



MINUTES
RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, August 7, 2024
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Special Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Richardson called the Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Welcome and Roll Call

Mayor Richardson welcomed those in the audience and expressed appreciation for their attendance.

Attendance: Mayor Richardson	Present
Mayor Pro Tem Kent	Present
Councilmember Jones	Present
Councilmember Lukson	Absent
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Absent
Councilmember Whitten	Present

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO EXCUSE COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON AND VANDYKE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Fire Chief Huntington, Development Services Director Jensen, Finance Director Allen, Human Resources Director Paulsen, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, Public Works Director D'Alessandro, Interim Chief of Police Meidl, and City Clerk Rogers

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Maier led the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

COUNCILMEMBER JONES MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Presentations

1. 3 Rivers Community Foundation Presentation

Abbey Cameron, CEO of 3 Rivers Community Foundation, a non-profit organization that creates opportunities for perpetual charitable giving in Benton and Franklin counties, presented the agency's mission and vision statement, and initiatives that address community needs. Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation included in the agenda packet.

2. New Hires and Retirements

A video featuring the new hires and retirements for July 2024 was played for the audience.

The City welcomed eleven (11) new employees to the City of Richland in July 2024.

- Camryn Andersen - Police Officer, Police Division
- Ian Bergevin - Police Officer, Police Division
- Tayler Jackson - Police Officer, Police Division
- Michael Minarik - Police Officer, Police Division
- Titan Ramberg - Police Officer, Police Division
- Travis Schouviller - Police Officer, Police Division
- Michelle Cooper - BCES Communications Supervisor, SECOMM Operations
- Kylian Cochran - Emergency Communications Dispatcher, SECOMM Operations
- Mikaela Monroy - Emergency Communications Dispatcher, SECOMM Operations
- Emma Perez - Emergency Communications Dispatcher, SECOMM Operations
- Hunter Krienke - Plant Operator-in-Training, Water Operations

There were no retirements to recognize.

Public Hearing

City Clerk Rogers read the Public Hearing and Public Comments procedures.

3. Proposed Amendment to Richland Municipal Code 3.24.560 and eliminating the 1-Year Grace Period for Downtown Business Improvement District Assessments, Ordinance No. 2024-25

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:16 p.m. No testimony was offered.

Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

4. Approval of the July 16, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes and the July 23, 2024 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

5. Ordinance No. 2024-26, Amending Richland Municipal Code Section 5.04.170 and 5.04.290 related to Business License Information and Enforcement
6. Ordinance No. 2024-27, Amending Chapter 8.10 of the Richland Municipal Code related to Public Camping

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

None.

Resolutions - Adoption

7. Resolution No. 2024-93, Adopting the Richland Energy Services 2024 Energy Resource Plan
8. Resolution No. 2024-95, Authorizing Weatherwise Contractor Agreements with Gale Contractor Services and Young's Heating and Cooling, LLC for Weatherwise Program Participation
9. Resolution No. 2021-96, Authorizing Change Order No. 4 to Contract No. 437-23 with Sharpe & Preszler Construction, Co. Inc. for the Sunset Street and Montana Avenue Water Main Replacement
10. Resolution No. 2024-97, Authorizing Change Order No. 1 to Contract No. 97-24 with McCann Trucking, LLC for the 2024 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Ramp Project
11. Resolution No. 2024-98, Authorizing a Grant Application to the Washington State Department of Transportation Traffic Conflict Screening Using Video Analytics Program
12. Resolution No. 2024-99, Authorizing Grant Applications to the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board Urban Arterial Program and Active Transportation Program

Items - Approval

None.

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PUBLISHED. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, MAIER AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Items of Business

13. Ordinance No. 2024-25, Amending Richland Municipal Code Section 3.24.560 and eliminating the 1-Year Grace Period for Downtown Business Improvement District Assessments (First Reading)

Development Services Director Jensen provided an overview of the creation of the Business Improvement District (BID) as authorized by RCW 35.87A. The City's Downtown Business Improvement District (DBID) was formally established by Ordinance No. 03-07 in February 2007. Per the ordinance, owner assessments were established to bring in revenue for beautification of common areas, including trash removal, annual flower planting, seasonal decorations, and district-wide promotional materials, as well as insurance and other administrative costs. The original assessments have never been modified.

The City's authority to levy assessments on businesses within BID boundaries is granted by Chapter 35.87A RCW. Since 2007, the City has collected DBID assessments and remitted them back to the District after deducting an administrative fee pursuant to Ordinance No. 03-97.

The DBID Board of Directors seeks to eliminate the assessment exemption for businesses in existence for less than one year. The DBID Board held its annual membership meeting on May 15, 2024, and during the meeting, the membership voted unanimously to eliminate the assessment exemption. However, under state law, modifications to assessments in a business improvement district can occur only through legislative action after a public hearing.

A public hearing was held during tonight's meeting. No testimony was offered. Additional information can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation included in the agenda packet.

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2024-25, AMENDING RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 3.24.560 AND ELIMINATING THE 1-YEAR GRACE PERIOD FOR DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS, FOR FIRST READING, BY TITLE ONLY. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, MAIER AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

14. Resolution No. 2024-94, Authorizing a Washington Families Clean Energy Credits Grant through the Washington State Department of Commerce

Finance Director Allen explained that the Washington State Legislature has allocated \$150M to the Washington Families Clean Energy Credits Grant Program administered by the Washington State Department of Commerce. The funding, derived from the Climate Commitment Act, is offered as a one-time utility bill credit of up to \$200 to low to moderate income residential households.

The City of Richland anticipates passing through \$1,025,326.78 in grant funds to approximately 5,100 eligible households in Richland. Qualifying customers will see the credit automatically applied to their utility account on or before September 15, 2024. The City will utilize a third-party service to assist with the electric utility requirements and to identify eligible households in Richland.

Councilmember Whitten raised concerns regarding the statement the City is required to publish as part of the grant conditions. Councilmember Whitten expressed the opinion that this requirement may present a conflict of interest, and inquired whether the City can add a neutral disclaimer statement as has been done in other jurisdictions. Council concurred with this request. Finance Director Allen replied that the statement is mandated and cannot be altered based on grant contract requirements. However, supplemental statements are not prohibited. Councilmember Maier commented that he would support a supplemental statement only if it is truly neutral and does not express support or opposition to the Climate Commitment Act. Finance Director Allen shared that other jurisdictions have included statements indicating that the mandated statement may or may not reflect the agency's position on the Climate Commitment Act. The majority of Council concurred with including a supplemental statement.

COUNCILMEMBER JONES MOVED AND MAYOR PRO TEM KENT SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-94, AUTHORIZING A WASHINGTON FAMILIES CLEAN ENERGY CREDITS GRANT THROUGH THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, MAIER AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED. 5-0.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson shared that a media release will be issued shortly to announce the three (3) finalists for the Chief of Police position. The release will include the names and brief biographies of each candidate. It will also announce a community meet-and-greet opportunity scheduled for September 4, 2024 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Members of the public will have an opportunity to meet the finalists and attend a moderated discussion. Final interviews are scheduled for Thursday, September 5, 2024. Candidates will participate in a three-panel interview, a police department tour, and a city-wide tour.

City Council

Mayor Pro Tem Kent announced that she attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony at Panda Express. The event drew a large crowd, including the Richland Bomber Cheerleaders and the Richland Marching Band, with several hundred attendees. During the event, Panda Express announced its partnership with local Richland organizations, pledging to donate proceeds to schools.

Next, Mayor Pro Tem Kent stated that she has visited over two dozen farmers' markets and noted that the Richland Farmers' Market ranks among the top three (3) for vendor diversity and enthusiasm. The high turnout and variety of vendors indicate that the farmers' market might need a larger space in the future.

Mayor Pro Tem Kent then expressed appreciation for those who participated in the National Night Out event, as well as city staff who managed booths with joy and enthusiasm. She received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with some residents expressing regret for having missed it.

Councilmember Jones encouraged everyone to be a tourist in Richland by actively supporting local businesses, stating that their success relies on the community's support.

Councilmember Whitten echoed Mayor Pro Tem Kent's comments regarding National Night Out, noting that he had an enjoyable time at the well-attended public event. He also thanked staff, including members of Police and Fire, who participated in making the event a success.

Councilmember Maier reported that the process of selecting a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the Ben Franklin Transit is progressing well, with several strong candidates in consideration. He then shared that several community members have expressed appreciation for the ongoing work at George Washington Way and McMurray where changes to the traffic signals are expected to enhance safety.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson made the following announcements:

- She attended the Lourdes Behavioral Health rebranding ribbon-cutting and 50th anniversary celebration on August 1, 2024.
- She participated in ribbon-cutting ceremonies for new homes by Hayden Homes at Queensgate and Pahlisch Homes at Horn Rapids.
- She highlighted the success of the National Night Out event and thanked staff for their hard work.
- She announced that the Federal Building has been nominated for the National Register of Historic Places.
- She attended a therapeutic court graduation ceremony and encouraged other councilmembers to attend.

- She reminded everyone about the upcoming Night of Remembrance event related to use of the atomic bomb.
- She recommended councilmembers attend the Richland Chamber of Commerce meeting held on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings feature guest speakers and provide an excellent opportunity to connect with local businesses.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: August 20, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: August 21, 2024