



MINUTES

RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

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

Mayor Richardson called the City 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	Absent
Councilmember Jones	Present
Councilmember Lukson	Present
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present
Councilmember Whitten	Present

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON SECONDED THE MOTION TO EXCUSE MAYOR PRO TEM KENT. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Development Services Director Jensen, Energy Services Director Whitney, 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

Members of Girl Scouts Troop No. 2129 led City Council and the audience in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Brian Newberry, CEO of Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington and Western Idaho, thanked City Council for its support and referenced a prior funding approval that helped the local troop thrive. He noted that Girl Scouts membership has reached 4,307 members, the highest since 2013. He also highlighted the achievement of Pasco graduate, Celeste Blair, who created an art exhibit currently displayed in the Pasco Air Museum which honors the contributions of women during World War II.

Approval of Agenda

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Presentations

1. New Hires and Retirements

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

The City welcomed the following five (5) new employees in September:

- Emily Baumgarten - Emergency Communications Dispatcher, SECOMM Division
- Ignacio "Chito" Escalera - Electrician 1, Parks & Public Facilities Division
- Curtis Henry - Service Writer/Parts Specialist, Equipment & Maintenance Division
- Howard Scharnhorst - Construction & Maintenance Worker 1, Equipment & Maintenance Division
- Daniel Walker - Plant Operator, Water Operations Division

The City recognized the retirement of four (4) employees in September:

- Scot Brines - Fire Lieutenant, retired after 27 years of service.
- Michael Emrick - Fire Captain, retired after 34 years of service.
- Brian Gagnebin - Electrical Systems Dispatcher, retired after 30 years of service.
- Jane Gagnebin - Payroll Specialist, retired after 35 years of service.

Public Hearing

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

2. Proposed Surplus of Property and Equipment, Resolution No. 2024-134

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:11 p.m. No testimony was offered.

Public Comments

The following individuals provided comments:

- Blanca Hinojosa, a resident of Tri-Cities, WA, and employee of Kadlec Reginal Medical Center, highlighted financial struggles faced by many Kadlec employees and requested City Council meet with Kadlec leadership to assist in negotiating a fair contract for Kadlec employees.

- Art Kelly, a resident of Richland, WA, raised issues regarding Richland's code legalizing fireworks and also commented on the City's slurry seal road maintenance process.
- Thelma Hedrick, a resident of Kennewick, WA and employee of Kadlec Regional Medical Center, agreed with comments made by Ms. Hinojosa and requested City Council support Kadlec employees by meeting with Kadlec leadership to assist in negotiating a fair contract for employees.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Minutes

3. Approval of the September 17, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes and the September 24, 2024 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

None.

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

4. Ordinance No. 2024-29, Amending Chapter 3.29 of the Richland Municipal Code related to the Utility Low Income Program
5. Ordinance No. 2024-30, Amending the 2024 Budget to provide for Additional Appropriations in the City's General Fund, Streets Capital Construction Fund, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Fund, HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) Fund, and Equipment Replacement Fund
6. Ordinance No. 2024-31, Accepting a Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority Grant and Amending the 2024 Budget to Appropriate Grant Funds

Resolutions – Adoption

7. Resolution No. 2024-130, Authorizing Amendment No. 1 to Contract No. 161-24 with RH2 Engineering, Inc. for the Tapteal 2 Truman Avenue Booster Pump Station Design

8. Resolution No. 2024-131, Authorizing Award of Bid to Culbert Construction, Inc. for the Systemic Stop Controlled Intersections Safety Improvements Project
9. Resolution No. 2024-132, Approving Electric Utility Wildfire Mitigation Plan
10. Resolution No. 2024-133, Accepting Cybersecurity Grants from the State of Washington and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)

Items – Approval

11. Appointment to the Richland Public Facilities District Board: Evan Rosenberg

Approval Items of Business

12. Resolution No. 2024-134, Declaring Certain Vehicles and Equipment Surplus to the City's Needs and Authorizing Disposition

Purchasing Manager Irma Bottineau provided an overview of the City's surplus and disposition process according to Chapter 3.08 of the Richland Municipal Code (RMC), which requires City Council to approve the sale or disposal of items purchased for use in a utility or having an estimated salvage value over \$5,000. Included with Resolution No. 2024-134 was an itemized list of items slated to be dispositioned. There were no questions from Council.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2024-134, DECLARING CERTAIN VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT SURPLUS TO THE CITY'S NEEDS AND AUTHORIZING DISPOSITION. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

13. Resolution No. 2024-135, Adopting the City of Richland's 2025 Legislative Priorities

Deputy City Manager Joe Schiessl stated that around this time each year, the City reviews its legislative priorities for the upcoming year. The proposed 2024 legislative priorities are presented under Resolution No. 2024-135 for Council consideration. Before discussing the proposed priorities, DCM Schiessl provided a brief overview of the City's successes during the recent short session. Highlights include the following:

- Secured \$1 million for the Aaron Drive/Highway SR-240 project design, which is funded through the Climate Commitment Act.
- A statewide change to the criminal pursuit law, allowing law enforcement to safely pursue fleeing suspects/criminals when appropriate.
- Partial success in advancing the City's Targeted Urban Area (TUA) fix, which passed in the House, but did not proceed to the Senate.
- Secured \$25 million for small modular reactor development, which could significantly benefit local companies and create an economic boost for the region.

Council discussed the 2025 legislative priorities at the August 27, 2024 City Council workshop meeting, and based on feedback received from that meeting, staff developed the draft 2025 priorities. The City is also set to host a workshop with state elected officials during the October 22, 2024 City Council workshop meeting.

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Deputy City Manager Schiessl provided an overview of the City's five (5) main legislative priorities, which include:

- Targeted Urban Area (TUA) Amendment – this is the second attempt to address challenges with specific industries in Richland, such as high-tech, hydrogen, and nuclear sectors, which face longer permitting and construction timelines. To overcome these obstacles, a solution has been developed involving introduction of a new term in state law: *Clean Energy Transition Business*.
- Capital Budget Funding – These are the same capital projects that were prioritized in 2024 and will continue to be the focus moving forward:
 - Public Safety Communication System Infrastructure Upgrades for Benton and Franklin Counties
 - SR 240/Aaron Drive Complete Streets Improvements Project
 - Island View to Vista Field Trail System
 - Yakima Delta Habitat Restoration Project
- Public Defense Standards – Involves a proposal by the State Bar Association to the Washington State Supreme Court to cap caseloads for indigent defense. This change would dramatically impact local prosecution and significantly increase prosecution costs to an unsustainable level. Since case caps are determined by the Washington State Supreme Court through court rule, the only legislative involvement that can be had is to secure additional funding, much like the *McCleary* decision and the State's obligation to fund public education.
- Housing Choice and Regional Housing Collaboration – The updated priority emphasizes supporting legislation that promotes access to housing by increasing inventory and preserving the existing supply to meet diverse income levels and needs.
- Clean Energy Generation and Effective Energy Transmission – The City will continue to support clean, affordable and reliable electricity supply.

The 2025 legislative priorities must be adopted before the October 22, 2024 City Council workshop meeting when elected officials will be attendance to discuss the priorities.

Council provided comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff throughout the presentation.

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2024-135, ADOPTING THE CITY OF

RICHLAND'S 2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

14. 2024 National Community Survey (Discussion Only)

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Assistant City Manager Florence provided an overview of the National Community Survey (NCS) report conducted by Polco regarding the livability in Richland. The report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 300 residents of the City of Richland collected from April 30, 2024 to June 28, 2024.

Richland last completed the NCS survey in 2022, and the results are represented in both the comprehensive report and comparison data sheets provided by staff to provide context to benchmarking and rating changes from 2022-2024. The presentation highlighted key findings, potential areas of focus, and other notable results.

Following the presentation, Council offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff. See details of the survey results in the ACM Florence's PowerPoint presentation included in the agenda packet.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson reminded City Council and the community that beginning Friday, October 4, 2024, the Port of Benton will begin construction on the Airport Way intersection to replace the entire railroad crossing, the gate mechanisms, and upgrading the lights to light-emitting diodes (LEDs). The railroad crossing is expected to reopen for traffic on Monday, October 7, 2024.

City Council

Councilmember VanDyke made the following announcements:

- Announced that he participated in the City's recent state financial audit exit interview. The City had no findings from the audit process.
- Reported that the Planning Commission has expressed an interest in working more closely with City Council.
- Reported on his recent meeting with Visit Tri-Cities in which Visit Tri-Cities praised the community's response to the Ironman event. Visit Tri-Cities will meet with stakeholders to gather feedback on ways to improve future Ironman events. He thanked all those who participated in the event.

Councilmember Lukson had no comments.

Councilmember Jones had no comments.

Councilmember Whitten made the following announcements:

- Reported that the Arts Commission is seeking a location for the third and final Bernard Hosey art sculpture, with one potential site being near the Badger Mountain trailhead. The Arts Commission hopes to bring a recommendation to City Council in the near future.
- Noted that mosquito control efforts are winding down for the season, and noted that favorable weather conditions resulted in a successful mosquito control year.
- Shared his experience volunteering at the Ironman event and expressed gratitude for the positive feedback received from the athletes and volunteers.

Councilmember Maier made the following announcements:

- Shared positive feedback from residents about the Ironman event and congratulated those who participated.
- Raised concerns about the new surveillance equipment funded by the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority grant outlined in Ordinance No. 2024-31, suggesting the City's policies may not cover this particular type of recording.
- Shared his experience participating in the *Week Without Driving* event.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson made the following announcements:

- Reported that she attended a fundraising event at The REACH Museum and recommended it as a venue for future events due to its scenic location.
- Shared that a visitor, familiar with the Ironman event, praised Richland for its beauty, trails, and welcoming community.
- Recounted an incident where a local resident assisted an Ironman athlete which highlighted the supportive nature of the community.
- Recommended the Ironman video produced by the City's Communications & Marketing staff, and commended staff for their work.

Executive Session

15. Executive Session Per RCW 42.30.110(1)(i): Discuss Current or Potential Litigation with Legal Counsel (45 minutes)

At 7:23 p.m., Richland City Council convened in executive session with legal counsel for forty-five (45) minutes to discuss current or potential litigation. A five (5) minute transition from dais to executive session room occurred, with the executive session getting underway at 7:28. p.m.

Individuals present included Mayor Richardson and Councilmembers Jones, Lukson, Maier, VanDyke and Whitten. Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, and contracted attorney Justin Bogle.

Council exited the executive session at 8:10 p.m.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: October 15, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: October 16, 2024