



MINUTES

RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers

625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Regular 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 (Remote via Zoom)
Councilmember Lukson	Present
Councilmember Maier	Present (Remote via Zoom)
Councilmember VanDyke	Present (Remote via Zoom)
Councilmember Whitten	Present

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Whitten led the Council and audience in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Presentations

1. Swearing In of Chief of Police, Marty Pilcher

City Clerk Rogers administered to the oath of office to Chief of Police Pilcher. Monica Malhan, Richland Police Department Foundation Board President introduced herself and recognized several board members in attendance. Mrs. Malhan then presented

Chief Pilcher with a gift basket on behalf of the Foundation and welcomed him to the community.

2. Richland Public Facilities District Board Update

Steve Willey, Richland Public Facilities District Board President presented on several key topics, including the Public Facilities District (PFD) Board reorganization, the concept plan for the \$81.3 million Performing Arts Center (PAC), and the timeline for its construction and completion. At the October 17, 2024 Richland PFD Board Meeting, members passed a resolution to place a ballot measure on the February 12, 2025 Special Election. The ballot measure will ask voters to approve a 0.2% sales tax to fund the construction of the PAC, with the tax set to expire after thirty (30) years.

Detailed information is included in the PowerPoint Presentation presented. Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with Mr. Wiley following the presentation.

3. Winter Weather Management Presentation

With the aid of a PowerPoint Presentation, Public Works Director D'Alessandro presented an update on the city's approach to Winter Weather Management. The presentation included an overview of street prioritization, level-of-service expectations, event categories, and emergency operations. He emphasized several key considerations in balancing these factors: public safety and emergency services, access during winter weather events, protection of both city and private property, existing and forecasted weather conditions, resource and budget constraints, and the environmental impacts of the city's operations.

Detailed information is included in the PowerPoint Presentation presented. Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with Mr. D'Alessandro following the presentation.

Public Hearing

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

4. Proposed 2025 Budget and 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Plan, Ordinance No. 2024-37

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6 :56 p.m. No testimony was offered.

5. Proposed Amendment to Richland Municipal Code Section 23.22.040 Establishing the Columbia Point North District within the Waterfront District and Increasing Building Height Limits Therein, Ordinance No. 2024-38

Mayor Richardson opened the public hearing at 6:57 p.m.

- Ginger Wireman - 2435 Michael Avenue, Richland, WA: Ms. Wireman expressed

her opposition to the adoption of Ordinance No. 2024-38, which would increase building heights. She voiced concerns about the private development at the Richland river shore and expressed frustration with the ongoing loss of public riverfront access. In conclusion, Mrs. Wireman stressed the importance of preserving the river shore for public use.

No other testimony was offered. Mayor Richardson closed the public hearing at 6:59 p.m.

6. Declaring Surplus and Authorizing Relinquishment of Portions of Two Easements Lying within Peachtree Estates 1 and an Unplatted Portion of Section 34, Township 9 North Range 28 East, Resolution No. 2024-154

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 7:00 p.m. No testimony was offered.

Public Comments

The following individuals provided public comments:

- Faith Gambetti, a resident of Richland, WA, advocated for homeless individuals. Drawing from her own experience of overcoming homelessness, she urged council reevaluate their policies and approach the issue with compassion and understanding.
- Catherine Kyler, a resident of Richland, WA, expressed frustration regarding the overlap between recycling pick-up and street cleaning schedules and called for better communication to address the problem.
- Ginger Wireman, a resident of Richland, WA advocated for a housing-first approach when addressing the homeless population and emphasized the importance of collaborating with non-profits and neighboring communities to provide necessary resources. Mrs. Wireman urged council to transition from current policies to compassionate solutions, prioritizing long-term support with a focus on assisting veterans first.
- Marylyn Dolan, a resident of Richland, WA, raised concerns about the city's recent decision to remove the homeless population and close Wye Park and Columbia Park West, and called for more humane ways to assist the homeless population.
- Lisa Dukes of Richland, WA, urged the city to take immediate action to assist the homeless population, and expressed concern about the lack of visible efforts to coordinate support. She emphasized the need for collaboration with community partners to provide essential services and offered to assist to initiate the process.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

7. Approval of the November 5, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

None.

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

8. Ordinance No. 2024-37, Approving the 2025 Budget and the 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Plan

Resolutions - Adoption

9. Resolution No. 2024-153, Authorizing an Application to the Benton County Rural Capital Fund for the Duportail Improvements Project
10. Resolution No. 2024-155, Ratifying a Corrected Construction Contract with Sharpe & Preszler Construction Company, Inc. for the Meadows Drive South Water Service Replacement Project
11. Resolution No. 2024-157, Authorizing an Interlocal Agreement to Pool Opioid Funds in Support of the Columbia Valley Center for Recovery

Expenditures – Approval

12. Expenditures from October 1, 2024 to October 31, 2024 for \$40,854,278.22 including Travel Checks Nos. 20632-20670, Accounts Payable Check Nos. 327709-328861, Accounts Payable Wire Nos. 10277-10321, Payroll Wires & ACH Nos. 14304-14357, Payroll Direct Deposit & Check Nos. 230076-231257, and Pension Check Nos. 6858-6879.

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE, AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Items of Business

13. Ordinance No. 2024-38, Amending Richland Municipal Code Section 23.22.040 to Establish the Columbia Point North District within the Waterfront District and Increasing Building Height Limits Therein

Planning Manager Stevens provided an overview of the ordinance, which would establish a new overlay district called Columbia Point North. Adoption of the ordinance would amend the zoning text to increase the allowed height limit from 35 feet to 100 feet, and allow an

increase in other areas of the Waterfront Zone from 35 feet to 55 feet. The second component of the ordinance would increase the height limit within the Waterfront Zoning District to 55 feet citywide. Under the current regulations, a 55-foot height limit requires a public hearing and Planning Commission approval. The ordinance proposes to streamline the process by automatically granting the 55-foot height limit without the need for additional review. The proposed change will not apply to areas within the shoreline jurisdiction, where state law cap heights at 35 feet.

Following the presentation, council engaged in a question-and-answer session with Planning Manager Stevens and Deputy City Manager Schiessl, and individually shared comments either supporting or opposing the adoption of the proposed ordinance.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND MAYOR PRO TEM KENT SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-38, AMENDING RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 23.22.040 TO ESTABLISH THE COLUMBIA POINT NORTH DISTRICT WITHIN THE WATERFRONT DISTRICT AND INCREASING BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITS THEREIN, FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, VANDYKE, AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: MAYOR PRO TEM KENT AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES AND MAIER. MOTION CARRIED 4-3.

14. Resolution No. 2024-154, Declaring Surplus and Authorizing Relinquishment of a Portion of Two Easements lying within Peachtree Estates 1 and an Unplatted Portion of Section 34, Township 9 North Range 28 East

Public Works Director D'Alessandro stated the property owner has requested the relinquishment of a portion of two (2) 10-foot-wide electric utility easements located along the south boundary of its property. The portions of the easements to be relinquished are no longer needed for city purposes as the utilities have been removed. Staff recommend approval of the relinquishments.

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-154, DECLARING SURPLUS AND AUTHORIZING RELINQUISHMENT OF A PORTION OF TWO EASEMENTS LYING WITHIN PEACHTREE ESTATES 1 AND AN UNPLATTED PORTION OF SECTION 34, TOWNSHIP 9 NORTH RANGE 28 EAST. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE, AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

15. Fire & Emergency Services Standards of Cover Overview

Fire Chief Huntington and Deputy Fire Chief Aust jointly provided an overview of the key findings of the Standards of Cover (SOC) and Emergency Services Department studies which focused on evaluating the department's ability to meet community needs for fire protection, emergency medical services (EMS), and other emergencies while optimizing resources and ensuring compliance with RCW 35.103.010.

The study also assessed current response capabilities, analyzed risk and hazard levels,

develop response standards, and align resources with community growth.

The top five (5) priorities included:

- Improve turnout and response times
- Plan for future stations
- Address increased community demands
- Develop a 3–5 year strategic plan
- Establish risk reduction programs

Current challenges include response delays compared to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and increased demand in high-risk and elderly population areas.

Proposed improvements include setting clearer policies for response times, monitoring performance data, optimizing internal processes, and planning for new station locations based on growth projections. Initiatives like the Resource Navigator Program and plans for fire inspection and pre-incident planning aim to reduce risks and address service gaps.

In conclusion, the SOC study identified areas for improvement to meet current and future safety demands. Strategic planning, effective resource allocation, and council feedback will guide the process. Next steps include council workshops in early 2025 to update service benchmarks, review comprehensive planning metrics, and finalize budget-related policies for improved service delivery.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation. Following the presentation, council offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson made the following announcements:

- The 2025 Budget of \$361 million was adopted under the Consent Calendar after a thorough process involving public hearings, workshops, and collaborative efforts by council and the Finance Department.
- Richland Fire & Emergency Services (RF&ES) and Kadlec Regional Medical Center were recognized by the American Heart Association for their efforts in the Heart Safe Program and other lifesaving initiatives. The City of Richland received the Gold level award, an improvement from the Silver designation previously received.
- The State of the Cities event will be held on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Red Lion Hotel & Conference Center in Pasco.

City Council

Councilmember Whitten congratulated RF&ES for receiving the Gold level designation award by the American Heart Association, wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, and stressed the importance of safe driving. He emphasized the importance of equipping vehicles with high-quality, well-maintained snow tires, and reminded everyone to drive cautiously, especially in challenging road conditions.

Mayor Pro Tem Kent welcomed Chief of Police Pilcher to the community and congratulated him on being sworn in. She then thanked city staff for their efforts in preparing the budget and commended City Manager Amundson and the Finance Department for their disciplined and transparent approach to ensuring the budget is completed on schedule. In conclusion, Mayor Pro Tem Kent wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, encouraged citizens to volunteer with a local non-profit organization as many are still in need of volunteers, and thanked fellow councilmembers for their participation in the evening's discussions.

Councilmember Lukson thanked City Manager Amundson for including a diverse range of topics on the agenda, including density, parking, easements, snow removal, fire safety, and homeliness. He noted that these issues are common in growing communities and acknowledged the city's challenges with homelessness, emphasizing progress being made, such as the Columbia Valley Center for Recovery initiative. He expressed optimism about the city's development while acknowledging the complexities that come with it.

Councilmember Jones wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. She then welcomed Chief Pilcher to the city and noted recent complaints regarding disturbances in the areas of Howard Amon Park and Eastland View. She highlighted concerns about individuals engaging in drug-related activities, causing noise and disruptions, particularly late at night. Councilmember Jones expressed the need for the police department to address these issues by clearing the affected areas and emphasized the importance of proactive measures to abate these activities and improve community safety.

Councilmembers Maier and VanDyke welcomed Chief of Police Pilcher to the city.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson acknowledged the effort councilmembers made to attend the meeting remotely and expressed appreciation for their participation.

Executive Session

16. Executive Session Per RCW 42.30.110(1)(c) to Determine Minimum Offering Price For Sale or Lease if Disclosure Would Decrease Price and RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to Discuss Current or Potential Litigation with Legal Counsel (45 minutes)

At 8:14 p.m., Richland City Council convened in executive session with legal counsel for forty-five (45) minutes to discuss minimum offering price for sale or lease if disclosure would decrease price and 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 8:20 p.m.

Individuals present included Mayor Richardson, Mayor Pro Tem Kent, and Councilmembers Jones, Lukson, Maier, VanDyke, and Whitten. Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, and City Attorney Kintzley.

Council exited the executive session at 9:02 p.m.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: December 3, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: December 4, 2024