



MINUTES
RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, December 3, 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	Absent
Councilmember Lukson	Present
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present
Councilmember Whitten	Present

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

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Fire Chief Huntington, Chief of Police Pilcher, 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 Lukson led the Council and audience in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE 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 the month of November was played for the audience.

The City welcomed the following new employees in November:

- Nylah Holt - Community Resources Navigator (RFD)
- Esther Lee - Customer Service Representative
- Jenna Warren - Parks & Recreation Aide
- Marty Pilcher - Chief of Police
- Camryn Dezember - Police Officer
- Jeffrey Luce, Jr. - Police Officer
- Breckan McDaid - Police Officer
- Corey Fox - IT Applications Supervisor
- Jose Pimentel - IT Customer Services Technician II

The following employee retired during the month of November:

- Paul Gifford - IT Customer Service Technician II, retired after twenty-one (21) years of service with the City.

Public Hearing

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

2. Proposed Adoption of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update Amendments, Ordinance No. 2024-41

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. No testimony was offered.

3. Proposed Amendment to Richland Municipal Code Title 23: Zoning Regulations and the Official Zoning Map of the City of Richland, Ordinance No. 2024-42

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:07 p.m. No testimony was offered.

4. Proposed Vacation of a Portion of Robertson Drive, Ordinance No. 2024-43

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:08 p.m. No testimony was offered.

5. Proposed Amendment to the 2024 Budget in the General Fund, Special Lodging Assessment Fund, Equipment Replacement Fund, Medical Services Fund, Parks Project Construction Fund and Community Development Block Grant Fund, Ordinance No. 2024-44

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:08 p.m. No testimony was offered.

6. Proposed Amendment to Exhibit A of the Compensation Plan for Unaffiliated Employees - 2024 and Continuing, Resolution No. 2024-162

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:09 p.m. No testimony was offered.

Public Comments

None.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

7. Approval of the November 19, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

None.

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

None.

Resolutions - Adoption

8. Resolution No. 2024-158, Approving 2025 Lodging Tax Grant Funding Awards

9. Resolution No. 2024-159, Authorizing a Consultant Services Agreement with Systems Design West, LLC for Ambulance Billing Services

10. Resolution No. 2024-160, Authorizing Application and Acceptance of Professional Development Grants from the Washington State Library

11. Resolution No. 2024-161, Ratifying Acceptance of 2019 - 2024 Grant Agreements

Items - Approval

None.

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PUBLISHED.

THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0

Items of Business

12. 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 (Second Reading)

Planning Manager Stevens explained that Ordinance No. 2024-38 is presented under Items of Business to allow for additional Council discussion since a unanimous vote did not occur when the matter was presented for first reading on December 3, 2024. Planning Manager Stevens offered to answer questions.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2024-38, AMENDING RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 23.22.040 TO ESTABLISH THE COLUMBIA NORTH POINT DISTRICT WITHIN THE WATERFRONT DISTRICT AND INCREASING BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITS THEREIN FOR SECOND READING AND PASSAGE. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: MAYOR PRO TEM KENT AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER. MOTION CARRIED 4-2.

13. Ordinance No. 2024-41, Adopting the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Amendments into the existing 2017 Comprehensive Plan (First Reading)

Planning Manager Stevens provided an overview of the two (2) Comprehensive Plan amendment applications received in 2024.

- Darral Moore, J-U-B Engineers, Inc. on behalf of Tom Fisher, HP Pasco, LLC submitted an application proposing to change the Comprehensive Plan land use designations for approximately 2.13 acres of land from High-Density Residential to Commercial, and to rezone the site from C-LB (Commercial Limited Business) to WF (Waterfront).
- Richland Properties, LLC submitted an application to change the Comprehensive Plan land use designations on approximately 12.62 acres of property by relocating/swapping the locations of the existing Commercial and Low-Density Residential comprehensive plan designations.

Additional information is available in the PowerPoint presentation referenced during Planning Manager Stevens' presentation to City Council.

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-41, ADOPTING THE 2024

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS INTO THE EXISTING 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

14. Ordinance No. 2024-42, Amending Richland Municipal Code Title 23: Zoning Regulations and the City's Official Zoning Map to Conform to the Updated 2017 Comprehensive Plan (First Reading)

Planning Manager Stevens stated that in coordination with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan updates, the City is obligated to implement changes to its development regulations as part of the annual update process. Ordinance No. 2024-42 considers two (2) applications to amend the City's Official Zoning Map to implement the 2024 updates to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.

COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-42, AMENDING RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 23: ZONING REGULATIONS AND THE CITY'S OFFICIAL ZONING MAP TO CONFORM TO THE UPDATED 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

15. Ordinance No. 2024-43, Vacating a Portion of Robertson Drive Right-of-Way (First Reading)

Public Works Director D'Alessandro explained that the section of Robertson Drive in the Horn Rapids Industrial Park is a minimally used public right-of-way located near Logan Street off of SR-240 and Kingsgate Road. The section functions as a parking area for a nearby RV park and is not planned to be connected to the eastern segment of Robertson Drive due to significant grade differences and the lack of necessity within the City's road network.

The right-of-way is no longer needed for municipal purposes, and the City's best interests are served by vacating the right-of-way. Concurrent with vacation of the unneeded right-of-way, staff will record public utility and emergency vehicle easements to protect existing utilities and emergency access to an adjacent privately owned parcel.

Following the presentation, Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff.

COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-43, VACATING A PORTION OF ROBERTSON DRIVE RIGHT-OF-WAY, FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION

CARRIED 6-0.

16. Ordinance No. 2024-44, Amending the 2024 Budget in the General Fund, Streets Maintenance Fund, Special Lodging Assessment Fund, Equipment Replacement Fund, Medical Services Fund, Parks Project Construction Fund and Community Development Block Grant Fund (First Reading)

Finance Director Allen provided an overview of the proposed budget amendments. The recommended budget adjustment totals \$1,733,566 in appropriations to the 2024 Budget. Of this amount, \$360,847 comes from new revenue sources, while the remaining \$1,372,719 is drawn from unappropriated fund balances.

Following the presentation, Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff.

MAYOR PRO TEM KENT MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-44, AMENDING THE 2024 BUDGET IN THE GENERAL FUND, STREETS MAINTENANCE FUND, SPECIAL LODGING ASSESSMENT FUND, EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT FUND, MEDICAL SERVICES FUND, PARKS PROJECT CONSTRUCTION FUND, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUND, FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

17. Resolution No. 2024-162, Amending Exhibit A of the Compensation Plan for Unaffiliated Employees - 2024 and Continuing

Human Resources Director Paulsen provided an overview of the City's compensation schedule for unaffiliated employees. Amending Exhibit A of the Compensation Plan would update positions based on internal restructuring, elimination of obsolete titles, incorporate new positions created since the last comprehensive update was performed, and establish a new market competitive pay structure. Exhibit A includes a market adjustment of 2.0%, which aligns with the City's analysis of internal and external comparators, as well as other economic factors.

In 2024, a Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Audit was conducted by a consultant to review eighty (80) exempt positions to ensure compliance with the duties test for exempt status. All positions passed the duties test, but Washington State increased the salary basis threshold for 2025, which will cause four (4) positions to be reclassified to non-exempt status in 2025.

In conclusion, Human Resources Director Paulsen announced that a Classification and Compensation Study for all unaffiliated positions is planned for 2025, with potential recommendations expected for Council consideration this time next year.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-162, AMENDING EXHIBIT A OF THE COMPENSATION PLAN FOR UNAFFILIATED EMPLOYEES – 2024 AND CONTINUING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

18. Resolution No. 2024-164, Authorizing a Financing Agreement with the Cities of Pasco and Kennewick and the Counties of Benton and Franklin for Capital Financing on behalf of Benton County Emergency Services

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Assistant City Manager Florence provided an overview of the Benton County Emergency Services' (BCES) project to replace failing public safety radio infrastructure across both Benton and Franklin Counties. Included in this project is both infrastructure and mobile subscriber radios that will allow public safety personnel to effectively communicate across the bi-county area.

On behalf of BCES, Richland contracted with Federal Engineering to conduct a study to provide the best recommendation for replacing the failing VHF system. After significant study and interaction with the first responder stakeholder groups, the recommendation is for regional fire personnel to transition to the 800MHz system.

Funding for this \$30 million 800MHz Radio Project will be a shared responsibility between the cities of Richland, Kennewick, Pasco, Benton County and Franklin County, with each contributing an equal one-fifth share.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff regarding topics such as total cost of project, product selection, the equipment's service life, compatibility of equipment, and estimated implementation timeline.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-164, AUTHORIZING A FINANCING AGREEMENT WITH THE CITIES OF PASCO AND KENNEWICK AND THE COUNTIES OF BENTON AND FRANKLIN FOR CAPITAL FINANCING ON BEHALF OF BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson announced that the Richland Winter Wonderland event, presented by HAPO Credit Union, will have its opening weekend on Friday, December 6, 2024 at the John Dam Plaza with festivities beginning at 5:30 p.m. The event will run until January 1, 2025.

Additionally, City Manager Amundson reminded Council of the Special Workshop meeting scheduled for Monday, December 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. The agenda includes two (2) discussion items: Parking and North Richland Land Use. Councilmember Maier will lead discussions on both topics.

City Council

Councilmember Lukson stated that under the Consent Calendar, Council passed Resolution No. 2024-158, approving the 2025 the Lodging Tax Grant Funding Awards. Councilmember Lukson, a member of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee, expressed satisfaction with the quality of applications received. He noted that some longstanding recipients requested less funding than previous years, which allowed newer organizations an opportunity to receive funds.

Next, Councilmember Lukson mentioned grant funds were approved for Columbia Playfield Park and the Little Badger Mountain Park parking lot improvements. However, funding requests for Hanford Legacy Park improvements were denied. He described it as an underutilized asset with untapped potential for sports and recreation tourism, and encouraged future discussion on the park, including the terms of the City's lease and potential investment decisions.

Councilmember Maier thanked staff for the progress being made on the emergency response public safety radio infrastructure. Next, he expressed anticipation for continuing the discussion on the proposed site for the Veterans Cemetery.

Lastly, Councilmember Maier reminded Council about the recent petition to amend the Richland City Charter, which is currently scheduled for the November 2025 General Election ballot. He encouraged Council to consider proactively placing the measure on the February 2025 Special Election ballot to support the citizen-led initiative.

Councilmember Whitten had no comments.

Councilmember VanDyke welcomed the three (3) new police officers to the City and thanked Chief Huntington for the efforts made in coordinating and bringing together various resources.

Mayor Pro Tem Kent announced that many non-profits are currently seeking volunteers and encouraged individuals with available time and energy to consider volunteering. Next, Mayor Pro Tem Kent highlighted the importance of supporting local entrepreneurs and encouraged everyone to shop local to support local businesses.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson expressed gratitude for the Council's efficiency in moving through the lengthy agenda, and acknowledged staff for providing sufficient information to support the decision-making process.

Next, Mayor Richardson emphasized the significance of Council participation in ribbon-cutting events, noting that businesses appreciate Council's presence and support. Mayor Richardson encouraged councilmembers to notify her of any upcoming ribbon-cuttings, particularly if they have personal connections to the businesses, so she can join in celebrating their success.

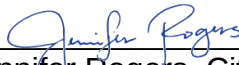
Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

APPROVED:


Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: December 17, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: December 18, 2024