



MINUTES
Richland City Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, July 1, 2025
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	Absent
Councilmember Jones	Present
Councilmember Lukson	Present
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present
Councilmember Whitten	Present

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN 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, 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, Development Services Director Rizzitiello, and City Clerk Rogers.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of Agenda

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

Presentations

1. Introduction of Basic Law Enforcement Academy Class No. 913 Graduates and Exceptional Entry Hire: Camryn Dezember, Jeffrey Luce, Breckan McDaid, Titan Ramberg, and Sean Finkbeiner

Chief of Police Pilcher introduced the newly sworn-in officers and shared brief background information for each. Chief Pilcher noted that all new officers will soon enter the department's Field Training Program, with one officer scheduled to work in the field that evening.

On behalf of the Richland Police Department Foundation, Ms. Ortega welcomed the new officers, expressed appreciation for their service, and presented each with a welcome basket.

Mayor Richardson thanked the officers on behalf of the City Council. She then highlighted her recent visit to the police academy in Pasco, and expressed gratitude that it is located locally, allowing officers to remain close to family during training.

2. New Hires and Retirements

A video featuring the new hires and retirements for the month of June was played for the audience.

- Jennifer Ballard - Senior Planner, Planning Division
- Brandon Brown - Fleet & Equipment Maintenance Analyst, Equipment Maintenance Division
- Abel Corona - Community Risk Reduction Specialist, Richland Fire Department
- Ben Dezember - Police Officer, Richland Police Department
- Sean Finkbeiner - Police Officer, Richland Police Department
- Geoffrey Mitchell - Maintenance Worker I, Street Maintenance Division
- Brian Mora-Pudilo - Police Officer, Richland Police Department
- Yuliya Oharkov - Emergency Communications Dispatcher, SECOMM
- Mike Rizzitiello - Development Services Director, Development Services Department

The City recognized six (6) individuals who retired in June, each concluding a long and distinguished career in public service:

- Stan Johnson - Parks & Recreation Coordinator, 34 years of service
- Ken Buechler - Deputy Fire Marshal, 27 years of service
- David Roney - Fire Lieutenant, 30 years of service
- Dawn Senger - Energy Efficiency Coordinator, 28 years of service
- Gail Everett - Communications & Marketing Specialist, 30 years of service
- Kevin Brown - Truck Driver Heavy, 41 years of service

Public Hearing

None.

Public Comments

City Clerk Rogers read the Public Comments procedures.

The following individuals provided public comments:

- Megan (no last name provided) expressed concerns over a recent Council discussion on homelessness and urged the Council to consider proactive solutions to support the unhoused and prevent future issues. Megan quoted the Bible to emphasize her position that Council has a moral responsibility to care for all members of the community. Megan reminded the Council that their role is to serve everyone, regardless of housing status or financial means.
- Ken Peterson, a resident of Richland, expressed his appreciation to the Parks Department for their excellent work in addressing various issues along and below the dike, as well as within city parks. He also raised concerns about safety issues along the curve on Haines Avenue, where visibility is obstructed by trees, bushes, and parked vehicles. He noted that a "No Parking" sign was installed in front of his home but was removed the same day due to a lack of prior city approval. Mr. Peterson concluded by once again thanking the Parks Department for their continued efforts in maintaining the community.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

3. Approval of the June 17, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes and the June 24, 2025 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

None.

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

4. Ordinance No. 2025-18, Amending Richland Municipal Code Section 9.24.070 related to Purchase, Possession, or Consumption by Minors

Resolutions – Adoption

5. Resolution No. 2025-81, Authorizing an Interagency Agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology on behalf of Hanford Communities
6. Resolution No. 2025-96, Authorizing Change Order No. 2 to Contract No. 451-24 with Sharpe & Preszler Construction Company, Inc. for the Meadows Drive South Water Service Replacement Project
7. Resolution No. 2025-97, Authorizing a First Amendment to the Lease Agreement with The Friends of the Richland Library
8. Resolution No. 2025-98, Authorizing a Services Agreement with ABM Industry Groups, LLC for Janitorial Services

Items – Approval

9. Reappointment to the Richland Public Facilities District Board: Mr. Charles (Ted) Miller

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

Items of Business

10. Resolution No. 2025-99, Authorizing a Lateral Incentive Program for Richland Fire & Emergency Services

Deputy Fire Chief Randy Aust presented proposed enhancements to the Fire Department's Lateral Recruitment Program intended to help attract and retain experienced firefighters in Richland. He highlighted the success of the initial 2022 lateral recruitment process and emphasized the value lateral hires bring through experience, reduced onboarding time, and organizational depth. Deputy Fire Chief Aust noted that RFD has struggled to recruit lateral candidates since 2022 due to competitive barriers.

Key incentives of the proposed program include hiring lateral firefighters at top-step pay (F-step), reducing promotion eligibility from five (5) to three (3) years of service, crediting prior service toward vacation accrual, and offering reimbursement for remaining paramedic training debt. These changes are designed to improve recruitment, reduce onboarding time, and build organizational depth.

Following his presentation, Deputy Fire Chief Aust answered Council questions.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2025-99, AUTHORIZING A LATERAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR RICHLAND FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

11. Resolution No. 2025-100, Authorizing a Lateral Incentive Program for the Richland Police Department

Chief of Police Pilcher presented proposed enhancements to the Richland Police Department's Lateral Incentive Program, designed to increase competitiveness and attract experienced officers from outside the region. Under the program, a lateral is defined as a commissioned law enforcement officer with a minimum of two (2) years of continuous full-time service in a city, county, state, or federal agency.

Key incentives proposed include placement in a pay step commensurate with previous years of service, an initial vacation benefit of eighty (80) hours plus accrual based on years of service in law enforcement, and relocation assistance for those living more than one hundred (100) miles from Richland.

Following his presentation, Chief Pilcher answered Council questions.

COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2025-100, AUTHORIZING A LATERAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR THE RICHLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson reported that the proposed incentive programs for police and fire personnel were part of a coordinated effort aligned with the City's strategic priority of having an engaged workforce. He stated that this effort is tied to the goal for increasing recruitment and retention.

He then introduced Mike Rizzitiello as the City's new Development Services Director and highlighted his extensive background with over seventeen (17) years of local government experience. City Manager Amundson then shared an overview of Mr. Rizzitiello's professional qualifications and accomplishments.

Next, City Manager Amundson encouraged both Council and the public to promote and help fill upcoming fall vacancies on several boards, commissions and committees.

City Manager Amundson concluded by recognizing staff contributions to the recent Association of Washington Cities (AWC) conference held at the Three Rivers Convention Center in Kennewick, June 24-27, 2025. Public Works Director D'Alessandro participated in the Transportation Summit, while Energy Services Director Whitney served on a panel discussing state energy needs. City Manager Amundson noted that the conference provided valuable insights into legislative impacts and innovative solutions for local government challenges.

City Council

Councilmember Lukson welcomed Development Services Director Rizzitiello. He then emphasized the significance of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee and encouraged anyone interested in serving to apply.

Councilmember Lukson wished everyone a safe 4th of July holiday, and expressed appreciation for the City's approach to fireworks regulations, which strikes a balance between enforcement and community expectations. While acknowledging that the current regulatory framework has room for improvement, he urged all citizens to exercise caution and mindfulness during their celebrations to ensure a festive yet incident-free holiday for the entire community.

Councilmember VanDyke also welcomed Development Services Director Rizzitiello to the City and expressed excitement about the experience and expertise he will bring to the team. He also thanked Human Resources Director Paulsen for her efforts in preparing the monthly new hire and retirees presentation. In closing, Councilmember VanDyke recognized City Manager Amundson and Finance Director Allen for receiving the Triple Crown Award, emphasizing that such achievements foster trust in the City's financial systems and enable Council to focus on major initiatives such as the Strategic Plan.

Councilmember Jones thanked first responders for their daily service and bravery, especially in light of a recent incident in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. She advocated for expediting the City's drone program, noting its potential to improve safety by assessing emergency scenes before first responders arrive. Councilmember Jones emphasized its value in preventing similar events in Richland and reaffirmed her appreciation for the courage and dedication of first responder personnel.

Councilmember Whitten expressed his condolences to the victims' families of the recent attack in Coeur d'Alene, describing it as a cowardly and evil act. He voiced strong support for the use of drone technology, citing its past effectiveness during an active shooter event. He welcomed the City's new police officers and recent academy graduates to the Richland Police Department, which he described as one of the best in the state. Councilmember Whitten also highlighted his attendance at Cool Desert Nights, praising it as a well-organized and well-attended event, and noted his appreciation for the improved weather compared to the previous year.

Councilmember Maier welcomed the City's new hires and expressed his appreciation to City Manager Amundson and staff for providing timely updates on various city matters,

especially code enforcement issues. He noted an increase in constituent inquiries and thanked staff for their efforts in compiling the necessary responses, which enables him to keep residents informed. Councilmember Maier concluded his remarks by wishing his wife a happy birthday.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson welcomed the City's new employees and echoed the appreciation shared by other councilmembers. She then announced the conclusion of the Hanford Advisory Economic Investment Fund Advisory Committee (HAEIFAC) after 30 years. During its tenure, the committee awarded over \$24 million in grants, supported the creation of more than 4,380 jobs, and generated an estimated \$330 million in economic impact. The remaining \$2.6 million in funds will now be managed by TRIDEC. She noted that the City recently received a \$462,000 grant from the program to support sewer infrastructure in the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park.

Next, Mayor Richardson highlighted the value of the Association of Washington Cities' (AWC) annual conference held in Kennewick, noting it was a sold-out event with over 500 attendees. Mayor Richardson encouraged greater Council participation at next year's conference to maximize learning opportunities.

Mayor Richardson also highlighted the recent ribbon-cutting events for Level Up Learning and Sabor a Mi Tierra. She thanked both businesses for their contributions to the local economy.

In conclusion, Mayor Richardson recognized recent retiree, Gail Everett, thanking her for her 30 years of dedicated service to the City. She described Gail as a positive, energetic individual who consistently embodied the spirit of Richland.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

APPROVED:


Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: July 15, 2025

DATE PUBLISHED: July 16, 2025