



MINUTES

Richland City Council Special Meeting and Workshop

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers

625 Swift Boulevard

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

Councilmember VanDyke called the Special Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilmember VanDyke announced that Mayor Richardson is currently attending a conference in Washington D.C.

Attendance: Mayor Richardson	Absent
Mayor Pro Tem Kent	Absent
Councilmember Jones	Present
Councilmember Lukson	Present (Remote via Zoom)
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present
Councilmember Whitten	Present

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Assistant City Manager Florence, Fire Chief Huntington, Chief of Police Pilcher, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Public Works Director D'Alessandro, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, Development Services Director Rizzitiello, and City Clerk Rogers.

Agenda Items

1. Ordinance No. 2025-25, Imposing an Additional Sales and Use Tax of One-Tenth of One Percent within the Boundaries of the Richland Transportation Benefit District for Pavement Preservation and Repealing the \$20 Vehicle License Fee.

City Manager Amundson summarized the proposal to transition the City's Transportation Benefit District (TBD) from a \$20 vehicle tab fee to the proposed 0.1% local Sales and Use Tax. He explained that the current fee generates about \$1 million annually, covering only 25% of the \$4 million needed annually to maintain a "Good" rating within the Pavement Condition Index (PCI). Since 2019, the City has supplemented the Pavement Preservation Program with transfers from the General Fund, Real Estate Excise Tax (REET), and reserves.

He noted that in July 2022, a legislative change to RCW 82.14.055 allowed cities with an existing TBD to convert to a sales tax mode by adopting a sales tax ordinance. Doing so would increase Richland's revenue to approximately \$2.2 to \$2.5 million annually, reducing the strain on other City funds and freeing resources for additional capital and quality-of-life projects. City Manager Amundson noted that the shift would raise the sales tax rate from 8.7% to 8.8%, equal to Kennewick's rate, and still lower than Pasco's 8.9%.

City Manager Amundson emphasized that the average household would see an estimated 83% savings compared to the car tab fee. He explained the change will distribute costs more equitably and is supported by Richland's strong sales tax base. He further noted that Council action by mid-October is required for implementation by January 1, 2026. In conclusion, City Manager Amundson commended City Attorney Kintzley for her prompt drafting of the proposed ordinance to meet the October deadline.

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2025-25, IMPOSING AN ADDITIONAL SALES AND USE TAX OF ONE-TENTH OF ONE PERCENT WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE RICHLAND TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT DISTRICT FOR PAVEMENT PRESERVATION AND REPEALING THE \$20 VEHICLE LICENSE FEE. THOSE IN FAVOR: COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Councilmember VanDyke adjourned the Special Meeting at 6:13 p.m.

City Council Regular Workshop Meeting

Councilmember VanDyke called the Workshop Meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

Agenda Items

1. *MyAccount* Utility Billing Payment Portal Demonstration

Utilizing the test environment, Assistant City Manager Florence provided a live demonstration of *MyAccount*, the City's new customer engagement utility billing portal. He highlighted key features of the system and announced that the portal is expected to go live the week of October 27, 2025.

Assistant City Manager Florence noted that staff have implemented a broad communications campaign since June 2025, and will provide customer service support through staffed kiosks, instructional videos and step-by-step guides.

Councilmembers offered comments and suggestions and engaged in a question-and-answer session with Assistant City Manager Florence throughout the presentation.

2. 2026 Budget Presentation

Finance Director Allen presented a comprehensive overview of the preliminary 2026 Budget, adding that detailed revenue and levy presentations will follow in October. The preliminary 2026 Budget totals \$330 million across all funds, a decrease of \$7.7 million from 2025. General Fund appropriations are \$82.6 million, a 0.2% decrease, largely driven by fewer one-time capital projects and grants.

He then reviewed projected revenues and expenditures with sources, proposed staffing recommendations, and operational expenses. In conclusion, Finance Director Allen outlined the next steps and timeline for the budget adoption.

Councilmembers engaged in a question-and-answer session with Finance Director Allen throughout the presentation.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation included with the agenda packet.

Closing Comments

Councilmember VanDyke reported that he participated in the exit interview for the state financial audit. He noted that the City received the highest possible marks, with no significant findings. He concluded by thanking staff for their continued excellence.

Future Workshop Agenda Items

None.

Adjournment

Councilmember VanDyke adjourned the workshop at 7:52 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: October 7, 2025

DATE PUBLISHED: October 8, 2025