



## MINUTES

Richland City Council Special Meeting and Workshop  
Tuesday, January 27, 2026  
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers  
625 Swift Boulevard

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### City Council Special Meeting - 3:00 p.m.

Mayor Richardson called the special meeting to order at 3:00 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 VanDyke        | Present |
| Councilmember Holten         | Present |
| Councilmember Jones          | Present |
| Councilmember Maier          | Present |
| Councilmember Whitten        | Present |

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Assistant City Manager Florence, and City Clerk Rogers.

### Candidate Interviews

#### 1. Interviews for Position No. 4 on the Richland City Council

City Council interviewed the following candidates for appointment to Position No. 4 on the Richland City Council:

- Britt Creer (Remote via Zoom)
- Kyle Palmer (Remote via Zoom)
- Andrew Rice
- Samantha Mason
- Todd Samuel

### Executive Session

#### 1. Executive Session Per RCW 42.30.110(1)(h): Evaluate the Qualifications of a Candidate for Appointment to Elective Office (30 minutes)

At 5:07 p.m., Mayor Richardson announced that Richland City Council would convene in executive session for thirty (30) minutes to evaluate the qualifications of candidates for appointment to elective office. A brief transition from the Council Chambers to the executive session room occurred.

Individuals present during the executive session were Mayor Richardson, Mayor Pro Tem VanDyke, and Councilmembers Holten, Jones, Maier and Whitten. City Manager Amundson was also present.

Council exited the executive session at 5:40 p.m.

### **Agenda Items**

1. Resolution No. 2026-10, Appointing Todd Samuel to serve as Interim Councilmember to Position No. 4 on the Richland City Council

**COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2026-10, APPOINTING TODD SAMUEL TO SERVE AS INTERIM COUNCILMEMBER TO POSITION NO. 4 ON THE RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE, AND COUNCILMEMBERS HOLTEN, JONES, MAIER AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.**

### **Adjournment**

Mayor Richardson adjourned the special meeting at 5:40 p.m.

### **City Council Workshop Meeting – 6:00 p.m.**

Mayor Richardson called the workshop meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

|                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Attendance: Mayor Richardson | Present |
| Mayor Pro Tem VanDyke        | Present |
| Councilmember Holten         | Present |
| Councilmember Jones          | Present |
| Councilmember Maier          | Present |
| Councilmember Whitten        | Present |

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Fire Chief Aust, Chief of Police Pilcher, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, Development Services Director Rizzitiello, and City Clerk Rogers.

Mayor Richardson opened the workshop by acknowledging the applicants who sought appointment to Position No. 4 on the Richland City Council. She noted that all candidates were professional, well-prepared, and demonstrated strong commitment to community service. She thanked everyone who participated in the process and emphasized appreciation for residents who engage with city government and initiatives.

1. Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC) Shoreline Reconveyance Project Update

Karl Dye, President & CEO of the Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC), David Reeploeg, Vice President for Federal Programs at TRIDEC, and Deputy City Manager

Schiessl jointly presented an update on TRIDEC's Shoreline Reconveyance Project.

Mr. Reeploeg provided an overview of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) ownership of Columbia River shoreline lands and the long-standing effort to pursue federal legislation that would transfer selected USACE-owned shoreline properties to local government. Local governments currently lease and maintain shoreline parks at a combined estimated annual cost of approximately \$2 million.

Since 2020, the cities of Richland, Kennewick and Pasco, the counties of Benton and Franklin, the Port of Pasco, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) have collaborated to advance legislation that would allow no-cost land transfers without requiring full completion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review prior to reconveyance. The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation recently joined the discussion.

The framework includes four (4) components:

- Federal legislation authorizing the transfers;
- Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) establishing government-to-government relationships and expectations;
- A perpetual cultural practices easement recognizing treaty-reserved rights along the shoreline;
- Ground-disturbing protocols modeled after the Inter-Tribal Advisory Board (ITAB) process.

Deputy City Manager Schiessl recommended that Council consider expanding Richland's request to include additional developed and urban shoreline park areas, such as portions of Leslie Groves Park and areas north toward Howard Amon Park, to improve operational efficiency and to reduce federal permitting delays. He emphasized that there is no intent to privatize or commercialize existing parks, and suggested that restrictive covenants could be used to permanently preserve park status.

Deputy City Manager Schiessl confirmed that levees, pump stations, and other flood control infrastructure would remain under federal ownership.

In conclusion, Deputy City Manager Schiessl stated that draft MOAs are nearing completion and will be presented at an upcoming meeting in February for Council consideration. Staff will also bring forward a resolution identifying which Richland parcels should be included in the legislation, with an opportunity for Council to refine and expand the list.

Detailed information is available in the agenda packet. Council engaged in a detailed question-and-answer session with the item presenters throughout the presentation.

## 2. Police Station Options

Deputy City Manager Schiessl provided an update on the City's police station replacement project, including background, space needs, site options, preliminary costs,

and potential funding approaches. He noted that the existing police station, completed in 2001, is undersized and not readily expandable. The City has engaged the architectural firm Rice Fergus Miller to update the space planning and develop refined cost estimates for a facility based on an anticipated facility size of approximately 52,750 square feet.

Three (3) site options were presented:

- Construction of a new facility at the former Richland City Hall site (505 Swift)
- Acquisition and renovation of the privately owned 1200 Jadwin building
- Construction of a new facility at the Queensgate site near Benton County Emergency Services (BCES)

Preliminary cost estimates ranged from approximately \$61 million (former City Hall site), \$63 million (Queensgate site), and \$49 million (1200 Jadwin), with potential additional costs for structured parking, basements, added floors, and exterior enhancements.

Deputy City Manager Schiessl summarized key tradeoffs related to a downtown presence, access, operational efficiency, and renovation risk. He noted that 1200 Jadwin would require substantial due diligence, but offers the greatest opportunity for long-term expansion and financial feasibility.

Detailed information is available in the agenda packet.

Council engaged in a detailed question-and-answer session with Deputy City Manager Schiessl throughout the presentation, generally focusing on location, long-term growth opportunities, and funding approaches. Council comment collectively indicated a preference to prioritize due diligence on the 1200 Jadwin option, retain Queensgate as a secondary alternative, and remove the former City Hall site from consideration.

### 3. Sewer, Stormwater, Solid Waste Utility Rates

Public Works Director Carlo D'Alessandro presented a proposed rate strategy for the City's sewer and stormwater utilities. He reported that utility rates have not been substantially updated since 2009 and now require adjustment to address rising operating costs, aging infrastructure, and upcoming capital projects.

He stated that the City engaged FCS to conduct a revenue requirement analysis to identify funding needs for operations, maintaining reserves, debt service obligations, and supporting capital investments.

The analysis reviewed a 10-year planning horizon (2026–2034) and recommended adopting rates for an initial three-year period (2026–2028), with a reevaluation at the end of that period.

For the sewer utility, Public Works Director D'Alessandro identified major wastewater treatment plant projects driven by end-of-life conditions, including rehabilitation of the anaerobic digester, gritworks improvements, and solids-handling upgrades. The recommended strategy includes annual sewer rate increases of 6 percent in 2026, 2027,

and 2028, equating to an estimated \$1.50 to \$1.75 monthly increase per year for a typical single-family residence.

For the stormwater utility, which is primarily funded on a cash basis rather than debt, Public Works Director D'Alessandro stated that the system faces increasing rehabilitation and vegetation management needs. The proposed strategy includes a one-time increase of approximately 36 percent in 2026, followed by annual 2 percent increases to address inflation. The initial increase equates to approximately \$1.39 per month. He noted that even with these adjustments, Richland's sewer and stormwater rates are projected to remain below regional comparators.

Public Works Director D'Alessandro stated that the proposed rate strategies will be presented to the Utility Advisory Committee for review and, following their input, will be brought forward to City Council with a formal recommendation.

Detailed information is available in the agenda packet. Council engaged in a detailed question-and-answer session with Public Works Director D'Alessandro throughout the presentation.

### **Closing Comments**

City Manager Amundson stated that following the swearing-in of Interim Councilmember Samuel to Position No. 4 on February 3, 2026, the next significant Council action will be to determine councilmember assignments for the 2026-2027 calendar years. This topic is scheduled as an item for discussion at the February 3, 2026 meeting.

City Manager Amundson also added that staff is developing a reference guide to aid in the councilmember assignments process, which will include key information such as the purpose of each board, commission and committee, the meeting time and location for each, and meeting frequency. He indicated that the guide will be distributed to Council to assist in preparation for the upcoming discussion.

### **Future Workshop Agenda Items**

None.

### **Adjournment**

Mayor Richardson adjourned the workshop at 8:24 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: February 3, 2026

DATE PUBLISHED: February 4, 2026