



Minutes
City Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 2, 2026
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 VanDyke	Present (Remote via Zoom)
	Councilmember Holten	Present
	Councilmember Jones	Present
	Councilmember Maier	Present
	Councilmember Samuel	Present
	Councilmember Whitten	Present

Also present were Deputy City Manager Schiessl, City Attorney Kintzley, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Fire Chief Aust, Information Technology Director Goodhue, Chief of Police Pilcher, Public Works Director D'Alessandro, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, and City Clerk Rogers.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of Agenda

COUNCILMEMBER JONES MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Presentations

1. Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC) Annual Report

Karl Dye, President & CEO of the Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC), presented the organization's annual report. He reviewed TRIDEC's history and the region's economic transition from heavy reliance on Hanford-related federal employment to a more diversified economy. Mr. Dye explained that TRIDEC's current efforts focus on economic

development through business recruitment, retention, and expansion, and federal advocacy for congressional appropriations supporting Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) and Hanford clean-up.

Mr. Dye highlighted ongoing projects conducted in partnership with the City of Richland, including business development, land-use initiatives, and shrub steppe habitat mitigation efforts.

He also addressed data center development, noting that under the Pacific Northwest Power Act of 1980, projects are required to secure their own power resources and would not increase costs for the city ratepayers. He further stated that modern closed-loop cooling technologies significantly reduce water consumption and that TRIDEC supports projects that meet standards and the community's interests.

Finally, Mr. Dye provided a map and commentary on TRIDEC's efforts to secure additional industrial land north of the City of Richland for future industrial development.

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

2. Columbia Basin Badger Club Introduction

Don Baer, President of the Columbia Basin Badger Club, provided an overview of the organization and its mission. He explained that the Badger Club, founded in 2008, is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to fostering civil discourse through public forums on issues of community and regional importance.

Mr. Baer highlighted the Club's role in facilitating balanced discussions on a variety of topics and shared examples of recent forum subjects. He encouraged councilmembers and city staff to participate in future events as speakers, panelists, or topic contributors. In closing, Mr. Baer emphasized the organization's commitment to promoting community engagement and informed public dialogue.

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

3. Impact Academy Graduation – Class of 2026

A video highlighting the Impact Academy Class of 2026 was played for the audience. The Impact Academy is a two-year internal leadership development program launched in 2023 for the purpose of investing in city employees, strengthening cross-departmental leadership, and building organizational connections. Each graduating class is tasked with completing a project that leaves a lasting impact on the organization.

The Class of 2024 developed the City's internal culture statement. The Class of 2026 created the "On the Spot" awards program, a peer recognition initiative designed to celebrate employees in real time for demonstrating organizational culture values including teamwork, accountability, service, and mutual support.

4. New Hires & Retirements

A video featuring eight (8) new hires and two (2) retirements for the month of May was played for the audience.

New Hires

- Isaac Anderson – Engineering Technician II (Design), Public Works Administration & Engineering Division
- Sage Brustad – Police Officer, Richland Police Department
- Jewel Cleveringa – Payroll Specialist, Finance Department
- Chad Goodhue – Information Technology Director, IT Department
- Gage Miller – Police Officer, Richland Police Department
- Emily Tagnolli – Emergency Communications Dispatcher, BCES
- Lindsey Wilkerson – Customer Service Associate, Solid Waste Disposal Division
- Melanie Winterroth – Emergency Communications Dispatcher, BCES

Retirements

- Chris Byrd was recognized for his retirement after 25 years of service with the City as a firefighter with Richland Fire & Emergency Services.
- Debbie Brennan-Cruz was recognized for her retirement after 22 years of service with the City as a police public records specialist in the Richland Police Department.

Public Hearing

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

5. Proposed Amendments to the 2026 Budget to Provide for Additional Appropriations in Various City Funds, Ordinance No. 2026-14

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:44 p.m. No testimony was offered.

6. Proposed Adoption of the 2027-2032 Transportation Improvement Program, Resolution No. 2026-32

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:44 p.m. No testimony was offered.

Public Comments

The following individuals provided comments:

- Tom Boczar, a Real Estate Broker and Developer, spoke on behalf of property owners Robert and Lisa Molt, to request City Council to direct staff to provide potable water

service to the Molt parcels located outside city limits but within the City's urban growth area (UGA).

- Edward Muñoz, a resident of Richland, addressed concerns regarding the proposed increase to the contract with Clean UP Crew LLC for clean-up costs associated with 2100 Pullen. Mr. Muñoz urged Council to pursue a resolution that prevents continued expenditure of public funds on the property.
- Randy Slovic, a resident of Richland, provided comments on Ordinance No. 2026-15 related to the crime of failure to supervise a child. Ms. Slovic expressed skepticism about the necessity for the ordinance and criticized the City for adopting a municipal code provision similar to those enacted by Kennewick and Pasco.
- Terri Stewart, a resident of Richland, raised concerns regarding the energy and noise impacts of the Atlas Agro Pacific Green fertilizer facility and data center project, and urged Council to address the concerns proactively during the project design process.
- Jessie Romero, a resident of Sunnyside, spoke in opposition to the data center development, and listed names of community members from Richland, West Richland, Benton City, and Sunnyside who also opposed the data center development.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

7. Approval of the May 19, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes and the May 26, 2026 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

8. Ordinance No. 2026-15, Amending Chapter 9.12 of the Richland Municipal Code related to Miscellaneous Crimes to add RMC 9.12.140; Failure to Supervise a Child Unlawful (**PULLED BY COUNCILMEMBER MAIER AND RELOCATED UNDER ITEMS OF BUSINESS**)

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

9. Ordinance No. 2026-11, Amending Richland Municipal Code Section 5.20.040 related to Occupation Tax on Manufactured and Natural Gas Systems
10. Ordinance No. 2026-12, Amending the 2026 Budget to Include the 2025 Budget Carryovers

Resolutions – Adoption

11. Resolution No. 2026-73, Authorizing Weatherwise Contractor Agreements with Vance Heating and Air Conditioning Inc. and Aces HVAC, LLC for Weatherwise Program Participation
12. Resolution No. 2026-74, Authorizing a Grant Application to the Washington State Military Department's State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program
13. Resolution No. 2026-75, Authorizing Award of Bid to Big D's Construction of Tri-Cities, Inc. for the Columbia Playfield North Parking Lot Reconstruction
14. Resolution No. 2026-76, Authorizing Change Order No. 2 to Contract No. 395-25 with Clean Up Crew LLC for On-Call Junk Removal and Hauling
15. Resolution No. 2026-77, Authorizing Award of Bid to C & E Trenching L.L.C. for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Anaerobic Digester Knife Gate Valve Replacement Project

Items – Approval

16. Travel Authorization for Mayor Pro Tem Shayne VanDyke and Councilmember Pat Holten

Expenditures – Approval

None.

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

Items of Business

17. Ordinance No. 2026-13, Rezoning Approximately 8.38 Unplatted Acres identified as Parcel No. 1-3498-201-0595-008 from Agriculture (AG) to Medium Density Residential Small Lots (R-2S) and Limited Business (C-LB) (Closed Record) (First Reading)

Mayor Richardson identified the items that comprise the record for the purposes of the closed-record review hearing. The items of record include all documents that were presented to the Richland Hearing Examiner and accepted into evidence at or prior to the open-record public hearing held on April 13, 2026, along with the Hearing Examiner's May 4, 2026 written decision, and all ordinances and comprehensive plans applicable to the project.

City Attorney Kintzley described the quasi-judicial nature of the hearing and described scenarios that would constitute conflicts of interest or violations of the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine. City Attorney Kintzley then asked if any councilmembers had any potential conflicts of interest regarding the topic. No conflicts were disclosed. City Attorney Kintzley asked the audience if anyone had any objection to any councilmember's participation in the closed-record review. No objections were raised. Finally, City Attorney Kintzley asked if anyone present had any objections on jurisdictional grounds as required by the Richland Municipal Code. No objections were raised.

City Clerk Rogers read additional closed record hearing procedures.

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 7:44 p.m. Neither the applicant nor the individuals who provided testimony during the open-record hearing were present to provide comments

Planning Manager Stevens presented the rezone application. He stated that the applicant requests rezoning of approximately 8.38 unplatted acres located off Bermuda Road from Agriculture (AG) to Medium Density Residential Small Lot (R-2S) and Limited Business (C-LB). He stated that the requested rezone mirrors the property's existing Comprehensive Plan designations to split the site between Commercial (southern portion) and Medium Density Residential (northern portion).

The Hearing Examiner held a duly advertised public hearing on April 13, 2026 and issued a recommendation of approval on May 4, 2026. Mr. Stevens noted that the applicant's likely development intent is townhome-style units in the R-2S portion and condominium or apartment-type units in the C-LB portion, with C-LB being the only Commercial zone that permits residential condominium uses under the current municipal code.

Councilmember Maier commented that C-LB should not be the only commercial zone permitting condominium-density residential and recommend that Council consider broadening which zones allow such development.

Councilmember Jones expressed appreciation for the Planning Department's work in supporting housing development and agreed that the City should pursue zoning code updates to allow more middle-housing types.

Planning Manager Stevens replied that the State of Washington is moving toward removing mixed-use requirements for residential-only development, and that the Comprehensive Plan and associated development regulation updates will be presented to Council in the fall.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2026-13, REZONING APPROXIMATELY 8.38 UNPLATTED ACRES IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL NO. 1- 3498-201-0595-008 FROM AGRICULTURE (AG) TO MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL SMALL LOTS (R-2S) AND LIMITED BUSINESS (C-LB), FOR FIRST READING.

THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE, AND COUNCILMEMBERS HOLTEN, JONES, MAIER, SAMUEL AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

18. Ordinance No. 2026-14, Amending the 2026 Budget to Provide for Additional Appropriations in Various City Funds

Finance Director Allen presented the proposed 2026 budget adjustments, which will increase overall appropriations by \$17,737.644 through a combination of grant revenues, interfund transfers, and available fund balance. Of note was an \$8,000,000 appropriation for purchase of 1200 Jadwin Avenue for a future police station.

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

Following the presentation, Council engaged in a question-and-answer session with Finance Director Allen.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2026-14, AMENDING THE 2026 BUDGET TO PROVIDE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS IN VARIOUS CITY FUNDS, FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE, AND COUNCILMEMBERS HOLTEN, JONES, MAIER, SAMUEL AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

19. Resolution No. 2026-78, Adopting the 2027-2032 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program

Public Works Director D'Alessandro presented the proposed 2027-2032 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and noted that the information mirrored information presented at a recent City Council workshop meeting. He explained that the TIP is a state-mandated planning document that identifies transportation projects over a six-year period and must be submitted to the state as part of a coordinated financial process for local jurisdictions to access funding.

Public Works Director D'Alessandro reported that the draft TIP was posted on the City's website and was reviewed by the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Planning Commission. Both commissions favorably recommend adoption.

Public Works Director D'Alessandro provided a high-level overview of funded projects, unfunded projects, and projects included and/or removed during TIP development.

Detailed information can be found in the presentation included in the agenda packet.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2026-78, ADOPTING THE 2027-2032 SIX-YEAR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. THOSE IN FAVOR:

MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE, AND COUNCILMEMBERS HOLTEN, JONES, MAIER, SAMUEL AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

20. Ordinance No. 2026-15, Amending Chapter 9.12 of the Richland Municipal Code related to Miscellaneous Crimes to add RMC 9.12.140; Failure to Supervise a Child Unlawful (**PULLED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR NO. 8**)

Chief of Police Pilcher presented on Ordinance No. 2026-15, which he noted was brought forward at his initiative in response to increasing concerns about juvenile misconduct and quality-of-life impacts in the community, including repeat juvenile offenses and unlawful operation of motorbikes and electric bikes in streets, sidewalks, and neighborhoods.

He explained that the ordinance was modeled on provisions used in neighboring jurisdictions and was developed in consultation with law enforcement and prosecution staff. Chief Pilcher emphasized that the ordinance is intended as a targeted accountability tool for repeat or egregious misconduct directly linked to a lack of parental supervision, not to criminalize reasonable parenting.

Following the presentation, Council offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with Chief Pilcher.

Councilmember Maier expressed support for the provisions addressing illegal motorized bikes and situations involving children in dangerous circumstances. However, he raised concerns regarding the term “unreasonable” found in the proposed ordinance, noting it is subjective and could lead to inconsistent enforcement and place an undue interpretive burden on law enforcement officers and prosecutors. He suggested either removing the reference or replacing it with a specifically defined time standard.

Council offered personal perspectives on inclusion of the terminology, and Chief Pilcher shared, anecdotally, that law enforcement frequently evaluates the concept of reasonableness in use-of-force scenarios and when dealing with legal processes that are interwoven in criminal justice.

Councilmember Jones invited City Attorney Kintzley to provide legal input. City Attorney Kintzley declined to provide legal advice during the open meeting, and offered to discuss the matter with Council in an executive session if so desired. She added that the modifications suggested by Councilmember Maier would be acceptable if the majority of the Council directed them, but that such modifications were not strictly necessary, from a legal perspective, in order for the proposed ordinance to move forward.

Councilmember Maier maintained that removing the language would reduce the interpretive burden on law enforcement officers and prosecutors without diminishing the ordinance’s effectiveness.

MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER HOLTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2026-15, AMENDING CHAPTER 9.12 OF THE RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE RELATED TO MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES TO ADD RMC 9.12.140: FAILURE TO SUPERVISE A CHILD UNLAWFUL, FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE, AND COUNCILMEMBERS HOLTEN, JONES AND SAMUEL. THOSE OPPOSED: COUNCILMEMBERS MAIER AND WHITTEN. MOTION CARRIED 5-2.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

Deputy City Manager Schiessl had no comments.

City Council

Councilmember Samuel reported attending the Memorial Day service at Sunset Memorial Gardens, a Richland Planning Commission meeting, the Community Automated External Defibrator (AED) dedication at Badger Mountain Community Park, and the Tri-City Chamber of Commerce's regional advocacy roundtable.

Councilmember Holten reported that she participated in several community events and facility tours. She highlighted the value of touring the City's wastewater treatment plant, water treatment plan, landfill, and the Hanford site. She encouraged residents to use the "I Want To" feature on the City's website for the quickest response to concerns. She also shared updates from the Parks & Recreation Commission and Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau, noting that Richland's hotel-motel revenues increased by 4%, and that Richland has been recognized as Washington's safest medium-sized city.

Councilmember Jones expressed appreciation for the Memorial Day Service at Sunset Memorial Gardens.

Councilmember Whitten reported attending the Memorial Day service at Sunset Memorial Gardens and recognized the Day's Pay Squadron flyover and the VFW Post 7952 Cook-Erickson Honor Guard. He also attended the Tri-Cities Recruit Academy graduation, welcomed new firefighters, and encouraged residents to visit the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO).

Councilmember Maier addressed community concerns regarding data center development, emphasizing that public concerns are primarily related to potential impacts on water quality, electricity rates, and noise rather than data processing itself. He advocated for operational standards applicable to all large industrial users, encouraged proactive policy development, and expressed support for city staff while urging respectful public discourse.

Mayor Pro Tem VanDyke echoed support for respectful treatment of city staff and expressed confidence in the City's due diligence regarding data center mitigation efforts. He also attended the Tri-Cities Recruit Academy graduation ceremony and congratulated new recruits.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson highlighted the LIGO Observatory as a valued community attraction and noted its significance as a world-class scientific facility that regularly draws visitors.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: June 16, 2026

DATE PUBLISHED: June 17, 2026