



Minutes

City Council Special Meeting
Tuesday, August 5, 2026
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Special 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
	Councilmember Holten	Present
	Councilmember Jones	Present
	Councilmember Maier	Present
	Councilmember Samuel	Present
	Councilmember Whitten	Present

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, City Attorney Kintzley, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Fire Chief Aust, Human Resources Director Paulsen, 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 Samuel led the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADD AN ITEM OF BUSINESS TO THE AGENDA CONCERNING AN EXTENSION OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT TIME LIMIT. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE AND COUNCILMEMBERS HOLTEN, JONES, MAIER, SAMUEL AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: MAYOR RICHARDSON. MOTION CARRIED 6-1.

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

Presentations

1. New Hires and Retirements

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

New Hires

- Kristopher Jimenez - Utility Craftworker, Wastewater Maintenance Division
- Kendall Klein - Police Records Specialist, Richland Police Department
- Esther Lee - Parks & Recreation Aide, Recreation Division
- Oleen Malallin - Electrical Distribution Engineer I, Electrical Engineering Division
- Rachel Montgomery - Accounting Specialist, Finance Division
- Chad Robie - Journey Lineworker, Power Operations Division
- Phoeby Trask - Library Supervisor, Richland Public Library
- James Wilkinson - Plant Operator-In-Training, Wastewater Operations Division

Retirements

- Colleen Jackson was recognized for her retirement after 26 years of service as an emergency communications dispatcher with the Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM).

Public Hearing

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

2. Proposed Amendment to the 2026 Budget to Provide for Additional Appropriations in Various City Funds, Ordinance No. 2026-18

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

Public Comments

The following individuals provided public comments:

- Kerri McKillop, a Richland resident, expressed concerns regarding the proposed data center development, including water resources, fire risk, and whether the City would retain qualified third-party experts to conduct due diligence.
- Natalie Williams, a resident of Pasco, expressed concerns regarding data center impacts and urged Council to publish associated information and studies for public review.
- Cassandra Tran, a Richland resident, supported previous comments made related to the data center development and expressed concern regarding whether sufficient water and other resources are available to support data center development.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

Minutes

3. Approval of the Meeting Minutes from the following City Council Meetings:
 - July 21, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting
 - July 24, 2026 City Council Retreat
 - July 28, 2026 City Council Workshop Meeting

Ordinances - First Reading

None.

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

None.

Resolutions – Adoption

4. Resolution No. 2026-105, Authorizing a Consultant Agreement with J-U-B Engineers, Inc. for the Systemic Stop-Controlled Intersection Safety Improvements – Phase 2 Project
5. Resolution No. 2026-106, Ratifying a Grant Application to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office for Columbia Park West and Wye Park Planning
6. Resolution No. 2026-107, Ratifying a Grant Application to Gesa Community Foundation's Local Heroes Grant Program
7. Resolution No. 2026-108, Authorizing Change Order No. 1 to Contract No. 347-21 with Axon Enterprises, Inc. to add Auto-Transcribe Minutes
8. Resolution No. 2026-109, Setting a Public Hearing Date for Vacation of a portion of Right-of-Way located between 2555 Harris Avenue and 2603 Harris Avenue
9. Resolution No. 2026-110, Ratifying a Grant Application to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's FY26 Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing Grant Program

Items – Approval

10. Appointment to the Tri-City Regional Hotel-Motel Commission: Yesenia Galvez (Position No. 1, effective September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2028)

Expenditures – Approval

None.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. 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

11. Ordinance No. 2026-17, Rezoning Approximately 10.26 Acres identified as Revised Parcel 2 of Record of Survey for Boundary Line Adjustment No. 6250 from Agricultural (AG) and Suburban Agricultural (SAG) to Retail Business (C-2)(Closed Record) (First Reading)

Mayor Richardson, City Attorney Kintzley, and City Clerk Rogers read the closed record hearing procedures.

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 May 11, 2026, along with the Hearing Examiner's June 2, 2026 written decision.

City Attorney Kintzley described the quasi-judicial nature of the hearing 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 the public hearing at 6:19 p.m.

Senior Planner Ryan Nelson presented the rezone request submitted by Rick Simon of RPS Planning Consultant, LLC on behalf of Columbia Valley Property Holdings LLC, owned by Mallikajurana Vallem. The request proposes to rezone 10.26 acres of property identified as Revised Parcel 2 of Record of Survey for Boundary Line Adjustment No. 6250, located south of Keene Road, east of Queensgate Drive and Lariat Lane, and northwest of Fairhaven Loop from Agriculture (AG) and Suburban Agriculture (SAG) to Retail Business (C-2). The property is designated for commercial land uses under the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The Richland Hearing Examiner held a duly advertised public hearing on May 11, 2026 and issued a recommendation of approval on June 2, 2026. No members of the public testified at the open-record public hearing before the Richland Hearing Examiner.

Planning staff concurs with the Hearing Examiner's findings, conclusions, and recommendations for approval of the rezone request, conditioned on a duly executed concomitant agreement included with Ordinance No. 2026-17.

No additional comments were made.

Mayor Richardson closed the hearing at 6:22 p.m.

MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2026-17, REZONING APPROXIMATELY 10.26 ACRES IDENTIFIED AS REVISED PARCEL 2 OF RECORD OF SURVEY FOR BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT NO. 6250 FROM AGRICULTURAL (AG) AND SUBURBAN AGRICULTURAL (SAG) TO RETAIL BUSINESS (C-2), 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.

12. Ordinance No. 2026-18, Amending the 2026 Budget to Provide for Additional Appropriations in Various City Funds (First Reading)

Finance Director Allen presented the proposed budget adjustments totaling approximately \$2.6 million in additional appropriations, funded by approximately \$1.59 million in fund balance and approximately \$470,000 in new revenues and transfers.

Detailed information can be found in Mr. Allen's presentation included with the agenda packet.

MAYOR RICHARDSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER MAIER SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2026-18, 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.

13. Consideration of Expanding the Public Comment Time Limit to Three (3) Minutes

Councilmember Maier proposed increasing the public comment time limit from two minutes to three minutes per speaker, emphasizing the value of allowing residents additional time to address Council. Councilmembers Jones, Whitten, and Samuel expressed support for the change. Councilmember Holten referenced public comment practices in surrounding and comparable jurisdictions, noting that time limits vary, with some jurisdictions allowing two minutes and others allowing three minutes or imposing

an overall limit on the public comment period. Mayor Richardson, Mayor Pro Tem VanDyke, and Councilmember Holten raised concerns regarding meeting length and the ability to accommodate a larger number of speakers during well-attended meetings.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO EXTEND THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FROM TWO MINUTES TO THREE MINUTES PER SPEAKER. THOSE IN FAVOR: COUNCILMEMBERS MAIER, JONES, SAMUEL AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM VANDYKE, AND COUNCILMEMBER HOLTEN. MOTION CARRIED 4-3.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson thanked the public for its understanding of the need to cancel several City events and activities due to poor air quality conditions. He then announced that the National Night Out (NNO) event has been rescheduled for Thursday, August 20, 2026. In closing, City Manager Amundson announced that Council would meet in closed session immediately following adjournment to discuss collective bargaining parameters.

City Council

Councilmember Maier reported that Ben Franklin Transit's fare-free period for the month of July has ended, welcomed Library Supervisor Phoeby Trask, noted he would miss the upcoming Library Board meeting, and reported that applicants for the Library Board vacancies were under review.

Councilmember Samuel reported on revised operating hours for the Benton County Moderate Risk Waste facility and described the types of hazardous waste items accepted there and at the City's landfill.

Councilmember Holten reported on Parks & Recreation Commission matters, including shade structures and visits to local parks, and described a tour on an American Cruise Lines vessel and the popularity of its Columbia River itinerary.

Councilmember Jones encouraged citizens to donate to local organizations collecting relief items for those impacted by state wildfires.

Councilmember Whitten thanked Recreation Manager Julie Piper for her service and contributions to the City and wished her well in her new position in Alaska.

Mayor Pro Tem VanDyke wished Recreation Manager Julie Piper well in her new position in Alaska and expressed interest in attending the upcoming Library Board meeting on behalf of Councilmember Maier. He also reported on a ride-a-long with the Richland Police Department volunteers and reiterated the importance of expert evaluation of

potential risks associated with data center development. He shared information about the open house and ribbon-cutting event for Lutheran Community Services Northwest and highlighted the organization's community services.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson emphasized City Council's engagement and City staff's work in retaining experts to inform Council on the proposed data center development, and suggested residents refer to the City Manager's prior public comments regarding the City's process on the matter. She reported speaking at the Washington Economic Development Association conference earlier in the day and thanked Economic Development Manager Mandy Wallner for her work in helping to bring the conference to the Tri-Cities. In conclusion, Mayor Richardson reported on attending a groundbreaking event for Habitat for Humanity.

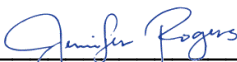
Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVED:


Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: August 18, 2026

DATE PUBLISHED: August 19, 2026