



MINUTES

RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, August 2, 2021

Richland City Hall ~ 625 Swift Boulevard

Zoom - Public Telephone Access: (206) 337-9723 or (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID No. 505 625 7380

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

Mayor Lukson called the Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was a hybrid of in-person and online attendance via Zoom.

Welcome and Roll Call

Mayor Lukson welcomed those in the audience and those attending remotely.

Attendance: Mayor Lukson, Mayor Pro Tem Kent, and Councilmembers Alvarez, Boring, Christensen, Lemley and Thompson were present.

Also present were Interim City Manager Amundson, Acting City Attorney Bronson Brown, Chief of Police Bruce, Finance Director Allen, Energy Services Director Whitney, and Parks & Public Facilities Director Schiessl. Deputy City Clerk Fulton was present remotely.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Lukson led the Council and audience in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

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

Presentations

1 Retirement of Ryan Nielsen

Mayor Lukson presented Fire Captain Ryan Nielsen with a plaque and read aloud a letter thanking Mr. Nielsen for his 31 years of service with Richland Fire & Emergency Services.

Mr. Nielsen expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work for the City of Richland.

Councilmember Lemley thanked Mr. Nielsen for his service and wished him luck in his future endeavors.

2 New Hires & Retirements

Finance Director Allen introduced new hires Marc La Vanway, who joined the City as a

Civil Engineer II, and Rigoberto Tovar, newly hired into the position of Utility Craftsworker. Mr. La Vanway introduced himself and provided a summary of his education and experience.

Recent retirements include Fire Captain Ryan Nielsen, who retired with 31 years of service, and Cable Communications Coordinator Michael Charboneau, who retired with 22 years of service.

Public Hearing

Deputy City Clerk Fulton read the public hearing and public comment procedures.

3. Proposed Amendment to the 2021 Budget in the City's General Fund, Equipment Replacement Fund, Community Development Block Grant Fund, Solid Waste Fund, Streets Capital Fund and Capital Improvements Fund, Ordinance No. 20-21

Finance Director Allen provided an overview of the proposed amendment to the 2021 Budget as provided in Ordinance No. 20-21.

Mayor Lukson opened the public hearing at 6:12 p.m. and closed the public hearing at 6:13 p.m. No public testimony was offered.

Public Comments

No in-person public comments were received from the public during the meeting.

Telephonic testimony was received from the following individual:

Laura Molu – 1791 Valmore Place, Richland, WA: Ms. Molu stated her support for the IBEW line crews and encouraged City Council to provide a comparable wage during labor negotiations.

Consent Calendar

Deputy Clerk Fulton read the Consent Calendar.

COUNCILMEMBER CHRISTENSEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER THOMPSON SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PUBLISHED. THE MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Minutes

4. Approval of the July 20, 2021 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes and July 27, 2021 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

5. Ordinance No. 19-21, Amending Richland Municipal Code Title 3: Finance to add a new Chapter 3.09 entitled Donations and Acceptance of Interests in Real Property
6. Ordinance No. 20-21, Amending the 2021 Budget in the General Fund, Equipment Replacement Fund, Community Development Block Grant Fund, Solid Waste Fund, Streets Capital Fund and Capital Improvements Fund

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

7. Ordinance No. 15-21, Amending Richland Municipal Code Sections 23.22.030 and 23.22.040 related to Commercial Use Districts
8. Ordinance No. 18-21, Amending the 2021 Budget to Include the 2020 Budget Carryovers

Resolutions – Adoption

9. Resolution No. 96-21, Authorizing the Submittal of Grant Applications to the Transportation Improvement Board
10. Resolution No. 97-21, Approving a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Matson Development, LLC
11. Resolution No. 98-21, Accepting a Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant for External Automated Defibrillators

Items - Approval

None.

Items of Business

None.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

Interim City Manager Amundson provided an update on the potential procurement and deployment of bodycams and dashcams by the Richland Police Department. Staff is currently working on policies related to the use of these cameras and have applied for grant funding. The City received \$235,259 for one-time costs related to law enforcement and criminal justice legislation recently enacted. These funds may be utilized, if desired, towards the purchase of bodycams and/or dashcams.

Mayor Lukson asked Interim City Manager Amundson if the budget impact of adding cameras is known. Interim City Manager Amundson recalled that the estimated annual cost, previously provided by Chief Bruce, is approximately \$250,000.

Interim City Manager Amundson also reminded Council that National Night Out is scheduled for Tuesday, August 3, 2021, and shared that those councilmembers interested in participating will meet at the library at 5:00 p.m. The public event is scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m.

City Council

Councilmember Boring commented that she hopes to see everyone at National Night Out.

Councilmember Alvarez spoke about the volume of help-wanted signs he has observed, and expressed his appreciation for the hard work and dedication shown by employees in the service and retail industries. Councilmember Alvarez also thanked Fire Captain Ryan Nielsen for his 31 years of service and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Councilmember Lemley shared that the next Ben Franklin Transit Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 12, 2021, and requested input from City Council related to action that may be voted on at that meeting. Mayor Lukson requested that any information regarding the timeline for action on this issue be promptly provided so that Council direction may be provided to Councilmember Lemley. Councilmember Lemley stated that he will speak with the BFT Board Chair to determine the timeline, and stated that he previously sent information related to this matter to each councilmember. Mayor Lukson questioned whether the information previously provided includes both sides of the argument. Councilmember Lemley clarified that he had not provided Council with the Benton or Franklin County Commissioners' position on the matter, but passed along the information that the Benton and Franklin County Commissioners had requested from Ben Franklin Transit. Finally, Councilmember Lemley wished Fire Captain Ryan Nielsen well in his future endeavors.

Councilmember Thompson spoke about the recently enacted legislative changes related to law enforcement and the implications of those changes. Councilmember Thompson opined that one of the consequences of recent legislation prohibits response from law enforcement without probable cause. Councilmember Thompson expressed his concern about the level of service that law enforcement is now limited to providing, and how these changes in the law will affect the public, especially those most vulnerable to criminal activity and mental health situations.

Councilmember Christensen echoed Councilmember Thompson's concern regarding the recent legislative changes impacting law enforcement, and recommended that a Council workshop be scheduled for Chief Bruce to provide a status update and planned course of action for the Richland Police Department. Councilmember Christensen also reiterated his desire, originally expressed at the July 20, 2021 Council meeting, for Council to consider adopting a resolution opposing an income tax. Councilmember Christensen provided data collected from recent polls along with examples of methods used by other

cities in Washington to document opposition to an income tax, and queried Council's interest. Mayor Lukson suggested that this topic be placed on the agenda to be discussed at the next Council meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Kent agreed that the topic should be placed on a future meeting or workshop agenda, but questioned the purpose of adopting a resolution as the City has no intent to levy the tax.

Councilmember Christensen also requested that Council consider returning to the practice of holding pre-meetings, allowing for better communication, trust, and team building. Councilmember Christensen stated that he has discussed the matter with Interim City Manager Amundson, and that City Attorney Kintzley is comfortable resuming pre-meetings. Councilmember Christensen queried Council. Mayor Lukson recommended, and Council concurred, that this topic be placed on a future meeting agenda for further discussion.

Related to future agendas, Councilmember Alvarez commented that he is in favor of a workshop on the recent law enforcement reform. Councilmember Thompson stressed the importance of getting information related to the legislative changes out to the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Kent expressed appreciation to Administrative Services staff for the information recently distributed on newly mandated long-term care insurance. Mayor Pro Tem Kent emphasized the importance of becoming educated about the new mandate, as individuals have only one opportunity to opt out of the mandatory payroll deduction, and a requirement of opting out is having an alternate long-term care policy. Lastly, Mayor Pro Tem Kent encouraged everyone to attend the Richland Farmers' Market and support local businesses.

Mayor

Mayor Lukson echoed Councilmember Thompson's comments on new legislation related to law enforcement. Mayor Lukson stated that it is important for Council to know what the City's position is on interpretation of the new legislation, and referenced several of the unintended consequences of the new laws. Mayor Lukson believes that the removal of less lethal tools, such as the device that dispenses rubber batons, will result in an increase in fatalities as tools available to law enforcement are now limited to firearms. Mayor Lukson's greatest concern is mental health calls, and the associated liability. Law enforcement officers will be hesitant to respond to these calls, as response is now limited to criminal activity. However, competing statutes allow for detaining individuals in the event of a mental health crisis. Mayor Lukson is in favor of a workshop on this topic, and recommends holding a community forum to educate the citizens on these changes in anticipation of significant citizen inquiries/concerns. Mayor Lukson commented on the rising number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, and encouraged everyone to consult with their medical providers and to educate themselves through reliable sources regarding vaccination.

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Adjournment

Mayor Lukson adjourned the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

APPROVED:



Ryan Lukson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Toni Fulton, Deputy City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: August 17, 2021

DATE PUBLISHED: August 18, 2021