

**CITY OF RUSTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At 7:00PM Mayor Hopkins called the regular Council Meeting to order. Councilmembers present were Councilmember Hedrick, Councilmember Syler, Councilmember Jensen, and Councilmember Holland. Councilmember Huson was unexcused. Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the agenda with a second from Councilmember Syler, passed 4-0.

MINUTES - Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the minutes for the regular Council Meeting of December 03, 2024, with a second from Councilmember Syler, passed 4-0.

STAFF REPORT –

Ruston Police Chief Bautista – See attached.

Ruston Fire Chief Allen – See attached.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Nothing at this time.

BUSINESS – Nothing at this time.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL – Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Claims for December 17, 2024, and Payroll for December 5, 2024, with a second from Councilmember Syler, passed 4-0.

MAYOR'S TIME – Mayor Hopkins provided updates over the ongoing City projects, discussions with the City of Tacoma regarding energy power, and announced the start of community engagement meetings to discuss grant opportunities. Mayor Hopkins would keep the Council updated on any new developments and wished everyone a Happy Holidays.

Councilmember Hedrick – Thanked the Ruston Police Department for their hard work in keeping the City of Ruston safe and wished everyone a Happy Holidays.

Councilmember Syler – Wished everyone a Happy Holidays.

Councilmember Huson – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Jensen – Wished everyone a Happy Holidays.

Councilmember Holland – Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and highlighted the Ruston Police Department, Ruston Fire Department and City staff for their hard work.

MEETING AJOURNED – At 7:23 PM Councilmember Hedrick moved to adjourn, with a second from Councilmember Syler, passed 4-0.

CITY OF RUSTON
Regular Council Minutes
December 17, 2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B Hopkins", written over a horizontal line.

Bruce Hopkins, Mayor

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mario A. Ortega, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Mario A. Ortega, Jr., City Clerk



**Chief's Report
Ruston Police Department
Tuesday, December 17, 2024**

Since our last report, Ruston officers arrested two felons in possession of firearms. In one of the arrests, the suspect fled on foot from the officers but left behind 30 grams of methamphetamine and three firearms. Within a week of this incident Ruston officers arrested the suspect at his workplace in Sumner. He is now charged with multiple felonies and will likely spend his Christmas in jail as he awaits trial.

The effort toward national level police accreditation is now fully underway. Officers will be assigned the task of providing "proofs" of our current practices which show our compliance to certification standards, and I will have the responsibility of developing policies and protocols where we are not in compliance.

Our decision to pursue accreditation is driven by several factors:

It will cause the Department to adopt recognized best practices for law enforcement.

Develop and orient our officers to the best policies for police

Provide a method of succession planning which will give a script for future chiefs and officers to follow.

The annual fee is cost-free as AWC provides a grant for the fees.

The State currently offers a \$50,000 grant to newly certified agencies.

Ruston's police will be among a handful of small agencies in the state and nation to be certified with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). It is the gold standard of accreditation in the police industry.

<https://www.clearpointstrategy.com/blog/calea-accreditation#:~:text=CALEA%20accreditation%20is%20the%20gold,and%20the%20people%20they%20serve.>

How do you know if a public safety agency is performing at the highest level? Or if a police department is working to strengthen the services it offers to the community? For organizations within the public safety industry, earning accreditations is one of the best ways to ensure (and demonstrate) continuous improvement.

CALEA accreditation is the gold standard for public safety agencies, and becoming certified can have big benefits for both agencies and the people they serve. While the certification process is far from being a piece of cake, it is more than worth the effort. In this article, we'll break down the basic steps involved in accreditation and why it's so important.

What is CALEA?

CALEA is an acronym for the Commission on Accreditation For Law Enforcement Agencies. Established in 1979, this is an international certification for public safety agencies. It requires organizations such as police departments to benchmark and report on 483 standards to achieve accreditation. There are four different types of CALEA accreditation programs:

- **Law Enforcement:** The program focuses on standards for a law enforcement agency's life, health, and safety procedures. It addresses high-risk issues in contemporary environments, basic community service expectations, and critical event management. This is the most popular CALEA certification and the focus of this article.
- **Communications:** Communications departments of public safety agencies pursue this accreditation, which involves a systematic review and internal assessment of their operations and procedures.
- **Training Academy:** Geared for organizations that train public safety officials, this program focuses on standards for both basic and advanced curriculums. These standards include instructional techniques, facilities management, student safety, records, and more.

- **Campus Security:** Focusing on the safety of students, this program is designed for campus security organizations. The standards encompass issues such as facility risks, regulatory reporting, preventive patrol, etc.

Why pursue CALEA accreditation?

There are [plenty of reasons](#) public safety agencies put in the time and effort to earn CALEA accreditation. Here are the top five benefits:

- **Lower Liability Insurance Costs:** Insurance companies recognize that an organization has lowered its risk profile by meeting industry standards, which often translates into reimbursements for extra resources spent on accreditation and related trainings.
- **Fewer Civil Lawsuits:** By putting strong, industry-best policies and procedures in place, accredited institutions are less exposed to liability and can better defend themselves against civil suits.
- **Improved Community Relationships:** Tracking and reporting on the 400+ CALEA standards helps organizations gain public support. Accreditation shows that a public safety agency is holding itself accountable to perform at higher levels, which builds trust with citizens.

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[CLICK TO TWEET](#) 

- **Better Resource Management:** Organizations invariably uncover gaps in resources and operations when reporting on all of CALEA's standards. After being identified, those gaps can be addressed and corrected to improve overall management, allowing for early intervention of potential problems.
- **Improved Internal Morale:** Protecting public safety can often be a thankless job. Plus, getting accredited is no easy task—the process can take up to 26 months. Earning CALEA honors is a way to celebrate the hard work of public safety employees, both during the accreditation process and in their daily jobs.

Ruston Fire Department Monthly Review for November 2024

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Presented by Chief Bruce Allen

Total Incidents (YTD) 161, November 10 (3 Fire/Service, 7 Medical Aid)

Volunteer Hours: October **1,749** Hours, **YTD 20,956** Hours

Membership Roster (21 out of 25): (18 Members, 3 Officers)

State of the Business

- With the help of our community the **Tree Lighting** was a huge success!! We at the Fire Department would like to thank all of you who helped make this possible. From Mark and Mark who put the lights up, Santa, Mrs. Claus and the Elves, all our wonderful musicians and carolers that stepped up, the group of volunteers that helped us to put this together, and finally our guest of honor that turned on the tree, Miss Jerkovich.
- We have three members graduating from the Browns Point Academy with their Firefighter I Certification, CJ Guzek, Alla Juhasz, and Miles Kelly. Starting in January we have two members going to the Buckley Academy.
- Lastly I would like to thank the Mayor and Council for our 2025 Budget.