

**CITY OF RUSTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, February 7, 2017**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At 7:00PM Mayor Hopkins called the Regular Council Meeting to order. Councilmembers present were: Jim Hedrick, Jane Hunt, Lyle Hardin, Deb Kristovich and Lynn Syler. Following the flag salute, Mayor Hopkins called for approval of the agenda. Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the Agenda of February 7, 2017, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

MINUTES

Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the minutes for the Regular Council meeting minutes of January 17, 2017, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

STAFF REPORT –

Ruston City Engineer – Jerry Morrisette – Was excused.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Nothing at this time.

BUSINESS-

ORD 1492 – Sign Code Matrix Update (1st reading). City Planner White provided an overview. The City last updated its sign code in 2012. Since that time, new development in the City has prompted the City to reconsider wall mounted sign and projection sign limitations. The Planning Commission undertook review of this issue, including holding a public hearing on the zoning text amendment on January 18, 2017 to receive community input on the proposal. During the review, the Planning Commission suggested revisions to the proposed amendment, and found that the proposed amendment was consistent with the goals and policies of the City of Ruston Comprehensive Plan.

The sign code update changes the limitations for wall mounted and project signs as follows:

Projecting signs. The regulations for projecting signs have been changed to increase the allowable area from 12 square feet to 48 square feet, with a new 96 square feet maximum (up from a 24-sf maximum). In addition, projecting signs are now limited to having an overall height that does not exceed 50 percent of the height of the building façade to which it is attached.

Wall-mounted signs. The regulations for wall-mounted signs have been changed to add new regulations imposing a maximum height which limits such signs from exceeding fascia, eaves, or cornice height of the building to which it is attached, however, pan-channel signs are allowed to exceed the fascia height by up to one foot.

Note: A "pan-channel sign" is defined under the RMC to be “a sign or sign graphic that is constructed of a three-sided metal channel, usually having a light source contained within the channel. The open side may face inward, resulting in silhouette or halo-style lighting, or it may face outward to allow full illumination. The open side of the channel may be enclosed with a translucent material.”

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ORD 1493 – Contract Approval Authority (1st reading). RCW 35A.11.010 provides the City of Ruston the authority by its legislative body to enter into contracts. As of today, there is no exception to allow the Mayor or any department head to enter into small, routine contracts. All contracts, no matter the value or nature, go to the City Council. This includes routine renewals of contracts that have previously been approved by the Council and which are contained in the City’s adopted budget. There is a cost of bringing every contract to the Council in terms of legal preparation of legislation, staff time to upload documents to the Council packet and Council time to review and approve these agreements. Many City Councils have delegated contracting authority to the Mayor, City Manager, and/or Department Heads with criteria for when contracts do not need to come to Council. Ordinance 1493 allows the Mayor, with legal review, to enter into certain contracts without Council pre-approval. Any contracts that exceed these limits are Interlocal Agreements, or which require funds which are not already budgeted would need to be brought to Council for pre-approval. The Mayor would also have the authority to enter into contracts to address an emergency; however, the Council would need to be notified at the next Council meeting and, if a contract is awarded without bidding due to the emergency, and Council would be the body that would need to declare an emergency.

RES 647 – Public Safety Testing Agreement Extension. The City of Ruston has the need for pre-employment services when it recruits and hires new law enforcement officers. Public Safety Testing, Inc. (“PST”) provides pre-employment testing services to police, fire, and other public safety agencies consistent with the State Civil Service Statutes. These services include advertising and recruiting assistance, application processing, and administration of pre-employment written examinations and physical ability tests. In addition, PST will report the scores of applicants, with all information necessary for the City to place passing applicants upon its eligibility list, and ranks the candidates relative to other candidates. If needed PST will appear in civil service proceedings for the City to provide information regarding the validity of the testing process. The City has contracted with PST for many years. The most recent one-year contract was approved on April 19, 2016 under Resolution No. 628. This is an extension of that agreement. The City can choose for the extension to be through 2017, 2018 or 2019. No other terms have changes. The agreement may be terminated prior to the expiration date with 60-days written notice. Authorizing this contract will allow the City to continue to utilize Public Safety Training, Inc. for pre-employment screening for police hires. Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Resolution 647, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL – Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Claims and Payroll, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

MAYOR’S TIME – Mayor Hopkins provided an update on Point Ruston and the Ruston Tunnel. In the past year or more the City has tried to establish an IAA with the Department of Ecology. The City ran into issues with the Department of Ecology and Point Ruston so an agreement could not be reached. The City has taken the position that we will enlist the Contractor Administrator for the filling of the tunnel. The City Attorney sent the IAA to the Department of Ecology and we anticipate the agreement will be done expediently. The agreement will pass \$400,000 from Department of Ecology to the City of Ruston to fill the Ruston Tunnel.

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In securing the IAA, the City will recoup legal and other expenses incurred to date in the amount of \$65,000. The remaining funds will be used to fill the Ruston Tunnel. The City anticipates the cost to fill the Ruston Tunnel will be under \$200,000. The plan is use the material from Metro Parks to fill the tunnel. The mountain at the end of Winnifred will be going into the tunnel. More to come. Time is of the essence because the filling of the tunnel is part of a consent decree, SEPA and is required prior to Point Ruston's next project east of the Copper Line. The tunnel must be completed before Point Ruston can receive occupancy from the City of Tacoma. Mayor Hopkins gave an update on the Complete Streets Grant which was awarded to the City of Ruston and thanked the City Planner for all his effort in securing this grant. The City is trying to re-establish the Pearl Street project. City of Engineer has contacted the Department of Ecology for an update on funding. Mayor Hopkins reached out to the owner of Coles and their opening is extremely close. Coles is waiting for the Health Department to sign off. The City heard from Fish Tail Brewery who would like to open its business in Ruston on a small scale this summer with August as their target date. Mayor Hopkins is working with City of Tacoma in several areas one being a sewer agreement and will keep Council informed.

COUNCIL TIME –

Councilmember Hedrick – The Interim Chief is doing a great job by stepping in and reaching out to the community. Councilmember Hedrick drove by Coles on Super Bowl Sunday and saw people there and noticed all the diagonal parking was full. Councilmember Hedrick reflected back to when Councilmember Huson made note that when the diagonal parking is consistently full it would be a great measure that Commerce had come to Ruston, Washington.

Councilmember Hunt – Stressed the importance of the Pearl Street Project and increasing business in the City of Ruston.

Councilmember Hardin – Thanked the Mayor and Council for all the work on getting the \$400,000 to pass through to Ruston. Councilmember Harding wanted to recognized Interim Chief Estes on jumping in with all the great work he's doing and staffing up the Police Department. Thanked the City Planner on the work in securing the Completed Streets Grant. Councilmember Hardin will be attending the Pierce County Regional meeting on March 6, 2017 and collect the award to the City of Ruston. Was excited for the Coles opening. It will have the same atmosphere as the Parkway Tavern in Tacoma and really glad to have it in the City of Ruston.

Councilmember Kristovich – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Syler – Nothing at this time.

MEETING AJOURNED -

At 7:37PM Councilmember Hedrick moved to adjourn, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

Mayor Bruce Hopkins

ATTEST:

Judy Grams