

**CITY OF RUSTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, February 21, 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 21, 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 February 7, 2017, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

STAFF REPORT –

Ruston Police – Interim Chief Estes – See attached.

Ruston Fire – Chief Torbet - See attached.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Nothing at this time.

BUSINESS-

Ruston-Point Defiance Business District – Joseph Atkinson, President of the Ruston Point Defiance Business District provided an overview, first thanking Mayor and the Council for their public service. Ruston Point Defiance Business District has been working on many things. The Business District met with Pierce Transit on the Downtown to Defiance Trolley program which is planned to come through Ruston and hoped the City of Ruston would work with Pierce Transit to get the best stops for the Trolley. Mr. Atkinson will be preparing a draft narrative on the City of Ruston and will contact Karen Pickett, who has a lot of Ruston history. Mr. Atkinson invited anyone interested in participating in the preparation of the draft to contact him. President Atkinson continues to work with City of Tacoma to put lights up on the west side of Pearl Street so that the Business District can put up poles and banners. The Business District has been working with Mitchell's Catering to hold the 2017 Farmers Market at Mitchell's business location. The Farmers Market Committee would like to work with City of Ruston on a fee structure soon. The Business District will present various alternatives to Council.

ORD 1492 – Sign Code Matrix Update (2nd 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.”

Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Ordinance 1492, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

ORD 1493 – Contract Approval Authority (2nd 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. Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Ordinance 1493, 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 – The City received five applications for the Ruston Police Chief position of which four will be extended interviews. These interviews will take place the week of March 6, 2017. The plan is to appoint the Ruston Police Chief by the end of March 2017.

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The timing for the filling of the Ruston Tunnel is getting close. Mayor Hopkins has seen the Department of Ecology agreement and will bring it before Council at the next council meeting. The City received Pierce County Transit's request for a Downtown to Defiance Trolley stop in the City of Ruston. The City will complete an assessment on the recommended stop at 51st Street, as it poses traffic and parking impacts to businesses at the proposed location. A resolution related to surplus real estate will go before Council in a Public Hearing on March 7, 2017. The City was notified that the funding for the Pearl Street Project was defunded by the State of Washington. The State of Washington will assess the reinstatement of these funds so the City can move forward with this project. A concept has floated around to hold a Concert in the Park event in 2017. The City plans to explore the feasibility of holding this event the third weekend in August 2017. The City's landscape company is doing improvements at the Ruston Park and we have a potential band interested in playing, more to come on this community event. Councilmember Hardin wanted to know about the feasibility in using the funds from the State to fill the Ruston Tunnel on other projects in the City and what would the term limits be. Mayor Hopkins responded that the term limits remain a question mark. The City would look to directing some of these funds to the Winnifred Street Project.

COUNCIL TIME –

Councilmember Hedrick – Recommended the City use funding for filling the Ruston Tunnel before June 2017.

Councilmember Hunt – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Hardin – Attended the Pierce County Regional meeting on March 6, 2017. On behalf of the City of Ruston, Councilmember Hardin accepted the 2016 Healthy Communities Platinum Award and presented this award to Kevin Moser, City Project Manager and Rob White, City Planner for their great work in this area. The Pierce County Regional Council held roll call by Cities and Councilmember Hardin was asked “how attractive is the City of Ruston”? Councilmember Hardin responded by saying “the City of Ruston was so attractive that City of Tacoma tried to annex Ruston”.

Councilmember Kristovich – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Syler – Nothing at this time.

MEETING AJOURNED -

At 7:32PM Councilmember Hedrick moved to adjourn, with a second from Councilmember Hunt, passed 5-0.

Mayor Bruce Hopkins

ATTEST:

Judy Grams