

**CITY OF RUSTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At 7:00PM Mayor Hopkins called the regular Council Meeting to order. Councilmembers present were Councilmember Hedrick, Councilmember Kristovich, Councilmember Syler, Councilmember Huson and Councilmember Jensen. Following the flag salute, Councilmember Hedrick moved to amend the Agenda to add Resolution 765 – Pierce County Sales Tax Levy, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich the Agenda, as amended, passed 5-0.

MINUTES - Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the minutes for the Regular Council meeting of March 7, 2023, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

STAFF REPORT –

Ruston Police Chief Bautista – See attached.

Ruston Fire Chief Allen – See attached.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Jan Griffiths – Appreciated Mayor Hopkins and Councilmembers for building a great Police and Fire Department.

BUSINESS –

RES 765 – Pierce County Sales Tax Levy – Increasing the availability of Ruston housing and mental and behavioral health services are important priorities for the Ruston City Council. Providing more affordable housing units and improved access to behavioral health services are critical to the overall health and safety of Ruston residents. In 2020, the Washington State Legislature passed House Bill 1590, which amended State law (RCW 82.14.530) to allow a sales and use tax increase of up to 0.1 percent imposed at either the city or county level. There are policy and timing implications relating to either the City of Ruston or Pierce County collecting and spending potential funds. Pierce County Council is expected to vote this week to enact the sales tax increase; this action would impose the tax throughout the county, including upon sales in the City of Ruston, and the collection and expenditure of funds would be governed by Pierce County. If the City takes action to impose the tax prior to Pierce County imposing the full tax, the City would collect and invest the full measure of the tax within Ruston. A 0.1 percent sales tax is projected to generate approximately \$30,563.00 per year which could be used by Ruston for affordable housing and related services in the City of Ruston. Councilmember Jensen noted that Pierce County was better equipped to manage the tax for affordable housing and recommended that the increase in Sales and Use tax and the collection and expenditure of funds be governed by Pierce County. Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Resolution 765, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 4-1.

PAYROLL – Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Payroll for March 20, 2023, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

MAYOR’S TIME – Mayor Hopkins reported that the contractor on the Baltimore Street project was in the paving portion of the project and should be completed by Thursday. Mayor Hopkins was still waiting to hear who would be paying for this work. Mayor Hopkins noted the City was still in mediation with the developer EIS discussions have begun with traffic impacts in the forefront.

Councilmember Hedrick – Was happy to see the Baltimore corridor moving along and the hedge grove at Rust Park removed.

Councilmember Kristovich – Invited everyone to join in the annual Ruston Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8, 2023 at 10AM and encouraged anyone interested to volunteer or donate.

Councilmember Syler – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Huson – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Jensen – The City of Ruston, working with the Red Cross, will host a blood drive at the Totem Yacht Club on July 6, 2023. More to come. Kudos to Ginger Kryger who, along with volunteers, cleaned up the Pocket Park at Park Avenue. The power of volunteers is amazing and wanted to thank Ms. Kryger for all her efforts.

MEETING AJOURNED – At 7:38PM Councilmember Hedrick moved to adjourn, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

ATTEST:

Mayor Bruce Hopkins

Judy Grams



**Chief's Report
Ruston Police Department
Tuesday, March 20, 2023**

Chief of Police:

In the early morning hours of March 12th, shots were fired in the parking lot of the Ruston Market. Officers recovered approximately 50 shell casings in two separate areas, and the Market's surveillance video footage reveals that unknown persons appeared to be shooting at one another. The Market's building was struck by several projectiles and there are no known injuries.

All physical evidence will be submitted to the State Patrol Crime Lab for examination, but we are not confident any leads will be generated. Additionally, the crime analyst at South Sound 911 is monitoring websites, social media, and blogs for possible clues.

Tacoma is now experiencing the seasonal increase in racer intersection "take-overs" and are requesting allied agency participation in the same anti-racer task force of years past. Ruston Police will again be members of the task force.

The Department has met with the ownership of the Ruston Market to address the continuing problems in the garage and roof parking lot. They agree that physical barriers for the facility would prevent after-hours crimes, but they are currently involved in a legal action with the previous owners over disputed user rights. Ruston officers are now enforcing after-hours trespassing with zero tolerance.

A house fire occurred last weekend at the 5600 block of N. 49th. We defer to the Fire Chief for more information, but our officers are actively watchful for any information that might indicate a crime was committed.

Prepared by Nestor Bautista

Ruston Fire Department Monthly Review for February 2023

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Presented by Chief Bruce Allen

Total Incidents (YTD) 10, February 10 (2 Fire/Service, 8 Medical Aid)

Volunteer Hours: February 1065 Hours, YTD 2039 Hours

Membership Roster (22 out of 25): (18 Members, 4 Officers)

State of the Business

- Saturday night we did have a house fire on 49th and we were able to stop the fire before it destroyed the home. TFD was called for mutual aid.
- We've done two patient transports.
- We will need to replace our stretcher soon now that we are transporting.
- All fire tools are fully operational.