

**CITY OF RUSTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At 7:02PM 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 approve the Agenda, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

MINUTES - Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the minutes for the Regular Council meeting of April 18, 2023, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0. The Regular Council meeting of May 2, 2023 was canceled.

STAFF REPORT –

Ruston Police Chief Bautista – See attached.

Ruston Fire Chief Allen – See attached.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Talia Thepvongsa – Attended the Council Retreat today and wanted to thank the Council for getting together to discuss many important topics Ms. Thepvongsa addressed Councilmember Huson’s comments regarding the Ruston School and noted the building’s historical significance which made it special to Ruston. Ms. Thepvongsa planned to attend future commission meetings in support of preserving the school building and getting more involved in community events. Ms. Thepvongsa noted that she and her family moved from Seattle, where things were torn down, to Ruston for its beauty and history.

Charles McKenna – Made comment on behalf of his wife who was interested in setting up a volunteer group to do cleanups throughout the City. Mr. McKenna noted the budget would be \$300.00 for purchase of garbage bags, grabbers, reflective vests and would focus on designated areas within the City.

BUSINESS –

ORD 1568 – New Chapter 18.06 RMC – Grant Program for Undergrounding Power (1st Reading) – City Attorney Robertson presented an overview of Ordinance 1568. The City of Ruston has long been engaged in a long-term effort to underground its utilities. As the electrical utility provider, Ruston has been working to move its distribution lines underground in order to increase electrical reliability to the residents and businesses in Ruston and to make the streets safer and more aesthetic by removing power poles in City right of way.

By moving City electrical lines underground, the communications and cable providers in Ruston (Comcast and Century Link) are also triggered to move their lines underground which then allows Ruston to remove the utility poles. This creates significant benefit to Ruston Power and to the residents and visitors to the City of Ruston. In addition, whenever new structures are built or major renovations occur, those property owners are required to install conduit for placement of future electrical utility lines when the abutting corridor is undergrounded by the City. The City estimates that approximately fifty percent (50%) of all properties in Ruston currently have either underground power or have conduit ready for placing lines underground when the aerial lines adjacent are removed. Ruston Power has funded various conversion projects over the years. When the City undergrounds its power, customers whose residences are served by the power lines being moved underground are required, in accordance with RCW 35.96.050, to underground their lines at their own expense from the meter to their residence. If a homeowner fails to timely move their lines underground, then that home is disconnected from electrical service at the end of the notice period. Although only required to provide 90 days' notice, the City has typically provided advance outreach followed by one-year advance notice to allow residents to plan for and complete the work. To date, every resident who has received the notice has met this deadline. The cost to perform this undergrounding is typically several thousand dollars (\$5,000-\$10,000 but maybe more depending on lot configuration). Even with significant advanced notice, there may be residents who do not have the means to underground their lines, in which case these residents would face being cut off from having electric power to their homes. In accordance with state law, the City is permitted to provide reduced rates and create programs by ordinance to assist low-income customers with the costs of utilities. There are some Ruston homeowners who have household incomes that are at or below 80 percent of the Pierce County Area Median Income (AMI). These homeowners may have difficulty in paying for the undergrounding of electricity to their homes when required to do so. This Ordinance creates a grant program to assist homeowners with household incomes at or below 80 percent AMI with the undergrounding expense. This Ordinance also sets forth the standards for eligibility, application requirements, and procedures for disbursement of grant proceeds. The grant proceeds are capped at either the cost of the project to place lines underground or at \$7,500, whichever is less. However, Council may set the maximum grant at whatever level it deems appropriate. Further, the grant program may be suspended if it is not funded by the City Council in the future. The maximum grant award is proposed at \$7,500 and would not be disbursed until after the work is completed. It is anticipated that there is unlikely to be more than three to five households eligible each year who would obtain grant funding under this program. These grant amounts can be funded out of existing funds in the electric utility accounts. Councilmember Hedrick noted undergrounding had been a long-term goal for the City and has made good progress. For some residents the initiative could be of great expense and was pleased the City could find a way to assist with a grant. Councilmember Hedrick would be in support of Ordinance 1568 as currently written.

Councilmember Syler recognized the need to move electric underground, which has been a long-term goal for the City. During the Council Retreat, Councilmembers discussed long and short-term goals, noting the City was working with a very strict budget. Councilmember Syler was in support of waiving fees, however, was not in support of grant funding. Councilmember Syler compared the City of Ruston to neighboring cities. City of Tacoma residents were required to pay for everything related to electric undergrounding. Councilmember Syler wanted to remind City residents that their responsibility was to underground on their private property, from the line to their home. Councilmember Syler wanted the dollars to support other initiatives which would benefit the majority of City residents. Councilmember Jensen asked City Attorney Robertson if Ordinance 1568 was based on TPU and if it was specific to low-income families? City Attorney Robertson noted the qualifications were found on page 3 of Ordinance 1568. The numbers were tied to TPU and used a cost-of-living table, which is based on household size and area specific to Pierce County. Councilmember Jensen was in support of Ordinance 1568 as currently written.

RES 767 – Doolittle and TIB Contracts for Crack Seal - Project Description. Ruston Streets have approximately 47,300 feet of pavement cracks which are wide enough to be sealed. Sealing pavement cracks reduces the amount of rainwater which infiltrates below the street surface. Water infiltration reduces pavement life in several ways.

Funding and Implementation Schedule. Community Development Director Rob White arranged for TIB funding of 95% of the cost of crack sealing, with the Ruston matching funds being 5% or \$ 1,985. The TIB Board must formally approve the project first (which is expected to take place on May 19th), and then there will be a funding agreement in place prior to award of the Contract to Doolittle Construction, the low bidder. In order to expedite the process, this matter is being brought forward for the Council to approve the contract award and to give Mayor Hopkins authority to sign it *after the TIB grant is awarded*. In addition, since the TIB grant will require an agreement with the State, providing authorization for the Mayor to sign the TIB grant agreement is also requested.

Public Bidding Process. In accordance with State law, small public works may be awarded using the Small Works Roster (MRSC) process. That is the process used for this contract. Bids were solicited and were opened on April 28, 2023. Doolittle Construction was the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. See tabulation below:

	Contractor Name	Bid for All work
1	Doolittle Construction LLC	\$39,709.00
2	Puget Paving & Construction, Inc	\$54,259.00
3	Central Paving, LLC	\$68,234.00
4	C.R. Contracting LLC	Not responsive
5	Transblue	\$88,625.00
6	Rainier Asphalt & Sealing	Not responsive

The City Engineer's Office recommended awarding the Project Contract to the lowest responsible bidder, which was Doolittle Construction LLC. If the Council authorized this Contract award at the May 16, 2023 Council Meeting, the City Engineer will send a notice of award to Doolittle and finalize the contract using the City's forms only after the TIB award is confirmed. In addition, once the TIB award is confirmed, the City would need to sign the grant agreement to receive the funds. The contract is for \$39,709.00 which will be primarily funded through the TIB grant in the amount of \$37,724.00 (covering 95% of the project). The City's expected match is \$1,985.00 (5%) which is available in the approved budget. Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Resolution 767, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

CLAIMS & PAYROLL – Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Claims for May 2, 2023, Payroll for April 20, 2023, and Payroll for May 5, 2023, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

MAYOR'S TIME – Mayor Hopkins thanked the Council for their time, hard work, and great discussions on the City's long- and short-term goals, and also thanked the public who attended the Council Retreat today. Mayor Hopkins noted that the City continues to work with Point Ruston on the EIS, which is becoming more complicated with all the lawsuits Point Ruston was undergoing. The City was hoping for resolution sometime before year end.

Councilmember Hedrick – Thanked Ray and the landscape contractor for getting rid of the old vine in the utility yard. It looks 100% better. There was a new bill in place which is tied to the possession of counter fit drugs and illegal narcotics. This was a statewide policy and is in place for a very serious issue. Councilmember Hedrick wanted to invite everyone to attend and participate in the 4th of July bicycle parade, which takes place at noon on July 4th, at 51st and Winnifred Street.

Councilmember Kristovich – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Syler – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Huson – Nothing at this time.


Councilmember Jensen – Nothing at this time.

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



Mayor Bruce Hopkins

ATTEST:



Judy Grams



**Chief's Report
Ruston Police Department
Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

In the previous 28 days, the Department recorded 300 calls for service, 138 of which were traffic stops. The previous 28 day breakdown compared to the same period in 2022 shown below:

<u>Calls for Service</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>PERCENT OF CHANGE</u>
	300	153	+96%
(Minus Traffic Stops)	162	109	+49%
<u>Traffic Stops</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>PERCENT OF CHANGE</u>
	138	44	+214%

The funding of two additional officers in 2021 increased the FTE count by 40%; the pro-active enforcement increase of 214% indicates a very good return on the City's investment in the Department.

We are receiving positive feedback from residents regarding the level of police coverage, particularly on Friday nights. Approximately every other Friday night, 4 officers will be on duty between 3pm and 1:40am.

Ruston officers have been working traffic safety emphasis patrol in Ruston approximately 2-3 times per month. This is an overtime job funded by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission and will continue until Pierce County's allocation has been spent.

Presented by Nestor Bautista

A lil drama

Chris 🇺🇸🔥

Ruston Police Department SMH. I ain't even do nothing



Write a comment...



Home



Friends



Watch



Marketplace



Notifications



Menu

Ruston Fire Department Monthly Review for April 2023

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Presented by Chief Bruce Allen

Total Incidents (YTD) 45, April 13 (4 Fire/Service, 9 Medical Aid)

Volunteer Hours: April 1312 Hours, YTD 4585 Hours

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

State of the Business

- We are starting the updating of the classroom at the Fire Station.
- The residence is now finished and functional.
- We will need to replace our stretcher soon now that we are transporting.
- All fire tools are fully operational.