

**CITY OF WEST RICHLAND  
REMOTE CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2021**

1. **Call to Order** – Mayor Gerry called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** –

Present:

Mayor Brent Gerry	Police Chief Ben Majetich
Mayor Pro Tem Fred Brink	Finance Director Erin Gwinn
Councilmember Richard Bloom	Public Works Director Roscoe Slade
Councilmember Gail Brown	Comm. Dev. Director Eric Mendenhall
Councilmember Rich Buel	Associate Planner Elisha Ransom
Councilmember David Fetto	City Clerk Stephanie Haug
Councilmember Kate Moran	City Attorney Bronson Brown
Councilmember John Smart	

3. **Pledge of Allegiance** –  
Upon the request of Mayor Gerry, Councilmember Bloom led the council, staff, and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. **Approval of Agenda** –  
*Mayor Pro Tem Brink moved to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Councilmember Buel. Council unanimously approved the agenda.*
5. **Presentation-**
  - a. **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Financial Report – Erin Gwinn, Finance Director**  
Finance Director Gwinn presented the second quarter financial report for 2021, including an economic update, and information about the status of each of the City's funds.
6. **Consent Agenda** – Mayor Gerry read the consent agenda titles for consideration.
  - a. Approve Payment of Bills
  - b. Approve Minutes - Regular July 20, 2021 & Special Meeting July 20, 2021
  - c. Motion to authorize the Mayor to execute professional services contract with Northwest Groundwater Services LLC for Well #3.
  - d. RES. 30-21 - Setting the public hearing for a public utility easement vacation (VACA-003)  
**RESOLUTION NO. 30-21** - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WEST RICHLAND, WASHINGTON, SETTING THE PUBLIC HEARING DATE TO CONSIDER A UTILITY EASEMENT VACATION ON WILLAMETTE HEIGHTS SECTION 6, LOT 70, PARCEL NUMBERS 1-0698-202-0070-000.
  - e. RES. 31-21 - Authorizing the Mayor to sign a security and improvement agreement for PLAT-012  
**RESOLUTION NO. 31-21** - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WEST RICHLAND, WASHINGTON, AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A SECURITY AND IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT.  
*Upon motion by Councilmember Bloom and seconded by Councilmember Moran, Council unanimously approved the consent agenda.*
7. **Citizen Public Comments-**  
Kimberly Nelson, 2318 S. Highlands, asked the City Council to consider changing the name of South

Highlands Park. The park, although named South Highlands Park, is not located on the road named South Highlands, and is often confused with the two parks that are located on that street.

**8. Ordinances, Resolutions, Motions And Public Hearings-**

**a. Public hearing - Vacation of a public utility easement (VACA-002)**

Associate Planner Elisha Ransom presented a staff report for the vacation of a utility easement on Willamette Heights Section 6, Lot 78. The easement sought to be vacated is a portion of the 30' utility easement on the east, west, and south boundaries of the property. It appears that the vacation of the easement would not unduly jeopardize the health, safety, welfare, or public good. Additionally, the retention of the easement no longer serves any useful public purpose.

Mayor Brent Gerry opened the public hearing at 6:41 p.m.

There were no comments.

Mayor Brent Gerry closed the hearing at 6:42 p.m.

**b. RES. 32-21- Vacation of a public utility easement (VACA-002)**

**RESOLUTION NO. 32-21** - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WEST RICHLAND, WASHINGTON, VACATING A PORTION OF THE 30 FOOT WIDE PUBLIC UTILITY EASEMENT LOCATED ON WILLAMETTE HEIGHTS SECTION 6, LOT 78, PARCEL NUMBER 1-0698-202-0078-000.

*Councilmember Moran moved to approve Resolution 32-21. It was seconded by Councilmember Smart. Councilmember Bloom abstained from the item due to a conflict of interest (he is the applicant.) Council voted to approve Resolution 32-21.*

**c. Public hearing - Naming a new park "The Heights Park"**

Associate Planner Elisha Ransom presented a staff report for Resolution 33-21, officially naming the park to be built as part of the Heights at Red Mountain Ranch subdivision The Heights Park. PBS has submitted plans for the park to be constructed as part of the Heights at Red Mountain Ranch as agreed in the Parks and Recreation Impact Mitigation Agreement signed on August 20, 2020. As part of the plans, they have submitted a name for consideration-The Heights Park. The Parks and Recreation Board voted to recommend the proposed name to the City Council for approval on June 28, 2021.

Mayor Brent Gerry opened the public hearing at 6:47 p.m.

There were no comments.

Mayor Brent Gerry closed the hearing at 6:47 p.m.

**d. RES. 33-21- Naming a new park "The Heights Park"**

**RESOLUTION NO. 33-21** - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WEST RICHLAND, WASHINGTON, FOR THE NAMING OF A NEW CITY PARK LOCATED IN THE HEIGHTS AT RED MOUNTAIN RANCH SUBDIVISION.

*Councilmember Moran moved to approve Resolution 33-21. It was seconded by Councilmember Buel. Council voted to approve Resolution 33-21.*

**9. Unfinished Business – There was no Unfinished Business.**

**10. New Business - There was no New Business.**

**11. Citizen Public Comments** - There were no Citizen Comments.

**12. Announcements, Reports & Comments**

**a. Staff Reports**

Community Development Director Mendenhall followed up on the concern presented during the Citizen Comments portion of the meeting. He is hoping to address the issue as part of the parks plan update, which would allow for more public input on the topic.

Public Works Director Slade reminded Council that there is a cost associated with changing the park names, including updating the park signs, many of which were Eagle Scout projects. Council concurred that this topic should be reviewed with the parks plan update.

Community Development Director Mendenhall reported that West Richland had the third highest volume in Tri-Cities for building permits, competing with commercial development in Richland and Pasco. In 2016, during the same year to date timeframe (January thru July), the City of West Richland processed 56 permits, in 2017- 80, in 2018-39, in 2019-60, in 2020-58, and in 2021-187. He gave credit to the permit team, and other departments for their hard work. He also reported on the current market conditions and housing forecasts.

Police Chief Majetich reported that National Night Out was a great success, even with the heat and smoke, and thanked everyone that turned out for the event. The new police facility is on-time and on budget, and he is expecting an updated schedule soon. The town hall scheduled for August 31<sup>st</sup> at 6pm is still planned, however it might change due to the current COVID situation.

Public Works Director Slade gave an update to the public works projects tour that the City provided to local representatives on August 12<sup>th</sup>. The City was able to showcase several of its local projects, including the SR 224 project, the IPlant, and the police facility. He also was happy to announce that the Well #2 project was awarded funding by the Public Works Trust Fund. A total of \$3.2 million dollars was secured as a low interest loan (.7%) over 20 years. As soon as the contract is sent to the City, it will come before Council for approval.

City Clerk Haug informed Council that the new website is scheduled to launch August 31<sup>st</sup>, so they should expect to see some changes as to how they access their meeting information.

**b. Council Reports**

Councilmember Bloom provided an update on the Ben Franklin Transit sales tax issue. The BFT board voted unanimously not to take the County's suggestion to reduce funding. Presentations were made by BFT to the Kennewick and Prosser City Councils, and the BFT director is available to present to the West Richland Council on what the agency's plan moving forward is. (BFT is to contact Clerk Haug to schedule presentation for future meeting.) Another item to report is that they have acquired the property next to the Tulip lane property and it will become a new transit center, which will improve connectivity for West Richland to the rest of the transit system. He also provided information on the "Connect" program, which will pick you up at your house and take you to a bus.

Councilmember Moran stated that National Night Out was great and it was great to see everyone out. She also reminded everyone to be careful about clicking on phishing emails. She inquired about a virtual option to attend the August 31<sup>st</sup> Open House (Mayor Gerry explained that it is not feasible to do both.) She mentioned it was National Black Cat Day, reported it is difficult for some to see what is happening in Afghanistan right now and provided information on the veteran's crisis line. She attended the BFCOG Strategic Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> and they followed up on the economic development plan and the SWAT analysis. She anticipates the City's annual BFCOG contribution will be increasing in the future to account for changes at the agency, and also provided Council with information about a program called "Hello Lamppost."

Councilmember Brown reported that Good Roads was reviewing and updating their bylaws. She also attended National Night Out and thought it was a great event, and had the opportunity to tour the new PD facility, which she thinks is really pretty and looking nice.

Councilmember Fetto reported that he came down with COVID before National Night Out even though he is vaccinated. He has been experiencing several severe symptoms and encouraged everyone to mask up to reduce their risk of experiencing the same.

Councilmember Smart thanked the Police Department for the National Night Out event. He thought it was great that so many of the younger participants were interested in law enforcement, including the presentation on the bullet proof vests. He also mentioned that the local 598 gold tournament will be happening on September 18<sup>th</sup> at Canyon Lakes. This event benefits the Bikes for Tikes program, which provides bikes for youth in our area around the holidays. He also encouraged first responders to participate.

Mayor Gerry reported that he was aware of the BFCOG membership fee situation that Councilwoman Moran had mentioned. He also reported on the current COVID conditions in our community. The case counts are the highest they have been per thousand since the beginning of the pandemic. Hospitals are pleading for our community to look at large events to help reduce the spread and the impact on the local hospitals. He predicts the Governor will make an announcement soon addressing the current COVID situation. He asked everyone to be careful, and to do what is right.

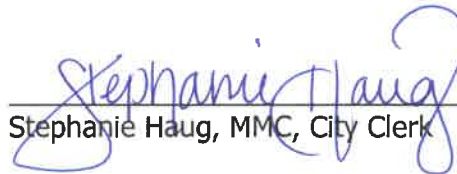
**13. Executive Session** – There was no executive session.

**14. Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.



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Brent Gerry, Mayor



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Stephanie Haug, MMC, City Clerk