

TOPPENISH CITY COUNCIL
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2024

Mayor Saavedra called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Attendees: Mayor Elpidia Saavedra, Mayor Pro Tem Loren Belton, and Councilmembers Naila Duval, George Garcia, Josh Garza, Ezequiel Morfin, and Cristian Sanchez
Staff: City Manager Debbie Zabell (CM Zabell), City Attorney Gary Cuillier, Interim City Manager Dan Ford, Budget and Finance Director Adam Vaughn (FD Vaughn), Chief of Police Joseph Mehline, Fire Chief Tim Smith, Public Works Superintendent Shaun Burgess, City Clerk Heidi Riojas (CC Riojas), and Community Television Manager Sean Davido

CC Riojas conducted roll call for each City Councilmember to respond their attendance at the meeting. Mayor Saavedra, Mayor Pro Tem Belton, and Councilmembers Duval, Garcia, Garza, Morfin, and Sanchez responded their attendance during roll call.

APPROVE AGENDA

Councilmember Duval moved, seconded by Councilmember Garza to approve the April 8, 2024, Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dennis Lee, 1121 Queen Avenue, Yakima, spoke to public safety concerns in the community and the crime impacting the Yakima Valley Rail and Steam Museum Association at the railroad depot.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Garza moved, seconded by Councilmember Sanchez to approve Consent Agenda items a through d:

- a. Approve Minutes of the March 25, 2024, Regular Meeting
- b. Approve Minutes of the April 1, 2024, Study Session
- c. Approve Payroll Checks Numbers 36630 through 36641 and Electronic Transfers EFTPR3215 through EFTPR3226 in the total amount of \$228,883.02 dated April 4, 2024
- d. Approve Claims Checks Numbers 98694 through 98755 and Electronic Transfer EFTAP385 through EFTAP388 in the total amount of \$191,470.60 dated April 8, 2024, and void checks NR98476 and NR98604

Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

FD Vaughn continued the discussion with the Council on proposed revenues with Real Estate Excise Taxes, Vehicle License Fees, and Utility Rates.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Saavedra Read Ordinance 2024-02 into the Record: An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Toppenish, Washington, Creating a New Chapter 2.33 of the Toppenish Municipal Code for Establishing a Budget and Finance Committee, Determining Members and Their Terms and Duties, Setting Meeting Schedule and Requiring City Staff Attendance, Providing for Severability, Corrections, and Establishing an Effective Date.

Councilmember Duval moved, seconded by Councilmember Morfin to adopt Ordinance 2024-02. Motion carried unanimously.

Prior to going to the next item on the agenda, the Mayor presented CM Zabell with a plaque to recognize her over 15 years of service serving the Council and the community. Each Councilmember expressed their appreciation to CM Zabell for her leadership over the years and wished her well.

Resolution 2024-19: A Resolution Accepting the City Manager's Resignation and Establishing an Effective Date.

Mayor Pro Tem Belton moved, seconded by Councilmember Duval to approve Resolution 2024-19. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session:

At 8:06 p.m., Mayor Saavedra called for the Council to go into Executive Session to review the performance of a public employee pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g). The approximate time for the Executive Session is 15 minutes with anticipated action. At 8:21 p.m., Mayor Saavedra extended the executive session another 10 minutes. At 8:31 p.m., Mayor Saavedra reconvened the regular session back to order.

Resolution 2024-20: A Resolution Appointing Interim City Manager for the City of Toppenish and Establishing an Effective Date.

Mayor Pro Tem Belton moved, seconded by Councilmember Sanchez to approve Resolution 2024-20. Motion carried unanimously.

Select Committee of Three Councilmembers to Negotiate and Formalize Interim City Manager Contract.

Mayor Saavedra and Councilmembers Sanchez and Garcia agreed to serve on the committee to negotiate and formalize the contract with Interim City Manager Dan Ford.

Swearing in of Interim City Manager.

CC Riojas administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Interim City Manager Dan Ford.

COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS/COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Garcia reported the passing of a family member of a former City employee.

Councilmember Sanchez suggested that the Public Safety Committee meet on April 15, 2024.

Councilmember Garza had nothing to report.

Mayor Pro Tem Belton had nothing to report.

Councilmember Morfin had nothing to report.

Councilmember Duval expressed her appreciation to Mr. Lee for speaking during public comment.

Mayor Saavedra noted that the public is welcome to attend the City Council meetings. She reported that she spoke at the Toppenish Rotary meeting, met with Commissioner Curtis, and spoke with Representative Corry regarding funding needs for the City for the WWTP improvements needed for the facility. In addition, she spoke to the other City funding needs consisting of a new Police Department and street repairs.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

CM reported on her meeting with John Anderson, the regional representative with Governor Inslee's Office, to discuss the City needs to include changes to the model used by Yakima County for equitable distribution of funds for human services consisting of homeless and mental health in the community.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.



HEIDI RIOJAS, CMC, CITY CLERK



ELPIDIA SAAVEDRA, MAYOR