

**CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE
MINUTES
Regular Meeting of the City Council
Monday, May 19, 2025**

1. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Figueroa called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by the City Clerk as follows:

Councilmember Boykin	Present
Councilmember Worthington	Present
Councilmember McCluskey	Present
Councilmember Flemming	Present
Councilmember Grassi	Present
Mayor Pro Tem Wood	Excused
Mayor Figueroa	Present

Staff Present: City Manager Sugg, City Attorney Kaser, Public Works Director Ecklund, Police Chief Burke, Finance Director Blaisdell, and City Clerk Genetia.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Grassi led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: By Councilmember Worthington, seconded by Councilmember McCluskey, to approve the agenda.

The motion carried.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: By Councilmember Worthington, seconded by Councilmember McCluskey, to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- A.** Approve the minutes of the May 5, 2025 Council meeting as submitted.
- B.** Confirm Nisha Smith's appointment to the Economic Development Advisory Commission for a term ending January 31, 2029.
- C.** Authorize the purchase of easements in the amount of \$68,800.00 from Fircrest Golf Club, over a portion of parcel #0220113001 for the 67th Phase I project and authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents.

The motion carried.

7. CITY MANAGER AND COUNCIL COMMENTS/REPORTS

City Manager Sugg announced that the lunch with the City Commissioners will take place on Thursday at 11:30 a.m. in the Council Chambers. The event will include all Commissioners, Council members, and senior staff. The focus of the lunch will be on the Commissioners' work plans and how they align with the Council's goals and will provide an opportunity for a good exchange of ideas and discussions on the progress and future plans.

Councilmember Boykin expressed appreciation for Nisha Smith's appointment to the Economic Development Commission and highlighted the value of commissions in contributing to the City. He also reflected on the Pierce County Memorial Service for law enforcement and mentioned an upcoming opportunity to celebrate small cities through the National League of Cities.

Councilmember McCluskey reported on the Pierce County Regional Council meeting where County Executive Mello provided an overview of Pierce County's strategic plan which outlines goals for the County from 2026 to 2027; highlighted the challenges in navigating federal funding streams; and shared updates on the planning for the 2026 World Cup. She reported attending the UP for Art piano performance event and noted the community's interest in having more events and the potential formation of an arts commission. Councilmember McCluskey discussed the Day Island sewer project, including public involvement and the upcoming residential outreach meeting. Lastly, she emphasized the importance of Memorial Day weekend in honoring the memories of those who served the country.

Councilmember Worthington wished everyone a happy Memorial Day and an opportunity to enjoy family and think about those connections along with those that have served us.

Councilmember Flemming reiterated on the quality of candidates applying for the commission vacancy. He also pointed out that Memorial Day is not just a holiday but a time to remember and really give thanks to those men and women who serve, including first responders, who give the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that all stay safe and enjoy the freedom of this nation.

Councilmember Grassi expressed her thoughts for a wonderful Memorial Day weekend and extended her gratitude to those that have given the ultimate sacrifice. She reported attending the Sheriff's Memorial Services and paid tribute to families of fallen heroes. She invited the community to take part in the upcoming Duck Daze parade event. Councilmember Grassi expressed excitement about the capital improvements being made in the City and thanked residents for their patience during construction. In addition, she highlighted the talent and willingness to serve among the candidates for commissioner positions and thanked them for their contribution.

Mayor Figueroa reported on his trip to Washington, DC where he visited Congresswoman Strickland and discussed federal grants and appropriations for City projects. He had an opportunity to speak on the panel where he stressed the need to keep federal grants as a priority in discussion with public officials. He indicated receiving an invitation from Pierce County Executive Mello for a 10-year celebration of the 2015 U.S. Open at Chambers Bay and will ensure the invitation is passed to the rest of the Council. Lastly, he discussed the complexity of the Day Island sewer situation and suggested having a detailed report to better understand the issue.

STUDY SESSION

8. 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Public Works and Engineering Director Ecklund provided an update on the 2025 Capital Improvement Projects, highlighting 16 active construction projects and 11 projects in design or planning stages. He detailed the funding sources for the projects, including over \$500,000 from the county, over \$6 million from the state, and over \$26 million from the federal government. He noted that the City's portion is around 20%. Director Ecklund reported that the 67th Phase II project is 90% complete, with minor items and power cabinet installations remaining, expected to be completed by August; that the 35th Phase II project is progressing well, with completion anticipated around September; and that the 36th and Grandview roundabout project will start in mid-June, addressing site distance issues and improving safety. He discussed the school area projects, including upgrading lights, ADA ramps, and crosswalks, with the goal of completing major impacts before school resumes; he highlighted the progress of the inclusive playground project, with completion expected by November, including paving the parking lot and installing an ADA accessible restroom; and mentioned the chip seal program, which will cover about 11 miles of city streets, with prep work already started and chip sealing scheduled for August. In addition, Director Ecklund provided updates on various public works projects, including equipment storage, salt storage, and storm pond

rehabilitation, all required by the NPDES permit; and shared plans to improve trailhead parking along Chamber Street Road, anticipating increased demand with the opening of the Chambers Canyon Trail. He expressed hope for active construction on the Homestead Park project in 2025, with progress being made on environmental aspects. Lastly, he discussed future construction projects, including pedestrian improvements on 40th Street, a joint project with the city of Burke Crest, and the Chambers Creek Road roundabout.

Councilmembers asked questions and provided comments on various projects, including infrastructure, traffic impacts, and community engagement. Suggestions were made to identify and specify the sources of grants in future discussions to keep track of funding origins; to partner with the school district to communicate the impact of upcoming projects around schools; and to re-engage with Pierce County Sewer to improve communication with Day Island residents regarding the sewer project.

9. BUDGET CARRYFORWARD

Finance Director Blaisdell explained that the carryforward adjustments recognize the carryforward of funding from the 2024 budget for re-appropriation in 2025. The re-appropriations are comprised of beginning fund balance adjustments, capital improvement projects, internal service fund carryforwards, and continuing grant funding. She explained that the most significant changes are in the Restricted and CIP funds and are mostly reflective of carryforwards in revenues and expenditures in Parks, Public Works, and Municipal CIP projects and the related interfund transfers. The Public Works CIP includes a new project added for the 67th Phase 2 improvements project, and one project requiring a cost increase. Director Blaisdell stated that the total carryforward requests in the general fund amount to about \$427,196 for professional services and various departmental needs; interfund transfers amounting to \$3M for grants and CIP projects not completed in the previous year; and approximately \$6.3M for ARPA project. Police and Public Safety Fund carryforwards total to about \$196,765 for special overtime and officer credits; and SWM Fund of about \$2.4M for SWM capital improvement projects and machinery. Expenditure adjustments are based on cost increases to existing services and include the appropriations for the 30th Birthday event. She outlined new item requests, including temporary help for records; additional funding for professional services for the City Attorney department; a .8 FTE communication specialist; and a request for an additional \$150,000 to be used for cybersecurity-related services.

Director Blaisdell reported that the one-time monies available after the carryforward and expenditure adjustments amount to \$1.5M, recommending that the funds be banked for future needs, such as debt repayment. She indicated that the Financial Forecast was updated to include all adjustments. Existing services and legal and contractual obligations can be met with existing revenues through the biennium.

Council expressed concerns about the new communication specialist position, seeking clarification on its alignment with Council goals, job description, and funding. Detailed information was requested on the \$150,000 request for cybersecurity services, including what the funds will cover and the necessity of the amount.

10. COMMUNITY GRANT PROCESS

City Attorney Kaser discussed the current community grants process, highlighting that the City Council has historically appropriated around \$10,000 for community grants, with two primary recipients receiving about \$7,000. He noted that the grants process has been largely on autopilot, with minimal changes or updates since its inception. This has led to a need for reevaluation to ensure it remains effective and relevant and aligns with current needs and priorities. He recommended making the grant process more inclusive, which aligns with Council's recent discussions and priorities, and including the management of out-of-cycle requests.

Discussion followed with regards to inclusivity in the grant process to ensure equitable distribution of funds; having an annual cycle review of the grant process before Council's adoption of the budget; the importance of promoting human services provided by churches and organizations in the City; the need to ensure the Community Grants application and process are clearly advertised and accessible on the City website; business matching contribution; the need to develop a system for grant recipients to report back to the City

Council on how the funds were used and the impact on the community; to revise the Community Grants criteria to ensure they align with current Council goals and priorities; service contracts for ongoing partners and accountability measures; the importance of understanding the intent of the community grants policy; and to establish guidelines for handling out-of-cycle grant requests. A suggestion was made to involve the Economic Development Advisory Commission in the review and recommendation process for the Community Grants policy.

At 8:58 p.m., a motion was made and was carried, to extend the meeting for 15 minutes.

11. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 9:00p.m. No other action was taken.

Submitted by,

Emy Genetia
City Clerk

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