

**TOPPENISH CITY COUNCIL**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**October 28, 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 Prieto Duval, George Garcia, Josh Garza, Ezequiel Morfin, and Cristian Sanchez

Staff: City Manager Dan Ford, City Attorney Gary Cuillier, Budget and Finance Director Adam Vaughn (FD Vaughn), Chief of Police Joseph Mehline, Fire Chief Tim Smith, Interim Public Works Director Shaun Burgess, Community Economic Development Director Andrew Hattori (CED Hattori), City Clerk Heidi Riojas, and Community Television Manager Sean Davido

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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:02 p.m., Mayor Saavedra called for the Council to go into Executive Session for potential litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i). The approximate time for the Executive Session is 15 minutes with no action anticipated.

At 7:17 p.m., Mayor Saavedra extended the Executive Session for another 15 minutes.

At 7:32 p.m., Mayor Saavedra reconvened the meeting back to order.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

Mayor Saavedra reported that Councilmember Garcia shared that he would like to add an item. Councilmember Garcia stated that he would like to add an item to reconsidered from the discussion from September 9, 2024, Regular Meeting, regarding the committees.

It was the consensus of the Council to add the new item to New Business as aa.

Councilmember Sanchez moved, seconded by Councilmember Garcia to approve the October 28, 2024, Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

**NEW EMPLOYEE INTRODUCTION**

CM Ford introduced Community Economic Development Director Andrew Hattori to the Council.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The City Council received comments from the public during the meeting.

Councilmember Prieto Duval called point of order to query whether a motion was made, or a vote taken for Approval of the Agenda. Mayor Saavedra responded that Councilmember Sanchez made the motion with a second by Councilmember Garcia to approve the agenda, and that she conducted the vote on the motion.

Councilmember Prieto Duval moved, seconded by Councilmember Morfin to appeal the Mayor's placement of Councilmember Garica's item under New Business as aa on the agenda. Motion passed. Mayor Saavedra, Mayor Pro Tem Belton, and Councilmember Garcia voted no.

Councilmember Prieto Duval stated she wants the new item placed as e under New Business.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- a. Approve Minutes of the October 14, 2024, Regular Meeting
- b. Approve Payroll Checks Numbers 36817 through 36828, and Electronic Transfers EFTPR3352 through EFTPR3363 in the total amount of \$300,854.59 dated October 22, 2024
- c. Approve Claims Checks Numbers 99713 through 99787 and Electronic Transfers EFTAP426 through EFTAP427 in the total amount of \$391,845.91 dated October 28, 2024

Motion carried unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **2025 Budget Overview**

FD Vaughn presented Council with the 2025 Preliminary Budget Overview to summarize the positive actions taken by Council earlier this year to reduce the budget deficit. He reported on how to read the budget consisting of the Citizen's Guide, the City Manager's Letter, the Financial Summary, the Funds, and the Line Items. The next meeting on November 12, 2024 will include the first of three public hearings for the 2025 Preliminary Budget. The last two public hearings will be during the meeting on November 25, 2024.

Councilmember Prieto Duval moved, seconded by Councilmember Morfin to cancel the Budget and Finance Committee meetings through December 31, 2024, until the 2025 Budget is passed, and reconvene in the next year to continue the work of the Budget and Finance Committee to reduce the budget deficit. Motion passed unanimously.

**Resolution 2024-43: A Resolution Approving an Interagency Agreement Between the Washington State Department of Commerce and the City of Toppenish for the 2024-2026 Growth Management Act Periodic Update.**

Mayor Pro Tem Belton moved, seconded by Councilmember Garza to approve Resolution 2024-43. Motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 2024-44: A Resolution Approving the Task Order with HLA Engineering and Land Surveying, Inc. for the Growth Management Act Periodic Update.**

Councilmember Morfin moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Belton to approve Resolution 2024-44. Motion carried unanimously.

**Updates from Public Safety Committee Chair.**

Councilmember Prieto Duval reported that there will be further discussion on each of the following four items one at a time:

1. Committee of the Whole to Include Full Council to Attend Committee Meetings – Special Meeting

Councilmember Morfin moved, seconded by Councilmember Prieto Duval to make the Public Safety Committee the Committee of the Whole. Motion failed. Mayor Saavedra, Mayor Pro Tem Belton, and Councilmembers Garcia, Garza, and Sanchez voted no.

2. Update meeting schedule to 5:00 p.m. on the 4th Monday of each month.

Mayor Saavedra moved, seconded by Councilmember Garcia to forward discussion to update meeting schedule to 5:00 p.m. on the 4th Monday of each month to next Study Session for current committee members to check their schedules. Motion carried. Councilmember Sanchez voted no.

3. Discussion on the extreme weather shelter.

Councilmember Prieto Duval moved, seconded by Councilmember Morfin that we review the reports provided to us by email from Yakama Nation and Yakima County and to search for all viable potential locations for an extreme winter weather shelter until a decision is made. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Discussion on submitting letter to Legislators and Commissioners to share the City's need for more public safety funding.

Councilmember Sanchez moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Belton to forward the discussion on submitting letter to Legislators and Commissions to share the City's need for more public safety funding to the next Study Session. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reconsideration of September 9, 2024 item for discussion regarding committees.**

Councilmember Garcia moved, seconded by Mayor Saavedra to dissolve the committees consisting of the Budget and Finance Committee and the Public Safety Committee.

Councilmember Garza moved, seconded by Councilmember Prieto Duval to amend the motion to dissolve the Budget and Finance Committee and keep the Public Safety Committee. Motion carried. Mayor Saavedra voted no.

Councilmember Garza moved, seconded by Councilmember Sanchez for retaining the Public Safety Committee and for dissolving the Budget and Finance Committee. Motion carried. Mayor Saavedra and Councilmember Garica voted no.

**COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS/COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

CM Ford encouraged Council to contact CC Riojas if they would like to sit at the City's table at the Ranch Party on November 7, 2024.

The City Councilmembers provided reports of their activities since the last meeting and community announcements.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:58 p.m.

---

ELPIDIA SAAVEDRA, MAYOR

---

HEIDI RIOJAS, CMC, CITY CLERK