

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Nikki Bufford called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and requested a moment of silence after the Pledge of Allegiance in honor of James “Jim” Marzano, retired Fircrest Public Works Utility Service Person II.

Councilmembers David M. Viafore, Shannon Reynolds, Brett L. Wittner, Karen Mauer-Smith, Hunter T. George and Joe Barrentine were present.

PRESIDING OFFICER’S REPORT

There was no report provided.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

City Manager Masko reported on scheduling the City Council Strategic Goals Workshop in August and requested the Council’s preference for either a one-day or two-day session. She also reported on the second round of interviews for the Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Specialist position. Lastly, she stated that she is preparing an information and educational webpage regarding the upcoming EMS Levy ballot measure. The information is expected to be available later in the week.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

- Police Chief Celis provided a departmental update to include calls for service, including fireworks-related calls with no significant incidents, staffing updates, National Night Out preparations, and the logistics for the upcoming Police Sergeant recruitment.
- Parks and Recreation Director Grover reported on the Strawberry Festival and Car Show events and stated that staff is preparing for Fircrest Fun Days.
- Public Works Director Bemis reported on seasonal hiring challenges, the Regents Boulevard construction update, Whittier Elementary Replacement Project detour impacts, and coordination with Parks and Recreation for Fircrest Fun Days. Council discussions included seasonal employee hiring requirements, improved construction updates on the City’s website through homepage links and project pages, providing a detailed construction schedule and project information, and exploring the use of construction cameras for public updates on social media.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

- Councilmember Viafore gave kudos to staff on their efforts towards the City events and discussed resident concerns regarding construction detours. He encouraged proactive communication with the affected neighborhoods.
- Councilmember Reynolds; no comment.
- Councilmember Wittner expressed his condolences to the Marzano family.
- Councilmember George recognized the growth and success of Fircrest events. He gave kudos to staff. Lastly, he encouraged public education of the upcoming EMS Levy election.
- Councilmember Mauer-Smith; no comment.
- Councilmember Barrentine thanked the Fircrest Kiwanis Club and volunteers for their support of community events.
- Mayor Bufford invited residents to attend the upcoming Fircrest Fun Days.

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Bufford invited public comment. There were none provided.

COMMITTEE, COMMISSION, AND LIAISON REPORTS

A. Administration

There was no report.

B. Built Environment, Planning, and Building

Councilmember Wittner reported on the recruitment for two Planning Commissioner vacancies, the Whittier Elementary School Replacement Project updates, and the Hearing Examiner's decision to deny the Alameda Avenue property's variance request.

C. Finance and Information Technology

There was no report.

D. Pierce Transit

Councilmember Reynolds reported that the Pierce Transit Board approved placing a ballot measure to expand transit service. The proposal would improve transit frequency throughout the region, and Pierce Transit remains debt-free should the Climate Commitment Act funding change.

E. South Sound Housing Affordability Partners

Councilmember George reported that South Sound Housing Affordability Partners (SSHAP) did not meet in July.

F. Other Liaison Reports

Pedestrian Safety Committee.

Councilmember George reported that the committee held its first meeting and discussed developing a comprehensive Pedestrian Safety Plan. The existing and planned pedestrian improvements will be inventoried. The committee will use GIS mapping, accident data, Safe Routes to School information, and the City's Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program to guide recommendations. Lastly, he stated that public outreach will be conducted in the future and the next meeting is scheduled for September.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Bufford requested the City Clerk read the Consent Calendar.

- A.** Approval of Check No. 224738 through No. 224838 in the amount of \$238,418.20
Approval of Check No. 14623 through No. 14624 in the amount of \$9,729.93
Approval of Check No. 14625 through No. 14632 in the amount of \$81,855.05
Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$212,413.36
Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$194,185.90
- B.** Approval of June 15, 2026, Study Session meeting minutes.
Approval of June 23, 2026, Regular meeting minutes.

Councilmember Reynolds MOVED to approve the Consent Calendar as amended; seconded by Councilmember Barrentine.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

PUBLIC HEARING

There was no public hearing scheduled.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution No. 2032: Ethos PNW Amendment #2

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the amendment provides continued planning consulting services associated with the Whittier Elementary School Replacement Project. **Councilmember George MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2030, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment #2 to the Professional Services Agreement with Ethos PNW for on-call planning consulting services; seconded by Councilmember Mauer-Smith.**

Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comments; none were provided. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

B. Resolution No. 2033: Pierce County Urban Consortium Agreement – Amendment #3

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the amendment will maintain the City's eligibility for future grant opportunities. **Councilmember Mauer-Smith MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2033, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment No. 3 to the Agreement with Pierce County Human Services for Urban County Community Development Program Funds; seconded by Councilmember Barrentine.** Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comments; none were provided. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

C. Resolution No. 2034: National Night Out Fireworks Display Agreement

Police Chief Celis briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the fireworks are funded directly through community donations. **Councilmember Reynolds MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2034, authorizing the City Manager to execute an Agreement with Alpha Pyrotechnics to provide a fireworks display at National Night Out; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comments; none were provided. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

D. Ordinance: 2026 Budget Amendment #1 - 1st Reading

Finance Director Deskins presented the City's routine mid-year budget amendment, which includes updated beginning fund balances using 2025 actual year-end balances, revised revenue projections, adjusted appropriations for current operational needs, and updates to capital project funding and equipment replacement funds. Council discussions included the City's conservative budgeting practices, strong financial position, healthy reserves, and the importance of reviewing mid-year budget amendments. Mayor Bufford stated that this is the first reading and no action will be taken.

CALL FOR FINAL COMMENTS

There were none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. To Review the Performance of a Public Employee, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)

At 7:40 P.M., Mayor Bufford reported that the Council would take a five-minute recess and convene into Executive Session, not to exceed twenty (20) minutes, to review the performance of a public employee, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g).

At 8:04 P.M., Mayor Bufford extended the Executive Session for an additional ten (10) minutes.

The Council reconvened at 8:15 P.M., and no action was taken.

Mayor Bufford announced that she and Councilmember Wittner will work with the City Manager regarding contract negotiations as discussed during Executive Session. There were no objections from the Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Reynolds MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 P.M., seconded by Councilmember Barrentine.

The Motion Carried (7-0).


Brett L. Wittner, Mayor Pro Tempore


Arlette Burkhardt, City Clerk