

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Nikki Bufford called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers Shannon Reynolds, Brett L. Wittner, and Hunter T. George were present.

Councilmember Reynolds attended the meeting virtually.

Councilmember David M. Viafore was absent at roll call. Mayor Bufford stated that Councilmember Viafore would be joining later. There was no objection from the Council.

Councilmembers Karen Mauer-Smith and Joe Barrentine were absent and excused.

PRESIDING OFFICER’S REPORT

Mayor Bufford requested an amendment to the Consent Calendar to include setting a public hearing for September 8, 2026, for the Critical Areas Ordinance Update. There were no objections from the Council.

A. Introduction and Pinning of New Police Officer Sood

Police Chief Celis introduced Police Officer Paramvir Sood and provided an overview of his law enforcement background. Police Chief Celis pinned Officer Sood.

B. Proclamation of Appreciation: Planning Commissioner Ben Ferguson

Councilmember George read the proclamation titled “Proclamation of Appreciation: Planning Commissioner Ben Ferguson” into the record. **Councilmember Wittner MOVED to authorize the Mayor’s signature on the proclamation proclaiming their recognition and gratitude to Planning Commissioner Ben Ferguson; seconded by Councilmember George.** Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comment. Councilmember George thanked Commissioner Ferguson for his service and commitment to the community. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (4-0).

C. Proclamation of Appreciation: Planning Commissioner Andreas Schonger

Councilmember Wittner read the proclamation titled “Proclamation of Appreciation: Planning Commissioner Andreas Schonger” into the record. **Councilmember George MOVED to authorize the Mayor’s signature on the proclamation proclaiming their recognition and gratitude to Planning Commissioner Andreas Schonger; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comment; none were provided. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (4-0).

D. Planning Commissioner Appointments

Mayor Bufford reported on the recommended appointments of Matthew Green and Anthony Chelf to the Planning Commission.

Councilmember George MOVED to confirm the Mayor's appointments of Matthew Green to Planning Commission Position No. 3, effective August 25, 2026, through June 15, 2030, and Anthony Chelf to Planning Commission Position No. 4, effective August 25, 2026 through June 15, 2027; seconded by Councilmember Wittner. Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comment. Council discussions included the missing agenda summary, thanking community members who applied, and the interview process. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (4-0).

E. Pierce Transit Service Expansion Package Presentation

Pierce County Councilmember Rosie Ayala, Pierce Transit Board Vice Chair, introduced Pierce Transit representatives Chief Financial Officer Christopher Schuler, Chief Administrative Officer Amy Cleveland, and Senior Planner Brittany Carbullido, who provided an overview of Proposition 1.

Representatives stated that, if approved by voters, the measure would fund an approximately 47 percent increase in transit service, including new routes, increased frequency and service hours, and improvements affecting Fircrest.

Councilmember discussions included the proposed service improvements, Pierce Transit's financial outlook, and potential impacts if the measure is not approved. Pierce Transit representatives stated that existing reserves would allow current service levels to continue for several years; however, future service adjustments may eventually be necessary without additional revenue.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

A. Presentation: Ezee Fiber

Director of Government Affairs Austin Christoffersen and Senior Vice President of Operations Eddie Abreu provided an overview of Ezee Fiber's planned high-speed fiber network in Fircrest. Representatives discussed the permitting and construction process, resident notifications, right-of-way work, restoration standards, and the construction timeline.

Councilmember Viafore joined the meeting at 7:41 P.M.

Councilmember discussions included construction methods, restoration, potential impacts to sprinkler systems, contractor licensing, and residential connections. Representatives stated that Ezee Fiber would coordinate with Public Works throughout construction and restore impacted areas following completion of the work.

City Manager Masko reported that Allison Schiefer had accepted the Associate Planner position. She also provided an update on the City's website migration project, the Civil Service Commission vacancy, and the Whittier Elementary School's student pick-up and drop-off concerns. Council discussions included the timing of the concerns, the City's authority under the conditional use permit, and the importance of student safety. Lastly, City Manager Masko reported that she would be on vacation and Parks and Recreation Director Grover would serve as Acting City Manager during her absence.

DEPARTMENT HEAD COMMENTS

- Police Chief Celis provided a departmental update to include calls for service, Officer Bounds' field training, and upcoming annual firearms qualification training. Chief Celis recognized Officer Lease and read a letter of commendation regarding Officer Lease's actions during a 2024 shots-fired investigation. Councilmember Reynolds congratulated Officer Lease and requested information about an incident regarding a recent credit-card fraud case.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

- Councilmember George; no comment.
- Councilmember Wittner; no comment.
- Councilmember Viafore commented on the Whittier Elementary School Replacement Project and expressed concerns regarding the choice of roofing material.
- Councilmember Reynolds congratulated Officer Lease and welcomed Officer Sood to the Fircrest Police Department.
- Mayor Bufford reported on interest in holding a future joint meeting between the Fircrest and University Place City Councils. Mayor Bufford requested Council consensus to postpone the scheduled Executive Session until a future meeting when all Councilmembers could attend. There were no objections from the Council.

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Bufford invited public comment.

- Jack Fallat, 909 Forrest Park Drive, expressed concerns regarding traffic and speeding on Forrest Park Drive. He stated that he previously submitted a neighborhood petition and requested if he could personally purchase and install a 25-mph speed limit sign on his private property. The Council requested that City Manager Masko research and follow up.
- Deborah Alyea, 112 Regents Boulevard #3, commented on the possibility of establishing a designated off-leash dog park in Fircrest.
- Ayanna Tapp, no address provided, commented on a recent experience in Fircrest and spoke about the importance of kindness, compassion, accountability, and community.

COMMITTEE, COMMISSION, AND LIAISON REPORTS

A. Parks, Recreation, and Sustainability

Councilmember Viafore provided a positive comment on the Community Center's current operations and activities.

B. Police/Public Safety and Court

Councilmember George reported on the law enforcement simulator and commented on the realistic scenarios. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to practice decision-making in a controlled environment.

C. Public Works and Facilities

There was no report.

D. Pierce County Regional Council

Councilmember Reynolds reported the Pierce County Regional Council did not meet in August.

E. Other Liaison Reports

There were none.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Bufford requested the City Clerk read the Consent Calendar:

- A. Approval of Check No. 224972 through No. 225040 in the amount of \$198,622.46
Approval of Check No. 14643 through No. 14643 in the amount of \$372.83
Approval of payroll electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$213,168.85
- B. Setting a Public Hearing on September 8, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. or shortly thereafter on the Critical Areas Ordinance Update
- C. Setting a Public Hearing on October 27, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. or shortly thereafter on the 2027 Revenue Sources
- D. Setting a Public Hearing on October 27, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. or shortly thereafter on the 2027 Preliminary Budget
- E. Setting a Public Hearing on November 10, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. or shortly thereafter on the 2027 Preliminary Budget
- F. Approval of the August 11, 2026, Regular Meeting minutes

Councilmember George MOVED to approve the Consent Calendar as amended; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.

The Motion Carried (5-0).

PUBLIC HEARING

There was no public hearing scheduled.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution No. 2036: Rescinding Resolution No. 2021

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and stated that Resolution No. 2036 would rescind Resolution No. 2021, which authorized placing the Emergency Medical Services levy renewal on the November General Election ballot if the levy failed at the August Primary Election. City Manager Masko reported that voters approved the EMS levy at the August Primary Election. **Councilmember George MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2036, rescinding Resolution No. 2021; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comment; none were provided. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (5-0).

B. Resolution No. 2037: Greenleaf Landscaping Amendment No. 8

City Manager Masko briefed the Council on the proposed resolution and highlighted that the amendment would provide for restoration of landscaping damaged during a vehicle collision on Emerson Street. Damage included the City entrance sign, irrigation, landscaping, decorative lighting, and two crimson maple trees. She reported that the City was seeking restitution through Municipal Court. **Councilmember George MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2037, authorizing the City Manager to execute Amendment No. 8 to the Professional Services Agreement with Greenleaf Landscaping, Inc. to repair damage to the landscaping on Emerson Street; seconded by Councilmember Wittner.** Mayor Bufford invited Councilmember comment. There was a brief discussion on the timeline for the restoration. Mayor Bufford invited public comment; none were provided.

The Motion Carried (5-0).

CALL FOR FINAL COMMENTS

There was a brief discussion on the recent Council goals workshop and appreciation for the opportunity to discuss priorities and goals.

Mayor Bufford thanked meeting attendees for their participation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Session was removed from the agenda and postponed to a future meeting.

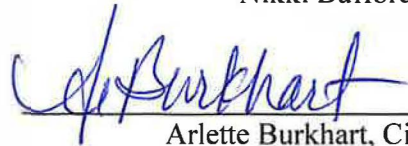
ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Wittner MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 P.M., seconded by Councilmember George.

The Motion Carried (5-0).



Nikki Bufford, Mayor



Arlette Burkhardt, City Clerk