

June 24, 2024

Charles Ross, Yakima County Auditor
128 N 2nd Street, Room 117
Yakima, WA 98901

RE: Petition for Recall of Mayor Rachel Ruelas of Mabton, WA

Dear Mr. Ross,

We, as the majority of the Mabton City Council, and registered voting citizens of Mabton, WA, are submitting this request to your office to review our recall petition of our city mayor, Rachel Ruelas. Mayor Ruelas is grossly incompetent and is in violation of several state laws and local ordinances, as well as her oath of office.

Mayor Ruelas refused to provide notice of hearing on final budget for the public, a violation of RCW 35.33.061 Budget – Notice of Hearing on Final, which needed to occur in November 2023. She continues to refuse to provide a final budget for council's review and passage via city ordinance, as required by state law, RCW 35A.33.075 Budget Adoption. Final review, amendments and vote on the final budget should have occurred in December 2023. We have asked for the final budget for review for five months and Mayor Ruelas continues to state that the 2024 budget is not ready for review even though we are more than halfway through the 2024 budget year. We are providing video evidence of her public statements about the 2024 budget for your review.

In April 2024, we passed a motion requiring the mayor and city clerk prepare and provide our council meeting packets with the council agenda, previous meeting minutes, consent agenda items, and any new business items up for review, by the Friday before our Tuesday council meetings, so that we may have the time necessary to prepare for our council meetings to conduct appropriate city business. The mayor and the city clerk refuse to provide us with our council packets by the council agreed upon motion of Friday prior to the meeting. The mayor provides the council packets Monday night prior to our Tuesday meeting. As of today, June 25th, the second Tuesday of the month, for which we are required to meet as a council, we still have not received our council packet for tonight's meeting.

The mayor also lacks due diligence in hiring of city personnel. She hired a person who did not have a valid driver's license and was operating city vehicles, compromising the city's insurability. She fired the employee after he did not comply with her request to renew his driver's license within six months, but she had already put the city in a very compromising situation by hiring him in the first place knowing he did not have a valid driver's license and allowing him to operate city vehicles. The mayor also hired this former employee's girlfriend as the deputy city clerk, who has just recently been criminally charged with theft of city funds up to \$22,000.

https://www.applevalleynewsnow.com/news/crime/mabton-mayor-silent-after-deputy-city-clerk-arrested-accused-of-stealing-22k-from-city/article_6b958dfc-329c-11ef-aab4-cb4a3e9e88a9.html

The council has asked several times during council meetings, since March 2024, that minutes provided to the council are rarely reflective of the business conducted during the meeting. We have provided her with details to update minutes to reflect accuracy and the mayor states that she will make the amendments to the minutes with the city clerk, but she does not follow through on those

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amendments. We are providing the minutes to several meetings as proof of inaccurate and bare minutes for our city council meetings. These inaccurate minutes are posted to the city website for community residents to access and it is a poor reflection of city business conducted through city council, in violation of RCW 42.30.035. The mayor is miscommunicating with and misleading our community residents with her refusal to provide accurate minutes.

Mayor Ruelas uses the City of Mabton website to promote her personal business, Forever Bridal and Decorating. We have attached a photo of one of her promotions, which has been posted on the website since she took office in January 2022. She has used the events space on the city website to promote her business events. This is a direct conflict of interest as a public official promoting her personal business to drum up sales, and a violation of Chapter 42.23 RCW.

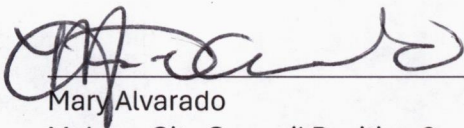
These are just a few of the reasons we believe Mayor Ruelas must be recalled. The Mabton residents are frustrated that they have a mayor that will not communicate with them about several issues, including any possible solutions to the ongoing water quality issues we are constantly dealing with. Most of our residents are requesting that we initiate the recall process because they understand that she is violating several state and local laws, operates with an extreme lack of transparency, and because she is in the mayor's seat simply to promote her business.

The undersigned declare, under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington, that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of our knowledge, and that we have sufficient knowledge of the alleged facts upon which the stated ground for recall are based.

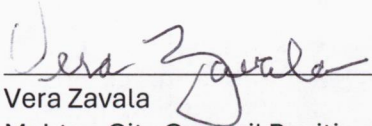
Sincerely,



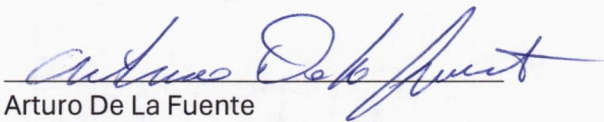
Sophia Spello
Mabton City Council Position 2
Address: PO Box 280 Mabton, WA 98935



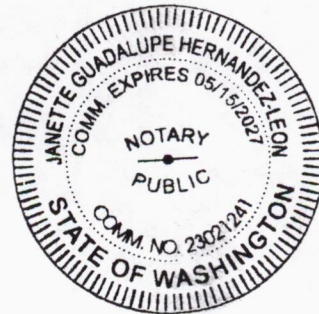
Mary Alvarado
Mabton City Council Position 3
Address: PO Box 491 Mabton, WA 98935



Vera Zavala
Mabton City Council Position 4
Address: PO Box 614 Mabton, WA 98935



Arturo De La Fuente
Mabton City Council Position 5
Address: PO Box 591 Mabton, WA 98935



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PDF **RCW 35.33.061**

Budget—Notice of hearing on final.

Immediately following the filing of the preliminary budget with the clerk, the clerk shall publish a notice once each week for two consecutive weeks stating that the preliminary budget for the ensuing fiscal year has been filed with the clerk; that a copy thereof will be furnished to any taxpayer who will call at the clerk's office therefor and that the legislative body of the city or town will meet on or before the first Monday of the month next preceding the beginning of the ensuing fiscal year for the purpose of fixing the final budget, designating the date, time and place of the legislative budget meeting and that any taxpayer may appear thereat and be heard for or against any part of the budget. The publication of the notice shall be made in the official newspaper of the city or town.

[1985 c 469 § 27; 1973 c 67 § 2; 1969 ex.s. c 95 § 8.]

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PDF **RCW 35A.33.075**

Budget adoption.

Following conclusion of the hearing, and prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, the legislative body shall make such adjustments and changes as it deems necessary or proper and after determining the allowance in each item, department, classification and fund, and shall by ordinance, adopt the budget in its final form and content. Appropriations shall be limited to the total estimated revenues contained therein including the amount to be raised by ad valorem taxes and the unencumbered fund balances estimated to be available at the close of the current fiscal year. Such ordinances may adopt the final budget by reference: PROVIDED, That the ordinance adopting such budget shall set forth in summary form the totals of estimated revenues and appropriations for each separate fund and the aggregate totals for all such funds combined.

A complete copy of the final budget as adopted shall be transmitted to the state auditor, and to the association of Washington cities.

[1995 c 301 § 53; 1969 ex.s. c 81 § 3; 1967 ex.s. c 119 § 35A.33.075.]

NOTES:

Effective date—1969 ex.s. c 81: See note following RCW **35A.13.035**.

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CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday November 14th, 2023

Mayor Rachel Ruelas

Councilmembers Diana Castaneda, Antonio Moreno, Ann Morales, Vera Zavala, and Arturo De La Fuente

1. Call to Order Time: __7:05pm__
2. Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence and Roll Call
Present: Mayor Rachel Ruelas, Diana Castaneda, Antonio Moreno, Vera Zavala, Arturo Dela Fuente, Larry Briones, and City Attorney William Edelblute.
3. Vote on the Meeting Agenda
There was a motion by Diana, a second by Ann. 5-0
4. Consent Agenda approval A-C
There was a motion by Diana, a second by Ann. 5-0
5. Public Hearing: Start Time: 7:08 pm End Time: __7:10 pm__
 - Review of the Tax levy Increase for the year 2024- City Clerk/Treasurer Larry Briones shared that the Tax Levy Rate would increase by 1%.
6. Public Hearing: Start Time: 7:10 pm End Time: 7:52 pm _____
 - Preliminary Budget 2024- City Clerk/Treasurer Larry Briones presented the 2024 preliminary budget and answered specific questions.
7. Old Business
8. New Business
 - A. Approval of Water Treatment Options Analysis – G&O Engineering Scope of Work
There was a motion by Diana, second by Ann. 5-0
 - B. Wells 7 & 8 – G&O Update for Council- Jamin from G&O shared that water quality and water quantity are not worth equipping. Jamin recommends drilling a second well at a different location. April 2025 is the deadline for spending the grant.
 - C. Approval of City of Mabton G&O CPX drive troubleshooting-

There was a motion by, Diana second by Ann. 5-0
 - D. Approval of Vision Desktop Replacement Recommendations for the City of Mabton
Motion by Diana, second by Ann. 5-0
 - E. Discussion of Resolution 2023-19 A resolution Approving the Law Enforcement Assistance Agreement Between the City of Mabton and the Yakima County Sheriff's Office for Communication Service for 2024

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There was a motion by Diana, second by Ann. 5-0

- F. Discussion of Resolution 2023-20 A Resolution Approving the Interlocal Correction/Detention Agreement with Yakima County for 2024-
There was a motion by Diana, second by Ann. 5-0

G. Discussion of Ordinance 2023-1182 an Ordinance Establishing the Amount of Taxes to Be Lived Upon Real and Personal Property with the City of Mabton and Also Fixing the Tax Levy Rate for the 2024 Calendar Year-
There was a motion by Diana, second by Antonio. 5-0

- G. Discussion of Preliminary Budget for 2024-
There was a motion by Diana, second by Antonio. 5-0

9. Visitors Comments (At the discretion of the presiding Chair, Visitor Comments may be accepted on individual business items only and will be limited to 2 to 5 minutes).

Maria Fernandez from ELLA cleared up details about the water distributions.


Ruben Olivarez also wanted to share additional information about ELLA water distributions.

10. Staff reports:

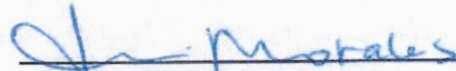
11. Mayor and Councilmember Reports:

Council Member Vera was concerned about a Facebook Post Mayor Ruelas shared.

12. Adjournment: Time: __9:03 pm__



Rachel Ruelas, Mayor

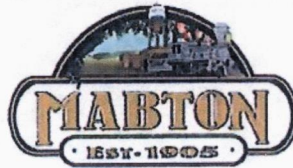


Yuli Morales, Deputy Clerk

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CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday December 12th, 2023

Mayor Rachel Ruelas

Councilmembers Diana Castaneda, Antonio Moreno, Ann Morales, Vera Zavala, and Arturo De La Fuente

1. Call to Order Time: ___ 7:00 pm. ___

2. Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence and Roll Call

Present: Mayor Rachel Ruelas, Diana Castaneda, Vera Zavala, Arturo Dela Fuente, Larry Briones, and City Attorney William Edelblute.

There was a motion by Diana, second by Vera to excuse council members Antonio and Ann. 3-0

3. Vote on the Meeting Agenda

There was a motion by Diana, second by Vera. 3-0

4. Consent Agenda approval A-C

There was a motion by Vera, second by Diana. 3-0

5. Old Business- None.

6. New Business

a. Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Mabton and Teamsters Local NO. 760 January 1st, 2024- December 31, 2026.

There was a motion to table this discussion, a motion by Arturo, second by Diana. 3-0

b. Approval of Ordinance 2023-21 -AN ORDINANCE AMMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 1007 ESTABLASHING MABTON CITY HALL OFFICE HOURS.

There was a motion by Diana, second by Vera. 3-0

c. Approval of Well 7 Update and Change Order Discussion G&O

There was a motion by Diana, second by Arturo. 3-0

7. Visitors Comments (At the discretion of the presiding Chair, Visitor Comments may be accepted on individual business items only and will be limited to 2 minutes.)

Rosa Martinez resident at 421 Fern St asked when the last day was for the current council members because she would like to thank them.

Norma Martinez asked the council if there is a code of conduct, they have to sign Norma also had some concerns about the MRSC meeting. Norma also was concerned about council members on social media.

Irma Martinez commented on the leadership council members should show.

Maria Rivera commented on the city of Mabton's improvements. Maria shared concerns about residents cleaning up their properties.

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8. Staff reports:

Chief Garcia commented on new vehicles for PD but mentioned he had not found any to purchase. Garcia also shared the PD purchased new bulletproof vests.

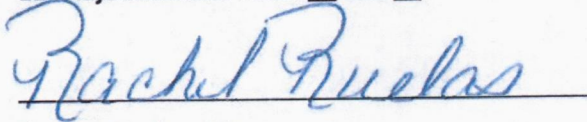
9. Mayor and Councilmember Reports:

Mayor Ruelas shared that Jesus de la Fuente is now certified as a level 1 wastewater operator. Mayor Ruelas also shared information about the upcoming community events.

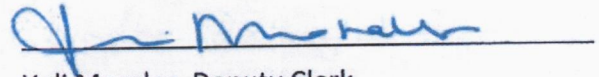
10. Executive Session: Start Time: 7:38 p.m. _____ End Time: 8:02 _____

To discuss employee personnel RCW 42.30.110 (G)(h) To evaluate a candidate's qualifications for appointment to elective office. Action is anticipated to be taken upon reconvening the Council Study Session Agenda.

11. Adjournment: Time: 8:02



Rachel Ruelas, Mayor



Yuli Morales, Deputy Clerk

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CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday December 26th, 2023

Mayor Rachel Ruelas

Councilmembers Diana Castaneda, Antonio Moreno, Ann Morales, Vera Zavala, and Arturo De La Fuente

1. Call to Order Time: ___7:00pm___
2. Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence and Roll Call
Present: Mayor Rachel Ruelas, Diana Castaneda, Antonio Moreno, Ann Morales, Vera Zavala, Arturo Dela Fuente, Larry Briones, and City Attorney William Edelblute.
3. Vote on the Meeting Agenda
There was a motion by Diana, second by Ann. 5-0
4. Consent Agenda approval A-C
There was a motion by Diana, second by Antonio. 5-0
5. Old Business-
 - a. Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Mabton and Teamsters Local NO. 760 January 1st, 2024- December 31, 2026.- There was a motion by Diana, second by Antonio. 5-0
6. New Business
 - a. Approval of Resolution 2023-21 Authorizing the mayor to sign a professional service agreement with the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments for the Yakima Valley Local Crime Lab.- There was a motion by Ann, second by Diana. 5-0
 - b. Approval of Ordinance 2023-1184 Am ordinance of the city of Mabton, Washington increasing compensation for the mayor. -There was a motion by Diana, second by Ann. 3-2
 - c. Approval of scrap metal, city sweeper, and grinder- There was a motion by Diana, second by Ann. 3-2
 - d. Approval of Code Enforcer- There was a motion to table by Vera, second by Ann. 5-0
7. Visitors Comments (At the discretion of the presiding Chair, Visitor Comments may be accepted on individual business items only and will be limited to 2 minutes.)

Rosa Martinez resident at 421 Fern St thanked the council members for their time served.

Maria Fernandes from ELLA shared information about water distribution.

Ruben Olivarez commented about the mayor's wages.

8. Staff reports:
9. Mayor and Councilmember Reports:

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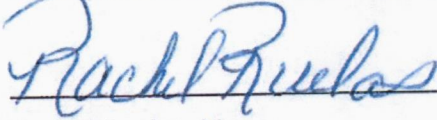
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The mayor commented on the successful events that took place for Christmas, she also shared that bikes, jackets, and toy giveaways were a success. The mayor shared that the newsletters were going to get mailed out to Mabton residents.

Ann thanked Vera for the senior dinner.

10. Adjournment: Time: 7:45 pm



Rachel Ruelas, Mayor

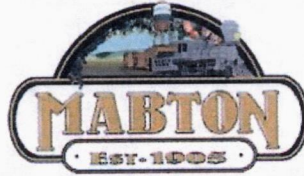


Yuli Morales, Deputy Clerk

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COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AGENDA

Tuesday March 12th, 2024

1. Call to Order Time: _____

2. Old Business:

3. New Business:

a. Discussion of Resolution No 2024-02- DECLARING THE VEHICLES OF THE CITY AS SURPLUS AND AUTHORIZING TO SALE SAID PROPERTY

1. 2007 Ford Expedition

Agenda Adjournment:

Time:

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COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AGENDA
Tuesday April 9th, 2024

1. Call to Order Time: _____
2. Old Business:
3. New Business:
 - a. DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION 2024-03-
A RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO ANNEX FOR INCORPORATING PARCEL NO.
23080624407 INTO THE CITY OF MABTON'S JURISDICTION.
 - b. Discussion of Mabton Chlorine System Invoice/Final Cost Breakdown- G&O

Agenda Adjournment: Time:

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COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AGENDA
Tuesday April 23rd, 2024

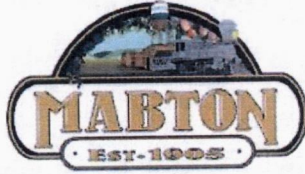
1. Call to Order Time: _____
2. Old Business:
3. New Business:
 - a. Discussion of Mabton Chlorine System Invoice/Final Cost Breakdown- G&O

Agenda Adjournment: Time:

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COUNCIL STUDY SESSION AGENDA

Tuesday June 11th, 2024

1. Call to Order Time: _____

2. Old Business:

- a. Discussion of Ordinance No. 2024-1186 an Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2021-1168 of the City of Mabton, WA, amending and setting general city fees.

3. New Business:

4. Executive Session: Start Time: End Time: _____

RCW 42.30.110 Current or potential litigation/qualifications of an applicant for public employment

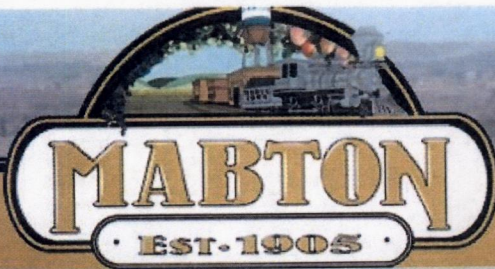
Agenda Adjournment:

Time:

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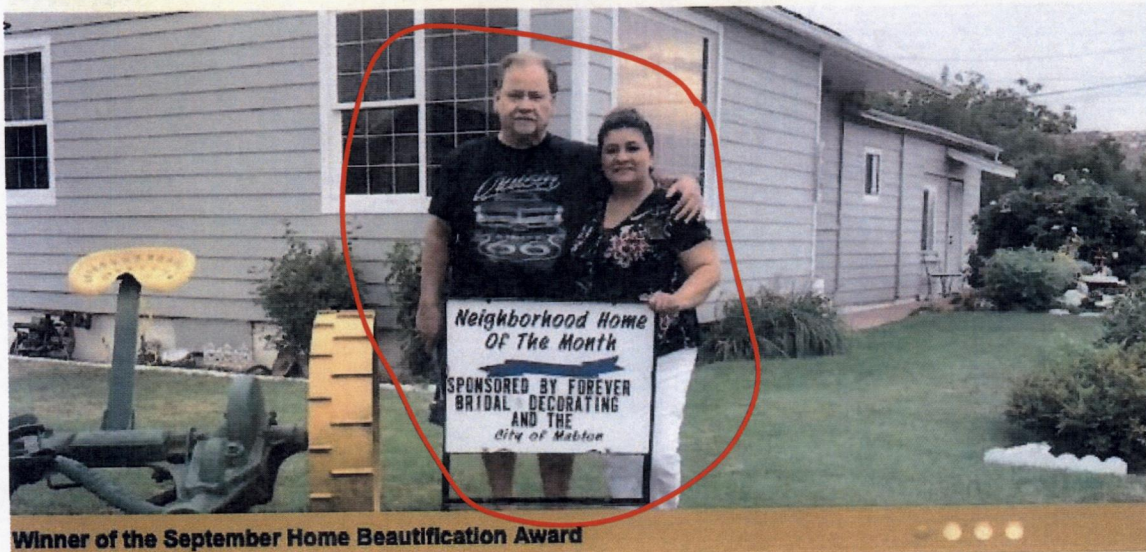
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Rural Living in the Heart of the Yakima Valley

- Home
- City Government
- City Services Departments
- Business Plan/Results
- Economic Development
- Living in Mabton
- Contact Us
- En Español



Winner of the September Home Beautification Award

News

Water System - Emergency Response Plan completion..

[Download the certificate](#)

City Contacts

City Hall
509-894-4096

Police Department
509-894-2955, 894-2945
Dispatch: 574-2500 - option "0"
for non-emergencies



Public Works
509-894-4096

Fire Department
509-894-4096

Pay Your Utility Bill Online

You must have the following information from your bill in order to make an online payment:

- Name
- Account Number
- Physical Address
- Payment Amount

There is a 2.65% fee per transaction charged by the processing company for this service.

PAY NOW

Summer Bash

July 13th - 12:00-8:00pm
Feezell Park



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