

City of Palouse

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

Note to persons reviewing this document: This is not a verbatim transcript. While an attempt has been made to document pertinent points, these minutes contain only a summary of the discussion and voting.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Pro Tempore Slinkard called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm, Councilmembers* present at the meeting were Sarah Bofenkamp, Leslie Jo Sena, Sam Brink, Travis Deerkop, Robert Brooks, and Ann Barrington. Also in attendance were Barb Hodson, Bren Fire Hawz, Angie Griner, Sandra Krause Ayers, Cassie Reinier, Dana Anderson, Robin Woltering, Cheryl Sanders, Andy Peltier, Ismael Perez, Mary Estes, and John Snyder.

*In the following paragraphs, Councilmember(s) will be abbreviated as: "C."

I. ROLL CALL: Acting DC Gaber took attendance; all Councilmembers were present.

City staff present: City Administrator (CA) Misty La Follett, Police Officer Joel Anderson, and Acting Deputy Clerk (DC) Jamie Gaber. City staff absent: Public Works (PW) Superintendent (Supt) Mike Wolf

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

C. Bofenkamp introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on August 22, 2023; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

Discussion occurred regarding the recording of Nay votes.

III. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Supt Mike Wolf submitted a written report for the Council.

IV. POLICE REPORT: Officer Anderson presented his report to the Council.

A. 12 calls for service since last Council.

1. two infractions issued, one criminal citation
2. four of those calls related to city ordinance violations.
3. one call-out

V. CITY ADMINISTRATOR / DEPUTY CLERK REPORT: CA La Follett reported:

A. **REVERSE 911:** Former Council member Jim Fielder identified that the Reverse 911 program is currently in place. CA La Follett will publish a link, ask for it to be displayed on digital reader board downtown, and explore ways to educate the public.

The direct link to the Whitman County city of Pullman and Washington State University combination system can be found at: <https://member.everbridge.net/3531635643383919/login>

B. CITY WEBSITE: City has ARPA funds allocated for a website. Our IT consultant identified the data that needs to be secure on our new website. Exploring new bids for our updated security needs.

C. ROC GRANT: An application for a \$93,000, non-matching grant has been submitted for pool repairs. Repairs include boiler replacement, underwater light replacement, and a reroof.

D. AVISTA: Gas line going through the park is temporarily postponed.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

A. VARELA (City's Wastewater Engineering Consultant): SEWER PLANT UPDATE

1. Meetings with Ecology held in July and August, next to be scheduled in Oct/Nov
2. City and Verala currently working on an extension request letter regarding temperature compliance.
3. Recommends a professional real estate acquisition team be utilized to acquire property.
4. City should expect an Administrative Order from Ecology/EPA by the first of the year.
5. When applying for Ecology funding, recommends two separate applications.
6. Applied for:
 - a) \$5 Million via Senator Maria Cantwell thru WWTP Nitrogen Reduction
 - b) \$1.95 Million via Cathy McMorris Rogers thru Headworks and Effluent Cooling
 - c) Both require 20% matching funds

Sena introduced a **MOTION** to approve Daniel Cowger to proceed with the funding applications; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Barrington. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

B. SHADY LANE: Foresters Kayla Johnson and Mark Swanson were present to discuss appropriate action and answer questions

1. CA La Follett :
 - a) Logging necessary to save large trees on the lane due to beetle infestation
 - b) Using Avista's services vs logger discussed
 - c) Loggers contacted
 - d) Will explore value as blue pine
 - e) Will assess cost of logging vs value of trees
2. Kayla Johnson will mark trees, Pro Tem Slinkard offered payment for service
3. Mark Swanson:
 - a) Value exists for blue pine, better to keep trees that are already on ground, add to overall value
 - b) Beetles already helped to thin overly dense sections, may need to thin a bit more around prize trees
 - c) Using a flagging system to mark trees for cutting allows citizens to comment and possibly change trees to be cut
 - d) Snags should be conserved to encourage nesting sites and overall forest health

C. GYM LANDSCAPING:

- a) Councilmembers discussed proposals Dave Griswold and Dave Berge presented at last council meeting. All agreed to decline both proposals.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. POLICE TASK FORCE PRESENTATION:

1. C. Brink Reviewed the options the PTF explored:
 - a). Continuing as a one-person department
 - b). Hiring a second officer and having a two-officer department
 - c). Redeveloping a partnership with a neighboring community
 - d). Contracting with the County and hiring a code-enforcement officer for local issues
 - e). Maintaining a full officer and contracting with the County for additional

- patrols
- f). Maintaining a full officer and contracting with a non-administrative, oversight
2. C. Brink presented the PTF Recommendations:
- a). Maintain our current single-officer Police Department
 - b) Officer Joel Anderson to be promoted to the position of Chief of Police

Furthermore, it is the consensus of the Police Task Force that additional oversight of the Police Department would allow the city to be better stewards of our resources. It is the wish of the Task Force that the Mayor and City Administrator continue researching a possible solution for a non-administrative, oversight entity to assist the Palouse Police Department and City of Palouse in ensuring its compliance with the everchanging landscape of law enforcement in Washington State. The intention of this entity would be;

- Perform periodic audits of the department's processes
- Assist the department in up-to-date certification, training, and reporting standards
- Communicate findings to the Police Chief and Mayor
- Provide solutions for possible lapses in compliance
- Be a liaison between the Police Department and City Hall

If, and when, such a solution has been found, it should be presented to the city council for review and direction to take action.

C. Brink introduced a **MOTION** to approve tabling the report until next council meeting; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Bofenkamp. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

VIII. OPEN FORUM: Mayor Pro Tempore Slinkard noted each person has three minutes to talk

Barb Hodson: Stated the tree blocking the stop sign and signal at Main St. and Bridge St. needs to be addressed.

Also, would like to see more police presence downtown during the middle of the day.

Bren Fire Hawz: Thanked the PTF for their work. Supports current model of local policing, would like to see relationship with Garfield rebuilt.

Angie Griner: Thanked the PTF for their report and for sending it out to the public.

Sandra Krause Ayers: Supports both Joel Anderson and the local police department. Noted positive impact on children in communities with a police department; both in deterring crime and providing secure living environment. At the school, police presence positive for children for many reasons. Also at the school, there are good security policies currently in place, as recent incident had proven.

Cassie Reinier: Supports local policing with good response time. Noted negative impact in another community due to lack of police in community. Willing to cut budget in other areas to keep police department.

Dana Anderson: Asked the PTF conclusion to be sent out. Also, supports more visibility of police throughout town.

Robin Woltering: Thanked city's 'Streets, Properties, & Facilities Committee' for recycling program. Also thanked city for having the pool running this summer with swimming lessons available for local children. Asked what the process is to file a complaint.

** Talked about the Viking Crew's work on the three welcoming signs as you enter town. Asked for volunteers to help with signs **

Cheryl Sanders: Asked the PTF recommendation be emailed out. Suggested asking for help from community

Andy Peltier: Supports both Joel Anderson and the current police department. Asked the City not to adhere to City's insurance company's recommendation of eliminating the police department.

Ishmael Perez: Supports both Joel Anderson and the current police department. He considers Joel knowledgeable and an asset to the city.

Mary Estes: Interested in details regarding Insurance coverage. Appreciates the Police Department enforcing city codes.

John Snyder: Would like city to pursue relationship with Garfield. Also, would like to identify insurance company's recommendations.

IX. COMMITTEES:

Policy and Administration - Chair Barrington:

No report

Budget, Finance, & Major Acquisitions - Chair Bofenkamp:

Good start on budget, will meet next week. C. Barrington relayed info about in person budget workshops being offered in Colfax. C. Bofenkamp will research and make available.

Streets, Properties, & Facilities - Chair Deerkop:

No report. C. Brooks suggested that all green posts, ie; clock, street lamps, and clock be repainted

Personnel - Chair Brink:

No report

Water and Sewer - Chair Slinkard:

Meeting with Ecology to be scheduled in November.

Joint Fire Board - Chair Sena:

No report.

X. MAYORS REPORT: No report

XI. ALLOW PAYMENT OF BILLS: C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to allow the payment of bills; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Barrington. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** was passed.

The following checks were approved for payment:

Claims paid	Ck# 13425-13434	\$10,767.91
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XII. ADJOURN: C. Brooks introduced a **MOTION** to adjourn; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** was passed.

The council meeting Adjourned at 8:20 pm

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____