

**DRAFT ONLY. Without council review or approval.**

Palouse City Council  
Regular Council Meeting via ZOOM teleconferencing  
December 8, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Cook called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**ROLL CALL:** Council members present: Mary Welcome; Bill Slinkard; Tim Sievers; John Snyder; Jim Fielder; Katie Cooper. Staff present: Police Chief Jerry Neumann; Officer Joel Anderson; Public Works Supt. Mike Wolf; City Administrator Kyle Dixon; & Deputy Clerk Ann Thompson.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Councilmember Welcome **MOVED** to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of November 24, 2020. Councilmember Slinkard seconded. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:** Supt. Wolf submitted a written report.

**POLICE REPORT:** Chief Neumann submitted the police log.

There have been some queries about where people can legally target shoot. The Garfield Gun Club is a safe and legal place for target practice.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**

No significant updates to report. Working on various year-end items.

With the demise of the old red pickup, we will repurpose the 3<sup>rd</sup> PD patrol vehicle for Public Works use as the vehicle for WWTP Operator Fealy and also as a parts runner. We will credit the fair market value of the vehicle to the PD Vehicle and Equipment Fund.

CA Dixon is meeting with representatives from Ziplly Fiber tomorrow. No revised timeline yet for fiber service to homes. Will have an update at our next council meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**New owners of 305 E. Main (old gymnasium) to present plans for the building:** Connie Newman introduced the new co-owners David Birge and David Grizwald of Spokane and then gave a brief history of the building along with a slide show of the building as it currently exists. The building was originally built in 1928 as a gymnasium. There was even a roller-skating rink in the building in mid-1900's. The building is 10,000 sf, 5,000 on each level. The new owners want to have commercial on the ground floor and luxury but affordable 1 and 2 bedroom apartments upstairs. They are working with an architect on the plans, and a structural engineer to ensure the building is safe and legal before moving on to the renovation. They hope to accentuate the architectural appeal and preserve the historical integrity of the building.

**Ord. No. 1002 – setting new rates for Sewer, Sewer Reserve, and sewer connection fee, effective Jan. 1, 2021**

We have been talking about these increases for over a year now. This ordinance raises the fee from \$250 to \$1,825 to connect to the city's sewer system. The fee has been the same for over 40 years. The committee did a lot of research on neighboring cities and towns as well as those of similar size across the state to come up with this rough market average. Additionally, the base sewer rate and the sewer reserve rate will both increase \$2 per month, per unit. This increase is a necessity because it is a good faith effort to show ECY that the city is a partner for these upgrades and it is incumbent upon us to share the cost of these upgrades. We are taking appropriate steps to tackle these improvements. This ordinance also allows for sewer rate and fee increases to be done via council resolution instead of ordinance. Councilmember Slinkard **MOVED** to adopt Ordinance No. 1002. Councilmember Fielder seconded. Motion carried.

**Ord. No. 1003 – setting new water overage rate and water connection fee, effective Jan. 1, 2021**

This ordinance raises the fee to connect to the city's water supply system from \$200 to \$1,825. This fee at other entities can be as high as \$3,000 or more in some instances. The fee has been the same since its inception over 40 years ago. The committee did a lot of research on neighboring cities and towns as well as those of similar size across the state to come up with this figure. Additionally, this ordinance increases the water overage rate from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per each additional 100 cubic feet of water metered over the base 600 cubic feet. This shows that the city is taking steps to encourage water conservation. Base water rates are not increasing. This ordinance also allows for water rate and fee increases to be done via council resolution instead of ordinance. Councilmember Sievers **MOVED** to adopt Ordinance No. 1003. Councilmember Slinkard seconded. Motion carried.

Ord. No. 1004 – 2020 Budget amendments for Current Expense, Cemetery, and Sewer funds

This is standard end-of-year housekeeping to address budget issues we weren't anticipating. COVID related revenues and expenditures are included in this amendment. We spent more money than anticipated for labor on cemetery upkeep. We also hired two public works assistants which contributed to additional labor hours. Sewer had a lift pump purchase and a lift pump repair and other outside professional services we weren't anticipating in 2020. But we are still in the black. Councilmember Cooper **MOVED** to adopt Ordinance No. 1004. Councilmember Sievers seconded. Motion carried.

Ord. No. 1005 – 2021 Annual Budget

Looking at about 1.2 million in our reserves due to good stewardship of previous years administration. We made it through 2020 better than anticipated at the onset of the pandemic and have budgeted cautiously for 2021. CA Dixon sees Current Expense Fund ending about where it started in 2020. Councilmember Welcome **MOVED** to adopt Ordinance No. 1005. Councilmember Cooper seconded. Motion carried.

Whitman County Public Works Interlocal Agreement:

This agreement updates a previous version. It allows for Whitman County to provide labor, equipment, and materials as requested by the city, at very reasonable costs. Whitman County is a great partner. Overwhelmingly it is streets and related materials that Palouse uses them for most. The contract term is indefinite. Councilmember Sievers **MOVED** to adopt the interlocal agreement between WC and Palouse. Councilmember Snyder seconded. Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS/REQUESTS:**

Streets, Properties, & Facilities, Chair Sievers-

Requesting to use the RV Park for a drive-in movie night on December 19<sup>th</sup> to bring some much-needed Christmas cheer to the community. The storage building will be the screen. Palouse Federated Church is loaning their local radio transmitter for the audio. This will provide a covid-safe way for some entertainment. Councilmember Slinkard **MOVED** to allow the event. Councilmember Welcome seconded. Motion carried.

Joint Fire Board, Chair Fielder-

There were 7 fire calls and 10 EMS calls in October.

As of today, EMS has had 121 calls and fire has had 54 calls. It has been a busy year.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

The Heritage Park public restrooms were temporarily closed again due to Covid concerns. They are open again. Moving forward, the bathrooms will be open seven days a week, from 8 am to 7 pm. Public Works will unlock them every morning and the PD will lock them every evening at 7 pm. The city will look into a product such as Google Lock for the doors which could then be operated remotely by the PD and PW via their smart phones.

Emily Akin has submitted a letter of interest for the vacant spot on the Planning Commission. Mayor appointed her to the PC.

Councilmember Cooper **MOVED** to cancel the second meeting in December. Councilmember Fielder seconded. Motion carried.

**ALLOW PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Councilmember Sievers **MOVED** that the bills against the city be allowed. Councilmember Slinkard seconded. The motion carried.

The following checks are approved for payment:

Payroll Paid	11/30/2020	Ck. #11259-11268, 11291-11308 & EFT	\$54,293.11
Claims Paid	12/08/2020	Ck. #11290, 11309-11338 & EFT	\$98,538.92
VOID		Ck. 11269	

**ADJOURN:** Councilmember Fielder **MOVED** to adjourn. Councilmember Slinkard seconded the motion and the motion carried. The council meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_