

**City of Palouse**  
**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
*Tuesday, December 12, 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 Sievers called the meeting to order at 7 PM

Councilmembers\* present at the meeting were Sarah Bofenkamp, Bill Slinkard, Leslie Jo Sena, Sam Brink, Robert Brooks and Ann Barrington.

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

**I. ROLL CALL:** DC Gaber took attendance; C. Deerkop was absent.

C. Brink introduced a **MOTION** to excuse C. Deerkop’s absence from the meeting; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

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

**BUDGET HEARING: FINAL BUDGET**

CA La Follett Reported: 2024 preliminary budget starts with approved budget of 2023.

**A. GENERAL FUND**

1. Daily operating fund in good shape
  - a) Property taxes up
  - b) Investment Interest up
  - c) RV Park Funds up
  - d) Pool repairs still need to be covered

**B. WATER FUND**

1. \$100,000 yearly payments coming due in 2024
  - a) Will transfer from General Fund to cover initial payment
  - b) F. St. Bridge Project
  - c) Design and implementation of Looping Main Project
2. Fund not self-sustaining; 2025 will need funds to cover payments
  - a) Water system design loan will be paid off by end of 2024

**C. SEWER FUND**

1. Daily operating fund in good shape
2. Fund not self-sustaining due to loans
3. Reserve does not have enough funds for a new sewer plant.

Discussion regarding budget questions occurred. Budget hearing closed at 7:15 PM.

The regular council meeting convened at 7:15 PM.

## **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on November 28, 2023; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Bofenkamp. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

## **III. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Supt Mike Wolf**

- A. Water leaks fixed, all holding
- B. Standing STOP sign at Heritage Park being repaired at welding shop
- C. Roach Construction called to jet out three main sewer plugs,
  - 1. Problems caused by large items being flushed down toilets
- D. Filled Pool, tightened phalange that was leaking first
- E. County delivered two loads of sanding gravel
- F. Asphalt will be purchased to fill potholes in spring

## **IV. POLICE REPORT:** Officer Anderson attended meeting, no report as he just returned from vacation

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

### **A. CITY BUDGET:**

- 1. First Quarter will offer a Budget Workshop to council members
  - a) Describe funds
  - b) Explain terms
- 2. Many thanks to Michael Echanove for work on budget and St. Elmo.
- 3. City annual budget concludes on January 20, 2024

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to allow the payment of regularly occurring bills at the end of 2023; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Slinkard. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** was passed.

### **B. JOINT FIRE BOARD:**

- 1. City mailed out notification of change in response to 911 calls to all 99161 residents
- 2. Ben Barstow asked that city pays JFB end of year bills before next meeting due to their annual budget year ending on Dec. 31, 2023

### **C. ST. ELMO**

- 1. EPA Building Blocks Program
  - a) Provides trainings, workshops, and promotes economic development
  - b) Haley & Aldrich Engineering Firm suggested pursuing
  - c) Dept. of Ecology noted only two applications came in regionally
  - d) Application submitted

### **D. COVE ROAD SIDEWALK PROJECT:**

- 1. Funds currently included in city budget
  - a) Received \$24,651.00 grant to offset costs

### **E. CHRISTMAS TREE UPDATE:**

- 1. DP Gaber: Geist Farm will set up a large Christmas tree in front of the Caboose
  - a) Donated by Nelson Family Farm

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS: AFLAC Supplemental Insurance Resolution 2023-26**

C. Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to approve AFLAC Supplemental Insurance for city employees; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Slinkard. All Council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **A. PROPOSED RULES OF PROCEDURE:**

1. Discussion occurred regarding Rules of Procedure including:
  - a) Order of future meetings
  - b) Possible change in placement of open forum (4.1)
  - c) Mayor's report and council member concerns (4.4)
    - (1) Must change Palouse Municipal Code if changing order of business
  - d) Request to change meeting language of "Shall" meet twice a month
  - e) Public hearings
    - (1) Have organized approach to opposing sides stating their opinions
  - f) Quarterly building report
  - g) Will continue to review Rules of Procedure into the next year

### **B. COVE SIDEWALK PROJECT:**

1. TD&H submitted
  - a) Itemized list of costs
  - b) Service contract

C. Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to accept engineering services from TD&H; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brooks. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

### **C. WHITMAN COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY:**

1. Discussion occurred regarding the necessity of having an updated contract with WC Humane Society
  - a) Deemed important for ease of reuniting families and pets; also, willing to take any dog regardless of behavior.

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to approve contract with the Whitman County Humane Society, with the correction of 'Palouse' to replace 'Pullman' in text.; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Barrington. C. Brooks voted Nay, all others voted Yea, and the **MOTION** passed.

### **D. ORDINANCE No. 1026**

1. Amended Annual Budget

C. Bofenkamp introduced a **MOTION** to adopt amending the 2023 Annual Budget; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

### **E. ORDINANCE No. 1027**

1. Adopt 2024 Annual Budget

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to adopt 2024 Annual Budget ending December 31, 2024; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brooks. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

## VIII.COMMITTEES:

### Policy and Administration - Chair Barrington:

No report. C. Deerkop's input has been appreciated. He will be missed.

### Budget, Finance, & Major Acquisitions - Chair Bofenkamp:

No report. CA Follett's hard work on budget is much appreciated, as well as assistance from all others. Will be happy to educate anyone on budget matters in the new year.

### Streets, Properties, & Facilities - Chair Deerkop:

No report.

### Personnel - Chair Brink:

No report. Thank you to everyone

### Water and Sewer - Chair Slinkard:

Confident all is well going forward; there has been consistent progress regardless of challenges. Thanks to all.

### Joint Fire Board - Chair Sena:

No report

## IX.OPEN FORUM:

Cheryl Sanders: Asked what would happen if Ordinances and RCW's don't line up

Barb Hudson: Asked: 1. What is the deadline for cutting trees on Shady Lane. 2. What will the City do with old cop car. 3. For more police presence on Main St. downtown; nights and weekends

Angie Griner: Would like to celebrate volunteerism on a monthly and yearly basis. Approached by citizens concerned about committee appointments and conflict of interest. Asked if City would consider doing live recordings of council meetings.

Dana Anderson: suggested adding a QR code for accessing council minutes. Asked to have police schedule include evening hours, nights, and weekends.

## X.MAYORS REPORT:

### A. SPIRIT OF PALOUSE AWARDS: Newly Established

1. Recognizing Volunteers
2. TD&H and Varela both funding first year celebration
3. Date and time TBA

### B. Thank you's to outgoing council members

1. Bill Slinkard: "showed me the ropes and has been a good mentor to both myself and many others on City Council through the years - many thanks for your eight years of service."
2. Sam Brink: Thank you for your service
3. Travis Deerkop: Thank you for your service

### C. Deadline for new council member application Friday Jan 5, 2024

## XI. ALLOW PAYMENT OF BILLS:

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to allow the payment of bills, including JFB 2023 bills; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brooks. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** was passed.

The following checks were approved for payment:

Claims paid	Ck# 13584-13585; 13591-13621	\$50,187.28
Payroll paid	Ck# 13566-13583; 13586-13590	\$53,979.08
Total:		\$ 104,166.36

**XII. ADJOURN:** C. Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to adjourn; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brink. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** was passed.

The council meeting Adjourned at 9:10 PM.

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

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

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_