

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: City Administrator Kyle Dixon; Deputy Clerk Ann Thompson; Police Chief Jerry Neumann; Public Works Supt. Mike Wolf.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Councilmember Sievers **MOVED** to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of January 26, 2021. Councilmember Welcome seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Supt. Wolf submitted a written report. Check valve on chlorinator and then the pump went bad last week. Everything has been replaced but we need to purchase a spare.

Phone line going into the well is working again. Got a quote from Bigfoot Technologies for alarms for about \$2,700. They will install a box to communicate emergency alerts to our Public Works phones.

Hoping to have the sander up and running by end of next week.

POLICE REPORT: Chief Neumann submitted the police log. Covid numbers are down about 50%.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

CA Dixon has resumed discussions with Munir Daud & Associates to put the Palouse Cove Sidewalk Project out for bids again soon. We put this project to bid last year but wound up rejecting all bids due to cost vs projected budget. We have eliminated the block wall along Palouse Cove, opting for winding the sidewalk more with the terrain, away from the road, which will cut a substantial cost. The rapid flashing beacon won't be included either but we can purchase one later and have our Public Works install. We will present final plans to council to put out for bid likely at our next meeting.

NW Fiber LLC is building out their fiber network in town. Originally, they planned to begin micro-trenching this week, but weather has pushed it to next week for now. We will send out information to the community to connect to their network when it is provided to us. Zipy Fiber, who initially planned to install fiber last year, is also scheduled to begin their buildout in town sometime this spring.

We sold the '95 Ford F250 last week for \$400.

Sumner foot bridge inspection is scheduled for this summer. In the meantime, Public Works will be replacing boards and securing railing. The bridge may be closed to the public intermittently while these repairs take place.

The Washington State Legislature is currently in session. Early feedback on proposed budget indicates that State Shared Revenues to cities will remain stable which is always good news. Cities will likely see another allocation of COVID relief but it's too early to predict size and scope. They are also looking into ways to expand cities' use of Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) funds. Palouse currently has roughly \$140k in this fund. Major area of focus for legislators is social justice and policing policy reform. Again, too early to speculate which bills will make it to the floor for a vote. CA Dixon will provide an update when we have a better idea of which bills are likely to advance. The 2021 session concludes on April 25th.

On January 11th, the Washington State COVID-19 Roadmap to Recovery plan was unveiled. Palouse is in the East Region, which is currently still in Phase 1 of reopening. In order to advance to Phase 2, a region must show improving trends in 3 of the following 4 metrics: Case rates, Hospital Admission rates, Percent ICU occupancy, and Percent positivity. Currently the East region is showing improvements in Hospital Admission rate and Percent ICU occupancy. The next update will be reported on February 12th for potential phase movement beginning February 15th if the East region meets 3 of the 4 criteria.

The City of Palouse is still accepting letters of interest for vacated council position #6 until Tuesday, February 23rd at 5PM.

DC Thompson processed 13 building permits in last two weeks, 12 of which are for new houses.

TD&H touched base with council, continuing to remain on standby for the completion of the Palouse Water System Improvements project. Palouse will reach out to them when we are ready to reengage but there are too many other mandatory and more pressing projects going on at this time. It is not in our best interest right now to go after any major water improvements because we aren't scoring well on funding applications because our water system is adequate. We'll look to finalize main upgrades on Church Street and Culton Street this Spring after the Dept of Health gets back to us regarding specific requirements.

OLD BUSINESS:

Varela Engineering to discuss design phase funding for WWTP: John Patrouch from Varela was present to give overview. We summarized preferred path forward as discussed in our last meeting. Palouse likes the idea of value engineering to review work done to date to see if another firm can identify any less-costly alternatives to comply with upcoming NPDES permits. It is rare for ECY to offer this alternative. We also want to demonstrate to ECY that we corrected the funding application and would like them to re-evaluate it. A comment letter is due to ECY on Feb. 14th. The letter will ask to extend the 2024 temperature permit deadline to coincide with our Dissolved Inorganic Nitrate permit scheduled for 2030. The letter will also request ECY expedite this process to show good faith on the part of the city.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/REQUESTS:

Policy & Administration, Chair Cooper- Committee met to preliminarily discuss Palouse's solicitor's permit ordinance. There seems to be a large percentage of Palouse residents who aren't comfortable with for-profit, door-to-door solicitors. Do we want to make changes? Just eliminate for-profit soliciting completely? Put a moratorium on soliciting during pandemic? Committee will continue researching the legalities. Committee also discussed options to address the ongoing feral cat problem in Palouse. Humanely trapping, then spaying/neutering and rereleasing is one solution. Monthly volunteers will be needed. Committee is still exploring the potential of a policy forbidding unfixed cats outdoors. Topic is still being researched.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor sat in on Pullman Regional Hospital's executive board meeting on the topic of boundary annexation. Their president acknowledged receiving our letter and indicated that Palouse's concerns are valid but they are still pointing to the upcoming November election for annexing Palouse into their hospital tax boundary. This summer is our community's only opportunity to voice concerns. Mayor or a council representative will continue to attend the meetings so Palouse is represented.

Mayor would like to create a Palouse Youth Advisory Board which would have a single representative attend one of our monthly meetings.

We are still moving forward with pool facility upgrades. Mayor and staff met with Fast Signs today to continue with new and improved graphics/signage at the pool.

The city received a letter of interest from Jay Iverson for the Board of Adjustment vacancy. Mayor Cook appointed Jay Iverson to the BOA. Council approved.

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

The following checks are approved for payment:

Payroll Paid	1/31/2021	Ck. #11416-11431 & EFT	\$40,558.01
Claims Paid	2/09/2021	Ck. #11432-11450 & EFT	\$ 5,964.25

ADJOURN: Councilmember Fielder **MOVED** to adjourn. Councilmember Snyder seconded. The motion carried. The council meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.

APPROVED: _____ ATTEST: _____