

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

ROLL CALL: Council members present: Chris Cook; Bill Slinkard; Tim Sievers; John Snyder; Rick Wekenman; Mark Wilcomb; Katie Cooper. Staff present: Police Chief Jerry Neumann; Officer Joel Anderson; Attorney Eric Hanson & City Administrator Kyle Dixon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Councilmember Wekenman **MOVED** to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of July 9, 2019 as written. Councilmember Slinkard seconded and the motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Supt Griffin submitted a written report.

POLICE REPORT: Chief Neumann and Officer Anderson continue to split shifts.
-Speed patrols continue on south entrance to Palouse.
-Working on removing a goat from south hill that is forbidden in R1 by code.
-Four call outs last week.

JOINT FIRE BOARD REPORT: Budget is where it should be this time of year. No concerns. National night out in Palouse is Tuesday, Aug 6th at the city park. Newly repaired pumper tanker is working well. Most July training time was spent on water drills and testing pumps.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

-CA Dixon and PW Supt Griffin are finalizing a minimum price bid for the spare fence and street light equipment in the flat house. CA Dixon would like council to surplus these items. Councilmember Slinkard **MOVED** to declare the fence and streetlight equipment in the flat house as a surplus to city needs. Councilmember Sievers seconded and the motion carried. CA Dixon will advertise as soon as details are finalized.
-On July 10th the Planning Commission approved a short plat (minor subdivision) application from Palouse Builders LLC in the Amber Ridge development. This short plat will provide more options for affordable housing in Palouse now that the owners will be able to pass title on each unit of the duplexes that were approved for construction last year.
-The Palouse Music Festival is this Saturday, July 27th from 11AM to 8PM at the city park.
-The last day of the season for the pool is Saturday, August 17th.
-On June 6th, 2019, CA Dixon sent a notice to Alex Anderson, the owner of Palouse Welding, informing him of some complaints that the city has received regarding their outdoor storage of equipment and related Palouse Municipal Code violations. CA Dixon is concerned with how the code is written and applicability, citing PMC 8.12.024. Alex and Marty Anderson explained their circumstances to council and how fencing around their property would result in a significant burden on their day-to-day operations. Mayor Echanove stated the benefits of having Palouse Welding as an anchor business that has been in town for more than fifty years. Mayor explained that he was on council when this ordinance was passed and he would like to go through his old minutes to provide more information about this matter at a subsequent council meeting. Council thanked Marty and Alex Anderson for their work done to date in cleaning up the site. Councilmember Wekenman suggests that the city push back the stated compliance date of August 7th 2019 until after the harvest season when business would be slower. Councilmember Sievers **MOVED** to postpone the compliance date from August 7th 2019 until October 9th 2019. Councilmember Wilcomb seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Councilmember Wekenman stressed that work to clean up the site needs to continue. Councilmember Snyder **MOVED** to have the Policy Committee take a further look at the ordinance for permitted outdoor storage and make a recommendation to council no later than October 8th to more clearly define items therein. Councilmember Cook seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 982 "17.06 Nonconforming Uses and Buildings": Mayor read aloud the ordinance in its entirety. This ordinance tightens up Chapter 17 zoning code to phase out nonconforming uses with respect to buildings and structures, both residential and otherwise, essentially preventing nonconforming uses from being replaced with other nonconforming uses. Discussion ensued about the clarity of the ordinance and definitions. Council would like to see Atty. Hanson simplify the ordinance. No action taken.

Resolution No. 2019-06: Mayor read aloud the resolution in its entirety. This resolution puts on the November ballot a proposition for a one-year excess property tax levy in the amount of \$44,000 for street improvements and street oiling. No change from last year's street levy. Councilmember Wekenman **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2019-06 as presented. Councilmember Cooper seconded and the motion carried.

Resolution No. 2019-07: Mayor read aloud the resolution in its entirety. This resolution puts on the November ballot a proposition for a one-year excess property tax levy of \$34,000 for operation and maintenance of the swimming pool. No change from last year's pool levy. Councilmember Slinkard **MOVED** to adopt Resolution No. 2019-07. Councilmember Cook seconded. Councilmember Wekenman discussed the possibility of removing this levy at some point in the future if the city ever has the monetary capacity to cover these costs without a levy. Councilmember Cook reminded council that this levy does not cover all the pool expenses and all costs in excess of the levy come out of the city's current expense budget. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/REQUESTS:

Personnel & Pool, Chair Cook- Pool season is coming to an end. Had one minor accident and one report of a patron's stolen phone in July. Pool Manager will provide an end of year report.

Policy & Administration, Chair Wilcomb-

-Policy Committee discussed adoption of city flag proposed by Moses Boone. Ordinance is being prepared. Committee would like to unveil the flag during Palouse Days.

-Councilmember Wilcomb read aloud the following statement pertaining to the ongoing compensation matter with the Palouse PD stemming from a staff shortage beginning in June.

“The Policy and Administration Committee has spent the past two weeks researching the questions assigned to us at the last City Council meeting. We spoke with the City Attorney, City Administrator, Mayor, and City employees. We also researched the codes, policies and ordinances of comparable cities.

*Our report tonight is **not** a comment on any person's competence or job performance.*

Most of the misunderstandings and disagreements we are facing result from a lack of clear, written policies duly adopted by the City Council and applied to all employees and residents.

All decisions we make regarding city policies must be handled in an informed, thoughtful and strategic manner. For the benefit of our employees and our city residents, we must not make emotion-based, short-term policy decisions that could result in long-term, unintended outcomes.

We recommend to the Council that all Committees of the City Council work together to create a modern, comprehensive policy and operations manual for the city. Each committee will handle their area of responsibility, under the general coordination of the Policy Committee. The manual should cover all departments and all services of the city.

There are many excellent resources already available that we can draw from to speed the creation of this manual. The process will give us an opportunity to fully address the issues discussed in previous meetings, and will help us anticipate and avoid future issues by looking at the best practices of other successful cities comparable to Palouse, and to consider the input of our citizens.

Our goal is to complete this process by the end of this calendar year. Until the city can implement a measured, strategic approach to clarifying and documenting its policies, we strongly recommend to the Council that all current city policies and employee compensation remain as-is.”

Council indicated that they need to make a final determination on which laws are applicable and adopt a city-wide policy accordingly. Policy Committee received input from attorney. Atty Hanson explained further which laws are applicable in various circumstances and case law that has driven these determinations. Discussion ensued on what constitutes compensable on-call time and the hardship that the recent, unexpected staffing shortage has had on the PD. Chief Neumann would like council to consider that any policy relating to compensation be retroactive to June 15, 2019. Councilmember Wekenman **MOVED** to approve a \$5 on-call, per hour payment for officers retroactive to June 15th until a new on-call policy is formally adopted. CA Dixon indicated that in terms of our annual budget this arrangement is sustainable in the short term. Councilmember Wilcomb seconded and the motion carried.

OPEN FORUM:

-Cheryl Johnson is requesting a moratorium on new construction on the south side of Palouse until the water pressure problems have been addressed. Council informed her that the city currently has a contract with TDH engineering for water system improvements and that this is one of the main objectives of their work. Planning Commission will be notified of her request.

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

The following checks are approved for payment:

Claims Paid 7/23/19 Ck. #10193-10209 & EFT \$28,221.99

ADJOURN: Councilmember Sievers **MOVED** to adjourn. Councilmember Cooper seconded the motion and the motion carried. The council meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

APPROVED: _____ ATTEST: _____