



PALOUSE WASHINGTON

City of Palouse
City Council Minutes
March 11, 2025
Palouse City Hall
120 E Main Street
Palouse, WA 99161

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Tim Sievers called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Councilmembers present: John Snyder, Angie Griner, Molly Quigley, Robert Brooks

Councilmembers absent: Leslie Sena, Rainy Anderson, Ann Barrington

City Staff Present: City Administrator Misty La Follett

Councilmember Brooks moved to excuse Councilmembers Sena, Anderson and Barrington from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Snyder and unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Council Meeting - February 11, 2025: Councilmember Griner moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Brooks and unanimously approved.

Regular Council Meeting - February 25, 2025: Councilmembers Griner, Quigley and Brooks requested corrections. Councilmember Quigley moved to approve the minutes with the proposed corrections. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Snyder and unanimously approved.

OPEN FORUM

Councilmember Griner moved to waive the allotted 15-minute limit for Open Forum, allowing 3 minutes per speaker. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Quigley and unanimously approved.

John Bofenkamp, Chris Bofenkamp, Robin Woltering, Cheryl Sanders and Vanessa Moore expressed concerns about Palouse's proposed cell tower and its proximity to their homes.

Marv Pillers spoke in support of the cell tower as a needed improvement for first responders and public safety.

Steve McGehee recommended the Council appoint a Parliamentarian to ensure meetings run smoothly and efficiently.

Katherine McGehee complemented the City staff on their handling of heavy workloads during the current personnel shortage.

Written comments submitted by Jim Fielder and Tracy Lee Sievers in support of the proposed cell tower were read by City Administrator Misty La Follett.

PRESENTATION

Renee Fontaine and Mike Matthesen from Verizon/Horizon presented an update addressing questions about cellular tower installation, safety standards, operating procedures, noise levels, and compliance with governing regulations. A question-and-answer period with the Council followed. The Council then allowed questions from audience members. Presentation and questions concluded at 8:30 PM.

Councilmember Griner moved to allow a 5-minute recess at 8:30 PM. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Quigley and unanimously approved.

Mayor Tim Sievers called the meeting back to order at 8:35 PM.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

The scales used to weigh Chlorine for the sewer plant need replacement. The City Administrator will be sending the Council pricing and specifications for industry-standard replacements.

Councilmember Brooks offered to research costs for an emergency backup generator to be installed on at least one City water well. He will bring information to the next Council meeting.

A new wastewater plant operator (Chad Fox) has been hired as of March 11. Search to fill vacant Public Works position continues.

POLICE REPORT

Officer Anderson submitted a written report (attached)

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Work is continuing on grant applications for refurbishment of City basketball courts. Making good progress on the project.

Update and training on water funds will be postponed to the next Council meeting so that all Council members can participate.

OLD BUSINESS

The Council continued discussion regarding the proposed cellular tower. Mayor Sievers read a letter from Councilmember Anderson expressing her concerns about the project. No final action was taken so that the full Council can participate at a later meeting.

The Council continued discussions about the most effective ways to manage police services in Palouse, working in cooperation with the Whitman County Sheriff's Office. Additional discussion will continue at a later meeting so that all Council members can be present.

PARTNERS FOR RURAL WASHINGTON

Jody Opheim, Executive Director of Partners for Rural Washington, briefed the Council about their organization's role helping rural communities find funding opportunities through grants and other sources. They are a non-profit organization. They would like to work with Palouse as one of the early pilot programs. Excellent potential for helping fund key City priorities. The Council will consider a Memorandum of Understanding with Partners for Rural Washington at the next Council meeting. More details at partnersruralwa.org

COMMITTEE REPORTS

No committees presented reports.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Quigley would like to see vacant committee assignments filled as soon as possible.

Councilmember Griner would like the Council to consider eliminating the Policy & Administration Committee and having each committee work on their own policies. Too big a workload for one committee alone.

Councilmember Griner suggested establishing formal office hours for the Mayor, with a tool allowing Council members and citizens to schedule appointments.

Councilmember Quigley asked if the Council could look at making Council meetings available over Zoom. She also agreed that policy work should be distributed, and Policy & Administration replaced by a Communications Committee or other committee addressing current City needs.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Hiring Update – Chad Fox has been hired to fill the wastewater treatment position. Search is continuing for vacant Public Works position. Search is underway to fill Deputy Clerk position. Hired Mark Wilcomb to provide temporary office support to the City Administrator until the Deputy Clerk position is filled.

Continuing work with Varela and Partners NW to better coordinate and avoid duplication.

The 24/25 Federal Budget appropriation that included some funds for the wastewater project is delayed in Congress. Will have to see if it makes it into the current stopgap budget. Three federal funding requests for the wastewater project are pending in the 25/26 Federal Budget request.

Appraisal is pending on land for the wastewater project. Will be scheduled soon.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilmember Brooks moved to allow the payment of bills. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Griner and unanimously approved.

Payroll Paid	Check #14410 to 14417, & 14439 to 14440	\$12,837.49
Claims Paid	Check #14418 to 14438	\$32,518.51
	Total	\$45,356.00

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Griner moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Snyder and unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting March 11, 2025:

Fifteen calls for service to include five ordinance related calls.

One call out.

250226-01 – While on patrol I received a call from GarPal admin staff requesting I respond to the school in regards to drug/drug paraphernalia located on a student. I responded and learned a student was caught in possession of two vapes, a vape pen, two empty hash oil cartridges and two folding knives. I took custody of all the items and placed them into evidence locker #2 at Palouse PD. The student was subsequently suspended for five days. The knives were later returned to a guardian of the student.

250226-02 – While on patrol I learned an elderly male Palouse resident had been driving his vehicle on public roadways with a driver license that had expired over two years ago. I made contact with the male and advised him if I observed him driving again without a driver license his vehicle would be impounded. I worked with the elderly male's son over the phone to arrange for his father to make arrangements to attempt to renew his license in person as Washington State law requires drivers over seventy to take an in person vision test before authorizing renewal. On 3-5-25 I learned the male had successfully passed his renewal test and was in full compliance of the law.

250303-01 – While on patrol, I was contacted by Public Works Superintendent Mike Wolf who advised the Heritage Park women's restroom soap dispenser had been opened, the soap box removed and soap dispensed on the floor by the door. It appears no permanent damage to the soap dispenser was sustained. There is no suspect or witness information.

250303-02 – While on patrol I observed a residence with two vehicles that appeared to meet the definition of junk vehicle as stated in Palouse Municipal Code 8.36.020. The vehicles were parked in the yard and had expired tabs over two years for both. I called the registered owner and he stated the vehicles were operable but just needed a charge of the old battery or new battery installed in them. I gave the home owner a week to show me the vehicles were operable and therefore in compliance with the ordinance.

250303-03 – While on patrol I received a call from an employee at the grocery store advising a large red Chevrolet Express Van drove south on the sidewalk in front of the store and was last seen driving towards Potlach. Video from the store was unable to get a clear shot of the license plate. Further investigation allowed me to locate the vehicle in Potlach and get the license plate. I was able to locate the registered owner and driver in Potlach. The driver admitted to the violation stating he was blocked in by a large truck unloading items and he had to get back to work. I advised the driver that if anyone had been able to positively identify him as the driver he would have been charged with Reckless Driving and I would be impounding his vehicle. I told the driver if he ever finds himself blocked in to call the police for help in maneuvering around the traffic hazard.

250303-04 – While on patrol I observed five tires and two inoperable snowmobiles parked in the yard of a residence on the north hill. Palouse Municipal Code 8.12.020 prohibits the "placing of wrecked or abandoned unlicensed machinery of any kind or any part thereof." I contacted the resident and gave

him a week to remove the snowmobiles OR place a fence around the property so as to screen the items from view from the public roadway. Follow up will be conducted.

On 2-27-25 I packaged and mailed off via UPS Palouse PD sixth MED-Project box full of expired and unused prescription medications. This continues to be a massively popular program for Palouse residents. I must reiterate to all citizens – DO NOT PLACE OVER THE COUNTER SUPPLEMENTS AND/OR VITAMINS INTO THE DROP BOX. Those can be thrown away into your residential garbage.

On 3-5-25 and 3-6-25 I escorted both the GarPal High School girls and boys basketball team buses as they departed school en route Spokane for state tournaments. The school athletic director requested the escort. This has proven to be a customary tradition for all GarPal athletic teams that qualify for state tournament status. This allows the community an opportunity to rally their support on Main Street, wish them good luck, congratulate them on their success so far and send them off.

On 3-5-25 Palouse PD completed and submitted our 2025 CJIS Technical Security Audit along with supporting documentation. This is required every three years. Whitcom IT Manager Brenden McNannay is our point person for this audit as we partner with Whitcom through an inter-agency agreement.

On 3-11-25 all Whitman County Law Enforcement Terminal Agency Coordinators will participate in a ZOOM meeting with Washington State Patrol ACCESS Instructor to prepare for each departments triennial audit. The instructor will be conducting the in person audits in May.

On 3-13-25 I will be meeting with Whitman County Emergency Management Deputy Director Matt Floyd and all Whitman County law enforcement leaders as we prepare for the Active Shooter Functional Exercise in June 2025. This meeting will focus on scoping/planning for the June event.

03/06/25
12:00

Palouse Police Department
Law Incident Summary Report, by Incident Number

1100
Page: 1

Number	Time and Date	Nature	Address	Loctn	Dsp
Agency: Palouse Police Department					
250224-01	18:00:16 02/24/25	Noise Complaint	S		INA
250225-01	08:03:54 02/25/25	Welfare Check	S		INA
250225-02	19:46:08 02/25/25	Welfare Check	N		INA
250226-01	11:34:43 02/26/25	Drugs	N		INA
250226-02	14:30:45 02/26/25	Traffic Offense	N		INA
250303-01	07:28:37 03/03/25	Mal Mischief	S		INA
250303-02	08:21:05 03/03/25	Code Violations	N		INA
250303-03	13:53:24 03/03/25	Traffic Offense	S		INA
250303-04	14:36:30 03/03/25	Code Violations	N		INA
250304-01	14:58:28 03/04/25	Animal Problem	N		INA
250305-01	11:16:38 03/05/25	Fraud	N		INA
250305-02	14:02:41 03/05/25	Escort Other	N		INA
250305-03	14:33:03 03/05/25	Animal Problem	N		INA
250305-04	17:37:26 03/05/25	Traffic Offenses	S		INA
250306-01	08:37:15 03/06/25	Escort Other	N		INA
Total Incidents for This Agency:				15	

Total Incidents for This Report: 15

Report Includes:

All dates greater than `00:00:00 02/20/25`
All agencies matching `PAPD`
All officers
All dispositions
All natures
All locations
All cities matching `PALOUSE`
All clearance codes
All observed offenses
All reported offenses
All offense codes
All circumstance codes

*** End of Report /tmp/rpts1a5Wi-rplwizr.r3_1 ***
