



**City of Palouse
City Council Minutes
December 23, 2025
Palouse City Hall
120 E Main Street
Palouse, WA 99161**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Sievers called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Councilmembers present: John Snyder, Danny Mullendore, Leslie Sena, Rainy Anderson, Katherine Keener

Councilmembers absent: Molly Quigley, Jacquelyn Huff

City Staff Present: City Administrator (CA) Misty La Follett, Deputy Clerk (DC) Stephanie Welch

Councilmember Anderson made a motion to excuse Councilmembers Quigley and Huff from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Keener and unanimously approved. (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilmember Sena moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting – December 9th, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Keener and approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

Councilmember Anderson moved to approve the minutes of the Special Council Meeting – December 16th, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sena and approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-Keener).

Councilmember Mullendore made a motion to amend the agenda and move the Open Forum to right after the Payment of Bills. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sena and approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

Councilmember Mullendore made a motion to amend the agenda and add an item to the agenda to discuss changing open forum to a written format and to be put under “New Business”. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Keener and approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Public Works Superintendent Wolf submitted a written report (attached).

Councilmember Sena reported wind damage to the highway sign at the SR 272/Division intersection on the way to Colfax, noting the sign appears to have snapped off. (CA) La Follett will have Mike Wolf contact the appropriate state road crew and will also send an email regarding the damage.

POLICE REPORT

None.

CITY ADMININSTRATOR REPORT

(CA) La Follett reported working on year-end and will have more to share next meeting.

OLD BUSINESSOrdinance 1041 – 2025 Budget Amendment:

Mayor Sievers commented that the Ordinance didn't pass last meeting with only Y-3 and 1-N.

(CA) La Follett noted that the 2025 Budget Amendment had no changes made, and that the 2026 Budget has the changes from the last meeting updated.

Councilmember Sena made a motion to consider Ordinance 1041 as read in. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Keener and was unanimously approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

Mayor Sievers noted that Ordinance 1041 is considered read in.

Councilmember Anderson made a motion to approve Ordinance 1041 – 2025 Budget Amendment. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sena and was unanimously approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

Ordinance 1042 – Approving 2026 Budget:

Councilmember Sena made a motion to consider Ordinance 1042 as read in. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Keener and was unanimously approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

Mayor Sievers noted that Ordinance 1042 is considered read in.

Councilmember Keener made a motion to approve Ordinance 1042 – 2026 Budget. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mullendore and was unanimously approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

NEW BUSINESSChanging Open Forum:

Councilmember Mullendore reported that under RCW 42.30.240, public comment is not required to be taken orally and may instead be accepted as written testimony, provided the public is given adequate time to submit comments. He noted that written comments create a clearer record, allow more focused council action, and make it easier to fully review and address public input than when comments are received orally while notes are being taken.

Councilmember Sena stated that accepting written public comments is preferable because the public comment period is not intended for back-and-forth questions and answers, and written submissions such as emails allow questions to be answered more effectively outside the meeting.

Councilmember Anderson explained that this proposal is intended to make meetings more efficient and allow Councilmembers to address questions without appearing unresponsive when they cannot engage in dialogue during public comment.

Councilmember Andersson then made the following motion:

To strike rule #6 entirely from the Palouse City Council procedures, replacing it with,
“Citizens wishing to state their concerns to the City Council shall do so in written form,

either electronically or by hard copy to the City Administrator. Until such time as the Council deems appropriate, verbal comments by spectators at council meetings are prohibited.”; and

To strike rules 7.1 through 7.4, and 7.6 through 7.7 along with any other references in the procedure policies mentioning open forum or public speech.

The motion was seconded by Councilmember Keener, and pursuant to section 11.2 of the Council Rules of Procedure, Mayor Sievers tabled the motion until the next regularly scheduled Council Meeting on January 13, 2026.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget, Finance, Major Acquisitions, Chair Anderson – No report.

Streets, Property, & Facilities, Chair Mullendore – A tombstone at the cemetery was blown off its support during recent wind and can likely be repaired without major work. (CA) La Follett is coordinating with Mike Wolf to repair the tombstone and obtain quotes for a tree that came down at the back of the cemetery and damaged a nearby resident’s vinyl fence, with those quotes to be brought to council, likely at the next meeting.

Personnel Committee, Chair Leslie Sena – No report.

Water & Sewer, Chair John Snyder – No report.

Policy & Administration, – No chair, no report.

Joint Fire Board, Chair Molly Quigley – Absent, no report.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Anderson reported receiving questions about overtime exemptions and summarized research on exemptions under the Fair Labor Standards Act. She noted that the City Administrator position does not automatically qualify for the professional exemption, which applies only when specific duties and advanced knowledge requirements are met, and that job title alone is insufficient; copies of the information are available for anyone with questions.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Sievers reported having a meeting with Paul Kimmell from Avista yesterday. They caught up on some city matters and discussed the windstorm and how we had fared through it all.

(CA) La Follett noted that senior meals had been cut and recognized Paul Kimmell for securing a significant donation from Avista to continue the program for a period of time, noting that John Bofenkamp was very pleased with the donation amount.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilmember Keener moved to allow the payment of bills. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mullendore and was unanimously approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

Payroll Paid	EFT + Check # 14982-14995	\$8,226.18
Claims Paid	EFT + Check # 14996-15005	\$26,023.65
	Total	\$34,249.83

OPEN FORUM

Councilmember Mullendore made a motion to extend the Open Forum by three minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Snyder and unanimously approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0).

Paula Fealy reported discrepancies in the proposed budget transfers between the General Fund, JFB, and the Pool Fund, resulting in imbalanced figured compared to prior versions. She also questioned approval of Ordinance 1042 on an imbalanced budget and noted unexplained changes to proposed revenues, expenditures, and transfer amounts between the General Fund and JFB.

Carmen Bolyard thanked Councilmember Sena for responding to emails and expressed concern that the combined Treasurer/City Administrator workload is too great for one person, recommending it be split into two positions. She also reported concerns with transaction coding.

Michael Echanove commented that the current budget process has been difficult for council, staff, and the public, and encouraged continued in-person public engagement rather than moving solely to written comments. He noted that past financial problems at another local institution might have been avoided with greater engagement and oversight, and spoke in favor of a full financial audit.

Darcy Bagott thanked and expressed appreciation for the council's work and voiced support for conducting a financial audit to provide a clear baseline.

Steve McGehee presented councilmembers with a rough draft resolution regarding the Department of Ecology's "one-size-fits-all" requirements on small cities and requested that the full text be included in the meeting minutes. He stated his intent to seek broader public and media attention to the issue and encouraged the council to consider the draft in an upcoming meeting. He also complimented Councilmember Snyder's legal expertise, and expressed support for a full financial audit.

Linda McWilliams stated that attending the meeting has been an interesting learning experience in how local government operates and thanked the council.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Sena moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Anderson and was unanimously approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

Public Works Superintendent Council Report
Date: December 22, 2025

WATER:

Did a water meter investigation last Tuesday, determining the water was ground water going over the top of the meter box and a tree dripping on it overhead.

We had another meter box full of water at Tamarack and 272. Ground water was the cause of that as well.

SEWER:

We will do samples today instead of Wednesday because the lab is closed for the last 3 days of this week.

STREETS:

We escaped well with all the wind over the last 2 weeks. Only had a few branches and a small tree fell across Myott Street.

We had a couple banner rods break off the light poles during the windstorm.

There was a tree that came down across the highway on 272 early Wednesday morning.

SHOP:

Mike has been servicing equipment as he has time.

CEMETERY:

We had a trunk of a large pine tree break. It took out the neighbor's new fence. Wilson Tree is coming to remove it when they get caught up from the windstorm.

PARK:

We had a large branch come down and it covered ¼ Of West Main Street.

FIRE STATION:

The boiler for the building will probably have to be replaced soon. It keeps throwing error codes and when it does the boiler stops working.