



**City of Palouse
City Council Minutes
February 24, 2026
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 PM

Councilmembers present: John Snyder, Danny Mullendore, Bill Slinkard, Rainy Anderson, Jacquelyn Huff, Megan Cuellar

Councilmembers absent:

City Staff Present: Deputy Clerk (DC) Stephanie Welch

Mayor Sievers announced Councilmember Sena's resignation effective immediately.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilmember Anderson moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting – January 27, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cuellar and approved (Y-5 | N-0 | A-Mullendore).

OPEN FORUM

Bruce Pemberton expressed concern about the proposed change to limit the open forum to a written format and suggested forming an ad hoc committee to review how other towns of similar size handle such issues. He also provided an update on Shady Lane, noting that several burn piles (3-4 of the piles) are being addressed.

Barb Hodson expressed concern about the proposed change eliminating in-person questions. She urged the council and mayor to prioritize representing the citizens of Palouse and to reconsider the policy.

Paula Fealy submitted letter to be read aloud, which was read aloud by Mayor Sievers.

Carmen Bolyard expressed concern on the 2025 budget, stating that it was overspent and cautioned that such overspending could create legal issues.

Cheryl Sanders acknowledged missing many meetings over the past year but noted increased stress and lack of connection among council members. She emphasized that everyone cares about Palouse and encouraged putting citizens first, working together, and supporting one another through current budget and infrastructure challenges.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

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

POLICE REPORT

Officer Anderson submitted a written report (attached).

CITY ADMININSTRATOR REPORT

Mayor Sievers reported that engineers from the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) will visit to review the recently denied sidewalk project application and provide guidance on how to improve it for future submission.

(DC) Welch reported updated warranty information from Spokane Electric regarding the solar panel project, noting the new data logger includes a 5-year warranty and a 1-year workmanship warranty. A quote of \$1,568 was provided for reference, and approval was requested.

Councilmember Anderson made a motion to approve the purchase and quote from Spokane Electric to replace the data logger at the solar plant. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mullendore, and was unanimously approved (Y-6, N-0, A-0).

OLD BUSINESS

Contract with WA Commerce Accepting Growth Management Act Periodic Update Grant:

Mayor Sievers reported that the City received a Growth Management Act Periodic Update Grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce to support required updates to the Comprehensive Plan. The grant includes two funding cycles: one through June 2026 and an additional \$10,000 for July 2026-June 2027. The funds will assist with updating critical areas ordinance and SEPA checklists and integrating related policies. Council discussion confirmed the funds will primarily support the Planning Commission's efforts.

Councilmember Snyder made a motion to authorize the mayor to sign the contract accepting the Washington Department of Commerce Growth Management Act Periodic Update Grant. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cuellar, and was unanimously approved (Y-6, N-0, A-0).

Resolution 2026-06: Amending Public Comments:

Resolution 2026-06 was discussed regarding possible amendments to public comment procedures. Councilmembers reviewed concerns about hostile and defamatory remarks during oral public comments, noting prior council resignations related to meeting hostility and the need to protect staff, council, and the City from further disruption and potential liability. Multiple members discussed a desire to balance open citizen participation with clear, enforceable rules, including options such as limiting comments to agenda-related items, establishing written complaint procedures, or creating a limited public forum structure. Several councilmembers voiced discomfort with fully eliminating oral public comment and emphasized finding less restrictive alternatives that maintain accessibility for residents while ensuring orderly meetings. After discussion, action on Resolution 2026-06 was tabled.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of Mayor Pro Tempore:

Mayor Sievers explained the role of Mayor Pro Tempore. Councilmember Snyder made a motion to appoint Councilmember Anderson as Mayor Pro Tempore beginning immediately and continuing through 12/31/2026. Councilmember Huff seconded the motion. The motion carried (Y-6 | N-0 | A-0).

Resolution 2026-04: Setting Street Vacation Hearing for 3/10/2026:

Resolution 2026-04 was introduced to set a public hearing on March 10, 2026, for a proposed street (alley) vacation. Council discussed that the vacation would consolidate platted lots into a single parcel, remove unused right-of-way from future city maintenance, and potentially generate some revenue from the sale of vacated property, while also confirming that fire, police, and public works had signed off and that neighboring property owners would have an opportunity to comment at the hearing pursuant to state street vacation procedures.

Mayor Sievers read aloud Resolution 2026-04.

Councilmember Huff made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-04 to set a street vacation hearing on March 10, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Anderson and was unanimously approved (Y-6, N-0, A-0). The hearing is set for March 10, 2026.

Resolution 2026-05: Declaring a State of Emergency for Ambulance Purchase:

Mayor Sievers reported that the current ambulance is not reliably operational, that the Joint Fire Board had already declared a state of emergency to expedite the purchase of a replacement, and that the JFB had requested that the City similarly declare a state of emergency to expedite the purchase of a replacement SUV-type ambulance at an estimated cost of \$15,452. Council discussion addressed surplusizing the existing vehicle, waiving the competitive bidding process for a timely purchase, and ensuring any replacement vehicle is inspected and evaluated for potential future repair costs before finalizing the acquisition.

Mayor Sievers read aloud Resolution 2026-05.

Councilmember Slinkard made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-05. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Snyder and was unanimously approved (Y-6, N-0, A-0).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Streets, Property, & Facilities, Chair Mullendore – No report.

Personnel Committee, – No chair, no report.

Water & Sewer, Chair John Snyder – He reported on a recent Zoom meeting with the Department of Ecology and Varela Engineering regarding the City's wastewater project and funding. The City currently has wastewater funding allocated but has not yet initiated project work pending final planning. Chair Snyder noted continued challenges related to nitrate and effluent temperature requirements but stated that Ecology is cautiously optimistic the City may qualify for increased grant funding rather than loans, depending on updated income and affordability data. Varela continues to provide planning and engineering services, with cost estimates remaining preliminary until construction begins. Chair Snyder also discussed

the potential need to review US Census income figures through an income or rate survey to better reflect local ability to pay and improve eligibility for grant-only funding.

Policy & Administration, – No chair, no report.

Joint Fire Board, – Mullendore – Reported that they talked about buying the vehicle/ambulance replacement and would like to check on the numbers from that meeting and report back.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmembers expressed appreciation for former Councilmember Sena’s service. Councilmember Mullendore formally thanked her for her years of service and noted sadness at her departure, with Mayor Sievers highlighting her strong policy work and valued perspective. Councilmember Anderson commended her for helping keep the council aligned with proper procedures and expressed gratitude for her contributions.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Sievers reported on multiple recent meetings, including ongoing coordination with Varela Engineering on the wastewater project and continued advocacy with state and federal regulators to secure grant funding, emphasizing that project affordability remains a critical concern for a small community with a limited number of utility accounts. He noted that Habitat for Humanity is completing one home and planning another in Palouse and expressed appreciation for their contributions to the community. He also reported participation in a Port of Whitman coalition meeting focused on infrastructure advocacy for small eastern Washington communities, as well as an updated meeting on the St. Elmo Phase 2 environmental study, which is nearing finalization. In addition, he described his regular participation in weekly Association of Washington Cities legislative update calls and encouraged councilmembers to stay informed about state legislation affecting cities.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilmember Anderson moved to allow the payment of bills. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Snyder, and the motion was unanimously approved (Y-6 | N-0 | A-0).

Payroll Paid	EFT + Check #15073-15083	\$40,638.80
Claims Paid	EFT + Check # 15084-15118	\$59,736.34
	Total	\$100,375.14

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Mullendore moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Slinkard and unanimously approved (Y-6 | N-0 | A-0). The meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: February 9, 2026,

WATER:

Mike was called to an emergency shutoff on the evening of Friday January 23rd. The main water shut off inside the house broke and flooded the whole floor of the house.

We repaired a leaking main to the fire hydrant at Lions Park on January 26th. The previous repair from a few years ago was cut too short and worked itself apart. Shon Clark from Colfax Public Works came and helped us.

A meter broke on the evening of January 28th. Mike got the call at 5:30 that evening. The gasket on the old meter blew out. The meter was replaced with a smart meter.

STREETS:

Dominick trimmed all the old over hanging branches on the sidewalk going up shady lane from the foot bridge to Bluff Street.

CEMETERY:

A couple of different residents wanted and removed the wood from the pine tree that was blown down in the windstorms in December.

PESTICIDE:

The last 2 Fridays of January mike completed his recert training.

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: February 23, 2026,

WATER:

KME worked replaced a leaking valve control on well 1.

Mike took a 2-day Cross Connection Specialist class last week.

SEWER:

The Beeson lift station plugged up again. There was a dish towel that got flushed in the sewer and plugged up the pump.

Chad took the first 3 days of class last week for the exam prep for wastewater. The other 3 days are this week.

SNOW:

We plowed and removed snow for about 3 days last week.

PESTICIDE:

Dom is taking a 2-day exam prep for her pesticide license in Pullman this week.

OTHER:

Between classes for everyone, snow, and no emergencies this report is short.

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting February 10, 2026:

Eleven calls for service with two being ordinance related.

Two criminal citations for Negligent Driving 1st Degree (alcohol offense) and DUI.

260129-02 – Contacted by two different residents on north hill about roosters continually crowing for weeks on end. Investigation determined where the roosters were located. Contacted rooster owner and advised ordinance did not allow roosters on property inside city limits. Owner had bought eight to re-flock his chickens after fox had killed majority of them over the past year. Gave owner ten days to remove all roosters. Owner text after eight days to thank me for working with him to get roosters re-homed and advise roosters had been removed from his property.

260201 -01 – While off duty and on call I received a complaint from a non-resident that the protest on the corner of SR27/ Main Street was blocking the sidewalk and participants were verbally “harassing” people as they walked by. I responded to the location and determined the complaint was without merit. The sidewalk was fully passable to include an adult male in a motorized wheelchair who was able to navigate freely as he used the sidewalk in my presence. No citizens were forced into the roadway and no participants were yelling at any passing vehicles or pedestrians.

260202-01 – While on patrol received text from property owner advising her husband heard a vehicle drive through their yard causing damage to grass by tire tracks. I responded to the area and took pictures of the damage as vehicle left SR27 southbound lane, drove through reporting party driveway, lawn then corrected back onto the roadway. Husband looked out window too late to see the suspect vehicle.

260203-01 – While on patrol I received a request from a citizen for a phone call. Citizen advised they received a text from an unknown number soliciting a sex act. Investigation revealed the number the text came from comes back to an elderly lady in Spokane area. I called the number multiple times in recent days and a computer voice answers for voicemail. It is believed this number was used to mask the real number the text came from.

260205-01 – While on patrol I received a text from a concerned citizen about a suspicious vehicle parked on E Main Street occupied by two young adults. I drove to the area, located the vehicle and observed an adult male in the driver seat and a young adult female in the passenger seat. Both were “ON THE NOD.” On the nod is a term associated with users of heroin/fentanyl who fall asleep after ingesting the drugs. In plain view I could see mini butane lighters on the floor, square sheets of tin foil with drug residue near the gear shift, and a box of aluminum foil – all items associated with the use of heroin/fentanyl. I awoke the occupants and detained them for constructive possession of drug paraphernalia.

Further investigation led to the recovery a small amount of fentanyl, four heroin/fentanyl glass smoking pipes, two glass pipe rubber mouthpieces, a large butane lighter, and scale for weighing drugs. Placed all items into evidence at Palouse PD. Suspects eventually admitted to driving from Kamiah, Idaho to Clarkston WA to purchase and smoke fentanyl the night before. Drove around for hours before becoming sleepy and pulling over to sleep where I located them. Charges pending.

260206-01 – While off duty and on call I received a call from a business owner on E Main Street advising they located illegally dumped garbage into their dumpster from another business in the area. The reporting party sent me text pictures that clearly showed the name, address and phone number of the business that dumped the garbage. I called the name on the garbage and advised the amount of garbage illegally placed into the reporting party business rose to the level of a misdemeanor. The subject advised he is the manager and his crew must have done that after working in Palouse. The manager drove to Palouse and quickly removed all the garbage his crew had dumped.

260207-01 – While working Brew Fest DUI Emphasis patrol I observed a pickup make an unsafe left turn while taking away the right of way for an oncoming minivan. The minivan was forced to brake to avoid a collision. I stopped the vehicle and contacted the driver who admitted to drinking at Brew Fest since 1500 hours. Field sobriety tests issued to include portable breath test that read .048. Did not rise to the level of a DUI arrest BUT did rise to the level of a Criminal Citation for Negligent Driving First Degree. Negligent Driving First Degree is an alcohol related offense as the driver operates a motor vehicle in a negligent manner and endangers or is likely to endanger any person or property and exhibits the effects of having consumed alcohol/drugs. Cited and released.

260207-02 – While working Brew Fest DUI Emphasis I assisted WCSO Deputies with the arrest and booking of a DUI subject who admitted her passenger and herself had been drinking at Brew Fest. The adult female blew .120 which is one and half times the legal limit. Passenger was intoxicated and was found to have a \$25K Kittitas County gross misdemeanor warrant for his arrest for previous DUI and DWLS.

Palouse PD thanks the excellent work of the two WCSO Deputies – Alcantar and Peterson _ who worked Brew Fest with me. The past three Brew Fests have seen Palouse PD/WCSO team up to remove four DUI drivers off the road. Palouse PD is committed to ZERO tolerance for drinking and driving. Palouse PD thanks the Brew Fest participants who enjoyed the festivities responsibly or who acted as designated drivers.

02/09/26
08:24

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					
260123-01	08:03:27 01/23/26	Disabled Vehicle		WCSOA	INA
260126-01	12:39:46 01/26/26	Disabled Vehicle		PAPDA	INA
260129-01	08:25:50 01/29/26	Parking Problem		PAPDA	INA
260129-02	12:01:41 01/29/26	Animal Problem		PAPDA	INA
260201-01	11:07:05 02/01/26	Traffic Hazard		PAPDA	INA
260202-01	13:02:01 02/02/26	Mal Mischief		PAPDA	INA
260203-01	07:52:33 02/03/26	Harassment		PAPDA	INA
260205-01	08:42:16 02/05/26	Drugs		PAPDA	CAA
260206-01	10:10:57 02/06/26	Code Violations		PAPDA	INA
260207-01	18:20:21 02/07/26	Traffic Offense		PAPDA	CAA
260207-02	19:09:36 02/07/26	Dui		PAPDA	ACT
Total Incidents for This Agency:				11	

Total Incidents for This Report: 11

Report Includes:

- All dates greater than `00:00:00 01/23/26`
- 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

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