



CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

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

Councilmembers present: Bill Slinkard, Michael Echanove, Rainy Anderson, Jacquelyn Huff

Councilmember Huff moved to excuse Councilmembers Snyder and Cuellar from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Slinkard and unanimously approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council discussed the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting – June 23, 2026. Councilmember Huff moved to make a change to Councilmember Comments to read “following Councilmember Anderson's remarks, Councilmember Huff thanked Councilmember Anderson for her service to the community. She stated that while criticism of elected officials is part of public service, personal attacks and involving family members, especially children, are concerning and do not reflect the type of respectful civic engagement she hopes to see in the Palouse community.” The motion was seconded by Councilmember Anderson and unanimously approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

Councilmember Anderson moved to approve the minutes of June 23, 2026 as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Slinkard and unanimously approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

Note: The Council meeting scheduled for July 14, 2026 was cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

OPEN FORUM

Barb Hodson – Gave the Mayor a letter to be read into the Minutes at Council meeting (attached).

Joe Ferlito - Thanked the staff for their service and inquired about the status of the recycling bin.

Kelsy Blair – Asked if the new financial software will allow online payment of utility bills. Her understanding is that Palouse now pays a fee to Whitman County for policing services, and the agreement with Whitman County was supposed to include the formation of a Citizens Advisory Committee regarding policing. Also inquired where questions submitted in Open Forum are being answered.

Cheryl Johnson – Concerned that Palouse still does not have a Councilmember assigned to Streets. Who is managing streets in the meantime? Illinois Street is in bad condition and needs gravel and removal of potholes. Wants more detail for citizens on the impacts of the upcoming Transportation Improvement projects. Cost to citizens?

Cheryl Sanders – Regarding the discussion of new sidewalks, can new sidewalks be postponed given the current tight budget? Need to make the sewer and water improvements mandated by the State the top priority for City funding.

Bruce Pemberton –Speeding on Union Street and Bluff Street is a problem. Appearance of Shady Lane needs to be improved. Unleashed dogs continue to be a problem in the City Park. Perhaps larger signage about the leash laws?

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

PW Superintendent Wolf submitted a written report (attached).

Councilmember Huff had concerns about the new street oiling mixture used this year. Ran off the road and pooled. Councilmember Echanove also received complaints about the oil mixture this year, noting Public Works Superintendent Mike Wolf did a good job of working with a concerned resident on Ellis Street. CA La Follett noted that the new mixture was water-based this year, as required for reduced environmental impact. It was thinner than in the past and behaves differently. Road oiling can be substantially reduced as the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) is implemented in the next few years.

POLICE REPORT

Officer Anderson submitted a written report (attached). No questions from Council.

CITY ADMINSTRATOR REPORT

Staff Licensing - City staff member Chad Fox passed his Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Level 1 Examination. It is a very difficult exam. Per his job description, he is entitled to a salary increase for completing this licensing process. Will be an agenda item at the next Council meeting, retroactive to the date of certification. Chad will immediately begin working toward the Level 2 license.

Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) Application - Begins gradually eliminating road oiling, pending approval of grants to the City. Moves us away from gravel roads and towards chip sealing that lasts approximately 10 years. Depends on how much the City receives in grant funding, and when. The program provides much longer-term fixes for streets and other City transportation challenges.

Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) - The Transportation Improvement Plan is entirely grant-funded at no expense to the City. City has applied for a grant to put sidewalks along the roadway by the welding shop, and a designated bicycle lane.

City Hall Staffing - Deputy Clerk Stephanie Welch returns from maternity leave beginning Monday, August 3. City Hall will then be back to normal staffing levels. Public hours for City Hall will return to Monday through Friday from 9am to 4pm as soon as DC Welch returns.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Tax Levies for the November 2026 Ballot

Mayor Sievers read aloud the resolutions for proposed tax levies (attached) to appear on the November 2026 ballot. Following discussion:

Councilmember Echanove moved to approve resolution 2026-08, funding operation and maintenance of City infrastructure. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Slinkard and unanimously approved. (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

Councilmember Anderson moved to approve resolution 2026-09, funding operation and maintenance of the City swimming pool. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Huff and unanimously approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

Councilmember Slinkard moved to approve resolution 2026-10, funding street improvements and equipment. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Anderson and unanimously approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

Well Telemetry Upgrade Discussion

Councilmember Echanove discussed an interim plan to provide 24/7 automated monitoring of City water systems. Daily manual inspection of all water system operations is becoming increasingly impractical. The \$5,876 cost of the proposal from Bigfoot Technical Services includes a complete tune-up of existing monitoring systems, adds 24-hour automated monitoring with remote access for staff, and sends automated alarms to multiple City staff simultaneously when a problem is detected. The proposal does not duplicate anything included in the upcoming sewer improvement project. Funds for these interim measures exist in the current City budget.

Following discussion, Councilmember Anderson moved to approve the interim plan and accept the proposal from Bigfoot Technical Services. Second by Councilmember Echanove. Motion carried unanimously (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0)

Cemetery Maintenance

Council has received several complaints about the condition of the Cemetery. Needs weeding and mowing on a more consistent basis. Public Works will be asked for more regular maintenance. Mayor will discuss with Public Works Superintendent Wolf.

Status of Vacant Council Seat #2

Mayor Sievers and CA La Follett discussed the status of the vacant City Council Seat #2. There have been no applications for the position after 90 days of advertising. The vacancy will now be referred to the Whitman County Commissioners, who will make an appointment to fill the position. If not filled after 120 days, the position gets referred to the Governor's office to make the appointment. The City will continue to advertise for applicants and collect applications, then forward any applications to the Commissioners or Governor's Office as appropriate. The same application packet will still be required.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Budget, Finance, Major Acquisitions, Chair Michael Echanove – No recent meeting. Keep an eye on water and sewer fund balances to make sure they do not go too low. With DC Welch on maternity leave, delays in processing monthly financial reconciliations is a concern. With DC Welch returning, make sure City follows cross-training principles to keep important reconciliations moving and maintain appropriate segregation of duties. Regarding an independent audit, talked to both

the State and local auditors. Both recommended we not conduct a comprehensive audit using a third party auditor, and instead schedule with State auditors.

- Streets, Property, & Facilities, Chair Vacant - No report
- Personnel Committee, Chair Megan Cuellar - No report
- Water & Sewer, Chair John Snyder – In the absence of the committee chair, Mayor Sievers reported that the City met with Ecology this past Monday to let them know the status of the City's various sewer projects. Grants are covering the cost of planning and design sewer improvements, so no cost to the City for this phase. Continuing to look at solutions that will satisfy State mandates at an affordable cost to the City and rate-payers.
- Policy & Administration, Chair Rainy Anderson – Internal control policies requested by past auditors are in progress. Need to finish final review of these policies and submit to Council for approval.
- Joint Fire Board, Chair Bill Slinkard – Two fire calls last month. Three training sessions completed. Four assistance calls, including one baby delivery. Need to review City's Memorandum of Understanding with the JFB to update the language and be clear on what everyone has agreed to. All City fire hydrants have been inspected. Up to three hydrants need to be replaced this year. There is a \$45K line item in the current City budget to cover this expense. JFB wants to purchase an advanced drone to assist with fire detection and search/rescue. They have certified operators for a drone. The cost would be split with the City and City share would be \$4,500.

Following discussion, Councilmember Echanove moved to approve a drone purchase, provided the purchase can be funded within the existing budgets for both the City and the Joint Fire Board. Second by Councilmember Anderson. Motion approved unanimously (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

Two surplus Fire vehicles that have not received any offers have been transferred to a broker for sale.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

None

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Attended a variety of meetings:
 - Association of Washington Cities (AWC) conference in Spokane.
 - Met with Varela to discuss sewer improvements.
 - Attended AWC Collaborative Elected Leaders Institute training.
 - Met with two councilmembers regarding a complaint.
 - Met with the City Attorney.
 - Attended Inland NW Partners Meeting at Eastern Washington University on Main Street strategies.
 - Met with TD&H and Transportation Improvement Board regarding Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan projects.
 - Met with Haley & Aldrich regarding the Integrated Planning Grant for environmental evaluation of the St. Elmo property.

- Attended Port of Whitman Economic Development Information Meeting.
- Met with Dan Bisbee from Congressman Baumgartner's office regarding City projects and priorities.
- Received an update from Ecology on the Palouse Brownfields site (current location of the Vet Clinic and Brewery). Current tests for soil contaminants show increased contaminants at some of the wells, which is expected as time passes and residual contamination continues to move through the soil. Ecology is proposing moving from a five-year sampling schedule to sampling every two years. Ecology will collect the samples and the City will continue to pay for the testing in accordance with our agreement.
- Mayor nominates Erin Harty to serve on vacant Planning Commission seat #1 and Fiona Quigley to serve on vacant Planning Commission seat #2. Both terms are through December 31, 2028. Councilmember Echanove moved to approve the appointments. Second by Councilmember Huff. Motion approved unanimously (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).
- Follow-up to Open Forum Questions
 - Palouse has no official contract for Police Services with Whitman County. There were concerns about the budget this year that seemed to indicate a temporary pause was appropriate.
 - All proposed sidewalk projects under consideration are funded by grants and create no cost for the City. The projects will only happen if grant funds are received.
 - Will ask Officer Anderson for additional patrols on the South Hill, especially Union Street, and possible setup of the speed trailer in that area. Whitman County Sheriff patrols on weekends will also emphasize speed reduction.
 - Spoke with City Attorney regarding Councilmember Anderson's June 23 statement at City Council meeting. The City Attorney indicated there was nothing improper in her comments, and no cause for any City action to be taken.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilmember Anderson moved to allow the payment of bills. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Huff. Motion was approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0).

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Huff moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Slinkard and unanimously approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-0). The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

DRAFT

Formal Complaint Regarding Improper Use of City Council Meeting

Mayor Sievers and Members of the City Council:

I am submitting this letter as a formal complaint regarding Council Member Rainy Anderson's use of an official City Council meeting to address a personal matter involving her daughter.

Council Member Anderson began her statement by acknowledging that the matter "should never have to be discussed in a City Council meeting." I agree with that statement. The subject matter of her remarks involved allegations of bullying, social media comments, and personal disputes concerning a minor. These issues, while important to the individuals involved, are private matters and do not constitute City business.

The Washington Open Public Meetings Act states that public agencies exist to conduct "the people's business" and that the actions and deliberations of public bodies should be conducted openly for that purpose. City Council meetings are intended to address municipal matters that affect the community, not personal grievances, family disputes, or private conflicts. [\[app.leg.wa.gov\]](http://app.leg.wa.gov), [\[mrsc.org\]](http://mrsc.org)

By using an official City Council meeting and her position as an elected official to address a personal matter, Council Member Anderson blurred the distinction between public business and private concerns. Her remarks included accusations and warnings directed toward unidentified individuals, creating an atmosphere in which members of the public could reasonably feel targeted or intimidated. Such conduct is inconsistent with the professional standards the public should expect from elected officials during official Council proceedings.

My concern is not with Council Member Anderson's right to defend or advocate for her daughter. Every parent has that right. My concern is with the use of public meeting time, public office, and the authority of a City Council position to address matters unrelated to the governance of the City.

This is particularly troubling because this is not the first instance in which Council Member Anderson has used a City Council meeting to discuss personal matters involving her daughter. A repeated pattern of using Council meetings for personal issues undermines public confidence in the Council, distracts from legitimate City business, and discourages public participation in local government.

I respectfully request that this complaint be entered into the public record and that the Mayor and City Council formally address this matter. I further request that the Council reaffirm that City Council meetings are to be limited to municipal business and that elected officials refrain from using official meetings as a platform to address personal disputes, family matters, or grievances unrelated to City governance.

Should this conduct continue, I request that the Council consider all remedies available under its rules of procedure, code of ethics, policies, and applicable law to ensure that future meetings remain focused on the business of the City and the interests of its citizens.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Hodson

7-2026

July 21, 2026

To Mayor Siever, City Council, and the citizens of Palouse,

I care very deeply about our special community here in Palouse. I appreciate good citizens who step forward to serve on City Council and attempt to govern for the benefit of all those in our community.

With that said I am appalled by the disclosures contained within Councilwoman Anderson's letter concerning bullying and inappropriate comments about her daughter. That this should be happening at all is baffling. Whoever is responsible for saying such rude remarks as well as outright lies about the character of a child should be ashamed of themselves. There is absolutely no defense for this type of behavior. In fact there is no reason at all for not maintaining civility in disagreements. These belong in conversations between concerned citizens and our representatives but bringing children into any conversation is not acceptable.

Is it possible these cowards wish to disrupt progress in our town and waste time distracting from the business at hand which should be solving serious problems that need to be addressed? I am glad Councilwoman Anderson is brave enough to speak out about this as it is never in the best interest of our city to have bullies pushing their agenda in such disgusting ways as picking on innocent children.

On a further note, as I read Officer Anderson's reports I am gratified about his presence and the way in which he conducts business efficiently but with compassion. He obviously cares deeply about all the citizens in our city. Thank you.

I close with saying that I would hope that most people would honor the golden rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Respectfully,

Katherine Keener

July 15, 2026

City of Palouse
ATTN: Mike Wolf
120 E Main ST
Palouse WA 99161

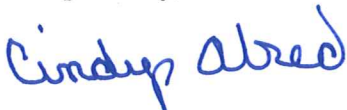
Dear Mike,

Thank you for stopping by this morning and checking out my concern regarding the run-off from the recent road oiling. Your suggestion to hose off the oil on my driveway based on the oil being water-based was an excellent one. When you learned my garden hose wasn't long enough to do the job, you called Dominique to take care of it. She was out within minutes and did a thorough job.

The purpose of this letter is to show my appreciation for your attention to this matter and to recognize Dominique for her thoroughness in handling the matter, her professionalism and friendliness.

I am very pleased with how my concern was handled by all involved.

Respectfully,



Cindy Alred

cc: Dominique
Misty LaFollette

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: July 11, 2026

WATER:

Mike finished the repairs to the reservoir, and well 3 to keep in compliance with DOH. Mike also submitted several pictures of the booster station, reservoir, and well 3.

We replaced 2 meters in the last week.

We've had a lot of locates these last 2 weeks.

We were called to a possible water leak on Idaho Loop July 2nd. It ended up being a plugged drain field.

We repaired a broken sprinkler line in the park and then a week later we had a sprinkler head break on the same line causing the playground area to flood out.

The telemetry system stopped working late Sunday or early Monday morning this week. The reservoir level was down to 8.7 feet.

Council member Echanove has been working with Bigfoot for a temporary SCADA system until the new one is installed in about 2 years. Council member Snyder also looked at our telemetry system. Both members know as much as I know.

POOL:

The new boiler's software module failed, and Hemphill's had to get a new module. The boiler was shut down for 2 days but with the solar hose on top of the pool house kept the water almost to temperature.

COMPOST:

Chad finished hauling the compost pile from downtown to well 3.

ARTERIAL STREETS:

Chad prepped the roads for 3 days for road oiling.

Lyman Dust Control oiled the streets on Thursday. The solution they used was mixed with water and made the application run off the roads a little more.

OTHER:

Dom and Morgan prepped the park for the Ice Cream social this weekend.

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: July 24, 2026

WATER:

We have another sprinkler line leak in the park. We will fix it on Monday.

We started reading meters today.

July is the biggest month for pumping water, and I will have the July numbers in next month's report.

SEWER:

Chad took 6 half day courses in the last 2 weeks for his exam prep. He scheduled his WW test for this coming Tuesday.

POOL:

The bearings in the wheels on the cart for the tarps went bad on a couple of them. Mike replaced all wheels with new ones.

OTHER:

Mike will be on vacation all next week.

Chad will be on vacation half of next week and the following week.

SHOP:

Dom's pickup lost the water pump and hopefully will be repaired on Monday.

The Durango needs new brakes

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting July 14, 2026:

Eighteen calls for service with four being ordinance related since last council report.

ZERO callouts.

260625-01 – While off duty and on call I received a call from an adult female who advised she had been assaulted by an older male at the grocery store. I contacted grocery store personnel and advised I would like to have any video of the incident as it allegedly occurred in front of the cash register where I know they have cameras. Store personnel sent me a video clip of the incident in which the suspect approaches the victim from behind and grabs her right shoulder dress strap and pushes it down her right bicep. The victim quickly catches the dress strap and puts it back up to prevent her breast from being exposed. The victim turns around and points at the suspect while yelling at him. This is a clear cut case of Assault IV as this crime is defined as harmful or offensive touching. I collected statements and video and completed a case report. I forwarded the report to Whitman County Prosecutor Office for filing of charges. I have since learned the same male assaulted a female in Garfield about ten days later and is now facing additional charges for that incident filed by Whitman County SO. I also assisted the woman in obtaining an anti-harassment order against the male.

260701-01 – While working patrol I was contacted by a female who was desperate to get a no contact order against a member of her family she no longer wants contact with. The reporting party advised she has blocked the family member's phone number to prevent phone calls and texts but the family member still sends anonymous letter via the mail that are upsetting. I explained to her how to begin the no contact order process through Whitman County Superior Court. I gave her a copy of the report to assist her in obtaining an order so the judge could review the petition with as much information as possible.

260701-02 – While working patrol I observed a campsite at Lion's Club Park that had become increasingly messy over the course of four days. I noticed the camping tents went from one to three during that time and dog feces and garbage was starting to accumulate around the area. I contacted two adults in their 50's who had two juvenile grandchildren with them. They advised they were homeless, guardians of their grandkids and were awaiting approval from Community Action Network in Pullman to sign papers for a rental house. I requested they sign in at the grocery store and reminded them the maximum stay is seven days. I also ordered them to pick up all dog feces as they had a large and small dog with them prior to leaving the location. The next day I observed marked improvements as all items left out had been packed and put away and no dog feces was located.

260702-03 – While working patrol a citizen text me to say an 85 year old man was walking from his disabled vehicle about two miles outside Palouse city limits on Palouse Cove RD. I drove to the location and located the male. The male stated he ran out of gas but does not have a credit card to purchase gas at the local gas station. The male was going to see if Chappell Motors could tow the vehicle to a gas station in Potlach. I gave the male a ride to my residence where I grabbed a gas can. We drove back out to his vehicle and filled the vehicle with about four gallons of gas. The vehicle successfully started up and we were able to save him an expensive tow bill when all it needed was some gas. The male thanked me for my assistance.

260708-01 – While working patrol I received a phone call from an elderly female requesting I conduct a welfare check on another elderly female on the south hill who was not answering her phone. I knew this female had a history of falling down and not being able to get back up or call for help as I have responded to the location in the past for the same issue. I drove to the location and located a note on the door from a neighbor saying for anyone attempting to locate the elderly female to call them. I called the neighbor and they advised the female had fallen down in her yard on 7-2-26 and was there for three hours before a passerby helped her get up. The neighbor then responded and requested she go to the hospital. The elderly female refused so the neighbor said she would check on her in the morning. Sixteen hours later the neighbor walked into house and found the elderly female still sitting in the same chair because her legs would not work and allow her to move. The neighbor called medics and they transported the female to the hospital for evaluation and treatment. The victim's adult daughter is now flying in from another state to arrange assisted living for her mother as it is clear she no longer has the mobility to care for herself. As a reminder, please never hesitate to call Palouse PD for welfare checks on anyone in our community when the totality of the circumstances warrant it.

July 4th 2026 resulted in ZERO calls for service related to fireworks complaints.

07/09/26
10:35

Palouse Police Department
Law Incident Summary Report, by Responsible Officer

1100
Page: 1

Number	Time and Date	Nature	Address	Loctn	Dsp
--------	---------------	--------	---------	-------	-----

Agency: Palouse Police Department

Officer: Joel Anderson

260619-01	11:07:56	06/19/26	Traffic Offense	PAPDA	INA
260621-01	12:03:53	06/21/26	Juvenile Prob	PAPDA	INA
260622-01	11:54:49	06/22/26	Traffic Offense	PAPDA	INA
260625-01	20:57:53	06/25/26	Assault	PAPDA	CAA
260629-01	09:24:05	06/29/26	Civil	PAPDA	INA
260629-02	10:45:33	06/29/26	Found Property	PAPDA	INA
260701-01	09:07:26	07/01/26	Harassment	PAPDA	INA
260701-02	14:04:19	07/01/26	Suspicious	PAPDA	INA
260702-01	10:04:37	07/02/26	Animal Problem	PAPDA	INA
260702-02	10:04:51	07/02/26	Parking Problem	PAPDA	INA
260702-03	16:02:57	07/02/26	Disabled Vehicle	WCSOA	INA
260703-01	12:54:52	07/03/26	Found Property	PAPDA	INA
260703-02	18:41:40	07/03/26	Animal Problem	PAPDA	INA
260704-01	14:21:37	07/04/26	Drugs	PAPDA	INA
260706-01	07:51:07	07/06/26	Animal Problem	PAPDA	INA
260708-01	11:02:22	07/08/26	Welfare Check	PAPDA	INA
260708-02	14:10:17	07/08/26	Communications	PAPD	INA
260708-03	16:30:20	07/08/26	Animal Problem	PAPDA	INA

Total Incidents for This Officer: 18

Total Incidents for This Agency: 18

Total Incidents for This Report: 18

Report Includes:

All dates greater than `00:00:00 06/19/26`

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

*** End of Report /tmp/rpt0jYkwI-rplwisr.rl_1 ***