



CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Sievers called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM

Councilmembers Present: John Snyder, Michael Echanove, Bill Slinkard, Rainy Anderson, Jacquelyn Huff, Megan Cuellar

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilmember Anderson moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting – July 28, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Slinkard and approved (Y-4 | N-0 | A-Snyder, Cuellar).

Note: The Council meeting scheduled for August 11, 2026, was cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

OPEN FORUM

Patty Rippee submitted a formal complaint regarding vegetation at Native Park, expressing concern that its condition may pose a fire hazard. She also asked which City department or official is responsible for park maintenance and for enforcing nuisance or visibility concerns related to overgrown weeds on private lots, particularly where vegetation obstructs sightlines at street corners.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

PW Superintendent Wolf submitted a written report (attached).

POLICE REPORT

Officer Anderson submitted a written report (attached).

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Well Telemetry Upgrade Update:

(CA) La Follett reported that the well telemetry upgrades have been installed and have improved system operation; however, intermittent communication or operational issues remain under troubleshooting. The current upgrades are considered an interim measure until a full SCADA system can be implemented. The system experienced approximately three to four outages during the past month. Public Works staff, currently reduced to Chad and Mike, are working to resolve the issues and improve system reliability and operational flexibility.

Council Seat 2 Appointment Update:

CA La Follett reported that guidance from Whitman County regarding the Council Seat 2 appointment process remains unclear. The City was advised to continue advertising the vacancy and submit any Council-approved applicant to the County Commissioners. La Follett will seek further clarification on the process and timelines, including the potential need for a gubernatorial appointment if the vacancy is not filled within the statutory period. Councilmember Huff recommended reviewing the application process to encourage a broader range of qualified applicants.

Liquor License Renewal:

CA La Follett reported that Cultivated's liquor license is due for renewal and will renew automatically unless the City submits an objection. Council expressed no objections. In response to Councilmember Huff's question, La Follett stated that Cultivated is authorized to sell beer, hard cider, mimosas, and similar alcoholic beverages.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2026-11 | Community Text Notification Policy:

Council discussed the proposed resolution.

Mayor Sievers read aloud Resolution 2026-11.

Councilmember Huff made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-11. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Snyder and was unanimously approved (Y-6 | N-0 | A-0).

Resolution 2026-12 | Interlocal Agreement for Recycling Bin:

Council discussed the proposed resolution.

Councilmember Slinkard made a motion to adopt and approve Resolution 2026-12. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Anderson and was unanimously approved (Y-6 | N-0 | A-0).

Resolution 2026-13 | Salary Schedule Adjustment (Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certification):

Council discussed the proposed resolution.

Councilmember Snyder made a motion to adopt and approve Resolution 2026-13. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cuellar and was unanimously approved (Y-6 | N-0 | A-0).

Cemetery Discussion:

Councilmember Cuellar led a discussion regarding cemetery maintenance. CA La Follett reported that photos were submitted July 11, older marble headstones are being cleaned with permission, and staff are addressing sprinkler repairs.

Council noted recent improvements in weed control and general upkeep and discussed establishing a regular maintenance schedule and clearer accountability. Staff are using temporary assistance while recruiting for a Public Works position. Council suggested reviewing the position's qualifications to include

broader maintenance skills. The Kramers remain responsible for cemetery maps and payments, while the City is responsible for grounds maintenance.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Budget, Finance, Major Acquisitions, Chair Michael Echanove – Reported on funding and anticipated costs for the new wastewater facility, currently estimated at approximately \$6.2 million. A project funding flow chart prepared by Daniel Cowgil was presented. Echanove noted that the project includes approximately \$3 million in grant funding through federal and state appropriations, including a state 20% grant contribution, and that funding information will be updated as additional funds are received. Required documentation related to wastewater treatment deed and insurance was also noted.

Echanove raised concerns that Sewer Fund 404 may be unable to meet projected expenses, with estimated annual operating costs of approximately \$350,000 compared with roughly \$275,000 in revenue. Council discussed reviewing expenditures, identifying potential reductions, and maintaining the sewer fund's financial stability.

Council also discussed the need for a rate study, possible rate and connection-fee adjustments, and identifying properties connected to sewer infrastructure that may not currently be paying fees. (CA) La Follett noted that an interfund loan from the General Fund could be used if necessary, but would require interest and a repayment schedule.

- Streets, Property, & Facilities, Chair Huff – Mayor Sievers officially appointed Councilmember Huff as Chair of Streets, Property, & Facilities. Chair Huff had no report, but has a list of things to work on, including scheduling time with (CA) La Follett and a tour with PW Supt. Mike Wolf.
- Personnel Committee, Chair Megan Cuellar - No report
- Water & Sewer, Chair John Snyder – Reported that the city continues to face significant water and sewer infrastructure and financing challenges, which have placed strain on City staff, the Mayor, and Council. He noted that projected compliance and infrastructure costs, previously estimated at \$6–8 million, may be closer to \$23 million or higher. He mentioned the City is pursuing alternatives to a full treatment facility, including filtration options that may improve nitrate removal and reduce costs. He stated that the City's current system achieves approximately 80–82% nitrate reduction but remains out of compliance with federal requirements. State Ecology staff and a federal representative have expressed guarded optimism regarding potential alternatives. Staff will meet with Ecology again and provide an update at a future Council meeting.
- Policy & Administration, Chair Rainy Anderson – Reported that the committee had not met, but that she prepared draft City Hall Rules of Conduct and a "Welcome to Palouse" handout for public use, based in part on a sample provided by (CA) La Follett. Anderson stated that the documents are preliminary drafts and requested Council feedback before implementation. Anderson also distributed proposed revisions to Council Rules and Procedures, including policies requested by auditors. She requested Council feedback by September 2nd, with draft revisions to be prepared by September 8th, and Council consideration scheduled for the September 22nd meeting. Anderson stated that the goal is to have auditor-required policies approved by November.

- Joint Fire Board, Chair Bill Slinkard – Reported that the Fire Department responded to four callouts, including two out-of-district incidents and two out-of-district gas leaks. The department also completed fire hose testing and purchased a drone; two operators are certified, and a third is in training. EMS responded to 12 calls in July, including two Life Flight transports. Volunteer staffing continues to decline, with fire volunteers decreasing from 14 to 11 and EMS volunteers expected to decrease from six to four by year-end. The department will offer an introductory training class and requested additional community outreach to recruit Fire and EMS volunteers. The Joint Fire Board reviewed and approved the 2027 budget. The City's 50% share is \$35,685.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Echanove requested an update on installation of the solar farm data logger, noting that funding was approved in February and that the data should be publicly available. Echanove also asked why City resolutions and ordinances were not current on the City website. (CA) La Follett reported that the documents are available but not up to date due to website compatibility issues following Inland Cellular's acquisition of First Step Internet. She reported that website widgets are updating, but the WordPress site is not displaying the information correctly.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor reported that the City may reconsider its maintenance agreement with Phoenix Conservancy for Native Park due to limited volunteer support. Options include maintaining native plantings while improving weed control and overall appearance.

The Mayor noted that the City's nuisance-abatement process for overgrown vegetation is cumbersome and may need revision to allow faster response to fire hazards and visibility concerns. Public Works will address vegetation affecting street signs and sightlines as appropriate.

The Mayor also reported ongoing advocacy for wastewater funding and infrastructure support through regional partners, the Port of Whitman County, and Congressman Baumgartner's office. Progress was reported on the Verizon tower project, with groundbreaking anticipated after harvest, potentially in late September or early October.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilmember Echanove inquired about a payment, and answers were provided.

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

Payroll Paid	EFT + Check # 15354-15373	\$66,492.36
Claims Paid	EFT + Check # 1515352-15353, 15374-15403	\$59,605.42
	Total	\$126,097.78

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Slinkard moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Echanove and unanimously approved (Y-6 | N-0 | A-0). The meeting adjourned at 9:09 PM.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

DRAFT

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: August 07, 2026

WATER:

We read meters at the end of July

We pumped 10,369,300 gallons for the month of July.

Bigfoot Technologies came on Wednesday. They up graded the telemetry system so we can see how our wells and reservoir are doing off our phones. It is a nice addition to the water system, and we can put up to 10 users on it.

We had quite few locates come in for the last couple of weeks.

We had an emergency meter shutoff to a resident. The water was going into their basement.

That was around 5:30 pm a week ago last Wednesday.

SEWER:

Chad passed his level 1 wastewater exam last week.

PARK:

Dom and Morgan repaired an irrigation line in the park.

Someone vandalized the men's restroom at Heritage Park on Wednesday night. They wrote graffiti on the wall and broke the soap dispenser.

POOL:

Pool is running pretty trouble free this season.

CEMETERY:

Dom and Morgan mowed and weed eated the whole cemetery this week.

Dom replaced the American and the City flags.

OTHER:

Mike was gone the last full week of July and Chad took 2 days and all this week as vacation.

SHOP:

The Durango got new brakes put on last week.

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting August 11, 2026:

Sixteen calls for service with six being ordinance related since last council report.

Two callouts.

260710-01 – While working uniformed patrol I received a call from an adult male advising he believed his soon to be ex wife violated the temporary restraining order that was served on her two days prior. Further investigation revealed the female inadvertently called the male but canceled the call when she realized it was accidentally dialed. The female also invited the male to a co-parenting app that the petition for the restraining order allowed but the actual order did not allow. Based upon the totality of the circumstances I contacted Whitman County Prosecutor Office and spoke with the lead prosecutor. The lead prosecutor agreed with me that a case could not be proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the female intentionally, willingly and knowingly attempted contact. Case documented and I thoroughly explained to the female how imperative it was to make no contact with the husband until the judge makes a final ruling at the hearing in ten days.

260721-01 – While on patrol I was contacted by the son of an elderly female requesting I serve a petition for a vulnerable adult protection order based upon negative interactions his mother has had with another elderly female. This included a physical confrontation that WCSO handled when I was out of town. I served the paperwork and explained it to the respondent.

260723-02 – While on patrol I was contacted by the adult daughter of an elderly female Palouse resident. The daughter has power of attorney because her mother cannot care for herself and has fallen down numerous times living on her own. The daughter located a non-operational rifle and requested Palouse PD take custody of it for destruction. I took custody of the rifle and could not locate a serial number. I placed the rifle into safekeeping at Palouse PD and will turn over to the evidence tech for WCSO when they schedule a drug/firearm transport for destruction to Spokane in the future.

260724-02 – While on patrol I was contacted two different times by two different citizens upset that a juvenile was operating a motorized foot scooter in violation of state law and local ordinance. I located the teen and explained the law to him. I advised future violations could result in the impoundment of the scooter. The teen was polite and respectful and stated he would no longer ride it on public roadways. I contacted the parent and explained the law to them. The parent came and retrieved the scooter to avoid it being ridden on the public roadway.

260725-01 – After being called out for a different call I was contacted by the city administrator requesting I conduct a welfare check on an elderly male Palouse citizen who had an overdue water bill and was not answering his door when Public Works attempted contact earlier in the day. I was familiar with the male and made contact with him at his back door. The male advised he recently got a cell phone but did not know the number. I told the male I would find his cell number for him by calling dispatch and having them advise what number showed up on the ANI/ALI screen. I then wrote his number down on a piece of paper so he had it and could give it out. I gave the male my cell number so he could call me directly for help if he was to need it in the future. I updated the male's phone number with city hall so they could have easier contact with the male.

260725-02 – While working the Palouse Music Festival I received a text from two different attendees advising they observed a male in a pickup on the bridge over the river parked, blocking the roadway while using binoculars to look at festival attendees. I drove to the location and made contact with the driver. I observed him with the binoculars and a large box of peaches on the passenger seat. I told the male about the suspicious calls I had received and advised not only was he making people concerned he was blocking the roadway with his vehicle illegally. The male stated he didn't want to pay to enter the festival but was supposed to meet a client who bought the box of peaches from him and he was trying to locate him in the crowd. I told him to park his vehicle in a legal spot and make other arrangements to locate his friend.

On 7-25-26 I worked security for the Palouse Music Festival. Attendance appeared lower than in previous years. I spoke with many attendees to include taking complaints on a suspicious person, a dog problem call, as well as a speeding complaint on the south hill. Zero complaints or problems with alcohol being consumed outside the beer garden area – thank you to Palouse Brewery for making sure those laws were adhered to by customers.

On 7-27-26 I attended a four hour training at WSU PD for the implementation of the new statewide ticketing/collision software that will be taking the place of the current SECTOR system. TRACS is used by sixteen other states that went from paper ticketing and collision reporting to computer software. Washington State is the only state that is going from one software program (SECTOR) to different software program (TRACS). I successfully completed the training and anticipate switching over to the new program with the next year as prosecutors and other departments get onboarded and trained on its use.

On 7-30-26 I was invited to and attended the WCSO long gun/rifle firearm training at the WCSO gun range at the Whitman County Landfill. This was a four hour session that

involved multiple AR-15 rifle drills to include firing on target while moving forward, lateral and backwards, adjusting and zeroing our rifle for accuracy when shooting close range, transitioning from rifle to handgun when appropriate, and successfully passing long gun rifle qualifications.

On 8-1-26 I worked the Palouse city wide garage sale. I made contact with thirty one of the thirty four addresses on the list as well as five more that were not on the list. I made contact with groups of people from Montana, Sequim and Tri-Cities who stated they set aside the first Saturday in August for the sole purpose of coming to Palouse and enjoying the massive amount of garage/yard sales.

08/10/26
11:51

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					
260710-01	10:57:30	07/10/26	Violate Order	S	INA
260710-02	20:06:39	07/10/26	Animal Stray	N	INA
260714-01	09:55:12	07/14/26	Suspicious	S	INA
260721-01	08:38:02	07/21/26	Paper Service	S	ACT
260721-02	10:07:30	07/21/26	Illegal Burning	N	INA
260721-03	14:28:57	07/21/26	Fraud	S	INA
260721-04	14:51:15	07/21/26	Parking Problem	N	INA
260723-01	13:34:13	07/23/26	Firearms	S	INA
260723-02	13:41:30	07/23/26	Animal Problem	S	INA
260724-01	14:58:50	07/24/26	Traffic Offense	N	INA
260724-02	15:35:24	07/24/26	Juvenile Prob	S	INA
260725-01	10:35:37	07/25/26	Welfare Check	N	INA
260725-02	13:17:32	07/25/26	Suspicious	S	INA
260728-01	09:16:28	07/28/26	Animal Stray	N	INA
260728-02	13:34:50	07/28/26	Code Violations	N	INA
260731-01	18:49:12	07/31/26	Code Violations	N	INA
260810-01	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
260810-02	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
260810-03	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
260810-04	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
260810-05	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
260810-06	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
260810-07	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
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260810-23	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
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260810-99	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
260810-100	07:00:00	08/10/26	Animal Problem	N	INA
Total Incidents for This Agency: 16					

Total Incidents for This Report: 16

Report Includes:

All dates greater than `00:00:00 07/10/26`
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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