

PALOUSE CITY COUNCIL
Regular Council Meeting
July 25, 2023, @ 7:00 PM
Palouse Community Center | 220 E Main St.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Tim Sievers called the Meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Deputy Clerk Kelsey Blair took Roll Call.

Councilmembers present: Bill Slinkard, Leslie Sena, Samuel Brink, Travis Deerkop, Robert Brooks, and Ann Barrington

Councilmembers absent: Sarah Bofenkamp,

- Councilmember Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to excuse Councilmember Bofenkamp's absence from the meeting, the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Brink. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

City staff present: City Administrator (CA) Misty La Follett and Deputy Clerk (DC) Kelsey Blair

City staff absent: Public Works (PW) Superintendent (Supt) Mike Wolf, Police Officer Joel Anderson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Councilmember Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on July 11, 2023, the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Brooks. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Supt Mike Wolf submitted a written report for the Council.

CA LaFollett updated:

Vehicles

- The Durango is done and ready to become a public works vehicle. The Journey is ready for sale to the Fire Department

*The full Public Works report is attached to the minutes.

POLICE REPORT:

Officer Anderson submitted a written report to the Council.

*The full Police Department Report is attached to the minutes.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR / DEPUTY CLERK REPORT:

CA LaFollett reported:

Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) grant for the St. Elmo feasibility study

- CA LaFollett and Councilmember Barrington traveled to Olympia to present to the CERB board for the grant application. The grant was awarded. There are forms that need to be signed to move forward with the Request for Proposals (RFP). Councilmember Barrington added that we are still looking for the remainder of the matching funds. If we put out the RFP, we need to make sure we can fulfill the RFP. There is money in the budget that the city could contribute to this.

Tennis Court

- The Tennis Courts need some maintenance and it is the city's responsibility to maintain them. We will need to budget some funds to maintain them. It has been suggested to paint pickleball lines on the tennis courts so that they have a dual use.

Tree block stop sign and Light

- In the council's packet is a quote to cut the tree down and add concrete to match the sidewalk.

Dog Swim

- Still working on a date. Kayla Johnston addressed the council. She is creating an advertisement flyer and she is asking businesses for prizes for a raffle. She is also looking for a volunteer to photograph the event and 2-3 volunteers to help during the event with conflict mitigation/resolution between the dogs, if it arises.

Main Street Striping

- Looking into the process for removing the double yellow striping in front of the City Shops and J Street. CA LaFollett has been in contact with the WA State Dept. of Transportation (WSDOT) and they are looking into it.

OLD BUSINESS:

Resolution 2023-17: 6-year Tax Levy - Continue Existing Ambulance Service by the City of Pullman and other EMS purposes

- Mayor Sievers read the resolution aloud in full.

- Councilmember Brooks introduced a **MOTION** to adopt Resolution 2023-17: 6-year Tax Levy - Continue Existing Ambulance Service by the City of Pullman and other EMS purposes, the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

Resolution 2023-18: 1-year Tax Levy – Operation and Maintenance of the Infrastructure for the City of Palouse

- Mayor Sievers read the resolution aloud in full.
- There was discussion about this amount being the same as last year and this being the source of funding for water projects.
- Councilmember Sena introduced a **MOTION** to adopt Resolution 2023-18: 1-year Tax Levy – Operation and Maintenance of the Infrastructure for the City of Palouse, the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Brink. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

Resolution 2023-19: 1-year Tax Levy – Operation and Maintenance of the Swimming Pool

- Mayor Sievers read the resolution aloud in full.
- There was discussion about the amount going up from last year and that this enables the city to keep the pool open.
- Councilmember Brooks introduced a **MOTION** to adopt Resolution 2023-19: 1-year Tax Levy – Operation and Maintenance of the Swimming Pool, the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Slinkard. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

Resolution 2023-20: 1-year Tax Levy – Street Improvements and Street Oiling

- Mayor Sievers read the resolution aloud in full.
- Council asked how much did the city spend on road oiling this year, and CA LaFollett answered \$22,480. There was a discussion about the amount of the Levy being \$50,000. CA LaFollett explained that back-blading and other improvements use the rest of the money.
- Councilmember Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to adopt Resolution 2023-20: 1-year Tax Levy – Street Improvements and Street Oiling, the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

Verizon

- CA LaFollett provided a Verizon cell tower update in the council's packet. CA LaFollett explained that Verizon will submit an official project proposal after the amount of the lease can be agreed on. There was a discussion about the amount that other landowners have been paid and about the types of towers. CA LaFollett asked the council if she should counter Verizon's offer with \$2000 per month, there were no objections from the council.

St. Elmo's Request for Proposal (RFP)

- The council was provided with the RFP for review, at the last council meeting. There was a discussion about who owns the St. Elmo building property and who will own it once the feasibility study is done. Justin and Lindsay Brown currently own the property and will continue to own the property until they decide to sell it.
- Councilmember Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to adopt the Request for Proposal for the CERB grant St. Elmo feasibility study, the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Barrington. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

No New Business

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Policy & Administration - Chair Barrington:

- The committee has reviewed examples of Public Nuisance / Noise disturbance ordinances. A good example that they like listed the types of noise disturbances, and the hours it would apply to. There was discussion about the noise from bars downtown and the exemptions that would apply to businesses and agriculture. There was a discussion about whether a business would need an application or a variance for events and if there would be a fee for the application or variance. It was mentioned that the state noise level is 55 decibels and the city would need a way to measure it. The committee hopes to get a draft noise ordinance sent to the City Attorney soon.
- A draft ordinance separating the consequences for the "potentially dangerous dogs" and "dangerous dogs" is being reviewed by the city attorney.
- The committee is still working on the sidewalk seating policy.

Budget, Finance, & Major Acquisitions - Chair Bofenkamp:

- No Report

Streets, Properties, & Facilities - Chair Deerkop:

- No Report

Personnel - Chair Brink:

- No Report

Water and Sewer - Chair Slinkard:

- Met with the Department of Ecology (DOE) to discuss solutions to the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) issues. The DOE is willing to come once a month to meet and help come up with potential solutions. Set to apply for an extension for the 2024 deadline. Implementing a full solution will take care of the thermal problem.

Joint Fire Board - Chair Sena:

- No Report

OPEN FORUM:

- Dennis Kittleson – addressed the council to say that we are lucky to have Officer Anderson. Mr. Kittleson is a 21-year resident and has seen a variety of officers and Officer Anderson is one of the best. The Sheriff's office is fine but they are stressed and it could take them a long time to respond.
- Jessica Twigg-Harris – Thanked CA LaFollett and Councilmember Barrington for work done on the St. Elmo Feasibility Study Grant. It is exciting to have the study done and have answers. Mrs. Twigg-Harris thanked the Browns for being open to exploring options. The building may come down, but at least we will understand.
- Michael Echanove – Thanked CA LaFollett and Councilmember Barrington and the whole council for the work done on the St. Elmo Feasibility Study Grant. Mr. Echanove said it is a great road to go down to get answers. He informed the council that he is in support of the current officer. He stated that when it comes to taking down the tree on the corner blocking the stop sign, it may be more complicated. The trees were planted in barrels and they have drip water lines and electricity. Mr. Echanove suggested consulting with an arborist for a solution.
- Edie Riddle – asked if there is a Police Task Force report yet. Councilmember Brink answered that they are still working on it.
- Brenda Fire Hawk – She has researched rural policing and rural policing is like Cheers, where everyone knows your name. An outside source will not know us or the situation. She asked if an outside source will police the schools.
- Angie Griner – Asked if the task force, if in the research, are they looking closely at code enforcement. She thinks that we should have a small-town police officer, but overtime should not be used by a police officer for code enforcement if a code enforcement person would be cheaper. Taking that off the current officer's plate could reduce the amount paid in overtime. Mrs. Griner stated that we should be careful when creating a noise ordinance so that it does not affect the livelihood of the bars and restaurants. She asked them to consider making the hours later, on Friday and Saturday nights. Mrs. Griner researched U-turns on state highways and stated that it is allowed with 500+ft of visibility. Mrs. Griner thanked CA LaFollett for the work done with the WSDOT. Mrs. Griner stated that she would love to see the St. Elmo be saved, but she asked the council if the city should be using taxpayer money to pay a city employee for hours worked on a project that is owned by a private citizen and is not city property. Mrs. Griner asked if city funds should be spent on the matching fund's requirement because once we use the grant money, the city is on the hook for the remaining matching funds. Mrs. Griner asked if the city would help other private business owners with their iconic buildings.
- Dana Anderson – Stated he has experience with negotiating a Verizon tower and is glad that the city did not accept the low offer of \$700 per month. Mr. Anderson suggested that the Verizon tower money could help cover the cost of the pool and/or other things like the tennis courts. If we do get \$2000 per month that is \$24,000 per year that could be put towards the pool and/or tennis courts etc. Mr. Anderson appreciates that a potential noise ordinance will consider weekends, he would also like to see clauses in the ordinance for special holidays such as the Fourth of July. Mr. Anderson addressed the Police Task Force on the topic of a code enforcement officer and the fact that they are not a cop and cannot enforce legal issues. Mr. Anderson states that Pullman can support a code enforcement officer because they have a larger population, but does not think Palouse could afford a code enforcement officer. Mr. Anderson stated that Officer Anderson does an outstanding job, and he asked the council who we have on backup when Officer Anderson is on vacation or after he has finished his 40-hour work week. Council did not answer.
- Steve McGehee – Being a former council member for 10 years, he has documents that he wanted to give back to the current council members, a 1992 WWTP Manual, and an Annexation Policy. Mr. McGehee told a story about an application for a subdivision, back in the 1990s, that wanted to annex a 200-unit residential development and that is how the Annexation Policy became to be. It was created to protect the water and sewer infrastructure and the people who live here now.
- Al Pancoast – Asked about the oiling of the gravel roads and wonders if there is something better than oiling that the \$20,000 could be spent on other than keeping dust down, like sidewalks. Also, Mr. Pancoast stated how valuable Officer Anderson is.
- Kayla Johnston – Stated she is a Forestry Professional and there is a patch of dead trees on Shady Lane, that is due to a Mt. Pine Beetle infestation. As a professional Mrs. Johnston recommends removing the stressed and dead wood in winter and hanging pheromone packets to deter the Mt. Pine Beetles. Mrs. Johnston stated that if left untreated Mt. Pine Beetles could destroy all the trees on Shady Lane within 5 years. There was a discussion about the trees being on private property and a discussion about spraying. Mrs. Johnston recommended consulting with a forest management company.

- Mayor Seivers read a letter in full from Jim Fielder.
- Councilmember Slinkard handout out information packets at the request of Mr. Gearhart.
- Tia Elgar – Expressed her support for Officer Anderson and told a story of how Officer Anderson assisted her with a domestic violence situation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Mayor Sievers reported that he had a pre-meeting with Varela Engineering prior to the meeting with the DOE.
- Regarding the meeting with the DOE, it seems there was forward progress.

ALLOW PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Councilmember Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to allow the payment of bills; the **MOTION** was seconded by Councilmember Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

The following checks are approved for payment:

Claims paid Ck#13271-13296 & EFT \$58,418.50

ADJOURN:

Councilmember Sena **MOVED** to adjourn; Councilmember Barrington seconded the **MOTION**: All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

The council meeting Adjourned at 8:21 pm

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

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Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: July 20, 2023

(Keep in mind this is 5 days from each council meeting)

WATER:

We read meters this week.

We finished replacing broken meters last week.

We have another leak on Tidwell Road that'll probably get repaired tomorrow. Slocum Excavation and Walter will work on it. It is on the longest line of the city going to the old Styer residence. We need to come up with a solution for replacing the line since the cost will be so great that the city is throwing money away at it. Maybe a 50/50 cost or pitching in on drilling a well.

We replaced a curb stop that had frozen over the winter. It is a new service line requested by the owner for future water upgrade to the house.

RAILROAD CROSSING:

We replaced 4 yield signs with stop signs on West Whitman Street as we were out of compliance with the railroad.

PARKS:

The Music Festival is on July 29th.

Vacation Bible School is August 7th –August 11th.

We received the new Cub Cadet mower and works great.

STREETS:

Evan and Ella have been painting parking lines on Main Street when they have time. We will paint crosswalks and stop lines in August.

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SHOP:

Chappell Auto has repaired and stripped and buffed the decals and lights off of the Durango. We're just waiting for license plates at this time before we put it into service.

OTHER:

Mike will be on vacation the last week of July.

Walt will be on vacation the first week of August.

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Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting July 25, 2023:

Eighteen calls for service and two call outs since last council.

32 traffic stops resulting in five infraction citations and two criminal citations issued.

230708-01 - While off duty and on call I received a report of a dog locked in a hot car outside Palouse Grocery Store. I put on my uniform and responded to the location to learn from reporting party the dog vehicle owner had returned and left the scene after a verbal disagreement between the reporting party and dog owner. I obtained the license plate from the reporting party and found a phone number for the dog owner. Spoke with dog owner and determined no crime occurred.

240709-02 - While attending the Ice Cream Social I was contacted by a citizen who believed a juvenile may be cutting herself with a knife near the pool. I responded and spoke with the juvenile who had no signs of cutting on her arms, legs or body. Juvenile admitted she had a knife in her backpack with approval of parents but had no intention of hurting herself. I knew the juvenile's parents so I called the father who was confident this was a misunderstanding by the reporting party. I concurred.

230710-01 - While working pro active traffic enforcement I stopped a vehicle for expired tabs. The driver advised he was a constitutionalist and did not have to show me his license. After some back and forth the driver produced a valid license but then told me to "fuck off" when I asked for proof of insurance. I clarified this was the route the driver wanted to go as it would force me to write him a \$560 ticket for no vehicle insurance. The driver then produced valid vehicle insurance but told me he only recognized the international treaty signed with the Yakima Tribe that did not require him to have a license, insurance or renew tabs. I advised him if he continued to drive with expired tabs he would be subject to receiving a ticket.

230710-02 - While working pro active traffic enforcement I stopped a vehicle with expired tabs of over two months. Further investigation revealed the driver did not have vehicle insurance and he had not transferred the title within 45 days of purchasing the vehicle. Two infractions issued for expired tabs over 45 days and no vehicle insurance. Criminal citation issued for Failure To Transfer Title Within 45 Days.

230710-03 - While working patrol a citizen advised of a blocking disabled vehicle about four miles south of Palouse on Palouse Cove RD. I responded to the area as it was close to the city limits and a vehicle blocking the roadway is an immediate danger to the traveling public. I arrived and contacted the driver who said he had a tow enroute but was concerned about blocking the road. I laid out a flare pattern and orange traffic cones directing traffic away from the vehicle until the tow arrived.

230711-01 - While working pro active traffic enforcement I stopped a vehicle for expired tabs of 10-2021 - over 21 months expired. Upon contacting the driver I realized this was the same driver and vehicle I had stopped for the same violation twice in a week period three months earlier in which I gave a warning then a citation after failing to purchase the new tabs after the verbal warning. The driver had still not renewed their tabs nor purchased vehicle insurance. The driver has also failed to transfer the vehicle into her name after purchasing the vehicle in March 2023. Two infractions issued

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for expired tabs over two months and no vehicle insurance. Criminal citation issued for Failure To Transfer Title Within 45 Days.

230712-02 - Received a complaint about loose chickens roaming a neighbors yard. I collected visual evidence via pictures and contacted the chicken owner. We were able locate holes in the wooden fence that enabled the chicken to escape. Chicken owner diligently repaired the fence and no reports of loose chickens since.

230714-02 - While working pro active traffic enforcement I attempted to stop a vehicle for expired tabs of 02-2023. The vehicle failed to yield while making left and right turns on Palouse arterials at 25 MPH. Upon activating my emergency sirens the vehicle still failed to stop. I followed the vehicle as it finally arrived in the alley of a north hill roadway and began to back up towards my vehicle. I took evasive action to avoid being struck. Only at that time did the driver realize I was behind him and jerked his vehicle to a stop. I determined the driver had music blaring at extreme levels and could not hear the siren. The rear view mirror was obstructed by the canopy of the pickup. Driver profusely apologized as I am familiar with this resident. Infraction issued for Expired Tabs Over Two Months and warning given for Failure To Stop.

230713-03 - Received a report of a citizen concerned about another citizen possibly driving intoxicated on city streets. I drove to the citizens residence and observed the front door open with keys in the lock. Concerned for the citizens safety I knocked and announced my presence in an effort of community caretaking. I learned the citizens caretaker was already with him. I advised of the complaint I had received and made sure the citizen knew my ZERO TOLERANCE policy for drinking and driving in Palouse.

230714-01 - While off duty and on call I received a text from a citizen with pictures of a suspicious vehicle driving around his neighborhood 5-6 times in the morning. I put on my uniform and responded to the area but could not locate the vehicle. No license plate was given. The next day, in the same area, another citizen reported a pickup parked in the cemetery at night that had left in a hurry but could not get a description. I am requesting any citizen call or text if they observe a tan/red pickup or any suspicious vehicle in the cemetery during hours of darkness. I am attempting to make contact with this vehicle/driver.

On 7-9-23 - Attended Ice Cream Social at the city park from 1200-1500 hours. Handed out stickers to kids and answered citizens question's in regards to policing in Palouse. Showed off new patrol vehicle to a few curious citizens. Overwhelming positive response and support given by citizens for Palouse PD to include some I had never met before and many I already knew.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Palouse Music Festival July 29 and the Palouse Yard Sale on August 5th. I will be working these events so feel free to stop me and say hello if I don't say hello first.

MPO Joel Anderson #603
Palouse PD 509-999-6016=