City of Palouse

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Note to persons reviewing this document: This is not a verbatim transcript. While an attempt has been made to document pertinent points, these minutes contain only a summary of the discussion and voting.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Sievers called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.,

Councilmembers* present at the meeting were Sarah Bofenkamp, Bill Slinkard, Sam Brink, Travis Deerkop, Robert Brooks, and Ann Barrington. Also in attendance were Hans Pidino, Lesa Neumann, Jim Morrison, Dana Anderson, Cheryl Sanders, Angie Griner, Mary Estes, Kelsey Blair, and Doug Cuellar.

*In the following paragraphs, Councilmember(s) will be abbreviated as: "C."

- I. ROLL CALL: Acting DC Gaber took attendance; C. Leslie Jo Sena was absent.
 - 1. C. Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to excuse C. Sena's absence from the meeting, the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Bofenkamp. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

City staff present: City Administrator (CA) Misty La Follett, Police Officer Joel Anderson, and Acting Deputy Clerk (DC) Jamie Gaber. City staff absent: Public Works (PW) Superintendent (Supt) Mike Wolf

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- C. Deerkop introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on July 25, 2023, the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brink. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.
- III. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Supt Mike Wolf submitted a written report for the Council.
- IV. POLICE REPORT: Officer Anderson presented his report to the Council.
 - A. 49 traffic stops resulting in two infraction citations.
 - **B**. 45 calls for service since last council.
 - 1. 15 of those calls related to city ordinances violations.
 - C. Officer Anderson then went through a diagram he had posted on the wall. He explained that U turns downtown can only occur in an official intersection. He demonstrated on the diagram the dangers of making a U turn at J St. and Main, in which visibility is easily blocked by large vehicles. Additionally, it is illegal to cross a double yellow to re-enter west bound traffic. He stated that PMCs (Palouse Municipal Code) override RCWs, as each city has the right to make more specific and/or restrictive code than the state requires. He noted that ordinances are not paused while under review.

V.CITY ADMINISTRATOR / DEPUTY CLERK REPORT: CA La Follett reported:

2.

- 3. **A. GYM:** Owners of the Gym would like to landscape city property next to the old medical clinic in exchange for 50% off future water bills. Mayor Sievers said that is not an option the city is willing to consider. C. Barrington and C. Slinkard both agreed all water bills should remain separate. C. Brink said council is open to other collaboration suggestions with the owners. C. Bofenkamp said she is interested in pursuing the wayfinding sign that had been brought up previously for that location.
- **B.** MAIN ST. STRIPING: WSDOT does not recognize the alley between Baggot Motors/Chappell Automotive and the Palouse Brewery as a continuation of J St., therefore they do not support the removal of the double yellow lines on Main St.
- C. WAR MEMORIAL: Sparrow Glass in Colfax is willing to fix the laminate covering on the War Memorial in Hayton-Green Park. It will be covered by the Parks Budget. All C. members agreed.
- **D. VERIZON:** Discussion occurred regarding the proposed rate to be paid by Verizon to have a tower on city property. All agreed to continue to negotiate for a higher rate. Multiple citizens asked that Verizon not have exclusive rights to tower use, leaving the ability to have multiple-use options open for the tower.
- E. TREE REMOVAL ON SHADY LANE: Avista is willing to move trees off Shady Lane and cut into smaller rounds for ease of movement by city staff.
- **F. ST. ELMO'S DONATIONS:** Confirmed with MRSC's auditor office that donations from the public are acceptable to offset planning grant's fund matching requirements. Donations have been received and are currently being accepted at City Hall.
- G. IPG GRANT: C. Barrington worked with CA La Follett to submit a \$200,000 planning grant in early August. Quick turnaround, should know if we receive grant in October.

VI. OLD BUSINESS: None

VII. NEW BUSINESS: SHADY LANE

4.

- 5. **A. Avista** marked trees for cutting in December 2022 because the trees were dead. Cut trees down in July, now will cut into rounds and haul offsite.
- 6. B. Western Pine Beetle Infestation; currently advised by Kayla Johnston, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, and Mark Swanson PhD, Forestry Ecology and Management, School of the Environment, WSU.

 Recommendations:
- 7. 1. The largest trees should be conserved thru targeted thinning, ideally in October thru April.
- 8. 2. Following thinning, small branch wood and crowns should be promptly removed to eliminate the possibility of attracting pine graver beetles (that attack and kill standing trees). Small wood can be disposed of by chipping, mastication, or pile burning.
- 9. 3. Snags should be conserved to provide habitat structure for cavity nesting wildlife such as woodpeckers, flickers, western bluebirds, and nuthatches (including red-breasted, white-breasted, and pygmy nuthatches). Snags chosen should not cause any safety issues.
- 10. **4.** Consider the use of prescribed fire under safe weather conditions (such as a light snow) as it will provide a flush of nutrients which will enhance the vigor of the ponderosa pines, (of all ages), eliminate small branch wood, and control competition for moisture.
- 11. **Next Steps:** Contact Forester(s) to mark trees, local possibilities identified. Thin trees in winter months. Follow up with other options to further protect the largest trees.

COMMITTEES:

Policy and Administration - Chair Barrington:

A draft Ordinance separating the consequences for the "potentially dangerous dogs" and "dangerous dogs" is being reviewed by the city attorney.

Budget, Finance, & Major Acquisitions - Chair Bofenkamp:

No Report

Streets, Properties, & Facilities - Chair Deerkop:

Tree in front of Stop sign on Main St. to be trimmed to increase visibility of the flashing signal

Personnel - Chair Brink:

Considering resumes for Deputy Clerk position

Water and Sewer - Chair Slinkard:

Ecology extended deadline for temperature reduction

Joint Fire Board - Chair Sena:

C. Bofenkamp asked if the Fire Board had considered a notification system that could be implemented in the event of a wildfire or other large-scale emergency to notify residents.

- /III. OPEN FORUM: <u>C. Slinkard</u> asked to have the floor. He noted citizens' responsibility to both the city and other citizens. These duties can be carried out by being respectful of each other, and responsible, by following the rules of city council. Each person has three minutes to talk and the mayor has both the right and responsibility to enforce this.

 <u>Hans Pidino</u>: Supports local policing. Also, suggested placing signs in town identifying local laws, such as the U turn policy.
 - 12. <u>Lesa Neumann</u>: Stated the whole community is important and rules are important to follow. Asked that Senate Bill 5051 regarding excessive force by police officers be reviewed. Wanted to follow up on status of dangerous dog ordinance.

 Supports both Joel Anderson and local policing. Would like all residents to be respected equally regardless of how long they have resided in town.
 - 13. <u>Dana Anderson:</u> Currently teaching a young driver the rules; WA. State driving handbook clearly states a double yellow line can not be crossed. Would like other drivers to follow rules, to set a good example. If not, they should be cited and let the courts decide. Also, would like to see a conclusion to the Police Task Force.

<u>Cheryl Sanders</u>: Asked what instigated forming the Police Task Force. Also, questioned what still needs to be addressed? Offered to help with food at Midnight Swim next year.

Angie Griner: Running in November for council position. Supports multiple steps for city employees to improve before any punitive measures taken. RCW 4661 states, if safe, can cross double yellow. Supports signage on acceptable U turns downtown. Would like to see more specifics stated on agenda for new business in council meetings.

Mary Estes: Asked why there are no citizens on the Police Task Force.

Appreciates the Police Department enforcing city codes. Supports signage, good solution to U turn questions downtown.

Kelsy Blair: U

turn happens in alley; code says can cross double yellow if coming out of an alley. Would like more topics listed on agenda for public to see beforehand. If tree by Stop sign/signal gets cut down, could replant, and grow a replacement.

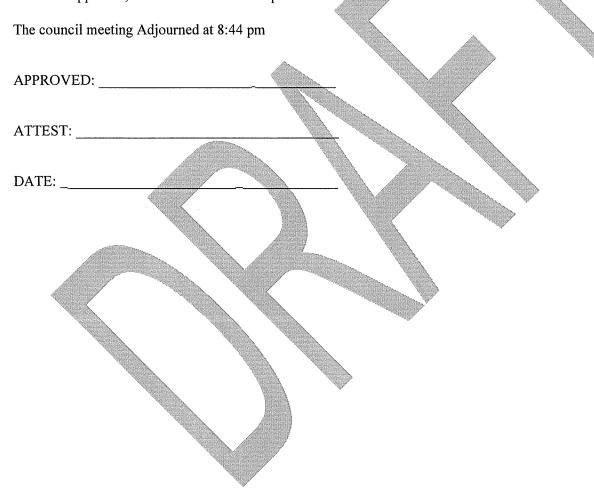
- 14. <u>Doug Cuellar</u>: Supports both Joel Anderson and local policing. Thinks laws are important to follow and hopes all will lead by example, especially for the benefit of new drivers.
- IX. MAYORS REPORT: ICMA CONFERENCE: attended in Detroit. Selected by the EPA to receive "Small Site, Big Impact" Award for the restoration of our Brownfield site downtown. An Ecology representative expressed interest in Palouse, noting a key bipartisan law has made more money available for similar projects. An article was written about Palouse in the ICMA (International City/County Management Association) magazine and distributed to more than 3,000 people. Travel expenses were offset by a generous donation by Avista.
 - B. BENNETT LUMBER: wants to reactivate Railroad tracks through town. The train would travel from Idaho to Palouse to Spokane. They will present to the city soon. They have an easement through town and expect 7-10 cars to come through town once weekly. They will do safety education. C. Bofenkamp noted we are responsible for safety signage. C. Barrington asked for sign changes to be announced on the listsery.
 - 16. **C. PALOUSE BASIN AQUIFER:** Looking for Palouse to be represented on new committee. C. Bofenkamp has contact information.

- X. COUNCIL MEMBER DISCUSSION: C. Brooks addressed the city council regarding the cancellation of the last city council meeting. He objected to the action, thinking violation of our code had occurred. Discussion amongst the councilmembers ensued. C. Brink concluded the discussion by recommending we check with the city lawyer then revisit the topic.
- XI. ALLOW PAYMENT OF BILLS: C. Slinkard asked why we were re-issuing firefighters checks. CA La Follett answered the firefighters had not cashed the original checks for an extended period. C. Barrington introduced a MOTION to allow the payment of bills; the MOTION was seconded by C. Brooks. All council members approved, and the MOTION was passed.

The following checks were approved for payment:

Claims paid Ck# 13297, #13322-13365 \$33,762.82 Payroll paid Ck# 13298-13321 \$65,685.46

XII. ADJOURN: C. Brink introduced a MOTION to adjourn; the MOTION was seconded by C. Deerkop. All council members approved, and the MOTION was passed.



Public Works Superintendent Council Report Date: August 22, 2023

WATER:

We've had several water leaks in the past 2 ½ weeks. The leaks were on Tidwell road, North River road, Idaho Loop, and Shady Lane. The infrastructure is getting old and more of these leaks are going to develop pretty quickly.

We still have a main leaking on Sumner Street by the county road shop that needs repaired.

We started on a low pressure complaint off of I Street and we dug up the line where we thought the problem would be. The problem exists further down the line than we expected so we may have to dig up the length of the alley to install a new line.

We are reading meters this week.

SEWER:

We've been hauling bio solids out the last couple of weeks. Our pile was full so that was much needed.

STREETS:

Evan and Ella have gotten all of the parking strips and handicap spots painted downtown.

We are planning on painting crosswalks next week.

We are going to start replacing boards on the foot bridge this week.

Evan and Ella have been trimming trees along Main Street and in the park.

COMPOST:

We've hauled two thirds of the compost pile from the site to well 3. We are hauling when we have time.

POOL:

The pool closed this last Saturday and the Pooch in the Park was cancelled on Sunday because of the smoke.

We are doing a deep clean of the pool house today.

CEMETERY:

Evan is replacing valves on the irrigation lines.

SHOP:

Evan's pickup is at Chappell's waiting to get worked on. It quits running at idle and doesn't start for a short time after it quits so it might be the fuel pump but unknown at this time.

OTHER:

We have Ainsley Sievers working with us until school starts.

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting August 22, 2023:

49 traffic stops resulting in two infraction citations.

45 calls for service since last council. 15 of those calls related to city ordinances violations.

230726-03 – While on patrol I was contacted by CA Misty Lafollet to advise trees have been cut down on both the private property and city property sides of Shady Lane. I walked the area and observed multiple trees marked with blue spray paint "X's" cut down. This work clearly required a chainsaw and thereby would have created noise if done under cover of darkness. There have been no citizen reports of people cutting down the trees or other witness information. The investigation remains open. **Update as of 8-16-23 ** - it has been determined the trees were cut down legally by a contractor of Avista.

230726-04 – While on patrol I received a third hand report of a citizen on the north hill possibly observing a cougar on their game camera set up in their yard. I contacted the citizen and he showed me the video. The video is brief but shows a cat of some kind disappearing into the night. The citizen advised another neighbor who hunts big game did not believe it was a cougar. I sent the video to our local Fish & Wildlife Officer Silver and requested he analyze it and determine if this was a legit cougar sighting in the city. Officer Silver advised he believed it was a large domestic cat that appeared larger based upon the angle in the video.

230726-05 — While on patrol I observed a vehicle parked on the public roadway with no plates and expired registration over one year. I located a phone number for the registered owner and advised the vehicle needed to be moved off the public roadway and onto private property. I received a phone call a few hours later from the vehicle owners asking if I would be willing to help with the removal of the vehicle by steering the vehicle onto private property as it was being towed. I responded and assisted with the removal.

230726-06 – While on patrol I observed a vehicle parked in the 500 block of E Main St illegally displaying a for sale sign in violation of Palouse Municipal Code 10.32.170. I located a phone number for registered owner and requested they move it or remove the for sale sign. Within a couple of hours the vehicle was removed from the roadway.

230726-07 – While working pro-active traffic enforcement I observed a pickup displaying expired tabs of 03-2023 and stopped the vehicle. Further investigation revealed the driver had no insurance. Driver cited expired tabs over two months and no vehicle insurance. Six days later I observed the same vehicle committing the same violation and stopped the vehicle. The driver advised he was getting paid the next day and would have both proof of insurance and tabs purchased by then. I chose not to be punitive by issuing another ticket but allowed him to show proof of current tabs/insurance the next day. The next day the driver followed through and sent proof he was now in compliance with tabs/insurance RCW's.

230727-01 – While on patrol I was dispatched to a domestic dispute between an adult granddaughter and grandfather. I am familiar with this female as I have contacted her on multiple occasions to assist with mental illness complaints. Female alleged grandfather punched holes in the wall of her room but this was proven to be untrue. Worked with grandmother to find resources and doctors who can better prescribe and manage medications for granddaughter diagnosis. I have since followed up with the

family to include the granddaughter and am pleased to report both parties state quality of life has improved dramatically since consulting other professional resources.

230728-03 – While on patrol I received a phone call from an adult female advising her former husband, a Palouse resident, was violating their agreed upon child custody agreement. Further investigation revealed both parties agreed to deviate from the six year old agreement for the summer thereby making any further deviation by either party non consequential. I contacted the male half and suggested that while there is no official violation of the custody agreement because of the agreed upon deviation, the best interest of their child should take priority. Male half agreed and issue was solved.

230728-04 — While on patrol I observed an adult male and adult female walking in the roadway on two different streets about a block apart. I asked why and they advised their three year old son had run out of the house when they were tending to another child and were now looking for the three year old. The parents advised the child has a history of escaping and hiding. A neighborhood search party was quickly organized and the child was found within a block of his residence within a half hour.

230728-05 – While on patrol I received a noise complaint in regards to a local business having a band play. The complaint stated the music was traveling from the commercial district into the residential district. I advised Palouse council/city attorney is currently reviewing a noise ordinance to provide guidance and enforcement ability within the Palouse Municipal Code. Until such ordinance is enacted that covers residential and commercial districts, no citations can be issued nor permits required.

230731-02 – While on patrol I was made aware of two juvenile runaways possibly in route to Palouse from Garfield by Marshal Handley. Upon getting the license plate and vehicle description I was able to locate the vehicle about fifteen minutes later and initiate a traffic stop. I located the two Pullman juvenile runaways in the backseat. Phone calls were made to both juveniles parents. One parent allowed their juvenile to be released to the driver while the other was transported to Pullman PD by Marshal Handley to be turned over to her parents.

230731-04 – While on patrol I received a call from a citizen advising they had discovered the contents of their glove compartments and middle console rifled through and strewn about on the passenger floorboard. Both of the vehicles were unlocked and had been parked for about 20 hours. Nothing was taken despite having some valuables in the vehicle. There is no suspect information and no other neighbors reported similar vehicle prowls.

230802-03 – While off duty and on call I received a call from a Palouse business owner advising two employees in a dating relationship got into an argument that caused the male half to destroy company property. Upon arrival I documented the damage with photos of forklift damage caused by a hammer, holes in the building wall, and multiple broken folding tables and stool. Further investigation led to the discovery of four employees committing time card theft that the owner wanted to handle internally. Upon terminating the employment of the employees involved with the vandalism and timecard theft, I served trespass letters on them per the request of the owner. The owner negotiated a civil settlement with the employee that caused the vandalism and chose not to follow through on prosecution.

230803-01 – While off duty and on call I received a text from a citizen advising of a hole in the road on North River Rd that had water bubbling from it and leaking down the hill. I put on my uniform and drove to the area. I prevented vehicles from making contact with the hole and called Public Works Supt Mike

Wolf to respond. Wolf requested I stay until he could come back with proper traffic cones to tape off the area until it could be repaired.

230804-02 – While on patrol I was dispatched to unincorporated Palouse just outside the city limits to respond to a report of a dog chasing a human. Investigation revealed a man out on a run on S River Rd was chased by two brown pit bull mixes at two different times. The second time the reporting party grabbed a stick to defend himself but ultimately did not strike the dogs. I located where the dogs lived and made contact with the owner. Owner advised invisible electric fence collar apparently not working and she would immediately tend to solving the issue. Both the incident and the dog owner live in the county but I handled the call as the victim was a Palouse resident.

230804-03 – While on duty a citizen contacted me and wished to report an estranged family member making threats via text. The estranged family member lived on a different continent but the reporting party still wanted to document the incident. Further investigation revealed the person making the threats has a history of mental illness and does not take their medication. The victim advised the family member does not know where she and her husband have moved to.

230804-04 – While on patrol I received a report of a door to door salesman selling roofing products without a peddler's license. I drove to the area and located one salesman on the south hill and another on the north hill. I identified both subjects and advised the process for applying for a peddler's license at City Hall as well as the cost. I instructed them to call their supervisors to be picked up or they would be cited for a violation of the ordinance. Both salesmen complied. It should be noted I located a different salesman from the same company two months prior and gave him a warning as well. Further violations by the same company will result in an ordinance violation citation issued.

230809-01 – While on patrol I observed a residence with a large box spring and king size mattress leaning against some trees near their driveway in violation of PMC 8.12.020. I text the owners and requested they take the bedding/mattress to the dump or move the items back inside so they are not visible from the roadway. The owner immediately took care of the problem.

230810-03 – While on patrol I heard dispatch advise of a diabetic medical call for EMS. I drove to the residence after clearing a previous call and noticed there were no Palouse EMS personnel at the scene yet. I inquired with dispatch who advised there were currently no EMS personnel available to respond but Pullman Paramedics were in route the past ten minutes. I made contact with the victim who advised her sugar was at alarming levels and blood pressure very low. I stood by and calmly spoke with the patient until Pullman could arrive to evaluate the subject.

230810-04 – While on patrol I responded to the Palouse Federated Church as the Pastor had reached out to me a month earlier requesting traffic control has Second Harvest Food Bank was arriving with the large truck to feed upwards of 200 families. Upon arrival I assisted in unloading the refrigerated food truck onto tables for dispensing. I then set up a traffic cone lane leading from Bridge to west on Cannon St to north on Mary Street then east on Houghton Street to avoid traffic congestion on the main arterial of Bridge St. Maintained scene security and traffic control for the three hour event.

230811-02 – While on patrol I was dispatched to a verbal DV between a husband and wife. I am familiar with this couple as the husband unfortunately is deep in the throes of an Alzheimers diagnosis. Upon arrival the parties were separated and calm with the assistance of neighbors. The wife continues to try

and impress upon the social services she is working with the urgency in getting her husband full time care from professionals.

230813-01 – While off duty and out of town I received a phone call from a citizen advising someone had entered the Newspaper/Printing Museum and tagged/vandalized the inside of the museum with green and silver spray paint. I requested Garfield Marshal Handley respond to look for any evidence and make contact with the reporting party. I instructed the reporting party to glove up and put the two spray paint cans she found on the floor into a plastic bag for evidentiary purposes. Upon returning to town I responded and took custody of the spray paint cans, walked the entire facility while taking pictures of the tagging which primarily consisted of the initial "V" or "VK" and "Val." Further investigation revealed the incident occurred sometime between 8-5-23 evening hours and 8-9-23 at noon. I contacted a local building owner to see if cameras attached to his building were functional and recording during the time frame listed above. I dusted the spray paint cans for prints and was able to lift three prints from each can. I submitted the spray paint cans and prints into evidence at Palouse PD. I requested the City Administrator notify city residents of the incident so anyone hearing of anyone involved can contact me immediately. Investigation is active and ongoing.

UPDATE Latent fingerprints cards and both spray cans have been submitted to the Washington State Patrol Crime Lab in Cheney, WA for analysis.

On 7-29-23 I attended the Palouse Music Festival throughout the day interacting with quite a few local and non-local residents. Handed out stickers and showed off the new Palouse Police PD SUV to kids.

On 8-2-23 I attended traffic court to represent the City of Palouse as the city currently has no agreement with an attorney to represent the cities interests related to traffic infractions. Also met with Whitman County Prosecuting Attorney Denis Tracy in regards to how the prosecutor's office can better serve the City of Palouse and/or to see if Palouse PD can do anything better to ensure domestic violence related crimes are prosecuted even without victim testimony.

On 8-5-23 I was able to stop by 38 of the 41 yard sales in the Palouse City limits. Spoke with citizens and answered questions from residents while handing out stickers to kids. Participated in way too many lemonade and food stands.

MPO Joel Anderson

1100 08/17/23 Palouse Police Department Law Incident Summary Report, by Incident Number Page: 1 11:28

Total Incidents for This Report: 45

All dates greater than `00:00:00 07/21/23` All agencies matching `PAPD` All officers