

City of Palouse
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 14, 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 Bill Slinkard, Leslie Jo Sena, Sam Brink, Travis Deerkop, Robert Brooks, and Ann Barrington. Also in attendance were Barb Hodson, Angie Griner, and Cheryl Sanders.

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

I. ROLL CALL: DC Gaber took attendance; C. Bofenkamp was absent.

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to excuse C. Bofenkamp's absence from the meeting; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brooks. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

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

PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING: REVENUE SOURCES

CA La Follett Reported: 2024 preliminary budget starts with approved budget of 2023.

1. Last year General Fund was separated into sub-funds for clarity
 - a. Pool
 - b. Police
 - c. Park
 - d. RV
2. Sales and Use tax revenue up approximately \$40,000 year to date
3. Five funds have been updated
4. Budget Hearing closed at 7:08pm

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

C. Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on October 24, 2023; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Slinkard. 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. 20 calls for service since the last Council Meeting.
 1. Seven of those calls related to city ordinance violations.
 2. Two traffic infractions; one ordinance infraction

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

A. CITY WEBSITE:

1. Federal government has approved the URL of palousewa.gov for our use
2. First Step is now building our website

B. CITY EMPLOYEE INSURANCE:

1. Employees interested in AFLAC insurance
2. No cost to city

C. Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to approve city employees to opt into AFLAC insurance policies; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All Council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

C. ST. ELMO: INFORMATION MEETING

1. Thursday Nov. 16th at the Community Center 6:30pm
2. Haley&Aldrich Engineering Firm
3. Dept. of Ecology

D. SHADY LANE: CUT TREES VIA AVISTA

1. Charity will split and deliver firewood to needy citizens

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Resolution 2023-25, purchase of 1994 Fire Truck

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to approve Resolution 2023-25; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Deerkop. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ORDINANCE No. 1023: Adopting the property tax increase for collection in 2024, an increase of 1%.

Brooks introduced a **MOTION** to approve Ordinance No. 1023; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Barrington. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

B. ORDINANCE No. 1024: Adopting the property tax increase for Emergency Medical Services for collection in 2024.

Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to approve Ordinance No. 1024; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All Council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

C. ORDINANCE No. 1025: Setting the regular and special levy amounts for the Budget Year 2024

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|--------------|
| a) | Special Street Levy | \$ 50,000.00 |
| b) | Special Pool Levy | \$ 50,000.00 |
| c) | Special Infrastructure Levy | \$ 55,000.00 |

d)	Voted Regular EMS Levy	\$ 32,179.72
e)	General Levy	\$204,591.82
f)	<i>Total amount to be raised by taxation</i>	<i>\$391,771.54</i>

C. Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to approve Ordinance No. 1025; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brink. All Council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

VIII. COMMITTEES:

Policy and Administration - Chair Barrington:

Introduced discussion regarding council rules of procedure, will continue next council meeting.

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:

Meeting with Ecology is scheduled for Nov. 27th

Joint Fire Board - Chair Sena:

No report.

IX. OPEN FORUM:

Barb Hudson: Asked why STOP letters had not been applied to ground at the Main and Bridge St. intersection. Also, asked about child riding in cop car

Cheryl Sanders: Asked about recording council meetings. Would like minutes to be made public earlier.

Angie Griner: Videos could be made of council meetings then put on new website. Please take hard copies of the minutes to senior lunches at the community center.

X. MAYORS REPORT:

A. Varela

1. Working with firm to draft letter concerning temp reduction requirements/deadline
2. Addressed four different points in the RCW's

B. Infrastructure Conference in Wenatchee

C. Spoke at Port of Whitman about the Brownfields project

D. Planning Commission Appointments

1. Bob Barry | Seat 7 | Term expires - 12/31/24
2. Amy Whitcomb | Seat 1 | Term expires - 12/31/25
3. Anthony Walls | Seat 3 | Term expires - 12/31/26

E. Deputy Clerk Appointment

1. The Mayor appointed Jamie Gaber to the position of Deputy Clerk and asked for the consent of the Council.
 - a) C. Brink introduced a **MOTION** to consent to the appointment of Jamie Gaber to the position of Deputy Clerk; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Slinkard. All Council members approved and the **MOTION** passed.
2. The Mayor administered the oath of office to the Deputy Clerk.

XI. ALLOW PAYMENT OF BILLS:

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

The following checks were approved for payment:

Claims paid:	Ck# 13494, 13498-13554	\$57,059.95
Payroll paid:	Ck# 13485-13493, 13495-13497	\$36,901.47
Total:		\$ 93,961.42

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

The council meeting Adjourned at 8:03 pm

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting November 14, 2023:

Twenty calls for service since last council to include seven ordinance related calls.

Two traffic infractions and one ordinance violation infraction issued.

231021-01 – While on pro-active traffic enforcement patrol I stopped a vehicle for expired tabs over two months. The driver had no proof of insurance. Further investigation revealed the driver has a history of driving unlicensed vehicles and having no proof of insurance. Driver cited for both violations.

231022-01 – While off duty and on call I received a call from a citizen reporting an illegal burn at the residence of an adult male on the north hill who has been warned before about violating the Palouse Municipal Code on outdoor burning. I arrived and observed a medium size area that was smoldering from burning yard waste to include leaves. While taking pictures of the burn I observed the male hiding on the porch and quickly run into his house. I called the male on his cell and told him to come outside so we could handle the issue. The male complied and said he thought it was now burn season. I, again, sent him a copy of the ordinance and advised he would be cited for the violation. Follow up revealed he and girlfriend have since moved out of the house and the city.

231023-01 – While on patrol I got called to GarPal High School to investigate a report of a vandalism to a student's vehicle. Student said he came out to his vehicle in the student parking lot the prior afternoon and noticed some macaroni and cheese poured on his hood and roof. Also noticed a door width key scratch on his passenger side. Student cannot say for sure when the scratch took place. Further investigation revealed school cameras pointed towards parking lot show no suspicious activity or persons around his car during the alleged time frame.

231023-02 – Dispatched to a two car non injury collision at the intersection of E Mohr and I Streets. Adult female traveling northbound on I Street failed to yield at the intersection for vehicle traveling eastbound on E Mohr Street. Victim vehicle required tow to remove vehicle due to damage to right rear passenger side tire. Facilitated exchange of licenses, valid insurance cards, phone numbers and vehicle information. Gave both parties Palouse PD case number.

231025-01 – While on pro-active traffic enforcement I observed a vehicle cross the double yellow while backing out of angle parking to travel the opposite direction during afternoon commute. I stopped the vehicle which had Texas plates and no tabs. Further investigation revealed the registration expired 02-2022. The driver stated she had been in the state working and establishing residence since July 2023. Further investigation revealed she was stopped for the registration issue in March 2023 thus showing she was dishonest with me in regards to how long she had been in the state. I gave the driver one week to get a Washington driver license and Washington license plate. Follow up revealed she completed both requirements within the time period.

231025-02 – While off duty and on call I received a call from dispatch advising of an audible burglary alarm at the Palouse Family Grocery. I responded and determined it was an unsecured front door that was causing the alarm not because someone was trying to break in. Double checked the perimeter and delivery area doors. Called both subscribers who advised they have had issues with the alarm at front door. Subscriber was able to deactivate outside front door alarm until they could get it fixed.

231030-01 – While on patrol I received a call from a citizen advising her campaign signs that had been posted near the SR27 electronic speed sign were missing. I drove to the area and determined another campaign sign of another individual was missing as were the Palouse Chamber signs posted in the same area a few months ago. Further investigation revealed a roofer in the area had observed a white pickup with green lettering driven by an adult male in a fluorescent yellow safety vest removing the signs earlier in the morning but did not report it. I deduced this was a WSDOT employee. I called the DOT supervisor in Colfax who determined it was a Pullman DOT employee and the signs were in Pullman DOT shed for retrieval. I advised the supervisor that in a citizen capacity I had called DOT in the middle of September to clarify state route right of way policy for signs and was told if it was in the city limits DOT defers to city policy which would have shown the signs were in compliance. The DOT supervisor advised while that was technically true, DOT has a responsibility to maintain the right of way until it comes upon curbing or sidewalk. I convinced DOT they

should deliver the signs to City Hall since it would be a hardship through no fault of the citizens who had acted in good faith based upon information provided by DOT originally. The DOT supervisor agreed and returned all signs.

231101-02 – While off duty and on call I received a call from a citizen reporting a suspicious vehicle driving around his neighborhood stopping and starting multiple times outside different houses. Citizen was concerned about possible casing of residences. I put on my uniform and drove to the area. Located the described vehicle in front of the house of a resident I knew and called them. They advised it was an emergency late night dog food delivery via Door Dash and the driver was having a difficult time finding the address.

231103-01 – While on patrol I had the privilege and honor to provide a police escort for the boy and girls state bound cross country team. Police and Fire combined to give a full throated lights and siren escort out of the city limits. Congrats to them.

231105-01 – While working patrol I had a citizen call to advise she had just witnessed an older pickup back out of a parking spot at the corner of Main and Beach Street and strike a large green lamp post that doubles as a stop sign. The vehicle continued westbound on Main Street without stopping. The citizen was quick thinking and took multiple pictures of the license plate and gave a good description of the driver. With the plate I was able to locate the registered owner who lived just outside the state boundary in Potlach. Owner was honest and advised his twenty year old son drives that vehicle and gave me an updated phone number for him as he lives at a different address in Potlach. I called the son and he admitted to striking the lamp post as he turned too quickly while worrying about clearing the parked car next to him. Driver provided proof of valid vehicle insurance and his license. I forwarded this information to City Administrator Lafollet for insurance claim to fix the lamp post and concrete damage in and around the post. I provided pictures of the damage as well to Lafollet and Public Works Supt Wolf. This is an excellent example of being a good witness and being the eyes/ears for the police department. Getting a license plate usually leads to a successful investigation as it provides a massive amount of vital information.

231107-01 – While on patrol I was approached by a citizen concerned about the welfare of a dog that belonged to an elderly male who may not have the resources and capabilities to properly care for the dog. The dog has been reported in the past running loose on the north hill and appears somewhat emaciated with its ribs showing. Citizen advised they have personally bought food for the dog. I am familiar with the owner so I made contact with him at this residence. Dog owner advised he believed the dog is schizophrenic and does not allow it inside even during poor weather conditions as it will tear up the house. Dog is not house trained and needs significant socialization work. I observed where the dog had been chewing through the wooden front porch posts and the rubber wheels on the garbage can due to boredom and lack of stimulation. I called the son of the owner who had originally gotten the dog for his father and explained the situation. Son agreed to come get the dog as he felt the dog would be better off somewhere else. Followed up with reporting party and advised dog would be removed from the city to be rehomed.

231108-01 – While on patrol I worked with a residence to continue removing junk vehicles from their property. The residents took pro-active measures to contact me and request I contact my junk vehicle hauler to remove another vehicle. Residents have been doing a great job of improving their property so as to get in compliance with Palouse code.

On 10-21-23 I was requested to work from 1pm to 5pm during the height of Boo Bash participation. I volunteered two additional hours and was present assisting staff and working the event from 1100-1700. Spoke with all vendors and assisted citizen with a lockout during the event. Large participation by both adults and kids.

On 10-23-23 I was asked to speak to the GarPal Elementary K-5 grade students during Red Ribbon Week. Emphasis is on making good choices/decisions and practicing safe habits while knowing who to go to when dangerous or concerning issues arise. Gave a fifteen minute presentation.

On 10-31-23 I worked Halloween to include the Whitman Street annual Trunk or Treat and saw an incredible turnout and community support.

On 11-1-23 I attended court representing the city as two violators who had been cited for expired tabs over two months and no insurance were contesting their tickets. Both the violators and I testified before Judge Hart. Judge Hart ruled in favor of the city in both instances.

On 11-2-23 I was asked to speak to the GarPal Elementary School kindergartner class for a few minutes in honor of safety week. It was an enjoyable back and forth which included showing the students how handcuffs work, answering questions and going over basic good safety habits.

On 11-2-23 I attended the monthly Whitman County Emergency Planning Meeting in Colfax. Law enforcement, fire and school department heads continue to formulate a county wide plan and establish best practices for handling a major event in the schools. School employees attending are planning on completing their required ICS 100 and 700 training in December and we will reconvene as a group in January 2024. Tentative plans to have a major drill in July 2024.

On 11-8-23 I completed the 2023-24 police department portion of the renewal for insurance questions. It was determined the police department had no policy for strip/cavity searches and handling of intoxicated persons as requested by the insurance questionnaire. I formulated, wrote and instituted a policy for each topic and they are now part of the Palouse Police Department Procedures and Operations Manual.

MPO Joel Anderson #603

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: November 09, 2023

WATER:

We have been working on trying to find the water leak on I Street with no luck. We have been there a better part of 4 days trying to find it. We're going back today to work on it some more.

STREETS:

We swept north and south hills 4 times since last council meeting as the leaves keep falling and are hard to keep up with.

The STOP sign at Heritage Park was struck Sunday afternoon. Chief Anderson informed me Sunday evening with pictures of it. Chief Anderson got all the info and insurance as we will work on the repair. Asplund Tree Service came down yesterday and cleaned up the lower half of Shady Lane and will be back Tuesday to get the upper half of the trail. There is a pile of nice wood chips available at the compost pile for whoever wants some.

Gary Anderson has finished hauling all of the gravel to us.

SEWER:

We have a collapsed clay line on J Street that will get repaired next week hopefully. Slocum Excavation will do the work.

PARKS:

Evan is still mulching leaves.

SHOP:

Evans pick up has been broke down and at Chappel Auto for the last week. Charlie called this morning and said it was ready to pick up.