

City of Palouse
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 12, 2024

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 7:08 PM

Councilmembers present at the meeting were Angie Griner, Leslie Sena, Molly Quigley, Robert Brooks, and Ann Barrington

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

I. ROLL CALL: DC Gaber took attendance; Council members Sarah Bofenkamp and Rainy Anderson were absent.

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

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

PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING:

CA La Follett Reported: 2025 preliminary budget starts with approved budget of 2024; discussion occurred

1. Applied a 5% increase across the board to all line items
2. Projects included:
 - a. Fire Hydrant replacements
 - b. Pool upgrades
 - c. Pheonix Conservancy, Native Garden project
3. Budget will be emailed out to community after next budget meeting
4. Budget Hearing closed at 7:30pm

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

C. Sena introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on October 22, 2024; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Brooks. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

III. OPEN FORUM:

None

IV. PALOUSE BASIN AQUIFER (PBA), PRESENTED BY: Mike Faupel, Committee Member

A. 2023 Annual Report

1. PBA covers a portion of both Whitman and Latah counties
 - a) Provides well water for over 80,000 residents, as a shared water source
 - (1) Palouse, Pullman, and Moscow
 - b) Made up of layers of basalt and sand that are saturated with water
 - (1) Water residents are currently using is thousands of years old
 - (2) Yearly use monitored; can decrease 8 inches to 2 feet a year
2. Committee will be doing a study to seek supplementary water sources to buffer the complete draining of the aquifer in the future
 - a) Latah county has new position to educate and encourage water conservation throughout their community
3. Invited Palouse community to become members on the PBA committee

V. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Supt Mike Wolf, submitted written report

A. Water main broke in Breedings Addition, Sunday at 7am.

1. 9 hours to repair
2. Volunteers were irreplaceable in getting water back on for residents
 - a) Would like to have pay options for extra help in these situations in the future
3. Thanks Evan, Walter, and Nick!

B. Winterized pool and park bathrooms

C. Flushable wipes caused a sewer blockage on Park St., called Roche to jet plug out

D. Cloth rag clogged pump at Beeson lift station

E. Sweeping streets tomorrow

F. Shady Lane; tree removal going well

G. Luke taking good care of sewer plant, seamless transition from Walter, working well with Sam from SJ Environmental

VI. POLICE REPORT: Submitted a list of calls for service and written report

A. 35 Calls for Service

1. 10 Ordinance related
2. Two citations issued
3. One callout

B. Haunted Palouse

1. Large turn out with over 3200 people in town, raised a record amount of funds for local groups and city projects
2. Hired extra deputies for all nights, appreciated their presence in town
 - a) Paid by Haunted Palouse
3. Spooktacular Saturdays, kids' day event, had good attendance

C. Nick Samuels used his bucket truck to assist removing a resident's cat from a power pole, Thanks Nick!

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

A. LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL:

1. Palouse Brewery
 - a) No objections

B. HORIZON/VERIZON TOWER:

- a) Board of Adjustments made a final decision
- b) Will be on next agenda for lease approval

C. IT UPDATE:

1. Ben is assisting council members setting up new emails with palousewa.gov addresses
2. Current gmails will be migrated to cloud for future reference

D. WASTE WATER TREATMENT POSITION:

1. Will send out job description to residents
2. Indeed has produced candidates to review

E. SHADY LANE:

1. Significant increase in dead trees to be removed
2. Avista will cut trees along power line
3. Infested trees will go to pulp mill in Lewiston
4. Slash piles will be burned in winter
5. Thinning a few live trees in congested areas to help big trees access more resources
6. Reforestation will occur in the spring

F. PRELIMINARY POOL GRANT APPROVED:

- a) Grant approved!
- b) Will be awarded after the state's 2025 budget is approved

G. CITY INSURANCE COVERAGE

1. Increased from \$114,000.00 to \$ 142,000.00

VIII. OLD BUSINESS: None

IX. NEW BUSINESS: None

X. COMMITTEES:

Policy and Administration – Chair Barrington: Working on financial policies while working on 2025 budget. Discussed budget funds

Budget, Finance, & Major Acquisitions – Chair Bofenkamp: No report

Streets, Properties, & Facilities- Chair Brooks: No report

Personnel – Chair Sena: No report

Water and Sewer – Chair Griner: Ecology cancelled latest meeting

Joint Fire Board: Chair Anderson: no report.

XI. MAYORS REPORT:

A. IACC CONFERENCE

1. Attended Tech Team Seminar
 - a) 30-40 federal and state representatives present
 - b) Daniel from Varela introduced our sewer project
 - (1) Overview
 - (2) Problems
 - (3) Rates vs grant #'s
 - (4) Cost and magnitude of the project
 - c) Key take-away: pursue Congressional designated spending through various federal agencies

- (1) Cathy McMorris-Rogers has been a good ally
- (2) Currently, \$1 million dollars available to city, with the potential of a second \$1 million when the federal budget is approved.
- (3) May ask RCAC to do a local income study and rate study, at no cost to the City.

B. WW POSITION:

- 1. Will do interviews
- 2. Must live within 30 minutes

C. PORT OF WHITMAN:

- 1. Interested in feasibility study on St. Elmo

D. WHITMAN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEV MEETING:

- 1. Presented ST. Elmo project

E. SJ ENVIROMENTAL:

- 1. Met with Sam Snead, recommended city stay with current contract at sewer plant

F. PST

- 1. No report at the moment
- 2. Copy will go out to council members

XII. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS:

- 1. Discussed how St. Elmo's is considered a Brownfield site
- 2. Inquiry about how long the orange fence will be up around the St. Elmo

XIII. PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

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

The following checks were approved for payment:

Payroll paid	Ck# 14178-14189 and 14192-14193	\$ 45,526.48
Claims paid	Ck# 14190-91 and 14194-14213	\$ 57,543.26
Total:		\$ 103,069.74

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

The council meeting Adjourned at 9:03 PM.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: November 08, 2024

WATER:

We read meters for the last read until March of next year.

We had a main break on Sunday Oct. 27th in Breeding Addition. We had 2 volunteers that helped us that day. Thank you to Walt Fealy and Nick Samuel.

We need to figure out a pay system for volunteers to help on emergencies like this main break. It is important to have volunteers to help us especially on weekend emergencies. No compensation will probably mean no help.

Mike replaced a broken meter on that Sunday as the homeowner twisted the threads from the one that was in there.

We've turned off a few garden meters for the winter.

SEWER:

Saturday October 26th Mike was called to a sewer manhole cover leaking water. The city does not have a Jetter to clean out the line. Mike called Roach Construction Monday morning to bring their Jetter to clean out the line. The Jetter went about 250 ft. to clear out the plugged line. Our snake is only 100' long. So that is why it was taken care of by Monday morning.

Luke is doing well at the sewer plant and works well with Sam.

We dug up what I thought was a collapsed sewer line on Wednesday where a cleanout was on the Cove Road. It ended up that the cleanout was not connected like it showed on the map. The residents said that their sewer was backed up. We took our snake down their line and found a plug on their side.

Western States came today to replace the batteries on the generator.

STREETS:

Luke has taken the street sweeper out 4 times so far to sweep the streets.

POOL:

We filled the pool and winterized the pool and pool house yesterday, so it is out to bed until next spring.

SHADY LANE:

We took the benches, and the sign posts out of the trail and took down the fence going down to the landing for the logging project. They started yesterday and are moving along quickly.

PARKS:

We winterized the park bathrooms yesterday and they are closed for the winter.

More vandalism took place in the park restrooms over the weekend as someone tore both soap dispensers from the wall and threw them in the garbage.

Evan has been mulching leaves almost daily.

SNOW:

We got the sander, and snow plows out and placed on the Ford one ton.

HAUNTED PALOUSE:

There were a couple of electrical outages due to overloading the outlets the first weekend. The next week we had Hemphill install a couple of more outlets at Heritage Park. Some of the proceeds from Haunted Palouse paid for the installation.

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting November 12, 2024:

Thirty five calls for service with ten being ordinance related.

Two citations issued.

One callouts.

241028-01 – While on morning patrol I received a text from a citizen concerned about a female walking on the highway just outside city limits who appeared distressed. I made contact with the female who had been crying and eventually admitted she had been in a verbal dispute with her husband in unincorporated Whitman County. The female chose to walk away to get away from the situation. I had deputies conduct a welfare check on the other half while I gave the female a ride to a safe location at a friend's house in Pullman.

241105-02 – While on patrol I had a citizen reach out to the police department to see if I could assist with a cat stuck up twenty feet on a power pole. I used my resources at Avista and called local lineman Nick Samuels inquiring if he would be willing to respond and use his pole bucket to access the cat. Samuels was very responsive and arrived within minutes. Samuels used his truck and bucket to encourage the cat to climb down the pole and onto the ground. The citizen was very impressed with the ability of city employees to find solutions to even small problems that they find important. Excellent example of how building relationships, not only with other law enforcement agencies, is paramount to continue to provide excellent customer service to citizens.

Haunted Palouse reported to set record turnout resulting in \$122,000 raised for the community groups that participate. Huge thank you to the deputies I hired to work security to make sure there were no concerns or dangers related to traffic control and participant behavior. Over 3200 people purchased tickets and grew the city on those nights.

Halloween was uneventful. I did receive reports of juveniles removing political signs from yards and throwing them in the street. I have since identified the juveniles and have spoken to their parents and documented the incidents.

Types of calls handled since last council include custodial interference, trespassing issues at the skate park, domestic dispute issues, four new license fraud cases, three collisions and alcohol offenses.

Joel