

City of Palouse
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 14, 2025

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 7:09 PM

Councilmembers present at the meeting were Sarah Bofenkamp, Angie Griner, Leslie Sena, Molly Quigley, Rainy Anderson, Robert Brooks, and Ann Barrington.

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

I. ROLL CALL: DC Gaber took attendance; All Councilmembers were present.

City staff present: City Administrator (CA), Misty La Follett and Deputy Clerk (DC) Jamie Gaber

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

C. Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on December 10, 2024; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Bofenkamp. Majority of council members approved, C. Sena abstained, and the **MOTION** passed.

C. Anderson introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the special council meeting on December 17, 2024; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

III. PD BACKGROUND

Mayor Sievers provided a history of the ongoing discussion regarding policing services in Palouse.

IV. OPEN FORUM:

C. Bofenkamp introduced a **MOTION** to remove the time limit on open forum; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Griner. All of council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

Cheryl Johnson: Past council member. Supports two officers in the Police Dept; concerned about outside services being hired out, questioned if due to city staff not being qualified, has concerns about current budget

Bruce Pemberton: Supports Palouse PD, acknowledged that every officer puts their life on the line each day they go to work. Noted Whitman County's large area makes policing challenging. Suggested referring to the First Amendment when deciding conflict of interest cases on council. Regularly sees Officer Anderson working.

Marsha Sandall: Stated signatures were gathered in town in support of PD and Officer Anderson, makes up approximately 80% of the electorate. Appreciates Officer Anderson being diligent and approachable

James Morrison: Noted PST report appeared to be a unique job for company, identified conflicting recommendations in report. Report suggested appointing a Police Chief, reminded council that has been asked for since October 2023, please rectify

Eunice Stime: Noted Officer Anderson has a good rapport with kids. Stated PST report gives a good starting point for quality assurance, commended all the effort put forth in PD improvements.

Mary Kittelson: Supports PD and Officer Anderson, appreciates daily patrol at school as children's safety is our most important priority

Bren Fire Hawk: Supports PD and Officer Anderson, asked why he has not been appointed Chief of Police. Noted rural police provide personal services; takes a special person to support our warm and giving community

John Snyder: Supports PD and Officer Anderson, is consistently present, helpful and treats people well

Bradley Griffin: Supports PD. Noted Officer Anderson needs supervision. Questioned: 1. petition signatures being acquired by Officer Anderson while in uniform 2. Officer Anderson's qualifications to carry a weapon 3. Why graffiti incident at museum has not been solved 4. Why cemetery theft has not been solved 5. Why maintenance jobs are being outsourced

Alexa Beckett: Advocated for the PD and Officer Anderson. Officer Anderson's presence at school invaluable for both students and staff. Response time an important benefit of local PD compared to County services. Noted opposition appears to be retribution for past decisions regarding the PD.

Diane Mylett: Implored council to maintain PD and Officer Anderson, school presence makes students and staff safer, quick response time crucial for everyone's safety.

Dennis Griner: Supports PD, safety at school important. Newcomers will view having a PD positively. Want to commend all for effort put into keeping and supporting our PD. Thank you for progress made on the PST recommendations

Patti Green-Kent: read her letter that is attached

Connie Newman: In favor of local PD; provides back up for our EMS and Fire volunteers going out on calls, decreases response time. Thanked council for the review process under way, suggested doing a yearly review. Encouraged council to listen to constituents and be open-minded about future solutions.

Greg Taylor: Supports PD; response time crucial, job creates dangerous situation -important to have local officer to assist

Annie Riedinger: Supports local PD, want to feel safe with kids, officer needs to be accountable for complying with certifications

Joe Ferlito: Noted Officer Anderson's quick response times and work with FD & EMS.

Mary Estes: Past council member, wants local PD maintained, noted supervision of PD a tough job, assigned as mayors' responsibility

Donna Langsett: In favor of local PD; wants to retain Officer Anderson, respectful and does a good job. Crime rates lower than other small communities without a PD

John Shuttleworth: Supports local PD and Officer Anderson. Believes conflict of interest council rule was applied incorrectly. Observed council members let personal feelings affect conversation about PD. Reminded elected officials should speak for constituents

Liz Rousseau: Supports Officer Anderson; sees working throughout town, appreciates relationship with children and staff at school, consistently assists elderly, easy to text and communicate with

Robin Woltering: Views community as family, good to listen and consider all views. Does not support Officer Anderson; poor judgement, driven through stop signs, questioned resident about driving with Idaho plates. Asked that policies be followed and hopes community can work together to find best solution.

Damon Estes: In favor of local PD, would like to hire more officers, crucial for back up

Val Fisher: Thanked Mayor and Council members for their time and service. In favor of local PD and local officer, who cares about citizens and keeping them safe. We are the best town in Whitman County.

Rick Reams: Supports PD and Officer Anderson, many positive interactions. Please retain Officer Anderson and make Chief of Police, will accomplish more in that capacity. In favor of hiring more officers. Thank you to Mayor for addressing misinformation and quelling problems in the community.

Cheryl Sanders: Need safety in Palouse, would like to bring back neighborhood watches in town

Jaide Wilhelm: Supports PD and Officer Anderson, good follow through on issues, checks back, great support for Haunted Palouse. In favor of hiring more officers.

Letters Submitted for the Record (read by Mayor Sievers): Aimee Talbot, Dan and Debbie Snyder, Ann Warrington, Maureen Jackson, Debbie Huffman, Bev Parks, Mark Wilcomb, Cindy Alred, Mark Bailey, Steve McGehee, Kevin Taylor, Rick McKinney, Don and Charlotte Snekvik, Bruce and Rosemary Gage, Shishona Turner, Jennifer Hanson.

C. Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to have a brief recess at 9:07 PM.; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

Reconvened at 9:14 PM

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

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

A. 36 Calls for Service

1. 5 Ordinance related
2. Assisted EMS with lift assists at three residences
3. Two infractions issued
4. One callout

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

A. TD and H:

1. TIB grants unsuccessful
2. TIB willing to come out and identify projects
3. Completed Palouse Cove sidewalk project put us in good standing for future grants

B. HORIZON/VERIZON TOWER PROJECT:

1. Contract cleared by City Attorney
2. Horizon has invested \$50,000 to date
3. Annual city income-\$18,000
4. Recommends accepting the contract

C. HAUNTED PALOUSE DONATION:

1. \$15,000 for the Palouse Pool!!

VIII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. HORIZON/VERIZON TOWER CONTRACT: Discussion occurred

C. Brooks introduced a **MOTION** to allow Mayor Sievers to sign the Horizon lease; the **MOTION** was not seconded, and the **MOTION** failed.

B. 2025 BUDGET: Discussion occurred

1. Will be analyzing a section per council meeting in the future

IX. NEW BUSINESS:

A. LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: Discussion tabled until next meeting

X. COMMITTEES:

Policy and Administration – Chair Barrington: Drafting a budget timeline, handed out work sheets to discuss in the future

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

Streets, Properties, & Facilities- Chair Brooks: Concerned about condition of bridge on HWY 27. Mayor Sievers is in contact with state. Asked to minimize fire hazard from dead trees on South River Road. Recommends purchasing generators for wells as back up when power is out. Asked city to pursue stable barricade for St. Elmo. CA La Follett noted, already in progress. Asked city to post signage at both ends of Shady Lane with schedule of events to come.

Personnel – Chair Sena: Met and discussed public works position, re-hire and PD policies after PST report analyzed

Water and Sewer – Chair Griner: No report.

Joint Fire Board: Chair Anderson: No report.

XI. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS:

1. C. Anderson read letter
2. C. Griner noted Mayor Sievers asked JFB to make budget amendments to increase salaries of Fire Chief and EMS
3. C. Bofenkamp read resignation letter
4. C. Quigley asked if Shady Lane bills had been invoiced and submitted to DNR
5. C. Barrington thanked C. Bofenkamp for her service

C. Barrington introduced a **MOTION** to have a five-minute recess at 10:37 PM.; the **MOTION** was seconded by C. Sena. All council members approved, and the **MOTION** passed.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 10:37 PM, discussed personnel

- A. At 10:42 PM extended to 10:48pm, to discuss real estate
- B. Reconvened at 10:47 PM

XIII. PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

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

The following checks were approved for payment:

Payroll paid	Ck# 14316-14325, 14328-14329	\$ 29,437.63
Claims paid	Ck# 14303-14315, 14326-14327, and 14330	\$38,253.09

Total: \$ 67,690.72

The following checks were approved for payment:

Payroll paid	EFT	\$8,169.44
Claims paid	Ck# 14331-14344,	\$31,413.35
Total:		\$ 39,582.79

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

The council meeting Adjourned at 10:50 PM.

APPROVED: _____

ATTEST: _____

DATE: _____

DRAFT

Public Works Superintendent Council Report
Date: January 09, 2025

WATER:

On December 9th Slocum Excavation completed the replacement of the fire hydrant at the school. Our map was printed wrong saying the supply came from the west side of the main and it came from the north side.

We capped off a water line on Alder Street where there was an old abandon water line. There are no issues now but there will be in the future as they are placing a concrete apron over the top of it for a shop.

On December 12th Slocum Excavation completed the gate valve replacement at the cemetery. Mike submitted the lead line inventory to DOH as a new federal requirement at the end of October. A lot of communities around this area received violations and we did not.

SEWER:

On December 23rd we had a call for a sewer backing up in a residence on Park Street. After we investigated it, our mains were flowing water like they should and determined it to be on the resident's side.

On December 23rd while working on the Park Street sewer issue, we had another resident contact us about a sewer line that was plugged running down their driveway on F Street. We went up there with our snake to unplug it and it was farther than our 100' snake would reach. At the time I called Roach Construction to bring their jet trailer, and no one answered. So, I called Palouse Valley Septic with their jet truck. They told me they would be here the next morning.

On December 24th in the morning of Palouse Valley Septic brought their truck and opened the line. They suggested bringing Roach in because they have a much bigger jetter. Roach got hold of me about an hour after PVS was here and brought up their bigger jet trailer to clean the roots out. After they were done, they ran a camera down the line and saw a lot of misaligned pipes for 200 plus feet. They suggested replacing that line.

Also, on December 24th while Roach was here, I had them go jet Church and Beach Street intersection. We had done that a year ago and got a lot more tree roots out this time. They ran the camera down and the pipes were misaligned and about 175' down the line the pipe is broken but still working. That sewer main needs to be replaced.

STREETS:

We changed the banners on Main Street from the Holiday banners to the Spring Banners.

We replaced the snow fence around St Elmo's with new snow fence after Christmas.

SNOW:

Mike plowed snow on New Years Day and Saturday.

OTHER:

Evan's last day for the city was December 31st.

Luke and Mike were sick for a couple of days each.

Mike has pesticide classes every Friday for the month of January.

Misty and Mike took an RCAC emergency water class yesterday.

Palouse Police Department report for Palouse City Council meeting January 14, 2025:

Thirty six calls for service since last council with five calls ordinance related.

Assisted EMS with lift assists at three residences.

Two infractions issued.

One callout.

The following should be noted prior to listing some of my activity during this time period:

I became a one man police department in July of 2021. At NO TIME during the last three and half years has Palouse PD or myself failed to meet ANY qualification or training standards set forth by the Criminal Justice Training Center or Washington State Patrol ACCESS system. I have copies of all compliance and training certifications to include yearly CJTC recurrent training standards, yearly WSP ACCESS LEVEL 2 (highest level) certifications, and successful completion of triennial WSP ACCESS WACIC/NCIC audit.

The mayor has increased my training budget TEN FOLD upon recommendation of the auditor. Now that the purse strings have been loosened I am able to put into play best practices instead of worrying about being a good steward to the budget and just doing the minimum. This has allowed the following to take place in the last month:

Reached out to Pullman PD and received authorization from Commander Breshears to be included on all yearly Taser recertification and 2025 Emergency Vehicle Operation Training.

12-17-24 – Taser Recertification completed via Pullman PD Taser Instructor McNannay.

12-19-24 – EVOC Intersection Analysis – Attention Distraction course completed.

12-21-24 – Second firearm qualification in calendar year completed with handgun/rifle via CJTC certified Firearms Instructor and WCSO Deputy Joe Handley.

241208-01 – Responded to a report of a vehicle theft on the south hill. Reporting party stated her grandmother sold a vehicle that was supposed to be hers after a relative passing away. The vehicle was not in the grandmother's name and this was deemed a civil issue.

241210-01 – Investigated a day old school bus vs pickup collision. Reporting party stated a local school bus backed in the passenger side of his pickup causing reportable damage. Reporting party initially agreed to just take the school district insurance card but thought better and reported it. I tracked down bus driver and bus information. No children on bus at time of collision. No injuries. Spillman and SECTOR report completed.

241213-01 – While working school patrol I was advised by a bus driver of a slide off due to icy/snow conditions in which a juvenile driver struck a DOT sign. Tow truck removed the vehicle. Spillman and SECTOR report completed.

241213-02 – While off duty I received a report of a male slumped over his steering wheel in front of the grocery store. I called Whitcom to start an aid car but received a call back that he had awoken and

driven off. A reporting party followed the vehicle to a parked location in the 100 block of E Alder Street. The reporting party gave an excellent description of the vehicle and driver. I drove back to the city, signed in service and attempted to locate vehicle/driver. The vehicle was still in the same location. I was able to determine the driver was a hired out day worker working for a Palouse citizen. Made contact and asked driver what was going on as I was concerned he either had a medical condition or may have been under the influence of drugs. Driver insisted it was lack of sleep. I verified good license and insurance.

241216-03 – Received a report of an attempted fraud. Reporting party advised he received a text advising the USPS was detaining a parcel that had not yet cleared their security due to invalid information. Text tells recipient to click on link which takes them to an online payment screen. Message on screen demands payment for redelivery. I contacted Palouse USPS and confirmed USPS would not ever send a text like this. DO NOT MAKE PAYMENT. Delete text.

241217-02 – Responded to a request for a welfare check made by a healthcare provider who was on the phone with an elderly female who was being yelled at by her husband in background. I am familiar with this address as I have helped with lift assists here and am in constant contact with the adult son who lives in another city. I was able to calm the male down and get him to agree to go in to have his leg pain looked at. No crime.

250101-02 – Followed up on the elderly male/female from the previous call to make sure things had calmed down and she was safe. Female advised things were much better but was worried because her smoke detector batteries needed changing. Came back later in the day and changed out batteries for the couple.

250104-01 – Received a report of missing Palouse resident who had not been heard or seen for the last twelve hours. The adult male had driven off in a vehicle with his dog and no working cell phone. Reporting party advised male usually likes to drive backroads to Moscow and other Idaho locations. I requested WCSO deputies drive the gravel/dirt roads the reporting party named with negative results. I stayed in contact with reporting party until they called to advise the male had called 911 to report he had been in a slide off in Idaho and was fine.

250106-01 – Received a report of multiple code violations in regards to the public nuisance ordinance. I drove to the location and determined the complaint was legitimate and that there were vehicles and trash bags that were in violation of PMC 8.12. I located a phone number for the resident and sent them a copy of the ordinance and what portion they were in violation. Resident was responsive and gave a detailed time line of twelve days in which all violations would come into compliance. Follow up needed.

250106-03 – Received a report for Division of Children Youth and Family Services requesting my assistance in entering an ATL – Attempt to Locate – for a vulnerable sixteen year old that no longer lives in Palouse but the most recent foster parent resides here. The foster parent has had no contact with the teen for three years. The DCYF worker specialized in locating missing teens/runaways and getting them much needed services when they have no parental resources. Based upon the totality of the circumstances and the vulnerability of the teen I worked with Whitcom to get an ATL message sent to all westside agencies about the teen and the urgency to report if she is contacted.

Working with GarPal School administration to include superintendent and principal to keep the student arrested for nationwide swatting calls from being allowed access to physically attend school. This is a dire public safety and learning environment issue. I have made the recommendation that the student be removed from school and receive online education at his residence. City of Palouse has been the victim of the following two swatting calls in which the teen is the prime suspect. See below:

On 9-26-23 GarPal School was the victim of a swatting bomb call. My response time was two minutes thirty six seconds from the time I received the call from Principal Krause to being inside the school. I determined it was a swatting call within thirty minutes and lockdown was lifted.

On 9-27-24 Whitcom received another swatting call that involved a caller saying they shot their father and would shoot it out with police. The alleged location was a house across street from Garpal School. I was in Spokane at the time being fitted for a new ballistic vest. I requested WCSO respond. Their response time was seventeen minutes five seconds.

The disparities in response times could prove critical should the real thing occur. The difference is having local police response versus having to rely on WCSO that has a massive area to respond from.

I will continue to represent City of Palouse interests at the Whitman County Emergency Management meeting February 6th in which department heads and school superintendents will participate in a four hour table top exercise involving a school shooter. This is a precursor to the all-day active shooter event in Colfax in June of 2025 in which volunteers will simulate gunshot victims, witnesses and shooters while clearing a school. It is critical to have local representation as we define roles and fine tune response to a major event like a school shooting.

Anyone with questions about anything they have seen, read or heard never hesitate to reach out to me via cell or email. I am always happy to answer any questions.

Joel

01/09/25
11:00

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					
241206-01	16:35:05	12/06/24	Abnormal Behav	N	INA
241207-01	13:06:50	12/07/24	Harassment	S	INA
241207-02	13:07:25	12/07/24	Suspicious	S	INA
241208-01	16:17:50	12/08/24	Theft Automobili	S	INA
241209-01	16:28:02	12/09/24	Fall	S	INA
241210-01	08:38:39	12/10/24	Accident Noninj	N	INA
241211-01	08:38:09	12/11/24	Suspicious	N	ACT
241211-02	09:19:40	12/11/24	Found Property	N	INA
241211-03	12:47:19	12/11/24	Animal Problem	N	INA
241211-04	16:15:30	12/11/24	Traffic Hazard	N	INA
241213-01	07:58:11	12/13/24	Accident Noninj	N	INA
241213-02	13:17:43	12/13/24	Suspicious	S	INA
241216-01	07:51:29	12/16/24	Other Calls	N	INA
241216-02	11:13:05	12/16/24	Parking Problem	N	ACT
241216-03	14:00:37	12/16/24	Fraud	N	INA
241217-01	09:09:22	12/17/24	Sick Person	N	INA
241217-02	14:35:37	12/17/24	Domestic Disput	S	INA
241218-01	10:38:35	12/18/24	Lockout	S	INA
241218-02	12:22:58	12/18/24	Traffic Offense	S	INA
241221-01	08:55:11	12/21/24	Found Property	N	INA
241221-02	08:55:27	12/21/24	Suspicious	N	INA
241223-01	01:15:43	12/23/24	Welfare Check	N	INA
241223-02	10:00:58	12/23/24	Traffic Offense	S	INF
241228-01	08:54:08	12/28/24	Aps Referral	N	INA
241231-01	21:40:33	12/31/24	Suspicious	N	INA
250101-01	11:22:20	01/01/25	Welfare Check	N	INA
250101-02	16:01:19	01/01/25	Citizen Assist	N	INA
250102-01	12:22:31	01/02/25	Animal Problem	N	INA
250104-01	00:51:40	01/04/25	Welfare Check	N	INA
250104-02	15:23:20	01/04/25	Animal Problem	S	INA
250106-01	09:20:31	01/06/25	Code Violations	N	INA
250106-02	11:29:47	01/06/25	Disabled Vehicle	N	INA
250106-03	12:22:34	01/06/25	Missing Person	S	INA
250107-01	20:22:32	01/07/25	Citizen Assist	S	INA
250109-01	08:32:46	01/09/25	Trespassing	N	INA
250109-02	08:46:18	01/09/25	Fall	N	INA
Total Incidents for This Agency:				36	

Total Incidents for This Report: 36

Report Includes:

All dates greater than `00:00:00 12/06/24`
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