

PALOUSE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

Regular Council Meeting
October 12, 2021 @ 7:00 pm
Palouse Community Center

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Deputy Clerk Misty La Follett took Roll Call.

Councilmembers present Mary Welcome, Bill Slinkard, John Snyder, Jim Fielder, Libby Akin, Tim Sievers, and Kaite Cooper.

City staff present: Deputy Clerk (DC) Misty La Follett and Public Works (PW) Supt. Mike Wolf.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilmember Akin a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on September 28, 2021; **MOTION** was seconded by: Councilmember Fielder. Councilmember Cooper asked for a change after the **MOTION** to approve the Minutes was introduced. There being a motion and a second, the vote was taken and the **MOTION** failed.

Councilmember Cooper requested to replace "No citizens attended" with "No citizens addressed the council." Councilmember Cooper introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting on September 28, 2021, with the proposed change; **MOTION** was seconded by: Councilmember Akin. Council unanimously passed the **MOTION**.

OPEN FORUM:

Bradley Pearce addressed the Council with his concerns regarding transparency within the City government.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Supt. Wolf provided Council with his written report.

Supt. Wolf briefed Council on the significant leak that happened on Main Street. A failure at a joint caused this leak because two different types of metals were used. Supt. Wolf warned that there could be more leaks on Main Street if these materials were used at other junctions. Legacy Paving will be repairing the street shortly.

Supt. Wolf has been overseeing the Cove Sidewalk project, and White Diamond Concrete is on track to start paving on October 25, 2021.

Supt. Wolf has been helping Inland Fiber Networks with the crack sealing to repair the trenching caused by the installation of the fiber lines.

*PW report attached to the minutes.

POLICE REPORT:

Officer Anderson was not present.

*Report attached to the minutes.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR/DEPUTY CLERK REPORT:

No Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers addressed the appointment process and how to proceed after the resignation of Mayor Cook.

As Mayor Pro Tempore, he cannot appoint anyone to a position, and that includes hiring the City Administrator.

There are two options; the Council can appoint a new mayor from the Council, or the Council can open up an application process for the community. Citizens could apply, and the Council would hold interviews in an open Council meeting. The Council would then discuss the candidates in an executive session, and after this session, they would vote on the appointment.

Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers contacted Whitman County Elections, and the person appointed to the position of Mayor would complete the term of Mayor Cook.

The process for appointing a new Mayor was open for Council discussion, and discussion ensued.

Councilmember Welcome expressed the importance of getting a new City Administrator as quickly as possible appointed to ensure that all statutory deadlines are met for the approval of the 2022 Budget. The City needs to appoint a Mayor as soon as possible to keep the budget process moving forward.

Councilmember Slinkard stated that time is of the essence, and the City needs a Mayor before a City Administrator can be hired. Councilmember Slinkard believes that the members of the Council are the most knowledgeable, which makes them the most desirable candidates for the position of Mayor. Of the City Council members, he recommends that Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers be installed as Mayor tonight.

Councilmember Cooper asked Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers if he had contacted Eric Hanson, the City's Attorney, and the City's insurance company. Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers stated that he was playing phone tag with the insurance company and that Eric Hanson did state that the City could do whatever it wanted to do regarding this matter. Councilmember Cooper was concerned about not being transparent if the Council did appoint a new Mayor without allowing residents to apply for the open position.

There was an extensive discussion amongst the Council regarding the need for transparency in a new mayor's appointment and balancing this with the urgent need to hire a City Administrator. Included in this discussion was the need to regain stability within the Palouse City Government and at City Hall.

Councilmember Fielder stated that the Council has been transparent regarding the location of the City Council Meeting. Council Meetings were moved to the Community Center starting in July, and a change of location was published on the email listserve and posted on the City Hall front door.

Councilmember Slinkard introduced a **MOTION** to appoint Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers as Mayor of Palouse; **MOTION** was seconded by: Councilmember Akin. Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers asked if there was any further discussion, and Councilmember Cooper again asked for confirmation that the City's attorney approved this process for an appointment. Mayor Pro Tempore Sievers stated he would apply for the position of Mayor if the Council wished to proceed with that option. The **MOTION** passed with five yay votes (Councilmembers Akin, Welcome, Fielder, Snyder, and Slinkard), one nay vote (Councilmember Cooper), and one abstention (Councilmember Sievers).

After this appointment, there was a discussion regarding the procedure to swear Tim Sievers in as Mayor. Council decided to recess to allow the Council time to determine the process to swear in the new Mayor.

Councilmember Akin introduced a **MOTION** to take a ten-minute recess; **MOTION** was seconded by: Councilmember Fielder. Council unanimously passed the **MOTION**.

The meeting recessed at 7:40 PM and resumed at 7:53 PM.

Deputy Clerk La Follett administered the oath of office to Tim Sievers, swearing him in as the Mayor of the City of Palouse.

Councilmember Slinkard started the discussion amongst Council on the procedure to fill the vacancy on Council created by Councilmember Sievers appointment to the position of Mayor. After much debate, the decision was made to wait until after the November election as Councilmember Sievers's term expires in December 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Budget, Finance, & Major Acquisitions, Chair Welcome: Chair Welcome and Policy and Administration Chair Cooper have been working in the Budget process and will give their notes to the Mayor. The preliminary Budget Hearing will be held on November 9, 2021, for the public to attend. Chair Welcome stressed the importance that all Councilmembers attend the upcoming meetings to ensure that the 2022 budget is approved.

Streets, Properties, & Facilities, Chair Sievers: No report.

Personnel, Chair Snyder: There are two very qualified applicants for the City Administrator position. He would like to get the interview panel in place to begin the interview process as soon as possible. Councilmember Slinkard asked Chair Snyder if the interview panel should include a person not on Council to participate in this process to help facilitate transparency.

Water and Sewer, Chair Slinkard: No Report.

Policy & Administration, Chair Cooper: Chair Cooper again expressed the importance of all Councilmembers attending the upcoming meetings. The budget meeting cannot be a special meeting; these meetings need to be a part of the regular City Council meetings.

Joint Fire Board, Chair Fielder: Chair Fielder reported for August that there were three Fire meetings, five outcalls, 2 of which were local calls. The fire department did a long call at the Moscow Mountain fire.

There were twelve EMS calls, ten of which were for the City. Pullman responded to seven of those calls and transported the patients. Three calls were for lift assists.

Councilmember Cooper asked Personnel Chair Snyder for a timeline to hire a City Administrator. There was a discussion amongst the Council regarding the process for this hire.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: No executive session.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Sievers thanked Deputy Clerk La Follet for the assistance the past couple of weeks. Mayor Sievers has been meeting with City Staff and our project partners. He also has had lots of contact from constituents via

email and phone calls. He appreciates this contact and thanked everyone who attended the City Council meeting. Mayor Sievers would like to affirm that the City Council does have the City's best interest at heart. Despite any disagreements, everyone in Palouse would like to move Palouse forward in a positive direction.

He thanked everyone for their service over the problematic past couple of weeks. Mayor Sievers stressed the importance of coming together despite our differences and to build off of them, and use them to our advantage.

Councilmember Akin asked if a Mayor Pro Tempore needed to be appointed, and Councilmember Cooper stated that it could wait until the next City Council Meeting.

ALLOW PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Councilmember Welcome asked about the payroll hours charged to the swimming pool. Deputy Clerk La Follett explained that this was from the former CA and would be corrected in the next payroll cycle. Councilmember Snyder introduced a **MOTION** to allow the payment of bills. Councilmember Welcome seconded the **MOTION**; **MOTION** unanimously passed.

ADJOURN: Councilmember Fielder MOVED to adjourn; Councilmember Cooper seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** passed. The council meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.

APPROVED: _____ ATTEST: _____

Public Works Superintendent Council Report

Date: October 12, 2021

WATER:

Repaired a leak on the chlorinator for the water system.

Repaired a huge water leak off of the 8" main on Main Street. The cause was two dissimilar-metal corrosion. The main was put in new in the 2000 main street project. Shon Clark (Garfield Supt.) and Monte (Farmington Maint.) came to help. Legacy paving will be here to pave the patch in the next couple of weeks.

The same day as the Main Street leak we also had a leak at a residence on West Church Street. We cut a piece of galvanized line and replaced it with poly line.

Had some residential complaints about discolored water on the weekend before last. We flushed six fire hydrants and seemed to clear the lines again.

STREETS:

I helped Inland Fiber start crack filling last week.

CEMETERY:

Dug two urn burials in the last two weeks with another one to dig this Friday.

SHOP:

Ford one ton is at Moscow Transmission. I am waiting to see what of if they found anything wrong.

We need to replace the ECM module in the 2016 Dodge service vehicle. It won't drive without it and Dodge said they can't get one for a month. I ordered one off of EBAY on Monday and it will not be here for a week.

I picked up the hydraulic filter housing for the grader but we have to make a new mounting bracket.

OTHER:

The Cove Road sidewalk project started last week. I am keeping in contact with the engineer and the contractor daily. The project seems to be going ok. They plan on paving by October 25th weather permitting.

PD Report

As of October 7 there were 10 calls for service and 1 call out. List of type of calls and dates will be submitted upon my return at next council.

Early morning hours of Sept 28 we had multiple 911 hang up calls from a small business land line. These calls occurred from 1230 AM through 0700 AM. I was able to determine the culprit was, in all probability a cordless phone low on battery after speaking with the business owner. Owner took steps to resolve the issue.

Continue to get a large amount of stray animal and/or barking dog complaints. Reminder to secure your dogs and make sure they are not in distress when leaving them at home to avoid unnecessary barking and annoyance to neighbors.

There has been an increase in citizen complaints about juvenile aged drivers speeding on city streets during lunchtime and after school. I have addressed the issue with a couple of students in terms of warnings however complaints persist. During my absence, I asked Marshal Handley to work some OT speed emphasis details in the area of the high school to immediately address the problem. Upon my return this week I will confer and get a debrief from Handley then relay to council w the type and quantity of enforcement action taken. Teenage drivers and their parents should take heed that tickets issued while on an intermediate license can lead to suspension of driving privileges and/or cause serious increases in driver premiums for student drivers - sometimes leading to insurance carriers dropping student drivers all together.

Officer Anderson.

Sent from my iPhone