MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF PULLMAN
OCTOBER 13, 2009

Roll Call

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Pullman was held on October 13, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, City Hall, Pullman, Washington with the following present:

Glenn A. Johnson	Mayor
William F. Mulholland	Finance Director
Francis Benjamin	Councilmember
Keith Bloom	Councilmember
Ann Heath	Councilmember
Bill Paul	Councilmember
Barney Waldrop	Councilmember
Nathan Weller	Councilmember
Pat Wright	Councilmember

Call to Order

Mayor Johnson called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Announcements

Mayor Johnson made four announcements including announcing that this is "Breast Cancer Awareness Week". Councilmember Weller announced that a link for landlord tenant information has been added to the City's website.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m. to conduct the Metropolitan Park District meeting.

Mayor Johnson reconvened the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Reports

SEL Anniversary

City Supervisor Sherman stated that Dr. Ed Schweitzer was unable to attend this meeting. He stated that Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories (SEL) sold its first product twenty-five years ago. He presented slides of a landscape project that SEL employees undertook at North Grand Avenue near Terre View. He stated that SEL's goal is to be involved in the community. City Supervisor Sherman stated that Dr. Schweitzer will be doing a presentation after the first of the year.

Mixed-Paper Recycling

City Supervisor Sherman stated that Devon Felsted was present to give a report on mixed-paper recycling. Devon Felsted stated that Pullman Disposal had previously stopped recycling mixed paper. They are now bringing back mixed-paper recycling. The bin will be by Pullman Disposal's shop off Wawawai Road.

Councilmember Bloom asked if Pullman Disposal would be picking up mixed paper at curbside. Mr. Felsted responded the paper has to be dropped off at Pullman Disposal.

Mayor Johnson stated we are still interested in commingled recycling. Mr. Felsted stated they are also interested in commingled recycling but this would raise the rates.
Councilmember Paul asked if Pullman Disposal accepts batteries. Mr. Felsted responded they accept household batteries.

City Supervisor Sherman stated that mixed-paper

recycling includes junk mail and catalogues.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Approval of Recommendations of Consent Agenda Items

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Johnson reviewed the items on the Consent Agenda with the Council and audience. He stated that items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted by a single motion of the Council without separate discussion. If separate discussion is desired, that item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda by Council request. Councilmember Bloom moved, Councilmember Benjamin seconded to read the items on the Consent Agenda by title only.

Motion Carried.

City Attorney McAloon read the items on the Consent Agenda by title only. Mayor Johnson asked if there were any requests for removal of items from the Consent Agenda from either the Council or audience. Councilmember Waldrop asked that item No. 5 be removed for separate discussion. Councilmember Paul asked that item No. 7 be removed for separate discussion. Mayor Johnson so ordered. Councilmember Bloom moved, Councilmember Benjamin seconded to adopt items 1 through 4, 6 and 8 on the Consent Agenda.

Motion Carried.

Motions

Minutes - September 29, 2009	1.	The Council dispensed with the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of September 29, 2009, and approved them as submitted.
Accounts Payable, Payroll, and Electronic Transfers - October, 2009	2.	The Council approved disbursements represented by accounts payable checks numbered _____ through _____ totaling $ inclusive, payroll checks numbered through _____ totaling $_____ inclusive, and electronic transfers totaling _____ and directed that they be paid upon approval of the Auditing Officer and Audit Committee.
Claim for Damages - Wright	3.	The Council referred a Claim for Damages submitted by Joshua Wright for an undermined amount to the Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA).
Interlocal Agreement with Palouse for Emergency Medical Services	4.	The Council approved an interlocal agreement with the City of Palouse/Rural Fire Protection District No. 4 for emergency medical services.
Click it or Ticket Grant	6.	The Council authorized a grant from the Washington Traffic Safety Commission for a “Click it or Ticket” grant.
Jackson Street Water Main	8.	The Council accepted as complete Contract No. 09-13, Jackson Street Water Main.

REGULAR AGENDA

Motions

Memorandum of Understanding with Palouse

5. Mayor Johnson announced that this item had been removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of Councilmember Waldrop. Councilmember Waldrop asked Chief Wilkins to explain the levels of responses for calls and asked how often they are responding to Palouse calls. Chief Wilkins explained the levels of response and stated that under the contract they will not be automatically responding to all calls at Palouse. Councilmember Waldrop and Mayor Johnson stated this is not what the contract states. Chief Wilkins stated the contract was incorrect and he will bring it back to the Council after it is corrected.

Chief Wilkins stated that in 2008 Pullman responded to 35 calls in Palouse and so far in 2009 we have responded to 48 calls in Palouse. We are trying to minimize Pullman's exposure and responses with this contract.

Change Order on Contract No. 09-02, Sidewalk Infilling 2009

7. Mayor Johnson announced that this item had been removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of Councilmember Paul. Councilmember Paul stated that this project is part of the 2007 Parks and Recreation Path Bond that provided for replacement of sidewalk sections. Due to the economy we were able to get better bid prices than expected and were able to include the construction of a sidewalk on South Street and Rocky Way between High Street and Water Street.

Councilmember Paul moved, Councilmember Bloom seconded to ratify Change Order No. 1 to Contract No. 09-02, Sidewalk Infilling 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

Workshop

Pre-Budget Workshop

9. Mayor Johnson announced that a pre-budget workshop is scheduled. City Supervisor Sherman presented the staff report stating that, due to Initiative 747, we can only increase the property tax rate by 1 percent. We will lose approximately $64,732 if we do not enact the 1 percent property tax. He stated that Pullman is starting to see revenues decrease and we are behind 2008 in single-family permits. He asked if the Council still wanted to go ahead with the 1 percent increase.

Councilmember Heath stated she will vote no, with the exception, perhaps, of the EMS Levy. She stated she is opposed to raising taxes this year, even by 1 percent. People have been laid off jobs, WSU is not giving raises, the State has no money, health costs are increasing, some people are paying for two mortgages, credit is tight, and appraised property values are down. The Council has already raised fees this year. She stated she understands if we forgo this increase, we cannot make it up but she cannot vote for this increase. Councilmember Bloom stated he agreed with Councilmember Heath.

Councilmember Waldrop stated that Councilmember Heath's words were well spoken. He stated that we should keep the 1 percent increase under advisement and asked the public for input on this

matter. Councilmember Weller stated he agreed with Councilmember Heath. Councilmembers Wright and Benjamin stated they agreed with Councilmember Waldrop.

City Supervisor Sherman stated that even with the 1 percent increase the General Fund will still be minus 1 percent. He stated that most of the experts feel the recession is over. He discussed Pullman's tax base.

Councilmember Benjamin asked if we know the impact on property taxes due to new property and increases in property taxes. City Supervisor Sherman stated we have not seen any big changes, that building permits are still coming in, and that he is not aware of any changes by the County in property taxes.

City Supervisor Sherman gave an update on Initiative 1033 stating that even if it passes we will not know the inflation figure until March 27, 2010, when the Implicit Price Deflator (IPD) is released or the population figure for the formula until June 30, 2010. He asked if we should proceed with the preparation of the 2010 budget. The consensus of the Council was to continue with the preparation of the 2010 budget.
Mayor Johnson stated that representatives of the Whitman County Humane Society were present to discuss their request for increased funding. Colleen Harrington, Whitman County Humane Society president, gave a presentation. She stated that Sonya Hussa, Gwen Anderson, and Derek Keno, of the Humane Society were also present. She stated that the first phase of the new Animal Haven will be completed in late October or early November and they will be moving into the new building. She stated that they have not asked for an increase in nine years. She talked about three possible funding options. They were to stay at the current rate, to follow Chief Weatherly's suggestion, or to give them the amount requested at the last meeting. She stated they have listened to Council's concerns about increased spending and are now asking for the full amount that is budgeted for their use. She talked about utility costs that the City currently budgets for the building that the Humane Society uses. She suggested that the City could raise the impound fees. She stated that most strays are from Pullman.

Councilmember Heath stated that there is a difference between budgeting and spending. Sonya Hussa thanked the donors for Animal Haven. She stated it is more than a dog and cat pound. She thanked everyone for the past support. Councilmember Paul asked if there would be a dog park with this facility. Sonya Hussa stated they are fundraising for a dog park. Councilmember Paul stated that he had received a lot of requests for a dog park.

Councilmember Bloom stated that he agreed with raising fees. He stated that he will be asking City departments for 3 percent budget cuts for 2010. He suggested using the impound fee increases to support Animal Haven. He stated he is reluctant to have any increases at this time. Councilmember Benjamin asked if we raise fees, can the money go to Animal Haven. City Attorney McAloon responded that they are providing a service

which we are paying for. Councilmember Benjamin asked what percentage of animals are from Pullman and what type of funding does the Humane Society receive from other entities. Derek Keno and Gwen Hussa responded that approximately 80 percent of the dogs are from Pullman. The Humane Society contracts with Palouse, Garfield, and Albion. They stated that less than 20 percent of the animals are from these cities. These cities do not have animal control officers. They stated that private citizens from Whitman County occasionally drop off animals. They also stated that Pullman is a "no kill" shelter.

Colleen Harrington stated she believes that the City is currently paying less for animal services than when they were running their own shelter. She stated you cannot run a shelter for $3,000 a month. Gwen Hussa stated that the Humane Society also has increased vet care for the animals. They have a vet that visits once a week.

Councilmember Waldrop asked if they still receive a large number of animals at the end of semesters. Derek Keno stated that there is approximately a 20 percent increase in animals during May. Councilmember Waldrop stated that WSU also has a responsibility. Gwen Hussa stated that WSU spays and neuters shelter animals at no cost. Councilmember Waldrop asked how many full-time animal control officers the City currently has. Chief Weatherly stated that the City currently has two employees who work both parking and animal control. Councilmember Waldrop asked how many animal control officers the City had before the Humane Society took over the shelter. Chief Weatherly stated they had one full-time and two part-time employees. Councilmember Waldrop stated we are getting a bargain. He asked how much we are willing to pay not to have animal control. Councilmember Heath asked about the current contract with the Humane Society. Colleen Harrington stated it runs through this December. Councilmember Heath stated we should not decide the matter tonight. Councilmember Weller stated that it is a tough budget. He suggested that Councilmembers take the pay cut that Councilmember Bloom suggested in a previous meeting and give that money to the Humane Society.

Councilmember Paul stated that the Humane Society boards animals, gives them medical treatment, and finds them a home. Gwen Hussa stated that when the City ran the shelter they euthanized animals. She feels the City should not delay a decision.

Councilmember Bloom stated the City needs to see where we are going with the budget. Councilmember Benjamin stated we will not have a good idea of the budget until after the election. Mayor Johnson stated that by law we have to complete a budget.

Chief Weatherly stated he had looked at revenues for 2009 and they are down. He needs direction from the Council to complete his budget. Councilmember Heath, Councilmember Benjamin, Colleen Harrington, Mayor Johnson, and Chief Weatherly discussed fees, the amount budgeted per year, where fine money goes, impound fees, Initiative 1033, and abandoned pets.

Councilmember Waldrop thanked everyone and stated he feels the Humane Society deserves an answer. He would not like to have the Humane Society refuse to deal with us.

Councilmember Waldrop moved, Councilmember Paul seconded to pay the Humane Society $4,178 a month starting in 2010. The motion carried with Councilmember Heath voting nay.

Councilmembers Bloom, Weller, Waldrop, and Paul all agreed to take a reduction in their wages back to the rate before the last raise and give the money to the Humane Society.

City Supervisor Sherman presented the financial update. He stated that the September projection for the State dropped the revenue forecast by an additional $238,000,000. It is not expected that we will be out of the recession until the middle of next year. He talked about projected State losses for next year. He stated that the Board of Regents approved two new buildings for WSU. He stated that 2010 will be a challenging year. It is not time to panic and the City will continue its cautionary approach.

Public Hearing

2010 Revenue Sources

10. Mayor Johnson announced that a public hearing is scheduled on the 2010 revenue sources. Finance Director Mulholland presented the staff report. City Supervisor Sherman made additional comments regarding revenues. Councilmember Waldrop asked if we could charge franchise fees on satellite TV services. Mayor Johnson and City Attorney McAloon responded that we are not allowed to tax satellite TV. City Supervisor Sherman stated that we will exceed last years cable fees. Finance Director Mulholland stated we have had small growth in cable, but we are down in revenues. He gave an update on property tax and sales tax.

Councilmember Bloom discussed research buildings and the fact that we do not get tax money from these buildings.

Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing. Janice Brown stated she objects to the Council saying they do not want an increase in the budget and then raising the amount given to the Humane Society. She objects to the Council passing this increase.

Mayor Johnson closed the public hearing.

Ordinance

Ordinance No. 09-23 - Budget Amendment

11. Mayor Johnson announced that an ordinance had been prepared amending the budget ordinance. He thanked Accounting Manager Babbitt for all his work on the budget. Finance Director Mulholland presented the staff report. Mayor Johnson stated that salary and benefit adjustments for 2009 were included in this amendment. Finance Director Mulholland also discussed an underpayment of unemployment taxes from 2004 and 2005 that is included in this amendment. The City was given the wrong rate and underpaid the taxes.

Councilmember Benjamin stated he would like to have a budget for the whole year and not do budget amendments. City Supervisor Sherman stated there

are also amendments on the revenue side of the budget. Councilmember Waldrop stated the cemetery paving project donation will be a revenue amendment. City Supervisor Sherman stated this donation is in excess of $20,000. Councilmember Bloom asked if, with this amendment, we are still within the 13 percent reserve. Councilmember Paul stated we will be within budget.

Ordinance No. 09-23 by title only reads as follows:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 08-23 ADOPTED DECEMBER 9, 2008, AND ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING A BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF PULLMAN FOR THE YEAR 2009".

Councilmember Bloom moved, Councilmember Weller seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 09-23. The motion carried with six aye votes, Councilmember Benjamin voting nay.

Discussions

Public Safety and Community Event Notifications

12. Mayor Johnson announced that a discussion is scheduled on public safety and community event notifications. Chief Weatherly presented the staff report. He stated that Nixle is a program for notification by e-mail or cell phone. He stated WSU has a similar program that was expensive and this one is free. Mayor Johnson asked about the funding source. Jerry Cork, Pullman PD, stated Nixle is a privately-funded company. Mayor Johnson asked if they sell the numbers. Jerry Cork responded they do not sell the numbers but he could find the funding source.

Councilmember Heath stated that when she read the information on Nixle it raised concerns. There is no information about the company. It is a private company and we do not have any information about them. The person signing up provides a lot of personal information. WSU has control of their system. We would have no control over this system. She stated she would like more information on this company. Councilmember Weller agreed with Councilmember Heath.

Chief Weatherly stated Nixle is endorsed by the International Chiefs of Police. Officer Matt Burkett stated that New York PD, Everett, and the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department use Nixle. Nixle does not give out private information. Mayor Johnson asked how long New York and the other entities have used Nixle. Officer Burkett stated he did not have that information. Councilmember Bloom asked how successful WSU's system has been. Chief Weatherly stated it is a good system. Councilmember Heath stated she wants to see Nixle's privacy policy and read more information on the company.

2009 Goal Status Update

13. Mayor Johnson announced that an update is scheduled on the 2009 goals. City Supervisor Sherman presented the staff report and stated that there are twenty goals which are listed in the packet with the status of each goal.

Councilmember Bloom asked the status of Goal No. 2, the fire flow project. Public Works Director Workman stated they are ahead of schedule. The tank will be up by the end of the year but it will not be operational until later in the spring.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Johnson asked if there was any new business from either the Council or audience. Councilmember Bloom stated an article from the Lewiston Tribune had been placed before the Council. It is an article stating that Washington has adopted a rainwater collection policy. Councilmember Weller stated that the article states that the Department of Ecology reserves the right to regulate these systems.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Waldrop moved, Councilmember Bloom seconded to adjourn the regular meeting of the City Council.

Motion Carried.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the regular meeting of the City Council at 9:43 p.m.