

## League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

### **Pullman City Council meeting: Feb. 25, 2020**

Observer: Libby Walker

Attending: Mayor Glenn Johnson, Brandon Chapman, Ann Parks, Pat Wright, Dan Records, Al Sorenson, Eileen Macoll, Adam Lincoln, Nathan Weller, Kevin Gardes, Pete Dickinson, and many members of the public.

Meeting lasted 1.5 hours.

**United Airlines** is being approached about a **direct flight to Denver** with a 50-person passenger jet. Pullman received a \$780,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation as a revenue guarantee and for marketing. Talks will start soon between Pullman and United Air, which endorsed this idea.

**Pullman ArtFest** will be held May 14-16, 2020. \$11,000 grant to Pullman Arts Commission to support the ArtFest.

**Parks and Facilities 2020-2025 comprehensive plan** approved.

Chief Gary Jenkins asked for and received permission to apply for a **grant to study de-escalation** and its impacts. WSU will conduct the study.

### **PULLMAN DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN- DRAFT:**

Kevin Gardes: The Council began the process in August of 2018. Brian Scott, founder of BDS Consulting Co., presented the plan. Final draft was submitted to public via city website last week. 40 stakeholders were interviewed. 17-person steering committee provided guidance. 100+ people were involved.

Key Elements:

1. **Enhance the “gems:”** Increase pride in elements of downtown including historic spaces. Create a design review program. Adjust height limits to encourage 5 story buildings. The trail system is wonderful; expand it.
2. **Make downtown more people centric!** Improve Main Street by changing from 3 to 2 lanes. Reconfigure to include a 10 ft bike lane. Back-in angle parking on one side and parallel parking on the other. Bike parking facilities. ADA parking spaces should be added. Prioritize downtown parking for customers and visitors. Develop a way to direct people to other public parking.
3. and 4. **Improve streetscape:** Develop Pine St Plaza. Add a bus stop downtown on NE Olsen St.. Reduce from 2 lanes to one lane on Paradise St. Incorporate a downtown gateway sign. Develop a public art program with WSU and Pullman Arts Commission. Install a small stage on High St Plaza. Add moveable furniture. Build a cultural corridor from Olsen St. along the river. Improve library facade. Magnify the core.

5. **Encourage entrepreneurship:** Refill vacant storefronts. Work with Downtown Association. Get more housing downtown. What we have is full.

6. **Catalyzing leadership:** Recruit and hire a paid downtown manager. Work with WSU to get seed money. More promotion of downtown Pullman. Create an annual calendar of events. Work with the new Economic Development manager.

TOP PRIORITIES:

Fund a downtown manager - this is essential and will lead to the other priorities.

Step up visibility of Pullman Downtown Association

Plan a 2020-2021 calendar working with the Chamber

Make 2-3 visible improvements

Develop a visible directory of downtown gems that pops up on phone apps

Begin design development of public realm including changing the downtown lanes.

This should be done in roughly this order, according to Scott.

Also, expand the current trail system and pursue the Colfax-Albion-Pullman trail.

Questions:

2 lane vs 3 lanes?

Current traffic does not justify 3 lanes.

Mayor Johnson asked about WADOT approval process

Back in parking. Will there be more accidents?

Probably more fender benders at first was the reply.

Eileen: There isn't a communication plan. Answer: the downtown manager should do this.

Clarity, consistency, compassion should be reflected in the Design Development Team.

Budget? No set amount but start with some smaller things. Do lane reduction as fast as possible.

Al Sorenson said sidewalks should be top priority. Consultant said only replace where needed.

Meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.