

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Pullman City Council Date: 5/26/2020
Observer Reporting: Karyn Hardy Length of Meeting: 37 minutes
Members Present: Mayor Glenn Johnson, Council Members Brandon Chapman, Eileen Macoll, Ann Parks, Dan Records, Al Sorensen, Nathan Weller, Pat Wright
Others Present: Dee Stiles-Elliot, City Clerk; Mike Urban, Director of Finance & Administrative Services; Gary Jenkins, Chief of Police; Laura McAloon, City Attorney; Adam Lincoln, City Administrator

Business pertaining to League Positions or topics of interest:

- **Meeting held on YouTube Channel** respecting COVID-19 Stay Home Stay Safe, so members of public or media were not identifiable, public questions and comments required submission by 5 pm. 5/26 no public comments were discussed during the meeting.

To view: <https://go.boarddocs.com/wa/pullman/Board.nsf/vpublic?open#>

- **COVID-19 Pandemic discussion** focused on the **Pullman Community Poll** conducted to determine Pullman residents' comfort level in frequenting businesses and institutions. 2400 people responded. 67 percent of those taking the poll support businesses taking safety measures that include requirement of customers and employees to wear masks, to check employees' temperatures, to protect employees with plexiglass, and publicly post the policy of the business regarding COVID. Council member Records drove this project.

Police Chief Jenkins discussed a **fraud involving the State of Washington's unemployment benefit**. Fraudsters stole names, birthdates and social security numbers using this information to file unemployment claims. At this point, 70 victims had filed complaints to the city police. Pullman residents should make a report to the police if their identities have been compromised. Information can be found at esd.wa.gov and the City of Pullman webpage pullman-wa.gov Pullman police will turn cases over to the FBI and Secret Service, these agencies have agreed to lead this investigation. Chief Jenkins had to file his own report, the scammers used Chief Jenkin's identity to file a fraudulent claim. Information may be found on the city webpage. pullman-wa.gov

- Adam Lincoln brought forward a request to approve the **purchase of AV equipment** to be installed in the new city council chambers. Purchase was approved in 2017, the dollars have been rolled forward to now, and this is the point in construction of the new city council chambers that the new equipment could be installed. Costs can be reduced if city employees install the equipment. Currently, in order to broadcast and hold meetings, some equipment is borrowed from city IT staff members and some equipment is borrowed from WSU. Mr. Lincoln and staff recommended approving this expenditure. City Attorney McAloon stated that Council meetings could not be broadcast without updated equipment.

Council member Parks championed approval of this contract, reiterating that this money had been budgeted in 2017, that the council did not need to approve the expenditure, council was being asked to approve the contract with the vendor. Council Member Parks argued that this equipment is needed if meetings are to be broadcast, a commitment which Parks believes is an avenue to provide governmental transparency. There was much discussion about this \$141,000 dollar expenditure. Council members Parks, Records, Wright and Weller voted to approve, council members Sorensen, Macoll and Chapman voted no.

- Staff recommended and Council unanimously approved **Verizon adding an antenna** in town.

Public Meetings of Interest to League:

Fourth of July will be celebrated in Pullman (fireworks) at an as yet undisclosed location.

City of Pullman is inventorying signage in town

Library is recording story time for our young Pullman citizens

Process and Protocol: Participants were very polite. Council member Parks was a strong advocate for the new AV system, stating many times that it will advantage public participation in council meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm, next meeting scheduled will be virtual on Tuesday June 9, 2020.