

# MOSCOW-PULLMAN DAILY NEWS

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## City Council supports new ice rink

*Moscow staff to work with fairground facility's board on conditions for \$1 million pledge*

By Garrett Cabeza  
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Every seat in the council chambers at City Hall was filled with Palouse Ice Rink supporters, some of them sporting Palouse Youth Hockey Association jerseys at Monday night's Moscow City Council meeting.

More adults stood on the periphery of the room and youth hockey players sat on the floor in front of Mayor Bill Lambert and the six council members.

And they all went home happy as the Council expressed its support for a new \$3.6 million ice rink, and its willingness to donate \$1 million from the

city's Hamilton Fund to help pay for it. So far, the Palouse Ice Rink board has raised \$200,000 in cash and \$200,000 in pledges toward construction.

Council members told city staff to work with the board and negotiate conditions to be met for the board to receive a \$1 million commitment.

Councilor John Weber said he would be more than willing to pledge \$1 million to the project. The crowd applauded heartily.

Councilor Art Bettge said the Hamilton Fund exists for projects like the ice rink and is not intended to just sit in the bank. Councilor Jim Boland agreed.

The Hamilton Fund was cre-

ated in 2000 when Bob Hamilton, a Moscow native and retired architect residing in Sequim, Wash., died and bequeathed the bulk of his estate — \$5 million — to the city to benefit Moscow's youth. There is about \$2.9 million left in the fund.

The ice rink is used by youth hockey leagues, figure skaters,

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youth educational programs, public skaters, adult hockey leagues, curling and special events, like birthday parties.

Tony Mangini, vice president of the Palouse Ice Rink board, said participation in the youth hockey program has been increasing since 2008 but participation from older

children has declined.

Mangini speculated that part of the decline had to do with families making the decision that it is too difficult to travel to other ice rinks to play all their games and tournaments because the current ice rink is only three-fourths regulation size. Mangini said local high schools and college teams play their home games in Cheney, and figure skaters can only take beginning level classes at Palouse Ice Rink.

Palouse Ice Rink brought in \$216,325 in 2015-16, Mangini said, predicting that in the fourth year of the new rink its income would hover around \$446,000.

"I don't see how you can go wrong funding this thing," Latah County Commissioner Dave McGraw told the council.

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