

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON
JULY 11, 2024, 7:00 P.M.**

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

Mayor Thom Walker called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Councilors present were Vicki Hallin and Jenny Gerold. Others present: City Administrator Michele McPherson, Community Developer Planner Stacy Marquardt, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Wastewater Manager Chris Klinghagen, Liquor Store Manager Dylan Donner, and Attorney Damien Toven. Absent was Councilors Jeff Reynolds and Jack Edmonds, Assistant Fire Chief Josh Vaccari and PUC Manager Keith Butcher.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Agenda Additions / Deletions

McPherson would like to switch 7.4 City Administrator Report and 7.5 Mille Lacs County Fair Request.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE CHANGE OF MOVING THE MILLE LACS COUNTY FAIR REQUEST BEFORE THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Consent Agenda

- 4.1. Approval of City Council Minutes of June 27th, 2024
- 4.2. Temporary Intoxicating Liquor for Christ Our Light event September 15, 2024.
- 4.3. Temporary Intoxicating Liquor for Princeton Youth Hockey event August 16-18th, 2024.
- 4.4. Approve CIP Expenditure - Library Flat Roof Repair
- 4.5. Princeton Public Utilities Commission Agenda Packet for July 11th, 2024, Special Meeting
- 4.6. Accept Resignation of Firefighter Alexa Wiirre effective July 1, 2024
- 4.7. Approve July 22, 2024, as Start Date for Fire Chief Steve Zumberge

J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Open Forum; public comment on items not on the agenda. Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes. The Council will not discuss legal matters.

6. Old Business

6.1. Ordinance 851 - Annexation of Pontious Property - FINAL READING

Marquardt stated that at the Public Hearing, two residents argued that the property was not eligible for annexation as it did not abut property that was in the City of Princeton. Attorney Toven looked at the state statute and stated that the property did meet those requirements. Also, staff submits the legal description to the State Boundary Adjustment division to clarify the property meets requirements before beginning the process.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 851 ANNEXING THE PONTIUS PROPERTY. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.2. Ordinance 854 - Title 10. Building/Housing Ordinance Amendment - FINAL READING

Marquardt advised that this ordinance amendment will allow MNSPECT to do the commercial plumbing permit review instead of the State needing to do it, which will allow permits to be processed much faster.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 854. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.3. Rural Taxing District - Refund Request for Payable 2024 Tax Credit to three recently annexed properties.

Jenkins reported At the June 27th City Council meeting, Ordinance 852 amending the Rural Taxing District was approved.

Cindy Penney’s property was annexed into the City of Princeton along with six others in 2022 – 2023 to square up the City’s boundary following State Statute 414.033, Sub 3.

Subd. 3.60 percent bordered and 40 acres or less.

If the perimeter of the area to be annexed by a municipality is 60 percent or more bordered by the municipality and if the area to be annexed is 40 acres or less, the municipality shall serve notice of intent to annex upon the town board and the chief administrative law judge, unless the area is appropriate for annexation by ordinance under subdivision 2, clause (3). The town board shall have 90 days from the date of service to serve objections with the chief administrative law judge. If no objections are forthcoming within the said 90-day period, such land may be annexed by ordinance. If objections are filed with the chief administrative law judge, the chief administrative law judge shall conduct hearings and issue an order as in the case of annexations under section [414.031](#), subdivisions 3 and 4.

Cindy Penney contacted the city regarding the increase in her property taxes since being annexed into the City. Staff informed her that the Rural Taxing District Ordinance was going to be amended and she could request a refund for the difference in tax amounts.

At the June 27th meeting, the Council heard her request and asked if any of the other properties that were recently annexed would meet the requirements to be in the Rural Tax District. Staff determined that three met the Rural Tax District Requirements.

	City Portion paid 2024	Rural Taxing Dist. \$	Refund \$
24-021-2301 (Penney)	\$1,339.00	\$469.55	\$869.45
24-021-4800 (Leuthard)	\$1,368.32	\$480.25	\$888.07
24-032-6000 (Arendsee)	\$1,944.24	\$673.70	\$1,270.54

WALKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE REFUND TO PENNEY NOW AS THOSE 2024 TAXES HAVE BEEN PAID IN FULL. LEUTHARD AND ARENDSEE REFUNDS WILL BE PROCESSED ONCE THE FINAL TAX PAYMENT IS MADE, USUALLY IN DECEMBER. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. New Business

7.1. Ordinance 856 - Rezoning and Memo for PID 24-032-5004 - FIRST READING

Marquardt advised that applicant Sam Eastey applied for rezoning of the property located at PID #24-032-5004 that is currently zoned as A-1, Agricultural District and to rezone the site to B-3, General Commercial Business District.

The property is vacant land, and the applicant would like to build a mix use of Automobile and Recreational Sales and Service building along with Automobile and Truck Repair Shop that both would be permitted with a Conditional Use Permit in the B-3 District.

The intent of the A-1, Agricultural District is to preserve the rural character of the district until such time as the land use is determined.

The intent of the B-3, General Business District is to create an area to serve the commercial and service needs of the general population. The objective is to provide services to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic and to accommodate those businesses which require large areas for off-street parking or generate substantial traffic originating from outside the community.

Rezoning Review Standards:

Many communities utilize the following factors as review standards in rezoning requests, which are being provided as information:

1. The proposed action has been considered in relation to the specific policies and provisions and has been found to be consistent with the official City Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposed use is or will be compatible with present and future land uses of the area.
3. The proposed use conforms with all performance standards contained in this code.
4. The proposed use can be accommodated with existing public services and will not overburden the city's service capacity.
5. Traffic generation by the proposed use is within capabilities of streets servicing property.

The Planning Commission held a Special Planning Commission meeting on July 1st, 2024, and approved the rezoning of the site at PID #24-032-5004 from A-1, Agricultural District to B-3, General Commercial Business District and forward the recommendation for the zoning map amendment to the City Council to hold a first reading July 11th, 2024, of Ordinance #856.

The intent of the A-1, Agricultural District is to preserve the rural character of the district until such time as the land use is determined.

The intent of the B-3, General Business District is to create an area to serve the commercial and service needs of the general population. The objective is to provide services to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic and to accommodate those businesses which require large areas for off-street parking or generate substantial traffic originating from outside the community.

The property is designated as Commercial in the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map. No change will occur with this designation. The definition of commercial: Located at gateways and along corridors into the city, uses in this district include general commercial, retail, business service and offices.

J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 856, REZONING FOR PID 24-032-5004. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7.2. Resolution 24-38 - Accept Donation from Abra Autobody for the Police Department K9

Frederick reported that on June 17, 2024, the Princeton Police Department received a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 from Abra Autobody and Glass of Princeton.

The donation will be used to assist the K9 program in the purchase of a new portable kennel system for the dog. The Princeton Police Department and its K9 program are extremely grateful for the donation which will help keep Bogey safe during his travels while off duty.

J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-38 ACCEPTING THE DONATION FROM ABRA AUTOBODY FOR THE POLICE K9 PROGRAM. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7.3. Bill List

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 28 TO JULY 11, 2024, CHECK REGISTER AND PAY PERIOD 14 CHECK AND ELECTRONIC PAYMENT REGISTERS WHICH DOCUMENT ISSUED CHECKS 88490 THROUGH 88554 AND ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MADE. THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHECKS ISSUED, AND ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MADE IS \$559,985.79. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7.4. Request from Mille Lacs County Fair to Park Stock Trailers on City Property

McPherson advised that the Mille Lacs County Agricultural Society is asking permission to park empty stock trailers on City property from August 6th through August 11th, 2024. She provided a map of the area, which is adjacent to the garden gate and is closer to the animal barns so it is more convenient for 4-hers to retrieve feed and bedding during the Fair. The current parking location is adjacent to the First Street gate. Allowing the parking of stock trailers on City property will open up the current trailer parking area to be used by Fair attendees.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO PARK EMPTY STOCK TRAILERS ON CITY PROPERTY FROM AUGUST 6TH THROUGH AUGUST 11TH. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7.5. City Administrator Bi-Weekly Report

McPherson reported on the following observations and information since the last update on June 27, 2024:

Airport

Work continues on the AWOS project as well as the ALP update.

Baldwin Township

We are in a holding pattern with the Administrative Law Judge regarding Baldwin's request to incorporate. The estimated date for the ALJ to issue an order is June 19, 2024. Staff have been fielding questions regarding when a decision will be made and there have been recent Facebook posts regarding the same.

We continue to work with the Township's Attorney on the ancillary Orderly Annexation Agreements.

Development

Development projects that are in discussion:

- Pontius property
- A replat by Nate Cook at 5th and Old County Road 18

The developer of the Pontius property has secured a purchase agreement with the School District for its property and staff anticipates that there will be two projects moving forward in tandem. More information will be forthcoming.

The CSAH 4/7th Avenue improvement project is progressing well. The contractor is a day or so behind on the sewer due to some of the issues that arose in the first week or two of the project. It is anticipated that there will be gravel on the roundabout at the end of the week.

If anyone would like weekly updates regarding the CSAH 4/7th Avenue project, please email: Princeton2024@wsbenq.com and request to be placed on the update list.

East Central Regional Development Commission

The ECRDC is seeking a candidate from Mille Lacs County to serve on the Revolving Loan Fund Board. Direct letters of application should be submitted directly to ECRDC. The application deadline is August 5, 2024, at 1:00pm.

Finance

The audit is complete and was submitted on time. Our only “deficiency” was a comment relating to the separation of duties; their letter is attached. A presentation on the audit results is scheduled for the July 25 meeting.

Work on the 2024 budget will begin soon.

Fire

The remaining item for the Chief hiring is the background check which has been submitted to Cardinal Investigations for completion. McPherson anticipates that it will be completed shortly, and a start date can be confirmed.

The transition team is now meeting bi-weekly.

Great Northern Trail (GNT)

Members of the GNT met today to review the components of the grant application that will be submitted for a July 31 deadline. A Power Point that provides a high-level overview of the components of the grant was provided. The Elk River Park Commission requested that more community input be provided into the logo design, so branding of the GNT will be delayed until that process is complete. Community input is included as a task within the grant application.

Upcoming Meetings and Reminders:

- July 10 – Fire Advisory Board 7 pm, City Hall
- July 11 – Regular City Council Meeting
- July 15 – Fire Executive Board 7 pm, Public Safety Building
- July 19 to August 2 – I will be working remotely (tentatively) assisting my dad with recovery after spine surgery
- August 1 – Council Study session; as of now I do not have any topics for discussion; if there are none, it will be cancelled at the July 25 meeting
- August 7 to 11 – Mille Lacs County Fair

8. Committee Reports

Walker reported that there was a big discussion on Fire Contracts at the Fire Advisory Board Meeting.

9. Closed Session - Personnel Data MN Statute 13D.05 subd 2

Walker stated that this agenda item for this meeting is personnel data and conduct.

This portion of the properly noticed meeting of the Princeton City Council will be closed pursuant to Minnesota Statutes under the personnel data and conduct exception to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 13D.05 subd. 2.

The need for confidentiality outweighs the purposes served by the open-meeting law in this case based on the following:

Confidentiality is required to protect personnel data and conduct from becoming public at this time.

- The purpose of the closed meeting is not to make a decision behind closed-doors, but instead is to determine what actions are appropriate with respect to the personnel data and conduct, if any.
- The only business to be discussed in this portion of the meeting are the personnel data and conduct issues, and what action, if any, should be taken.

HALLIN MOVED TO CLOSE THE MEETING AT 7:26PM. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Council will now go into closed session. The time is 7:26pm.

Only the officials and consultants of the Council who reasonably require access to this data may be in attendance at any portion of the meeting for this agenda item.

The minutes of this portion of the meeting should reflect only that a meeting was held with its date, time and location; who was present at the meeting; and the purpose of the meeting.

HALLIN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE CLOSED PORTION OF THE MEETING AT 8:30PM. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Toven stated that during the closed session there was a frank conversation with staff regarding personnel data.

10. Adjournment

J GEROLD MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:31PM. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully Submitted,

ATTEST:

Shawna Jenkins Tadych
City Clerk

Thom Walker,
Mayor