

**MINUTES OF A STUDY SESSION OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL  
HELD ON APRIL 2 2020 4:30 P.M. VI ZOOM**

\*\*\*\*\*

Mayor Brad Schumacher called the meeting to order. Council members present were Jack Edmonds, Jenny Gerold, Jules Zimmer and Jeff Reynolds. Staff present, Administrator Robert Barbian, Finance Director Steve Jackson, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Community Development Specialist Stephanie Hillesheim, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Liquor Store Manager Nancy Campbell, Fire Chief Ron Lawrence and Attorney Damien Toven.

**Open forum - NONE**

**Chamber of commerce – City Flowers –**

Zimmer said he contacted Chamber director Kim Young in regard to her request to be on the agenda. She was not aware until recently that the Chamber usually handled the Flower planting and planning. She wanted to ask if this was a budgeted item and was looking for information on where the baskets were stored. They brainstormed a bit, and Young will make some calls.

Zimmer suggested that the Civic Betterment group may be of assistance, as well as those that are involved with the Community Garden

Barbian said this has been an ongoing program that the City has been involved with.

Hillesheim stated that she spoke with Nelson Nursery a little bit ago, and the baskets needed new liners. Jackson approved those to be replaced.

Zimmer stated that Lee Steinbrecher was involved in some beautification to the Roundabout, so that may be an option as well.

Schumacher asked when the baskets and plants need to be picked up. Hillesheim has not been given a date. Nelson Nursery had just contacted the city to get the liners replaced before they get really busy. Barbian suggested getting a group of volunteers determined, and staff will find out about the flower order and dates.

J Gerold asked if the baskets are owned by the City. B Gerold said he believes they are owned by the Chamber. Hillesheim understands that the same flowers used last year were going to be used again this year, and may have been ordered last fall already.

Zimmer asked if there should be a motion to order the plants. Jackson said he is not aware of an official order being made, but it was in the budget. Staff will get it the details and report back to the Council.

B Gerold stated that Public Works staff usually maintains the planters, but adjacent property owners have participated in the maintenance as well.

Barbian added that another item that has been brought up was the area near the fence by the malls is looking a bit rough. He had spoken with Prairie restorations and was provided an estimate of approximately \$4000. He was considering contacting the mall owners to see if they wanted to be involved.

**33<sup>rd</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave Joint Project with Princeton Township**

Toven reported that at last week's meeting there was some information was not received from the Township. Yesterday afternoon he had received the rest of the information from the

township and is confident that it is okay to move forward with the following documents. Everything was done to meet time and publishing requirements for the 429 process. Staff is okay with the language being removed regarding the Township being responsible if the assessment process was not followed correctly.

Toven suggests the motion include the wording "limiting improvements of the cul-de-sac, pending approval with the school agreement on the easement"

***Resolution 20-26 – Accepting the Joint Powers Agreement***

REYNOLDS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 20-26 APPROVING THE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT WITH PRINCETON TOWNSHIP. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTIION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

***Resolution 20-28 – approving plans, specs and recognizing advertisements***

EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 20-28 APPROVING THE PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS AND RECOGNIZING ADVERTISEMENTS. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

***Resolution 20-29 – Ordering improvement and preparation of plans***

ZIMMER MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 20-29 ORDERING THE IMPROVEMENT AND PREPARATION OF PLANS LIMITING IMPROVEMENTS OF THE CUL-DE-SAC, PENDING APPROVAL WITH THE SCHOOL AGREEMENT ON THE EASEMENT. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Edmonds asked what would happen if the Township and School district does not come to an agreement about the cul-de-sac. Barbian replied that the cul-de-sac would drop off the project if an agreement was not made with the school district. Staff has a few days to work with the school district.

Schumacher stated that he and Zimmer had been part of the discussions with the school district and feels they should be involved in working out this agreement.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Liquor store manager update**

Campbell reported that they did install plexiglass barriers on their registers. The customers ring up their own product and run their own credit cards. Employees and customers both feel much more comfortable. She thanked Klinghagen, Pierce and Hall for getting that set up right away for them. Schumacher thanked staff as well, and said it is a real task for businesses to work around this pandemic. He can foresee some of these changes remaining in place after the pandemic is over.

Campbell advised that the Liquor store is not as busy as it was the first 2 weeks, but still doing very well and up in numbers. The reason she has another new employee to add this week, is the one that they approved to be added last week is at the hospital in quarantine with his pregnant girlfriend.

Schumacher asked if they have been able to maintain the numbers in the store to a reasonable amount to keep social distancing in place. Campbell responded that during the week it isn't too bad, but on weekends it can be a little difficult. Most people have been very understanding.

### **Approve hiring of Liquor Clerk Izabella Fehrmann**

EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF LIQUOR CLERK IZABELLA FEHRMANN. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **Street Sweeping update**

B Gerold provided an update on street sweeping. Public works is in the process of sweeping City streets. He was not privy to the County's plan, but he finally received an email from Mille Lacs saying they would begin sweeping Rum River, First Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Ave at midnight on April 15<sup>th</sup>. He is not sure if they are going to include 7<sup>th</sup> Ave, he will find out.

Frederick added that it would be nice to verify the times so they can let residents know in regard to parking.

Barbian said it would be beneficial for those that have a sidewalk adjacent to the county road, that they can sweep that into the street to be cleaned up when the County sweeps.

Zimmer stated that he was in the meeting with the County Administrator and Engineer. One concern was the sand and gravel getting into the storm sewer. B Gerold said they try to get it swept in a timely manner to keep it from getting to the storm sewers. They have been tasked by MPCA to keep phosphorus levels down and we would rather capture that sand in the street, versus trying to clean it out of the storm sewers.

Zimmer questioned if Rum River would be the first swept if the City was still handling it. B Gerold responded that it was always top priority to keep downtown looking the best we can. Zimmer added that he really noticed the large amount of sand, gravel and salt that was put down compared to what the City has used in the past. He has heard comments that from those that walk and they have some areas it is like walking on a gravel road. B Gerold said the County's rationale is likely different. because their trucks handle a much larger area, they probably want to put a lot more down so they do not have to come back if needed.

J Gerold said she also doesn't recall seeing so much sand on the curb and on the sidewalks as there is this year. B Gerold said part of that is procedurally how its done. The county plow drivers are used to ditches and the city tries to drop at the curb line. The city would also do a little more snow removal along the curb line, so that makes a difference as well.

Edmonds commented that when the City was doing the snow removal, the City crew know how to apply and where. He asked if the city is also be recapture the sand that is swept up. B Gerold said it becomes more of a fill material once it is driven over more, so they can use it for fill time needs, but cannot reapply it to streets.

### **Shopko Lot parking and mailbox**

Frederick stated he was able to speak to the post office and they are starting the process to have that mail box moved to a different location.

**2020 budget Discussion – Jules Zimmer**

Zimmer stated that it was said at the last meeting that the City would not be receiving any more PILOT fees from Princeton Public Utilities. He asked how the City was going to go absorb that loss. When staff works on the budget and when the Council approves it, those funds are planned to be there. If it was known they would not be, the levy could have been increased if needed.

Barbian said as noted it was the PUC's choice to stop paying that fee, even though it has been in place for many years. With this and the COVID-19 Emergency, it may be a big loss of revenue for the City. He suggests the department heads could look over their budgets and see where we can possibly make up for that shortage.

Jackson clarified the PILOT has been \$52,500 per year for over 20 years. The City has have already collected 3 months, so it would make it closer to about \$40,000 for the year. Schumacher suggested adding this to the next Study Session agenda, which will allow the department heads a month to review their budgets and see where things can be cut if needed.

J Gerold added that in regard to the PILOT, the Mayor had provided his ideas, and the Council members were going to write down some of their ideas. As a Council, they would have worked with the PUC to come up with a plan that would work for everyone. It is very unfortunate that the PUC didn't have the desire to work something out with the City.

**Closed Session – Land Purchase**

REYNOLDS MOVED TO CLOSE THE MEETING AT 5:53PM. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REYNOLDS MOVED TO ADJOURN INTO OPEN SESSION AT 6:42PM. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Toven reported that City has been engaging in negotiations with a property owner to purchase land. Staff has received a preliminary purchase agreement. There was discussion around covid-19, how it may affect the purchase, and the council has decided what they would like to move forward. There will be additional information and a hopefully a final agreement at an upcoming meeting

**Adjournment**

EDMONDS MOVED TO ADJOURN THE STUDY SESSION AT 6:44PM. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully Submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Shawna Jenkins Tadych  
City Clerk

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brad Schumacher, Mayor