

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON  
FEBRUARY 24, 2022 7:00 P.M.**

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**1. Call to Order - Roll Call**

Mayor Thom Walker called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Council members present were Vicki Hallin, Jenny Gerold, Jeff Reynolds, and Jules Zimmer. Others present: Administrator Michele McPherson, Finance Director Tracy Peters, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Technology Services Manager Ed Yost, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Fire Chief Ron Lawrence, Liquor Store Manager Dylan Donner, Clerk Shawna Jenkins and Attorney Damien Toven.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Agenda Additions / Deletions**

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

**4. Consent Agenda**

- 4.1.** City Council Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2022
- 4.2.** Approve Step Increase for City Administrator Michele McPherson
- 4.3.** Approve Application to Conduct Excluded Bingo - Kinship Youth Mentoring of Princeton
- 4.4.** Approve and Sign Resolution Supporting DNR Federal Trails Grant for Cross Country Ski Trail Groomer
- 4.5.** PUC Agenda Packet for February 23, 2022 Meeting
- 4.6.** Approval to hire Jace Cooper as a Police Officer, Contingent on Background Check, Psychological and Medical Examinations
- 4.7.** Sherburne County Fire Departments - Mutual Aid Agreement
- 4.8.** Mobile Food Vendor License for Brain Freeze Ice Cream - 5 days, over 3 months

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

**5. Public Hearing - Small Cities Development Program Grant Project; 7th Avenue Infrastructure Improvement**

HALLIN MOVED TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:02 PM. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

As part of the grant application process for the Small Cities Development Program, a public hearing is required. The Council set the date of the public hearing for February 24, 2022. The following notice was published and posted to Facebook:

The City of Princeton is applying for a Small Cities Development Program grant to help fund infrastructure improvements located under 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. The application requires the City to hold a public hearing prior to submission of the application. The City Council has scheduled the required public hearing for 7pm on Thursday, February 24, 2022; the hearing will be held at City Hall located at 705 North Second Street, Princeton Minnesota. The public is invited to attend in person, or they may submit comments to Michele McPherson, City Administrator at [mmcpherson@princetonmn.org](mailto:mmcpherson@princetonmn.org) or by mail at the City Hall address.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the City Council hold the public hearing and accept comment regarding the proposed project.

McPherson advised that the goal is to replace the infrastructure when the county replaces the road.

Joe Hanson stated he lives on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave and asked if this hearing is just regarding the application, or the project itself. McPherson responded that this hearing is only regarding the application. There will be additional hearings regarding the project. She believes the County has it on their list for 2025, but could be moved up if funds were secured sooner.

Jerry Nelson who also lives on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave asked how deep the sewer line is there. B Gerold replied that he believes it is 25 feet.

HALLIN MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:08 PM. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**6. 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. The Council will likely not speak to anything at this time, it is for their information.**

Elizabeth Ferron, 208 9<sup>th</sup> Ave South spoke about a legal matter regarding her mother's caretaker who is her sister and brother-in-law. She mentioned an assault and feels she has not been provided the information she has requested. She has been waiting for 3 ½ years for her day in court. Toven said legal matters cannot be discussed, and recommended she contact the Mille Lacs County Attorney.

Leonard Hanson, 208 9<sup>th</sup> Ave S added that this is a dangerous situation and this needs to be investigated at a higher level.

## **7. Old Business**

### **7.1. Ordinance 819 Rezoning Newly Annexed Properties - FINAL READING**

McPherson advised that the City Council approved the annexation on July 8th, 2021 for parcels #90-009- 1105 (approx. 33.15 acres) and parcel #90-009-1110 (approx. 5 acres) currently is a Mobile Home Park and parcel #90-009-1106 (approx. 16.47 acres) is vacant land.

RM-1 Residential Manufactured Housing guideline, the intent of the RM-1 Residential Manufactured Housing District is to promote health, safety, order, convenience, and general welfare by enforcing minimum standards for mobile home parks, the location and use of mobile home parks, and the design, construction, alteration, and arrangement of homes on said lots, authorizing the inspection of mobile home parks, the licensing of operators, and fixing penalties for violations. No building or land shall be used and no building shall be erected, converted, or structurally altered, unless otherwise provided herein.

With the current use of the properties, zoning to RM-1, Residential Manufactured Housing would be the appropriate zoning district for the sites.

Rezoning Review Standards: Many communities utilize the following factors as review standards in rezoning request, 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.

Conclusion/ Recommendation: The Planning Commission held a public hearing on January 24th, 2022 and recommended approval to the City Council of the rezoning. If the Council sees fit, a motion to introduce Ordinance #819 would be in order. The property sites are PID#'s 90- 009-1105, 90-009-1110, and 90-009-1106, to the RM-1, Residential Manufactured Housing District.

J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 819. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### 7.1.1 Resolution 22-10 - Approving Amendment to Land Use Map

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 22-10. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### 7.2. Peak Exteriors Building Permit Refund Request

Jenkins advised that in April 2021, Charlene with Peak Exteriors pulled 33 permits to reroof the Townhomes in Meadowview Estates. Staff spent a considerable amount of time numbering and making 4 copies for each permit (original goes in the property file, copy for customer, copy to Finance, copy for Planning and zoning, and one to the building inspector).

Staff received a call from Charlene last week requesting a refund as the insurance company did not approve the work.

Our Fee Schedule states under Building permit refunds that the "City retains the Plan Check fee". In the case of a reroof permit, it is a flat rate fee and there is no plan check fee.

The bottom of the building permit where the applicant signs reads as such:

*This permit shall expire if work authorized by this permit is not commenced within 180 days from the date of this permit, or if the work is suspended for a period of 180 days. Enforcement and administration of the Minnesota State Building code is a public service and is limited in nature. This building permit and the subsequent building inspections are not to be construed or relied upon as any type of warranty, guarantee, or representation on the part of the City that the plans, construction, or finished product are in conformance with the provisions of the Minnesota State Building Code or other applicable construction standards. Further, the City assumes no responsibility or liability for damages of any nature allegedly arising out of the issuance of this permit or subsequent inspections.*

*Approval of this permit does not authorize the breaking of any law, resolution, or code.*

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND SIGNATURE:**

*The undersigned hereby agrees that, in case such permit is granted, that all work*

*which shall be done and all materials which shall be used shall comply with the plans and specifications herewith submitted and with all the ordinances of said City of Princeton applicable thereto.*

Last year, the flat rate fee for a Reroof was \$50, \$60 plus a \$1 surcharge that was already paid to the state.

The Council asked for staff time spent on these permits.

Shawna, approximately 1 hour to number and make copies, label, distribute, and scan copies of each permit.

#Of copies made 132, at \$.25 each, which would be \$33.00

Mary Lou – approximately 1 hour to enter all the permit information into the spreadsheet

Finance – approximately 1 1/2 hours to write up receipt, everything entered per permit, and then process the surcharge report.

Metro West Inspections does still charge us their fee (32% of the permit fee) for expired permits, so we will be paying them \$19.20 per permit, for a total of \$633.60.

If a refund is issued, Finance stated it will be approximately another 1 ½ hours of staff time to enter them as a vendor, and enter all of the permits and amounts.

Using the “labor” rate of \$45 per hour under Public Works, staff time was 5 hours, so \$225

Total payment received for the 33 permits: \$2,013.00

Surcharges paid to the state:	-\$ 33.00
Copies made	-\$ 33.00
Expired permit fee paid to Metro West	-\$633.60
Staff Time processing permits	-\$225.00

#### Recommendation

Staff recommends the city retains 75% of the building permit fees

- if we deduct all of the above costs before calculating the 75% - \$816.75 refund
- if we only deduct the surcharge costs before calculating the 75% - \$1,460.25 refund

Walker stated that he would hate to start a precedent to refund permit fees when a permit was expired. Building permits should not be applied for prior to the work being approved.

HALLIN MOVED TO DENY THE REQUEST FOR PERMIT REFUNDS. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

## 8. New Business

### 8.1. Accept Resignation of Finance Director Peters

Peters said she was not looking for other employment, she was contacted and it is a great opportunity that she cannot turn down. She promises to leave things in better shape.

HALLIN MOVED TO ACCEPT TRACY PETERS RESIGNATION. WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE 4:0 HALLIN, WALKER, REYNOLDS AND ZIMMER APPROVED, J GEROLD OPPOSED. THE MOTION CARRIED.

**8.2. Approve Job Description and Authorize Posting for a Finance/Human Resources Director**

J Gerold stated that the job description is almost identical to the previous one, they just added a few things that Peters had been doing. They added in some human resources, and took out any IT items.

J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE THE JOB DESCRIPTION AND AUTHORIZE POSTING THE POSITION. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8.3. Authorize Execution of Service Contract with T Peters for Financial Consultation**

McPherson reported that until a new Finance/Human Resources Director is hired, various financial tasks, in order to maintain separation of duties, will be absorbed by other staff, primarily the City Administrator. These financial tasks include entering receipts and deposits, processing the HSA information to Further for ACH withdrawal, and reconciliation. There will be questions.

In addition, the Finance Director does not have a signatory backup. Ms. Peters has offered to remain a signer on the checks (via use of a stamp), however, there needs to be a relationship between the City and Ms. Peters.

To have a resource to answer financial questions and resolve the issue of the signatory, staff has drafted and the Attorney has reviewed the attached Service Contract with Ms. Peters. She is not requesting compensation for the hours noted in the Contract.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize execution of the Service Contract with Ms. Peters. The Contract will remain in effect until a new staff person is on board.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE SERVICE CONTRACT WITH TRACY PETERS. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8.4. Resolution 22-12 Annual Council Designations**

McPherson reported that this is done yearly at the first meeting of the year. With Peters leaving, a minor change needed to be made to authorize McPherson to make financial decisions.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 22-12. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8.5. Princeton Wine & Spirits Grant Request, Princeton VFW Post 806**

McPherson advised that Randy Hatch was not able to come to the meeting tonight to discuss this request. She is recommending it be tabled this request until Randy Hatch can attend.

ZIMMER MOVED TO TABLE THIS WINE AND SPIRITS GRANT REQUEST. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8.6. Authorize Execution of Lease with Dudley Syrup Company to Tap Maple Trees, Riverside Terrace Park**

**Background:**

Public Works Director Gerold was approached by Jake Dudley of Dudley Syrup Company regarding the possibility of tapping the maple trees located in Riverside Terrace Park. After a site visit, the two agreed that there were sufficient trees to make a go of a commercial tapping operation.

**Analysis:**

Mr. Dudley provided a copy of a standard Sugar Bush lease (developed in Vermont) that is the standard in the industry. The lease was modified to better fit the conditions and reviewed by the City Attorney and the Renter. The Renter has agreed to the terms contained within the attached lease. He requested a 10-year term in order to receive a return on investment for the equipment and supplies he will need to purchase for tapping the trees in the park.

The Renter estimates that initially, there would be 1,000 taps. The money generated from the lease would be deposited into the city's shade tree fund and utilized for that program.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize execution of the lease and that the revenue generated be deposited into the shade tree fund and used for those purposes.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXECUTION OF THE LEASE WITH DUDLEY SYRUP COMPANY. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8.7. Bill List**

ZIMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE BILL LIST WHICH INCLUDES THE MANUAL CHECKS AS LISTED ON THE MANUAL BILL LIST FOR A TOTAL OF \$105,236.74 AND THE ITEMS LISTED ON THE LIQUOR BILL LIST AND GENERAL CITY BILL LIST WHICH WILL BE CHECKS 84414 TO 84466 FOR A TOTAL OF \$206,616.66. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8.8. City Administrator Bi-Weekly Report**

McPherson has the following observations and information to share from the last two weeks

### **Airport**

The deadline for Request for Qualifications for the Airport Planning and Engineering consultants was Fri-day, February 18 at 3:00 pm. Two submittals were received: Bollig Inc and KLJ. I will be sending them out to the Council and Airport Advisory Board for review and comment later this week with a decision planned for the March 10 City Council agenda.

### **Classification and Compensation Study**

The Job Analysis Questionnaires (JAQs) have been distributed to staff to complete. It is a challenging task for all those selected to complete them; but I believe that everyone is meeting the challenge. Interviews were originally set for March 7, but a family issue for the consultant came up, so they have been pushed back a week to March 14.

### **Grants**

Community Development Manager Brooks submitted an Aquatic Invasive Species grant application to help get rid of the invasive reeds at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. She is currently working with Public Works Director Gerold on a grant to purchase (hopefully) a cross-country ski trail groomer.

Still no word on the Federal EDA Grant. I did email Congressman Stauber's office last week to see if they could assist; I heard back from them as of the writing of this memo and they need two pieces of information and they will be able to hopefully move things along.

### **Personnel**

As noted in the agenda, the Finance/HR Director position has been posted as have the three interns. Finance Director Peters has been working with Technology Services Manager Yost to document the procedures of the various tasks that she completes in order to leave a road map for the staff that will be filling in in the interim and for the next Director.

I am making progress on the Personnel Manual. I am about one-third of the way in cutting and pasting the City's current manual language into the League's model manual. This will give us an opportunity to decide what to keep of each via a side-by-side comparison. I have already found some language in the League's version that our current manual does address. At a minimum, I believe that we should use the League's organizational format at a minimum since they keep it updated whenever Federal or State law changes; this will make keeping the City's current an easier task.

### **Redistricting**

The Court issued redistricting maps were issued February 15 and are attached for your information. The new map pits incumbent Republican representatives (Daudt and Erickson) and senators (Kiffmeyer and Matthews) against each other. Senator Kiffmeyer announced February 18 that she would not seek reelection in 2022 and endorsed Senator Matthews for Senate District 27. Administrator's Bi-Weekly Report February 22, 2022 Page 2

### **Technology Services**

Technology Services Manager Yost is continuing to work on consolidating the phone service and phone system vendors into two versus the four we have now across the various buildings. If successful, the year one savings should be around \$2,800 and going forward, the annual savings should be approximately \$4,200. In addition, there will be increased speeds for the

WWTP, a reduction in the number of phone lines needed, and a simplification in the billing process.

A second large project is the upgrade to the WWTP SCADA system. He has obtained a second quote for the work that is significantly under the CIP amount of \$167,000 and is pushing our current vendor to sharpen their pencils. He is also developing an option to break the project into a hardware update and then a soft-ware update, but only if needed. This project may get pushed into 2023; more to follow.

### Upcoming Meeting/Event Reminders

\* CGMC Legislative Action Day – March 2, 2022; registration is now open for those Councilors interested

#### 8.8.1 Identify Topics for March 3 Study Session

<i>Month/Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
March 3	Review of Open Meeting Law Goal/Priority Follow-up Franchise Fee
April 7	Joint Meeting with Airport Advisory Board
May 5	Joint Meeting with PUC (they agreed and set this as a special meeting)
June 2	
July 7	CIP Budget Review
August 4	Preliminary Budget Discussion
September 1	Preliminary Budget Discussion
October 6	
November 3	
December 1	Final Budget Review

McPherson stated that there is not nothing necessary to discuss at the Study Session Thursday, so the Council could cancel that meeting if they so choose.

ZIMMER MOVED TO CANCEL THE MARCH 3 STUDY SESSION. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### 9. Committee Reports

Butcher provided the Council an update on the PUC meeting that was held last night.

Zimmer reported that Brooks did a great job at the “Age Friendly Princeton” brainstorming session.

J Gerold advised that she attended the Chamber meeting and passed along the intern positions that the City has listed.



Hallin reported that the Chamber is also starting "Ladies Local" events which are slated for May 14, June 11, September 10, and November 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

**10. Adjournment**

ZIMMER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:03 PM. J GEROLD  
SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully Submitted,

ATTEST:

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Shawna Jenkins Tadych  
City Clerk

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Thom Walker,  
Mayor