

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL  
HELD ON JUNE 24, 2021 7:00 P.M.**

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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, Jules Zimmer and Jeff Reynolds. Others present: Administrator Michele McPherson, Finance Director Tracy Peters, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Liquor Store Manager Nancy Campbell, Fire Chief Ron Lawrence, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, and Attorney Damien Toven. Absent was Community Development Manager Stephanie Hillesheim

**AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS**

McPherson stated that staff has added an item under new Business regarding Renzo Vita and a Riebe Park Pollinator Garden.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE ADDITION TO NEW BUSINESS. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Council Meeting minutes of June 8, 2021
- B. Liquor Assistant Manager Dylan Donner Step 2 Increase Effective July 8, 2021
- C. Police Sergeant Ryan VanDenHeuvel Step 7 Increase Effective July 1, 2021
- D. Public Works GMII Adam Cook Step 3 Increase Effective July 9, 2021
- E. Finance Director Tracy Peters Step 5 Increase Effective June 4, 2021
- F. Planning Commission Minutes of May 17, 2021
- G. Knights of Columbus Gambling Permit for Raffle
- H. Christ Our Light Gambling Permit for Raffle - July 17, 2021
- I. Christ Our Light Gambling Permit for Raffle - September 19, 2021
- J. Princeton Public Utility Packet for June 23rd, 2021 meeting
- K. Bill List

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

Walker stated that starting at the next meeting, he would like to see the Bill list be under New Business. Staff will make that change.

**OPEN FORUM**

Jeri Bredemus at 902 3<sup>rd</sup> Street North said she is wondering about the ordinances regarding non-mowed properties. She had received a letter in the past about her property not being mowed. She is questioning why there are so many properties that have not been mowed and why the city is allowing that to happen.

Walker agreed that people should take care of their properties. J Gerold said staff may have already sent letters out to the owners of the properties she is concerned about.

Frederick added that there are currently 50 open cases for ordinance violations. The problem now is the courts are basically closed down, so it is harder to move things through the system. He suggested she call him tomorrow or Monday with the list of properties and he will look to see

if they are already on the list. City hall and the Police Department are battling these issues on a daily basis. Toven added that he believes most of the issues fall under Chapter 600. There have been citations issued, but those are greatly delayed with the courts right now.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Approve letter of support for the Highway 169 and CSAH 4 Grant Funding Request

McPherson reported that the Council approved a similar letter of support a few years ago. Staff received a request for another letter of support for the same project. Walker stated that this is a necessary project.

ZIMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HIGHWAY 169 AND THE CSAH 4 PROJECT. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Renzo Vita – Riebe Park Pollinator Garden

McPherson reported that Renzo Vita's Eagle Scout project was to create a Pollinator Garden. With some help from B Gerold, Public Works and many Volunteers, there is a Pollinator garden with 2000 plants and 2 bee hotels that were placed within the park.

Vita presented Walker with a check for \$890.42 to use towards the purchase of the plants used.

B. Public Hearing re: Abatement of Nuisance at 509 96<sup>th</sup> Ave North

Toven reported that Resolution 21-34 gives him the ability to order a direct abatement within 20 days. If not corrected, the City can get a court order to abate the nuisance, seek a judgement and assess the cleanup cost to the property.

The underlying goal is to obtain voluntary compliance. The problem is they have tried to get voluntary compliance on this property for years and have not been able to do. The property owners were sent a letter on June 4<sup>th</sup> that lists all of the code violations. This is one of a number of properties that staff is trying to get cleaned up. Again, due to Covid, the Court system has slowed the process down greatly.

J Gerold stated that this property has been out of hand for a long time, and she hopes staff can move quicker on these problem properties in the future. Frederick responded that he feels the ordinance should be looked at and amended if needed.

HALLIN MOVED TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:20PM. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Property owner Rory Clayson spoke in regard to the issues. There is an old alley that is half owned by him and half by his neighbor. The neighbors are blocking a portion of the alley, so he

cannot get back there to clean it up. He claimed the neighbors have unlicensed vehicles on their property and have threatened him in the past.

Toven responded that he does not know about the unlicensed vehicles or threats. The neighboring property may also be on the list of problem properties that staff is working on. In regard to the threats, he can contact the Police Department and have someone there to assist with the neighbor issues regarding the backyard. The focus is to get the property cleaned up. If the city has to hire someone to do it, they will be charged for the cleanup.

Clayson stated he is not saying the neighbors never let him back there, they have on some occasions. Some of the stuff was carried back there. He understands that it has been an issue for several years, but he thinks he deserves more than 20 days to clean up the property. He has been hauling out of the front yard for many days, even in this heat, but it is going to take him a little while to get everything removed.

Walker added that he cannot be running a recycling business in a residential district. He asked how much time he needs to get most of that cleaned up.

Clayson stated that they have made a lot of progress in the front, but were waiting for the backyard until this meeting due to the neighbor issues.

Frederick said that Clayson is talking about a property line dispute, but he cannot understand why he cannot get into his backyard. He told Clayson that he has been more than gracious in trying to work with him on cleaning up his property. J Gerold added that it seems like there is a lot of excuses, there is no reason for the property to look the way it does.

Clayson commented that except for this week, they have hauled stuff out of there almost every single day. J Gerold responded that the issue is he waited until he received the latest letter and notification of the public hearing. This has been going on for 4 years.

J Gerold asked how many loads has he removed from the property since June 4<sup>th</sup>. Clayson replied that he believes it to be about 15 loads removed since June 4<sup>th</sup>.

Walker would like this Resolution to be approved so Toven can enforce it when needed. Toven said if significant progress is made on the cleanup, he can delay the process a bit.

HALLIN MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:45PM. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 21-34, ORDERING THE ABATEMENT OF A PUBLIC NUISANCE AT 509 6<sup>TH</sup> AVE NORTH. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### C. Request to purchase Body Armor, CIP

Frederick advised that the Princeton Police Department has currently budgeted \$14,500.00 for body armor through the 2021 Capital Improvements Program. The current quote from Streicher's is \$16,050.68. The current body armor worn by the officers is expiring within the next few months and falls under the normal 5-year replacement plan with the department and the state.

He is asking for City Council approval to purchase body armor for 10 Princeton Officers under the state bid price. Once they receive the body armor, we will start the grant processes for approximately ½ the amount of the body armor through the state.

With the above recommended purchase and receiving the state grant, we will be under the budgeted amount for the 2021 CIP request. As a note, in 2016 we received \$5200.00 in vest reimbursement from the state.

A motion to approve the purchase of the body armor and to proceed with the application of the grant is recommended.

ZIMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE BODY ARMOR AND TO PROCEED WITH THE APPLICATION OF THE GRANT. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. Princeton Lion's Special Event Permit for Circus

McPherson reported that the Lion's have requested approval to hold a Circus at the County Fairgrounds. Staff has reviewed the application and it is approved pending contact information for Pete Kleingartner.

ZIMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE LION'S SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FOR A CIRCUS TO BE HELD AT THE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS ON JULY 30, 2021 PENDING THE RECEIPT OF CONTACT INFORMATION FROM PETE KLEINGARTNER. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

E. Award Contract Airport Taxiway Reconstruction and Medium Intensity Taxiway Lighting System Installation

McPherson advised that the bid opening for the above referenced project was held on Thursday, June 10, 2021. Seven (7) bids were received and none were rejected.

The bids received were as follows:

1. Knife River Corporation – North Central \$977,729.53
2. Kraemer Trucking & Excavating, Inc. \$992,760.46
3. North Valley, Inc. \$1,022,586.97
4. Minnesota Paving & Materials \$1,039,014.62
5. G Urban Companies, Inc. \$1,155,719.25
6. Duininck, Inc. \$1,194,520.31
7. J.R. Ferche, Inc. \$1,533,288.30

The Engineer's Opinion of Probable Cost was \$1,536,647.00

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal for the project is 5.48%. Knife River Corporation has identified a DBE utilization for the project of 5.66% which meets the project requirements. Knife River Corporation also provided the required Buy American supporting documentation. KLJ reviewed these documents and believes that Knife River Corporation met the requirements set forth in the Project Manual.

Taking all information above into consideration, KLJ recommends award of the low bid for the

Base Bid to Knife River Corporation. If the City agrees with this recommendation, please execute the following at your next board meeting:

- Approve award of the Base Bid to Knife River Corporation in the amount of \$977,729.53, contingent upon obtaining federal and state funding.
- Authorize a representative to sign the Notice of Award and Agreement.

Once the City has approved the award, KLJ will prepare the Notice of Award (NOA) for execution. The actual contract will not be presented to the City until the NOA has been signed by the Contractor. The Contractor will then prepare their payment and performance bonds, insurance certificates, other appropriate information as needed, and then KLJ will forward the contract package to the City for approval.

Walker asked if the city has ever had negative experience with Knife River. He thinks that should be something that is also looked at for every project. Reynolds said he spoke to the County and they have not had any issues with Knife River. B Gerold added that he spoke to some private businesses and they also had not had any issues with Knife River.

J Gerold asked about the lighting as she does not remember that being part of the project McPherson responded that it was in the project specifications. Due to the recently authorized CARES dollars, the Federally funded part of the project will be covered 100% now. Staff will get the breakdown to the Council.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE BID AND TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIES UNANIMOUSLY.

F. Resolution 21-35 – Approve Mutual Aid Agreement with the City of Isanti

McPherson advised that we have a similar agreement with the counties and other municipalities. This is the same as the previous Isanti agreement, with the exception of an increase to the Officer per hour rate, which staff determined.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF ISANTI. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

G. Resolution 21-33 – Approve a Lot Split located at 307 and 309<sup>th</sup> Ave North

McPherson advised that Steven Andersen, applicant has submitted a Lot Split application for the property located at 307 & 309 13th Avenue North. The legal description of this site is: Lot 1, Block 1, Sullivan Estates, according to the plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the County Recorder, Mille Lacs County, Minnesota, City of Princeton. Property Identification Number: #24-799-0010

ZONING

The property site is located in the R-2 Residential Zoning District. The Zoning Ordinance states for a permitted use in the R-2 District;

- \* Two-family dwellings
- \* Conversion of single-family structures to a two-family unit when each unit contains 800

- square feet of floor area or more
- \* Twin home
- \* Accessory buildings not exceeding 800 square feet related to the above principal use.

The twin home yard requirements for R-2 District;

- \* Lot area minimum square feet for Twin Home - 6,000
- \* Lot width minimum feet -40 feet
- \* Maximum lot coverage - 30%
- \* Front yard minimum setback (living area) 20 feet
- \* Side yard minimum setback (living area) 10 feet
- \* Street side yard minimum setback - 20 feet (The street north of the site is vacated)
- \* Rear yard minimum setback- 30 feet

#### PROPOSAL

This site currently has a twin home on it that was built in 2003. The current owner is requesting a lot split so each unit would have its own property identification number and can be sold individually in the future. The site is a rental property currently.

With the lot split, Parcel A description would be the north 59.95 feet of Lot 1, Block 1, Sullivan Estates, Mille Lacs County, Minnesota, resulting in 8,993 square feet and;

Parcel B description would be that part of Lot 1, Block 1, Sullivan Estates, Mille Lacs County, Minnesota, which lies South of the North 59.95 feet of said Lot 1, resulting in 8,789 square feet.

The proposed lot split appears to meet the standards for the Zoning Ordinance.

#### CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission held a public hearing for the lot split at their June 21st, 2021 meeting. There were no responses from property owners that had received the notice 350 feet from the site. The Planning Commission supported the Lot Split and moved to forward the recommendation for approval to the City Council for their review at their June 24th, 2021 meeting.

#### CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Staff would recommend approval of the lot split at 307 & 309 13th Avenue North, Resolution #21-33 with the following conditions:

1. Per Mille Lacs County recording requirements, the applicant will need to provide a Deed that will accompany the Lot Split Resolution, large survey, along with property taxes paid in full.

WALKER MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION APPROVING A LOT SPLIT AT 307 AND 309<sup>TH</sup> AVE NORTH WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIOIN:

1. PER MILLE LACS COUNTY RECORDING REQUIREMENTS, THE APPLICANT WILL NEED TO PROVIDE A DEED THAT WILL ACCOMPANY THE LOT SPLIT RESOLUTION, LARGE SURVEY, ALONG WITH PROPERTY TAXES PAID IN FULL. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### H. City Administrator Bi-Weekly Report

McPherson reported that she has the following observations and information to share from the last two weeks:

##### **Airport**

The bid opening for the taxiway project occurred June 10. As the Council is aware, the bids were very favorable.

I met with KLJ to review the current CIP for the airport in preparation for the July 1 joint meeting with the Airport Advisory Board. There were questions requiring a historical perspective, so I followed up with Public Works Director Gerold for additional insight on some of the items.

A new roof will be or was installed on the AD Building. It is steel, so it should have a long shelf life.

We received notice from MNDOT Aeronautics that all state payments will be put on hold if the government shuts down July 1 due to lack of legislative action. This will impact our standard operations and maintenance reimbursements should we need to submit any. In addition, all work activity under a state contract must also be suspended.

##### **Development Projects**

###### Sherburne Lakes

Staff met with Todd Olin, Landform and the Titcombs regarding the Sherburne Lakes 55+ residential project to go over their request to waive fees and other questions that they had regarding development. Staff is still waiting for information from Mr. Olin before further discussions with PUC in order to provide more answers to their questions.

###### Residential Development

We met June 8 with our residential developer to discuss how to fund the infrastructure extensions that are needed. They have another property they are working to develop in addition to the original parcels under discussion. Information was provided and the ball is now in their court as they wait for the property owner to petition for annexation.

##### **Finance**

We are meeting with the Auditors June 24 to review the results of the audit. Preliminary indications are that there will be no new significant findings other than their annual concerns regarding separation of duties, etc. The audit results will be formally presented to the City Council on July 8, assuming the schedule holds.

###### American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds

We have submitted our request through the State of Minnesota Office of Management and Budget for our ARP funds. Staff is currently submitting to me a list of what they feel are eligible purchases and the Department Heads will prioritize and present a recommendation to the City Council at a future meeting. We will receive 50 percent of the money in 2021 and the remainder in 2022, but the funds do not need to be spent until 2024.

##### **Public Safety**

The meeting with Mille Lacs County regarding the radio simulcast system was held June 8. The grant that we thought we were going to submit July 1 is not going to happen because the state

has changed its funding philosophy. The first grant that we are now eligible for does not open until January 2022 which may further delay the project.

We are looking at other sources of funding, including the County's ARP funding or financing the equipment purchase. In addition, we will be drafting a letter to the State on the need to fund this project.

### **Infrastructure**

County Road 4/7th Avenue North

Staff, including those from PUC, met with the County Engineer, Neal Knopik on June 9 to discuss the County Road 4/7th Avenue project. It was a *very* short meeting as we were informed that the project is a mill and overlay, not a reconstruction as everyone had been led to believe. We are reconvening as a staff in the next week or two to look at what needs to be done and how to pay for it.

### **Upcoming Meeting/Event Reminders**

- June 24 – Bill Siercks Memorial at Princeton Speedway (Mille Lacs County Fairgrounds). This is part of a 4-day dirt track event occurring at three different tracks. There are 200 registered cars from all over the country and there could be an additional 100 coming to participate. Races will start at 6:00 pm and will extend past curfew. There will be *no* races July 2.
- July 1 – Study Session, Joint Meeting with the Airport Advisory Board
- July 4 – Free Family Fun at the Fairgrounds, Noon to 10 pm, Fireworks following

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

McPherson reported on the PUC meeting. They have received another delivery of the new meters. There are at about 81% on the electric conversation, and 29% on water meters. The water meters have been on backorder, but they are hoping to get another delivery of them in August.

Butcher was able to negotiate a territory change with East Central Energy for the new Business Park land. Their audit is complete, but Chair Greg Anderson was not in attendance, so their Audit presentation will be in July. They have also approved going to a credit check process for new customers, instead of deposits. They will be working on creating policies to cover that. They will be using the same company collections.

They approved a \$1000 donation for fireworks, approve an annual hydrant fee government or nonprofit entities that use a hydrant. They also adopted an updated seasonal water shut off policy.

They will be doing something similar to the City's Wine and Spirits Grant, with an amount set per year and they will be working on an application.

J Gerold questioned if the 5-person board discussion has come up. McPherson said there have been some discussions, but they want to put some language together and discuss it. It has not been a formal item on an agenda.

J Gerold asked about the PILOT discussions. Zimmer replied that Chairman Hanson has been out of town all of June, so they have not met recently. However, McPherson and Butcher have been compiling information. They plan on meeting in July.

Hallin wanted clarification on the new credit check. She asked if an applicant had favorable credit, would that mean they would not be required to pay a deposit. McPherson responded that was correct. It is a new method for them, and it is a "soft check" so it is a quick response and will not affect their credit scores.

Hallin reported on the Chamber of Commerce meeting. Their Rum River Festival was very successful. The Golf Tournament is planned for July 21<sup>st</sup>, and instead of a Chili Fest, they are planning it as the "October Feast" which will include Food Trucks.

Hallin advised that the East Central Cable Commission's next meeting is in September. There have not been many changes, but they are proposing the Quarterly Franchise Fees be changed to twice a year.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business:

WALKER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:22PM. ZIMMER 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