

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON  
MARCH 23, 2023, 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, Jack Edmonds, and Jeff Reynolds. Others present: City Administrator Michele McPherson, Community Developer Planner Stacy Marquardt, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Fire Chief Ron Lawrence, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Technology Services Manager Ed Yost, Liquor Store Manager Dylan Donner, Attorney Damien Toven. Absent was Public Utility Manager Keith Butcher.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Agenda Additions / Deletions**

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**4. Consent Agenda**

- 4.1. Approval of City Council Minutes of March 9, 2023
- 4.2. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2023
- 4.3. EDA Meeting Minutes February 16, 2023
- 4.4. Fire Advisory Board Minutes
- 4.5. Airport Board Meeting Minutes of February 6, 2023
- 4.6. Princeton Public Utilities Commission Agenda Packet for March 22, 2023, Meeting
- 4.7. Chamber of Commerce - Gambling permit for Rum River Festival Raffle
- 4.8. Approve advertising for 2023 Sealcoating Bids
- 4.9. Authorize Purchase of Tank Level Sensors - Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 4.10. Police 2023 Capital Improvement Plan Purchase Requests
  - 4.10.1. Digital App Recorder for Mobile Phones
  - 4.10.2. Suppressors and Equipment
- 4.11. Authorize 2023 CIP Purchase - Replacement Truck for Sewer Maintenance
- 4.12. Crystal Cabinets Surrey Bike Storage Rental Amendment
- 4.13. Read-A-Thon Thank you.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. REYNOLDS 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**

**7. New Business**

- 7.1. Resolution 23-16 Lucille Decker 100th Birthday Proclamation

Jenkins stated that James Decker contacted her a few weeks ago to ask if we could recognize Lucille Decker's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday. A copy of the signed resolution was provided to Mr. Decker.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-16. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- 7.2. Resolution 23-15 - Accept Donation from Princeton Lions for Surrey Bike Building

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-15. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- 7.3. Resolution 23-19 - Accept Donation from Crystal Cabinets for Age Friendly

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-19. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **7.4. Princeton Ambassadors Wine and Spirits Grant Request**

Kayla Siercks spoke about the Ambassadors program and how many events they attend throughout the year. Reynolds asked approximately how many parades they are in. Siercks responded that they are in about 30 parades each year.

Edmonds added that they are very active in the community. McPherson stated from a Fair perspective it is a great program. Reynolds agreed and said that they are the face of Princeton.

J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE THE WINE AND SPIRITS GRANT REQUEST FOR \$2000 FROM THE PRINCETON AMBASSADORS. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **7.5. Resolution 23-17 - Job Creation Fund Application with Elemet Group, Inc**

Marquardt reported Elemet Group, LLC intends to submit an application for a Job Creation Fund to the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development. They are requesting a resolution in support of the application.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-17. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **7.6. Resolution 23-18 Amending the 2023 Capital Improvement Budget and Authorizing Purchase of a Fire Truck**

McPherson reported that the 2023 Capital Improvement Budget for the Fire Department did not include the purchase of a truck. The long-range CIP budget forecast includes a \$1,000,000 expenditure in 2028 for the replacement of Engine #8.

The Truck Committee has found a Tender to replace Tender #2 at the Wyanett Station. Tender #2 would then be sold with the proceeds to be returned to the Truck Replacement Reserve Fund. This proposed purchase is part of the overall truck replacement plan that was developed and approved in 2019.

The truck committee has done extensive research on this truck purchase and with the current economy, the truck they have located is new and available immediately. The truck committee feels this is the time to purchase this truck as the prices have and will continue to rise.

The cost of the tender is \$372,563.00. There is just under \$343,000 in the Truck Replacement Reserve Fund and another \$365,400.00 in the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund to purchase the tender. However, the Council must approve a resolution amending the 2023 CIP and authorize the expenditure with an inter-fund transfer from the Equipment Reserve Fund to the Truck Replacement Reserve Fund.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Resolution 23-18 which:

1. Amends the 2023 CIP to include purchase of a truck for the Fire Department.
2. Authorizes purchase of the truck in the amount of \$373,000; and
3. Authorizes an inter-fund transfer of \$30,000 from the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund to the Truck Replacement Reserve Fund to make up the difference.

The Contract Pricing Sheet with the details was provided to the Council.

Townships were charged a portion of the \$1,000,000 truck fund, and several paid the amount in full. Spencer Brook is still paying for their portion on an annual basis.

J Gerold wanted to clarify that this purchase will deplete the truck fund. Lawrence confirmed that was correct.

McPherson stated that when Engine #1 is sold, the proceeds will go into the truck fund. If the Department finds additional surplus equipment to sell, it could come before the Council for approval. At that time, the Council could request that those funds be put into the truck fund as well.

Walker asked if there are other trucks on the schedule for the next seven years. Lawrence said they are looking into the future needs for the department.

J Gerold asked what other trucks need replacement. Jerry Rud responded that the next one in the order is Engine #5, which was built in 1992. They are all near the end of their service life, so they are working on a future replacement schedule.

McPherson added that the Truck Committee will be looking at these closely and will recommend additions to the CIP as needed.

**EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 23-18. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **7.7. Authorize Hiring Two (2) Additional Firefighters**

Lawrence asked for Council permission to hire two additional firefighters. This would put the Department over the allotted 40 firefighters to 41. With two expected retirements coming up this summer and fall, the department will be back under the 40 allotment.

Edmonds asked what was the time frame from hiring to fully trained. Lawrence responded it is three to four months to get through the hiring process, and then the firefighters are on probationary status for about a year on average. He does not see hiring any additional firefighters for a while.

J Gerold added that she had talked to Lawrence about this as she had a few concerns. However, she is aware that some don't make it through the training, some quit, some take medical leave, etc so she is in agreement of hiring two additional firefighters.

**J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF TWO ADDITIONAL FIREFIGHTERS. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **7.8. Rum River Festival Special Event Permit**

Chamber Director Kim Young has submitted a special event permit for the Rum River Festival parade. Staff has reviewed and approved the request. The Mille Lacs County road closure request and resolution will be on the next agenda for Council approval.

**EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FOR RUM RIVER FESTIVAL. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **7.9. Bill List**

**HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 20 AND 21, 2023 CHECK REGISTERS CONTAINING CHECKS 86298 TO 86361 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$428,493.70, AND THE PAYROLL ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS AS NOTED ON THE PAY PERIOD 6 TRANSMITTAL REGISTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$77,867.29 AND PAY PERIOD 6 CHECK REGISTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$184,431.00 (EQUALS THE AMOUNT OF CHECK 86299). J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **7.10. City Administrator Bi-Weekly Report**

McPherson had the following observations and information to share from the last update:

##### **Airport**

The Joint Planning Board was unable to conduct the scheduled public hearing regarding the amendment to the Airport Ordinance due to the lack of a quorum. The meeting will be rescheduled

and affected parties will be re-noticed. This delay actually works in our favor as MNDOT was able to review the changes and provide two additional changes that need to be made due to outdated language.

There is a vacancy on the Airport Advisory Board, so any assistance in recruitment would be fantastic.

### **Development**

In the past two weeks, staff has met with Eldon Johnson and Rick Schwartz on their potential development projects.

Staff expects to see concept plans for Charlie Bravo and the next phase of the Briggs project very soon.

### **Finance**

Staff is starting to compile the needed information for the 2022 audit. Abdo will be pulling trial balances this week and Smith-Schafer has scheduled field work for the week of April 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Infrastructure**

Advertisement for bids for the Business Park infrastructure have been sent to the local paper and the relevant professional publications. McPherson has been working with George Eilertson of Northland Securities on a plan to finance the improvements.

The draft feasibility study for 7th Avenue/CSAH 4 has been sent to the Mille Lacs County Engineer for review and comment.

### **Personnel**

Work continues on the Personnel Manual. The work is progressing nicely. The opening for a Police Officer closes March 24 at 3:00 pm.

### **Legislative Monitoring**

McPherson is monitoring, with help from CGMC and LMC various legislative topics. Of interest:

- *Bill to Address Public Safety PTSD (House File 1234, Senate File 1959)*; requires treatment for a mental injury prior to filing for a duty disability, keeps employees on payroll while receiving treatment, financial support to backfill positions, fully reimburses employers for health insurance provide the employer has implemented mental health injury prevention measures, requires preservice training to prepare staff for stressful events and to teach coping mechanisms. This bill passed out of three House committees on March 9, 14 and 16 respectively. The next stope is the House Ways and Means Committee. It was to be heard in a Senate committee on March 20. It will also need to be heard in the Joint House and Senate Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement which vets all bills that impact public pension benefits and plans.
- *Earned Sick and Safe Time (House File 19, Senate File 34)*; requires employers to provide on hour of paid sick and safe time for every 30 hours worked. This covers all employees including part-time and seasonal, working 80 hours in a year for the employer. The bill was passed in the House on February 16. In the Senate it was passed out of the Human Services Committee and re-referred to the Finance Committee
- *Creation of Street Improvement Districts (House File 1183, Senate File 1627)*; allows cities to create street improvement districts for the purpose of construction and reconstruction of streets and related components (minus underground utilities). Cities would be allowed to impose a street improvement fee after providing public notice and holding a public hearing. This bill was

pulled from receiving a hearing in committee. Multiple organizations have signed on to oppose this bill. It is unlikely to be resurrected this session.

- *Competing Bonding Bills*; two bills have been unveiled, a General Obligation bonding bill totaling \$1.5 billion and a “cash only” bill of \$392 million. The House passed the bonding bill, but the Senate has not.
- *Local Government Aid Increase (House File 1377, Senate File 1828)*; increases the appropriation for local government aid and modifies the calculation for distribution. The House referred it to the Taxes Committee and the Chair referred it to the Property Tax Division. The Senate has referred it to the Taxes Committee. There has been no additional action since the February 21 update.
- *Indigenous Peoples Day (House File 211, Senate File 104)*; eliminates and replaces Columbus Day, requires observance where no public business could be conducted on the second Monday in October. If passed, it would become effective for 2023. There has been no further action on the bill since the last update.

In the CGMC Brief, there is a list of other “bills to watch” listed in the February 16 edition.

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

- March 28 – 1-2 pm, Ribbon Cutting, Crystal Family Care Clinic; 12513 318th Avenue.
- March 30 – 10 am, Ribbon Cutting, Minnco Credit Union; 1912 5th Street North

#### **8. Committee Reports**

J Gerold reported on the Chamber meeting. They are doing a lot of planning for the Rum River Festival. So far, there are 30 parade entries and 2 bands. There is now a monthly calendar of events, and the podcasts have started. She is sitting on the Tourism committee, which meets quarterly.

Edmonds reported on the PUC meeting. They approved a couple of bids, with both coming in under the engineer’s estimates. Princeton Utilities will be doing to be doing tours again in April.

#### **Adjournment**

HALLIN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:59 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