

**MINUTES OF A STUDY SESSION OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL  
HELD ON JANUARY 6, 2022 4:30 P.M.**

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**1. Call To Order / Roll Call**

Mayor Thom Walker called the meeting to order. Council members present were Vicki Hallin, Jenny Gerold, Jules Zimmer and Jeff Reynolds. Staff present, Administrator Michele McPherson, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Community Development Manager Heather Brooks, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Fire Chief Ron Lawrence, and Clerk Shawna Jenkins. Absent was Finance Director Tracy Peters.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Sherburne County Market Values**

Presenter: Michelle Moen, Sherburne County Assessor

Moen reported on the market trends County Wide.

The sales study period looks at sales that occurred between October 2020 and September 2021. Not all sales are representative of the market. Some sales, such as foreclosures, sales between relatives, or sales where the seller or buyers are acting under undue duress are not considered open-market, arm's length transactions are not used in sales ration studies, nor are they used as comparable sales in estimating the value of similar properties.

Over the past year the real estate market value in Sherburne County has seen significant gains, greater than experienced in recent history. She said they are seeing an 18 – 25% increase in residential / seasonal depending on the jurisdiction.

**4. Tax Abatement for Residential Development**

Presenter: Eldon Johnson, Scott Moeller

Scott Moller and Eldon Johnson are close to agreement with the School District to purchase 50 acres north of the middle school. They have a preliminary concept plan for 78 new homes and presented to the Park Board on January 24 for their input on the proposed park amenities.

Analysis:

In order to facilitate this development, they would like assistance in the form of tax abatement for the infrastructure. Preliminary discussions with the developer indicated that they would need to carry the debt for the infrastructure.

Recommendation:

Moller and Johnson will be present to present the concept plan and make their request. The Council is asked for consensus on the use of tax abatement for this project.

Walker said this concept is great, and understands the tax abatement request. All the Councilors were excited about the proposed development and were in favor of a Tax Abatement.

**5. City Council Goal Setting, Review of 2022 Workplan Items**

McPherson reported that the Mayor requested an opportunity to review past goals and to set new priorities.

The Workplan and Tentative Schedule contains a list of ongoing projects, topics expressed by either Council or staff, and needs identified by the Administrator over the last almost year. It is by no means all-encompassing and does not include all of the projects that other departments may be undertaking in 2022. In addition, the schedule is a best estimation, unless a schedule was noted, as to when a project may or should commence.

Recommendation:

The Council is asked to review the attachments and provide direction as to:

- Projects or goals that were overlooked
- Priority/timing of projects

J Gerold thinks the walking bridge between Riverside and Riebe, she doesn't know if that is money well spent. She can see pros and cons; she doesn't think that is money well spent. We have spent a lot of money in the parks recently, and she would like to see some other things get done.

Walker agrees, and from a Police Perspective, a walking bridge may be difficult. He doesn't see the downside of taking it off. Zimmer said it would be a nice thing, if there were grant funds available. It was one of those things that came along with the franchise fee discussions.

B Gerold said a few administrators ago, he was sent a link for a free bridge that we could have had, we would have just needed to move it. It was thought, if our park was designated as a regional park, it would be nice to have it on the plan.

McPherson said they could set short-, mid- and long-term goals.

J Gerold most of her items are on the list or in process. Her number one thing to see done is the infrastructure plan, and her number 2 would be the Business Park. Her third is to look for ways to generate revenues. One way would be to possibly sell the Flight Service Station building. We are working on increasing the population and added that she would like to review rates and fees more often than is currently been done. She would like to see the personnel policy update be completed soon. She would like to look at using the franchise fees for another area when it comes due for review, and to look into a lodging tax.

Walker would to utilize the transportation plan and street improvement plan to identify street projects that need to be done. To identify additional acreage for commercial and industrial lots, and incentivize residential development, which the Council was in agreement with about the project discussed earlier.

Walker asked what the status is on the drug task force. Frederick would love to continue with that program.

Walker said he would also like to revisit USDP using our wastewater plant. We currently have a lot of capacity, but thinks it could be revisited as an increase revenue.

Walker also mentioned starting discussions on annexation, squaring off the city boundary, and look at orderly annexation.

Zimmer said his number one goal is to get the Simulcast system up and going. We are really close to getting that completed. He thinks staff has hands full with all the previous goals, and there are a lot of things falling into the plan. He would like to see some development in Rivertown Crossing. McPherson responded that if someone is looking for commercial land, they do send them that direction. Zimmer would also like to discuss the lodging tax.

Hallin agrees with everyone who has spoken regarding the goals. The first and foremost goal was always to get 21st Ave through, and that is happening. She added that Rivertown Crossing has such a great visible area from both Hwy 169 and Hwy 95, she is surprised that there are lots still available. Senior Housing and 55+ housing options is important to her as well and imperative for the Community. We think we have all our bases covers.

Reynolds mentioned working on funding sources for the transportation issues and infrastructure.

Walker would like to see an end of year budget status report, see where the departments are at, and CIP Planning.

PUC Manager Keith Butcher mentioned the Wellhead protection plan they are working on and would like the city to be involved as well.

**6. Adjournment, there being no further business:**

ZIMMER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:07PM. 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