

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON
APRIL 25, 2023, 7:00 P.M.**

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

Mayor Thom Walker called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Councilors present were Vicki Hallin, Jack Edmonds and Jeff Reynolds. Others present: City Administrator Michele McPherson, Community Developer Planner Stacy Marquardt, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Attorney Damien Toven, and Liquor Store Manager Dylan Donner. Absent was Councilor Jenny Reynolds, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Police Chief Todd Frederick, PUC Manager Keith Butcher.

Attending online was Technology Services Manager Ed Yost.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Mille Lacs County Board of Appeal and Equalization

Dave Vigdal spoke to the Council about Gage Keegan’s property, which is the new Maytag Laundromat (PID 24-750-0110). Keegan feels his lot is valued too high at \$224,500, as he purchased the lot at \$150,000. The lot he purchased was on the market for a thousand days at \$250,000 and was never sold.

Walker stated he is not comfortable changing the value. Reynolds asked for clarification that there the options were to lower the value, keep it the same, or send it on to the county. Vigdal responded that was correct.

HALLIN MOVED TO KEEP THE VALUE THE SAME AND ALLOW THE OWNER TO BRING THE REQUEST TO THE COUNTY BOARD. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Assessor Dave Vigdal asked the Council to make changes to a couple of properties that were recently annexed into the City.

24-021-4800 – Current land value was \$84,200 with the building at \$194,000, for a total current value of \$278,200. His recommendation is to lower the land value to \$66,700, and increase the building slightly to \$198,600, lowering the overall value to \$265,300.

24-519-0020 - Current land value was \$32,000, and he recommends lowering that to \$31,200.

24-515-0020 - Current land value was \$69,000 with the building at \$312,900, for a total current value of \$381,900. His recommendation is to lower the land value to \$65,900 and increase the building to \$326,600.

REYNOLDS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDED VALUES ON PID’S 24-021-4800, 24-515-0020, AND 24-519-0020. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REYNOLDS MOVED TO CLOSE THE MILLE LACS BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION MEETING AT 7:40PM. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Agenda Additions / Deletions

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

5. Consent Agenda

- 5.1. Approval of City Council Minutes of April 11th, 2024
- 5.2. Public Works General Maintenance II Kris Macko Step Increase effective 5-2-24.
- 5.3. Police Secretary Kathy Lewis Step Increase effective 5-1-24.
- 5.4. Approval to Hire Emma Flaten as the Marketing Intern Effective May 6th, 2024.
- 5.5. Approval to Hire Abby Benson as the Splash Park Intern Effective May 15th, 2024.
- 5.6. Approve Fireworks Display by Minnesota Pyrotechnics for dirty Rotten Bikers Event May 4th, 2024
- Pending Background Check
- 5.7. Approve Fireworks Display for J & M Displays for July 4th, 2024 - Pending Background Check
- 5.8. Approve Gambling Permit for Princeton Lion's Raffle for June 9th, 2024.
- 5.9. Approval of the SCDP Loan Application - Andrea Provo & Wayne Conelius (Provo Management)
\$25,000
- 5.10. Letter of Support for the GNRT Funding Application
- 5.11. Authorize Application to MN DNR Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program
- 5.12. Resolution 24-19 Authorizing Assignment of TIF 9-4 Agreement and Note

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. EDMONDS 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.*

Ken Murray stated that he was recently at the MN Association of Townships training, and everyone was talking about the Baldwin Incorporation request that Princeton was involved in.

7. Old Business

7.1. Mayor Walker - Discuss Mr. Briggs Park Dedication Fees

Marquardt reported that in August 2023, the Park Board considered this project and determined, based on the number of units at that time (62 and 85), that they would accept \$264,600, which is the full amount at \$1800/unit. Mr. Briggs was informed of this amount after the August meeting; his Engineer provided written comment to Community Development Specialist DeWitt in September 2023 that Mr. Briggs may request a reduction in the fee since they had increased significantly. In the meantime, Mr. Briggs raised his unit numbers to 66 and 100. Because the Park Board did not reduce the park dedication fee amount, Staff did not send it back to the Park Board and told Mr. Briggs the new dollar amount with the increased units would be \$298,800. This was also communicated as part of his TIF agreement.

At the March 25th Park Board meeting Mr. Briggs petitioned the Park Board to reduce his park dedication fees. The Park Board approved allowing the dollar amount to remain at \$264,600 even though the unit count increased, this is a \$34,200 reduction of what he would currently be charged for the increased number of units, thus approving a reduction.

On March 28th the City Council approved the Park Boards recommendation to approve the park dedication fee for Phase 3 and Phase 4 in the amount of \$264,600 which is a \$34,200 reduction of what he would now be charged for the increased number of units:

Old Phase 3 (62 units): \$111,600 Actual Phase 3 (66 units): \$118,800
Old Phase 4 (85 units): \$153,000 Actual Phase 4 (100 units): \$180,000
Old Total (147 units): \$264,600 Actual as Built Total (166 units): \$298,800

Mayor Walker would like to reopen the discussion. Mr. Briggs would like to reduce the dollar amount to \$900 a unit for Phase 3 and have it remain at \$1800 a unit for Phase 4 and any subsequent Phases.

However, staff wants to note they are proposing to calculate this off the already approved and reduced rate of \$264,600 and not the actual rate of \$298,800.

Staff believes this is what they are looking at:

Currently \$264,600 / 166 units = \$1593.98 per unit is essentially what has been approved. Mr. Briggs would like to reduce 66 (or Phase 3) of those units to \$900 so the new park dedication fee would be \$239,400.

New equation:

66 units x \$900 = \$59,400 and 100 units x \$1,800 = \$180,000

Total park dedication fee \$239,400 / 166 units = \$1442.17 per unit.

WALKER MOVED TO RECONSIDER THE PARK DEDICATION FEES FOR PHASES THREE AND FOUR. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

McPherson suggested that the motion specify the amount of \$59,400 for Phase Three, and in the amount of \$180,000 for Phase Four, which will reflect the \$900 fee per door in Phase Three, and the \$1,800 fee per door for Phase Four.

REYNOLDS MOVED TO APPROVE THE REDUCED PARK FEE DEDICATION OF \$59,400 FOR PHASE THREE, WHICH EQUATES TO \$900 PER DOOR AND \$180,000 FOR PHASE FOUR, WHICH EQUATES TO \$1,800 PER DOOR. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE 3:0:1, REYNOLDS, EDMONDS AND HALLIN IN FAVOR, WALKER OBSTAINED. THE MOTION CARRIED.

7.2. Fire Billing

McPherson has provided significant information regarding the fire billing issues over the last several Council meetings. At the April 11, 2024, meeting, the issue was nearing a conclusion, apart from one last check with Wyanett resident Mellgren.

The numbers have now been verified to the best of everyone's abilities. The refunds were calculated based on using the State's final net capacity numbers.

Conclusion:

Per the April 11 memo, the following actions should be taken:

Wyanett:

2022: forgo collection on the outstanding amount of \$10,999.00 (includes voiding an invoice for an under charge
provide an additional refund of \$1,781.00.
2019: provide a refund of \$7,078.00
Total: \$8,859.00

Spencer Brook:

2022: provide a refund of \$9,748.00

However, when comparing the other Township billings for 2021, 2020, and 2019, there are under and overcharges across those three years. To be fair and consistent, the remaining townships should be treated the same. The resulting amounts would be:

<u>Blue Hill:</u>	\$2,578.00 refund
<u>Bogus Brook:</u>	No refund, they have a total undercharge of \$1,044.00.
<u>Greenbush:</u>	\$2,428.00 refund
<u>Princeton:</u>	\$9,850.00 refund
<u>Spencer Brook:</u>	\$4,371.00 refund

As stated at the April 11th meeting, the 2024 billing can be reduced to reflect the above amounts.

As to the truck bill overpayment by Wyanett, the City did not budget for this in 2024. We are in the midst of the audit, so all fund adjustments have not been completed. The purchase of the new Tender 2 expended all funds available in the truck fund and required a transfer from the Fire Equipment Reserve. Staff recommends that the Council budget repayment of the overage to Wyanett in the 2025 Unallocated department and make the payment in January 2025. This keeps the operating and capital payments “clean” and does not impact the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund.

Staff recommends refunding the above overbilling amounts to all Townships on the 2024 billing and budgeting for the truck fund overpayment in 2025 in the Unallocated department.

WALKER MOVED TO REFUND THE OVERBILLING AMOUNTS TO ALL TOWNSHIPS ON THE 2024 BILLING AND BUDGETING FOR THE TRUCK FUND OVERPAYMENT IN 2025 TO THE UNALLOCATED DEPARTMENT. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. New Business

8.1. Purchase of Thermal Imaging Cameral

The PFRD owns and operates, when needed, two Thermal Imaging Cameras (TIC). One of the TICS has a battery that no longer holds a charge for more than two minutes and the batteries can no longer be obtained.

The Fire Executive Board decided to pursue a grant application through East Central Energy's Operation Round Up for the cost of the TIC (\$8,000). Staff is pleased to announce that a donation of \$3,000 has been awarded.

The TIC was not originally identified as a needed CIP purchase when preparing the 2024 budget. The \$20,000 budget for disposal of the Class B fire-fighting foam. The disposal cost ended up being one-fourth the estimated amount.

Staff prepared a resolution amending the 2024 CIP to add the TIC and to authorize use of the unutilized funds for the balance of the amount. The funds will come from the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Resolutions 24-17 and 24-18 accepting the donation and amending the 2024 CIP/authorizing the purchase of the new TIC for the PFRD.

8.1.1. Resolution 24-17 Acknowledging Donation from East Central Energy Operation Round Up

EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-17. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.1.2. Resolution 24-18 Amending the 2024 CIP and Authorizing the Purchase

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-18. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.2. Fire Chief Hiring

McPherson reported that at the April 11 meeting, the City Council approved the process for hiring the next PFRD Fire Chief.

Panel B is filled.

Panel A is filled with the exception of the City Council position. Councilor Gerold has recused herself from the process and the Mayor is out of town May 4, the date that Panel A's interviews are scheduled.

In addition, to the process approval, the Council set the number of candidates to move from Panel A to Panel B. McPherson said she was asked if there is an additional candidate that Panel A would like to move forward because they are very close to the remaining candidates, if the Council is supportive of moving four candidates to Panel B.

PFRD members have provided questions that they would like to see asked. City Attorney Toven and McPherson will prepare the remaining questions.

The City Council is asked to:

1. Identify the Council's representative on Panel A. Interviews on May 4 will be an all-day affair starting with Panel members arriving at 8:30 am, lunch provided and the final interview at 3:00 pm.
2. Indicate that moving four applicants to Panel B, if the circumstances arise, is supported.

Edmonds said he would be available to be on Panel A.

The Council consensus was to move up to four applicants to the second interview if applicable.

8.3. Bill List

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 25, 2024, CHECK REGISTER CONTAINING CHECKS 88156 TO 88211 AND ACH PAYMENT 425241 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$304,357.09, AND THE PAYROLL ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS AS NOTED ON THE PAY PERIOD 8 TRANSMITTAL REGISTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$83,471.06 AND PAY PERIOD 8 CHECK REGISTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$198,386.40, INCLUDING CHECKS 88154 AND 88155. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.4. City Administrator Bi-Weekly Report

McPherson had the following observations and information to share from the last update on March 26, 2024:

Airport

A vacancy exists on the Board.

The May 6 Airport Advisory Board meeting is being rescheduled to May 14, 2024. Chair Stoeckel is out of town May 3 to 13, 2024.

Baldwin Township

Our legal brief was submitted to the Administrative Law Judge on April 19 at the deadline. We continue to wait for the “clean up” orderly annexation agreement from the Township’s attorney.

Development

The same Developer interested in the 40 acres near the northwest corner of the airport has met with the School Superintendent. They have developed a concept plan for the school’s 50 acres. They are looking for financial assistance for this site as well.

Finance

The Auditors will be doing fieldwork May 1 and 2.

Assistant City Administrators Frederick and Gerold and McPherson met with Jim Burroughs from Princeton Insurance Agency on April 11. It was time to review our insurance coverage, ask questions, update information and see if there are any possible cost savings to the City. The various auto, building and equipment schedules need to be reviewed to ensure that we have sufficient coverage, for example, the value on the jetter truck was well below replacement value.

Fire

The transition team continues to meet weekly; discussions are open, and the meeting results are productive. Information sharing on policies and procedures between departments is ongoing. Of particular interest are forms and procedures to ensure that equipment and PPE repairs are documented, and completion is achieved.

Infrastructure

Advertisements for bids for the CSAH 4/7th Avenue project are in the process of being published. The staff is hopeful for a bid opening the second week of May.

Engineer Edison and McPherson met with School District representatives regarding the project on April 23. The project needs a street, drainage and utility easement from the school for the infiltration pond at the northeast corner of the roundabout. I will be attending the May 7 School Board meeting to explain the project and request the easement.

Legislature

There has been no significant change in the legislation previously reported, although it appears that the housing legislation is losing steam and may not make it out of various committees to the chamber floors. CGMC and LMC continue to monitor any progress.

Liquor

Princeton Wine and Spirits won an award at the MMBA Conference.

Upcoming Meetings and Reminders:

- May 1 – Fire Advisory Board 7 pm City Hall

- May 2 – Study Session (proposed to be cancelled)
- May 4 – Fire Chief Interviews 9 am to 5 pm, City Hall
- May 4 – Dirty Rotten Biker Fest 11 am to 11 pm, Mille Lacs County Fair Grounds
- May 7 – School Board Meeting 6 pm to present easement requests CSAH 4/7th Avenue project
- May 9, 10 – McPherson will be out of town on vacation.

9. Committee Reports

Hallin reported that the Chamber is working hard on the planning for Rum River Festival.

Edmonds advised that PUC is on top of the PFAS concerns that were recently released by the MPCA. He reported that PUC's water is safe to drink.

10. Adjournment

EDMONDS MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:38PM. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully Submitted,

ATTEST:

Shawna Jenkins Tadych
City Clerk

Thom Walker,
Mayor