

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON  
JUNE 27, 2024, 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. Councilors 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, Liquor Store Manager Dylan Donner, Assistant Fire Chief Josh Vaccari, PUC Manager Keith Butcher and Attorney Damien Toven. Absent was Wastewater Manager Chris Klinghagen.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Agenda Additions / Deletions**

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

**4. Consent Agenda**

- 4.1. Approve City Council Minutes from June 13, 2024
- 4.2. Liquor Store Manager Dylan Donner Step increase effective 7-8-24
- 4.3. Approval to Hire Angela Ulrich for Seasonal Public Works
- 4.4. Approve Step Increase for Liquor Clerk Kameron Opsal effective June 13, 2024
- 4.5. EDA Meeting Minutes of June 20, 2024
- 4.6. Princeton Public Utility Commission Agenda Packet for June 26, 2024
- 4.7. Solicitor's Permit Request for Julia Jochemczyk with Southwest Advantage - pending background check
- 4.8. Approve Items Related to 2024A Bond Issuance
  - 4.8.1. Resolution 24-37 Entering the Bonds into the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (PFA) Credit Enhancement Program
  - 4.8.2. Authorize Execution of PFA Agreement by the Mayor
- 4.9. Authorize Purchase of a Replacement Touchscreen TV for the Emergency Operations Center

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. J GEROLD 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.**

Nick Volkmuth 1402 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave Court North spoke to the Council about the need for a Community Center, and stated he thought it is something the City should budget for.

**6. Presentations**

**6.1. Darrin Lee, Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities**

Darrin Lee presented CGMC's 2024 Legislative results. They include EMS Aid for struggling rural ambulance service providers, bonding, housing and zoning, local sales tax, prevailing wage, streets, and greenhouse gas.

**6.2. Housing and Redevelopment Authority Update - Kat Kleinbaum**

HRA Executive Director Kat Kleinbaum provided a brief update on The Oaks. The building is full, a storage building has been finished and they are going to be replacing all the electrical breakers.

**7. Old Business**

**7.1. Annexation of Pontious Property - Continuation from June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting**

Toven advised that at the June 13, 2024 regular meeting of the Princeton City Council, a public hearing was held on the above application for annexation pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 414.033, Subd. 2(3).

At that public hearing, comments were submitted by the township indicating that it did not believe the property in question could be annexed into the city because it did not meet the statutory requirement that the property “abut” City of Princeton property.

Minnesota Statute Section 414.011 Subd. 6 defines the terms abut, abuts or abutting as “areas whose boundaries at least touch one another at a single point, including areas whose boundaries would touch but for an intervening roadway, railroad, waterway or parcel of publicly owned land.”

As the GIS map shows, the Southwest corner of Parcel No. 16-031-0100 touches the Northeast corner of Parcel No. 24-032-4900 at a single point. As such, it does meet the definition of abutting City property.

During the public hearing, comment was made regarding County Road 33 bisecting the City parcel. While not explicitly stating so, he assumes the township’s argument was that because the county road bisected the City’s property, that the City property did not “abut” the property to be annexed at the corner in question.

However, as noted in Minnesota Statute Section 414.011 Subd. 6, abutting properties include “areas whose boundaries would touch but for an intervening roadway, railroad, waterway or parcel of publicly owned land.”

Based upon the legal review of the application material and maps provided, it is Toven’s opinion that the property that is to be annexed into the City of Princeton does abut City property and meets the statutory requirements for annexation.

Toven added that all of the application material for this annexation was also submitted to the Municipal Boundary Adjustments Unit of the State of Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings, and they concur that the property to be annexed does meet the statute requirements for annexation.

Todd Olin stated that the plan for the property is mixed use residential. Twenty five side by side homes and fifty row homes, as well as a building for senior housing.

#### **7.1.1. Ordinance 851 - Annexation of Pontious Property - FIRST READING**

HALLIN MOVED TO INTRODUCE ORDINANCE 851. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### **7.2. Ordinance 852 - Rural Taxing District - FINAL READING**

EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 852. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE 4:0:1 EDMONDS, HALLIN, WALKER AND REYNOLDS IN FAVOR. J GEROLD ABSTAINED. THE MOTION CARRIED.

#### **7.2.1. Partial Tax Refund Request - Cindy Penney**

Cindy Penney lives at 3013 85<sup>th</sup> Ave. She recently became aware that her property was annexed into the City of Princeton. The municipal portion of her property taxes went up due to the annexation and she is concerned that she will not be able to afford it. Staff informed her that the city was going to revamp the rural taxing district ordinance and her property will be eligible for that once the Ordinance is approved.

She is asking for a refund of the difference in what the Township portion would have been and the current City portion.

The Council asked if any of the other properties would be eligible and what the exact amount would have been if calculated in the rural taxing district compared to the city portion shown on their tax statements. Staff will look to see which other properties would qualify and get the exact numbers from the County.

WALKER MOVED TO TABLE THE TAX REFUND REQUEST TO THE NEXT MEETING FOR STAFF TO GATHER MORE INFORMATION. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **7.3. Ordinance 853 - Amending Chapter 355 - Cannabinoid Products - FINAL READING**

Donner stated that they plan to realign the cameras to view the area where the products will be sold and will do a presentation to the Council on the products they will be selling.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 853. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

## **8. New Business**

### **8.1. Resolution 24-33 - Accept Donation from Civic Betterment Club for a Park Bench**

B Gerold reported that the bench has been placed in the cemetery.

EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-33 ACCEPTING THE DONATION FROM THE CIVIC BETTERMENT CLUB. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **8.2. Resolution 24-34 Approval of Donations for Splash Park Free Days**

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-34 ACCEPTING DONATIONS FOR FREE SPLASH PARK DAYS. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **8.3. Resolution 24-35 - Accept Twice New Clothing Donation to the Fire Department**

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-35 ACCEPTING THE DONATION FROM TWICE NEW CLOTHING TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **8.4. Resolution 24-36 - Accept Donation from the Princeton Chamber of Commerce to the Police Department.**

Frederick reported that the Princeton Police Department received a donation in the amount of \$1,300.00 from the Princeton Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber also sold stuffed Bogey dogs for the police department at their booth during the Rum River Festival. They sold a total of ten dogs for a total of \$200.00 making the total amount of the check for \$1,500.00. The Princeton Police Department is truly grateful for the donation and assisting with selling the dogs for the k9 program.

The donation will be used to assist the department with overtime during the Rum River festival. The \$200.00 will be placed into the k9 program to purchase miscellaneous supplies for the program.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-36. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **8.5. Ordinance 854 - Title 10. Building/Housing Ordinance Amendment - FIRST READING**

Marquardt stated that this amendment will allow our current Building Inspection company to handle the state plumbing permit review, this saving time for contractors as the State Plumbing division is backlogged.

J GEROLD MOVED TO INTRODUCE ORDINANCE 854. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **8.6. Bill List**

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 27, 2024 CHECK REGISTER AND PAY PERIOD 13 CHECK AND ELECTRONIC PAYMENT REGISTERS WHICH DOCUMENT ISSUED CHECKS 88439 THROUGH 88489, ACH PAYMENT 62720241 AND ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MADE. THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHECKS ISSUED, AND ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS MADE IS \$475,804.41. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

McPherson had the following observations and information to share from the last update on Jun 11, 2024:

#### **Airport**

Work continues on the AWOS project as well as the ALP update.

#### **Baldwin Township**

We are in a holding pattern with the Administrative Law Judge regarding Baldwin's request to incorporate.

We continue to work with the Township's Attorney on the ancillary Orderly Annexation Agreements.

#### **Development**

Staff continues to work with the developer of the Pontius site. A schedule for the TIF process has been developed and the remaining approvals required will be run concurrently with that process.

The CSAH 4/7th Avenue improvement project is progressing well. So far any complaints, if any, are being handled by WSB staff on site. They are doing their best to door knock and communicate with residents regarding utility shut-offs, mail delivery, trash pick-up, and general access to properties.

If anyone wishes to receive weekly updates regarding the CSAH 4/7th Avenue project, please email: Princeton2024@wsbeng.com and request to be placed on the update list.

#### **Emergency Management**

The City's speed trailer was hit by a passing motorist on June 15; the motorist did not stop. The impact was such that the trailer was destroyed. Emergency Manager Lawrence and Police Chief Frederick are working through the insurance claim and arranging for a replacement. Total loss including graphics and miscellaneous items is approximately \$20,000.

#### **Finance**

Staff is waiting for the preliminary audit results now that the field work is done.

Work on the 2024 budget will begin soon.

**Fire**

Staff is completing the remaining tasks for the hiring of the Chief. The psych evaluation is completed and we have outsourced the backgrounding; Mr. Zumberge is filling out the information packet as we speak. Mr. Zumberge attended breakfast with the Department June 22 and indicated that he enjoyed the meal and the opportunity to meet and talk with the members.

The transition team is now meeting bi-weekly.

Ladder 1 passed its inspection.

Engine 2 is finally back from being repaired. The City received a final bill, but it will not be approved for payment until the Truck Committee is confident that all of the repairs are satisfactory.

**Upcoming Meetings and Reminders:**

- July 1 – Rescheduled Study Session/Joint meeting with the Airport Advisory Board
- July 4 – City Office Closed; Annual Community Celebration/American Legion Fireworks at the Mille Lacs County Fairgrounds
- July 10 – Fire Advisory Board 7 pm, City Hall
- July 11 – Regular City Council Meeting
- July 15 – Fire Executive Board 7 pm, Public Safety Building
- July 19 to August 2 – I will be working remotely (tentatively) assisting my dad with recovery after spine surgery
- August 7 to 11 – Mille Lacs County Fair

**9. Committee Reports**

Edmonds provided a summary of the PUC Meeting.

J Gerold stated that the Park Board Meeting was cancelled as there was not a quorum. The Chamber meeting was a follow-up and recap of the Rum River Festival.

Walker reported that Jordan Zeller from East Central Regional Development Commission gave a presentation on the Business Assistance Directory and finance options for Mille Lacs County.

**10. Adjournment**

MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:19PM. 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