

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON
OCTOBER 28, 2010, 7:00 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Mayor Jeremy Riddle called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Council members present were Paul Whitcomb, Victoria Hallin, Dick Dobson and Lee Steinbrecher. Staff present was Administrator Mark Karnowski, Finance Director Steve Jackson, Community Developer Jay Blake, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Police Chief Brian Payne and City Clerk Katie Hunter. Also present: City Attorneys Damien Toven and Dick Schieffer.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

The Council agreed to add under Unfinished Business the clarification of meeting time.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 14, 2010

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 14, 2010 AS WRITTEN. WHITCOMB SECONDED THE MOTION. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Permits and Licenses**
- B. Personnel**
- C. Donations/Designations:**

OPEN FORUM – no one was present for the Open Forum portion of the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS - no one was present for Public Hearings

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES

- A. Princeton Area Visionary Committee Minutes of September 27, 2010
- B. Airport Advisory Board Minutes of October 4, 2010
- C. Parks and Recreation Board Minutes of October 25, 2010
- D. PUC Minutes for August 18, 2010
- E. PUC Minutes for September 29, 2010

PETITIONS, REQUESTS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

A. Ordinance 658 Zoning Ordinance Amendments; First Reading

Blake explained that the amendments are essentially the same as when the council reviewed them on the 14th of October. Blake asked if the council had any questions.

WHITCOMB MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 658 ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

B. Resolution #10-48; Past Due Utility Billing

Karnowski explained that the Public Utilities Commission tracks the past due sewer and water accounts. If approved by the City Council, staff certifies them to the County.

HALLIN MOTIONED TO ACCEPT RESOLUTION #10-48; PAST DUE UTILITIES. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Council Salary Discussion

Karnowski went over the City Council's discussion from August regarding council salaries. At that time, there was some reluctance from some of the Council Members on whether or not to raise the Council salary in this time of economic downturn. He clarified that the City Council salaries have not been adjusted for six years. In 1999, the Mayor was at a salary of \$3,500 a year and the Council at \$3,000 a year. In 2004, that was increased to what it is today: Mayor at \$3,600 and Council at \$3,090.

In addition, Karnowski added that since, by law, Council salary changes cannot go into effect until after a Council election. If the Council decides to raise their stipend, it would have to be voted on at this week's meeting in order to go into effect on January 1, 2011.

The average salaries for the nine cities chosen for the research project done by Hunter is as follows: Mayor per year: \$4,576.11 and the Council per year: \$5,512.67. In general, the City of Princeton is much lower than these numbers.

Dobson said he is sticking to his guns whereas he doesn't think this is the time to be raising the Council's salary when the employees have been asked to take a forty hour furlough throughout the year and there have been no cost of living increases for union members. Hallin commented that a lot of boards have actually opted to take no pay at all. The Princeton City Council did take a fifty percent pay cut a couple of years ago.

Riddle stated that he had initially brought the idea up before when he had to get on the phone to try to get people to apply for City Council.

Riddle asked how much staff health insurance went up in 2010. Jackson reported that there was a zero increase in 2010 and that will be true for next year as well.

B. PUC Board Applications

Karnowski stated that both applicants were present; Blake Broding and Mindi Siercks.

Whitcomb asked Mr. Broding if the afternoon meetings of the PUC would work in his schedule. Broding commented that he has already cleared it with his work.

Blake Broding

Broding added that he is thankful he is able to have the opportunity to be a steward of the community, with being on the Broding feels he has a lot of knowledge being on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. In addition, he has done a lot of interesting research on SEMPA (South East Minnesota Municipal Power Association) and what the organization involves.

Hallin said she has observed Mr. Broding and his family in community events and sees how he has an interest in the community.

Mindi Siercks

Dobson asked if Mrs. Mindi Siercks would be able to attend the afternoon meetings with the PUC. Mrs. Siercks said she sets her own schedule being she works with her husband out of their home with their own business. Her husband is part of the Chamber of Commerce and they have helped in the community with many different events. Siercks said she lives in the community and would be representing a lot of families that use the utility commission. Siercks is looking to get more involved and show interest in what is going on. The Council asked Siercks if she has a degree in accounting. She said she does not, but has over ten years experience in accounting with large companies.

Dobson commented to both applicants that the Council really appreciates you applying. Because only one applicant can be chosen, please do not stop applying because there will be several more openings coming up the first of the year.

Steinbrecher said it is so difficult with only having one opening but having two positive people.

Dobson said he has had the privilege of working with Mr. Broding through the Park Board and he has been an asset on that board. Broding caught on very fast. Dobson's wife has also worked with Broding's wife and Broding himself with scouts, and he received a good recommendation through the Lion's Club.

Steinbrecher said sine Broding is already involved with the Park Board; it would be nice to get another individual involved. Steinbrecher added that he has nothing at all against Mr. Broding, but it would be a way to give Mrs. Siercks an opportunity.

Whitcomb asked how long is this appointment will take you through the end of 2011. This position will be taking over Hank Findell's position.

STEINBRECHER MOTIONED TO NOMINIATE MINDI SIERCKS FOR THE PUC. WHITCOMB SECONDED THE MOTION. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

B. Meeting Time

The City Council voted to move the meeting regularly scheduled for Thanksgiving Thursday to the prior Tuesday, November 23. The time was just not discussed.

The Council concurred that 7:00 PM works well for everyone.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Citizen Letter Regarding Office Staff

Karnowski said that a week ago, a letter arrived in the mail referencing the attentiveness that Mary Lou DeWitt and Karen Hodge had given the citizen when approached at the front counter.

Dobson said he appreciated the Administrator sharing this compliment. Especially since Karen Hodge is a new hire and already receiving a flattering remark.

Jackson added that Hodge is picking up things very fast and doing a great job. Staff is pleased with the appointment that the council made of Karen Hodge.

B. Disposition of Lots in Murrays Addition

Blake said that Staff is looking at selling Lots 4, 5, and 6, Block 2, Murray's Addition. They were acquired by the City in two transactions in 1948 and 1985. Lots 5 and 6 were acquired from the State of Minnesota through tax forfeiture in 1948 and Lot 4 purchased from Prairie Restorations in 1985. Because the lots were not acquired with Park Dedication Funds, they may be sold. The site consists of two and one half traditional city lots. There are two potential building sites.

The Parks Advisory Board had recommended that the south skating rink not be used this year due to budget constraints and the availability of outdoor rink adjacent to the new Princeton Hockey Arena.

Blake explained that the site has access to the municipal water system on the water system on the south side of the tracts in 4th Street South. Sanitary sewer ends at the intersection of 9th Avenue South and 4th Street South.

Blake suggested several different ways in which the tracts could be sold; sealed bids, conation to non-for-profit, or listing on the Multiple List Serve.

City Attorney Scheiffer advised that the Council may authorize staff to sell property and that the Planning Commission will be requested to recommend approval of the sale based on the goals and policies of the City Comprehensive Plan. If the Planning Commission fails to recommend action on the sale, the Council can take action after forty-five days. If the council agrees to the disposition of the lots, staff will place this on the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on November 15, 2010. Staff would then bring any offers to the City Council for final action.

Steinbrecher asked if some parameters could be set on the sale so we can be assured that one new residence would be built, so the lot doesn't sit vacant. Blake said that has been done before through the Economic Development Authority.

Steinbrecher also suggested a public auction as another option with a minimum starting price. It would be a nice and quick way to get the date set. Schieffer said with an auction, it is difficult to put conditions on building in a certain amount of time. Conditions may be put on and Request for Proposal (RFP).

On the other hand, Riddle said that with the housing market with the way it is, we do not want to take the chance of an empty house sitting on the lot.

Steinbrecher said he knows a builder that was in the market for a private lot in the city limits of Princeton and could only find one. The Council concurred that they would prefer to see an added tax base in hopes that homes would be built in future.

Blake added that although he cannot speak for Habitat for Humanity, but that is another option. They are still looking for other parcels in community.

Hallin inquired about the alleyway that was unused at this time. Blake said the alleyway could be vacated, and that staff would want to contact all of the home owners on that

block. It is highly unlikely that the alleyway would be constructed.

STEINBRECHER MOTIONED TO DIRECT STAFF TO CONSTRUCT A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE DISPOSITION OF LOTS 4, 5, AND 6, BLOCK 2, IN MURRAY'S ADDITION. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

C. Third Quarter 2010 Finance Update

Jackson explained that the three major funds are summarized in the handouts that the council received. (The General Fund, Sewer Fund and the Liquor Fund). All of the expenditures for the City are on track. This indicates that staff has been using as much restraint as possible.

At first glance, it looks as though the Emergency Management is off, but Jackson found out there was a siren repair for a little over \$3000. In addition, the Historical Depot has set Recreation Facilities over and above because of what was paid for the handicapped automatic door, although those funds were received in grant monies.

The Liquor Fund is looking good and on track. Hallin asked if the Liquor Store had higher volume months in November and December. Jackson answered that yes, the store tends to sell more wine, which is a higher mark up price at the end of the year around the holidays.

Karnowski said that Liquor Store Manager Nancy Campbell has been doing a Wine Tasting for the past couple of years. She receives a tremendous turnout and sold several cases of wine at the last party.

Dobson would like to thank all of the Department Heads for the efforts to keep expenses down and Steve Jackson for staying on top of it.

B. Acquisition of 601 – Old Highway 18 South

Blake explained that at their October 25, 2010 meeting, the Princeton Park Board discussed and recommended the acquisition of the property at 601 – Old Highway 18 south for the purposes of future expansion of the facilities at Mark Park. The city had previously acquired a portion of this site from the Lind family (West of the current property), which allowed the construction of the Splash Park. The PAB would like to plan for a second entrance to the park, the construction of additional parking facilities, and perhaps expansion of the park facilities.

The site consists of approximately .7 acre. It is currently listed with Quickstrom's Realty for \$65,000. The property has a residence and an outbuilding. The residence could possibly be moved to another property. The outbuilding does not appear to be in good condition and should likely be demolished or burned by the Princeton Fire and Rescue Department.

One year ago, the city obtained an appraisal of the site and it came back at \$80,000. At that time, we were not able to come to terms on the sale. The Park Board anticipates receiving adequate funds for Park Dedication from the Sterling Pointe Plat by the end of October.

Steinbrecher asked what was directly behind the lot. Blake said the Princeton Hockey

Arena, a grove of pine trees, and the open field south of the park.

DOBSON MOTIONED TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO OFFER TO ACQUIRE PROPERTY AT 601 – OLD HIGHWAY 18 SUBJECT TO AN OFFER NOT TO EXCEED \$65,000, TO AN APPRAISAL AND TO RECEIPT FROM THE STERLING POINTE PLAT. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION.

Blake added that all of the signatures are on the Sterling Pointe Plat, so it will be moving forward. A final closing is scheduled for Monday.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

C. Library Carpet Proposal

Karnowski said that there is \$12,000 in this year's capital improvement budget for new floor coverings for the Library. There isn't enough money to carpet the entire library at this time, so Robin is looking at doing just the community room which is in more need of new flooring. The new carpet is sold in three foot by three foot squares which are easily replaced if soiled or damaged, rather than the entire room.

The quote is from Hiller's Flooring out of Rochester for a total of \$5,588.55. Robin Suh-sen added that volunteers or city employees could do some moving of furniture to greatly reduce the cost. In addition, the library entrance doors and terrace doors are in need of refinishing.

The only concern from staff and Karnowski received a phone call with why was the only quote received from Hiller's out of Rochester when there are plenty firms closer to Princeton that do this type of work.

Whitcomb suggested a state contract for a better deal.

Steinbrecher added that he would like to see a look at a local installer, even one out of St. Cloud, to receive a competitive bid. It is ironic to hire 250 miles away when the economy is the way it is.

Steinbrecher asked if the price could be held for thirty days and if the Library staff could receive more options.

Hallin suggested sentence to serve helping out, because they would be helping out the community. Payne thought that Sentence to Serve was one of the items that got shut down at the County level. Although the city could dispose of the carpet on its own, Council thought having a company take care of all of it is the easiest way to go.

The council concurred to have the Library Staff look for more quotes, especially a quote from a company closer to Princeton, before deciding on one.

Steinbrecher added that Steinbrecher Painting will volunteer to fix and refinish the doors in the library for free.

MISCELLANEOUS

Dobson added that the city received a grant for the Reibe Park Golf course and that signs

are being made up and will be installed. A total of \$875 was received for the signs. That will include one sign for each course hole and a main sign for the starting of the course.

BILL LIST – \$193,389.97

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE BILL LIST WHICH INCLUDES THE MANUAL CHECKS AS LISTED ON THE MANUAL VOUCHER BILL LIST FOR A TOTAL OF \$94,497.03 AND THE ITEMS LISTED ON THE LIQUOR BILL LIST AND GENERAL CITY BILL LIST WHICH WILL BE CHECKS 93209 TO 63264 FOR A TOTAL OF \$598,892.94. WHITCOMB SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

ADJOURNMENT

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS:

DOBSON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:55 PM. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 AYES, 0 NAYS).

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Hunter
City Clerk

ATTEST:

Jeremy Riddle, Mayor