

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON
April 23, 2009, 7:00 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Acting Mayor Whitcomb called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Council members present were Councilors Lee Steinbrecher, Victoria Hallin and Dick Dobson. Mayor Jeremy Riddle was absent. Staff members present were Mark Karnowski, Steve Jackson, Jay Blake, Bob Gerold, Joe Backlund, and Katie Hunter. Also present was City Attorney Dick Schieffer.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO ADD THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO THE AGENDA:

Under Open Forum:

- A. George Eilertson with Northland Securities

Under Ordinances and Resolutions

- C. Resolution #09-18 A Resolution to Open a Checking Account for the NSP Program

Under Unfinished Business:

- B. Personnel
 - 1. Allen "Pete" Donner

Under New Business

- A. USDP

IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE COUNCIL TO DELETE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

Under New Business

- A. Trail Construction (Visionary Committee)
- B. Planning Commission Vacancy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 9, 2009

STEINBRECHER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 9, 2009 AS WRITTEN. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Permits and Licenses

- 1. Princeton Lions Club: Gambling Exemption Permit for Raffle on 06-14-09 at Princeton Airport

B. Donations/Designations: None

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. STEINBRECHER SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OPEN FORUM

George Eilertson with Northland Securities summarized that the City sold some bonds and received a bond rating upgrade this year. A rating plaque was presented to the Acting Mayor, Paul Whitcomb and the Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

No one was present for Public Hearings.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES

A. Planning Commission

1. Draft Minutes of April 6, 2009

The above minutes were reviewed.

B. Public Utilities Commission

1. Minutes of February 25, 2009

The above minutes were reviewed.

C. Visionary Committee

1. Minutes of March 23, 2009

The above minutes were reviewed.

D. EDA

1. Minutes of March 19, 2009

The above minutes were reviewed.

PETITIONS, REQUESTS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Princeton Friends of the Library Request

Robin Suhsen with Princeton Friends of the Library has requested a \$1200 contribution which would come out of the Liquor Store fund to be used for the library's summer reading program. This program approximately costs about \$3000 total and encourages kids to use the library for the 8 weeks of the summer reading program. Steinbrecher asked what the donation has been in the past. Jackson reported that it was \$1200 in 2008 and \$1000 in 2007. At the March 26, 2009 Council Meeting, the Council voted on a 19% decrease in donation to the Chamber of Commerce. The Council agrees that the same percent in reduction should be applied to the Friends of the Library Donation Request. A total of \$972.00 will be donated to the Friends of the Library.

DOBSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE DONATION REQUEST AT A 19% DECREASE IN WHAT WAS REQUESTED. STEINBRECHER SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Gerald Stacy Request to Remove Boulevard Tree; 3rd Street North

Karnowski explained that Mr. Gerald Stacy wrote a letter requesting for the city to remove a Kentucky coffee tree from the boulevard of his property. Mr. Stacy was the original person who inquired about trees in boulevard and that resulted in the policy for boulevard trees. Mr. Stacy's letter lists that it is located near an anchor cable for overhead wires and near buried cable. It is a messy tree and can be toxic to animals and people. Bob Gerold observed the tree and reported that the tree is healthy and not hurting anything. Gerold stated that there are the pods on the ground, which Mr. Stacy mentions in his letter. Dobson viewed the tree as well and sees no problem with power poles or an anchor cable. Dobson did some research of his own and found that this particular tree is well suited for our soils in the City of Princeton and it tolerates drought very well. Dobson reported that the Kentucky coffee tree is often used on streets and in parks and golf courses for ornamental purposes. It is only toxic to humans or livestock, not cats or dogs. Dobson also reported that coffee used to be made from boiling the pods. Dobson believes the city should not spend the expense of manpower and time to remove a perfectly good tree.

Karnowski added that the Emerald Ash Borer beetle has come to Minnesota and taken out some Ash trees. Because the tree in question is not an ash, it would not be affected. This is why a wider variety of trees were planted in the boulevard by the city. Hallin believes that this was researched by both the Public Works Department and by Councilmember Dobson and agrees with the extra expense.

DOBSON MOVED TO DENY THE REQUEST OF THE REMOVAL OF THE KENTUCKY COFFEE TREE LOCATED AT 3RD STREET. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. Street Closure Request from Chamber of Commerce for Parade in June

Karnowski explained that each year the Chamber of Commerce requests certain streets be closed off during the parade. This year the parade will be held on Thursday, June 11, 2009.

STEINBRECHER MOVED TO APPROVE THE STREET CLOSURE ON JUNE 11, 2009 FOR THE RUN RIVER FESTIVAL PARADE. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

D. VFW 806 Buddy Poppy Days Request

HALLIN MAKES A MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #09-17. STEINBRECHER SECONDEC THE MOTION. DOBSON OBSTAINED FROM THE VOTE. ON THE VOTE: AYES – 3, NAYES – 0, OBSTAINED – 1.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

A. Ordinance #632, Fireworks Ordinance Amendment

Karnowski explained that it was brought to the attention by the Police Department that the city should amend the existing ordinance to add conducting a background check on Fireworks sales in the City of Princeton. Dobson suggested having the wording changed from 'requiring that a criminal history check be performed on the *applicant*' to '*any responsible parties*'. Karnowski will re-word Ordinance #632.

HALLIN MAKES A MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE #632 AS A FIRST READING. STEINBRECHER SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Resolution #09-16 Contract with Neighborhood Stabilization Program

Blake explained that the first step in releasing the funds from government to State of MN for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program is to sign this contract. Early next week, the approval will be in. Steinbrecher questioned the map of the selected project areas; specifically in the down town area, if the city plans to include all of the residences in that area. Blake explained that at this time, all commercial zoned areas were taken out. Blake explained that this map will be used for first 6 months and if we see other properties in that time frame, another map may be submitted. Steinbrecher also questioned why Meadow View was being left out because of the known high foreclosure rate in that area. Blake explained that a majority of those homes are already selling on their own compared to the older homes that need upgrades before selling. Hallin asked if we have 18 month timeframe when this contract goes through. Blake stated that the 18 month period started about four weeks ago on March 20, but the contract was finally drafted this past week. Councilmember Hallin was concerned with the timeliness.

The grant agreement states that the MHFA may reduce the Grant amount or cancel the agreement if the project is not started within the approved timeframe. Blake explained that the funds will have to be scheduled to be spent within the 18 months, but they don't have to be spent.

Karnowski added that, in the Princeton downtown area, Jay and he are trying to do a June study session that would address some downtown issues. The Visionary Committee is also working with some folks that would like to come and give a presentation.

DOBSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #09-16 CONTRACT WITH NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROGRAM. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. Resolution 09-18 A Resolution to Open a Checking Account for the NSP Program

Jackson explained that because the city is receiving a large amount of money for the NSP program there will be some complexities. Both Lakes & Pines and Jackson concur that it works better to do a separate checking account. Lakes and Pines will be doing the check writing, which the granting agency prefers. Jackson also explained that, because of the increased transactions, a separate checking account makes much more sense. Hallin questioned which bank the account would be opened. Jackson stated the new account would be opened at Bremer Bank where the city's other checking account is currently active. Steinbrecher questioned if it would make sense to put the money into a interest bearing account. Blake and Jackson both explained that the money would be deposited one day and would be out of the account within a week or so. Jackson stated that the same signatures would be required as with the city's other checking account. Steinbrecher questioned that if Lakes and Pines is writing all of the checks, what other part are they going to play in making decisions. Steinbrecher stated that the city trusts Blake in making decisions for the city and feels comfortable that Mr. Blake will be retaining control.

HALLIN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #09-18 A RESOLUTION TO OPEN A CHECKING ACCOUNT FOR THE NSP PROGRAM. STEINBRECHER SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Vehicle Use Policy

Karnowski reminded the council that at the end of March, a Vehicle Use Policy was presented. The Police Chief has agreed to the updated policy and the attorney has reviewed it .

STENBRECHER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE VEHICLE USE POLICY. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Furlough Policy

The Furlough Policy consists of each full-time employee would be required to take forty furlough (unpaid leave) hours off in 2009. Employees who may be in their "high five" PERA earning years have the option of buying back the five days from the city in order to minimize the furlough's impact on their annual retirement amounts.

Karnowski stated that both the Police Union and all department heads have agreed on the Furlough Policy as laid out in the memo for full time employees.

DOBSON MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE FURLOUGH POLICY. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED.

C. Resolution from Baldwin Township

Karnowski stated that Baldwin Township has adopted a resolution in response to city's resolution adopted by council in February of 2009. It addresses a lot of the concerns, although the language is a little different. Karnowski explained that no official action is necessary from the council. Both Blake and Karnowski agree that minutes should be taken at the meetings, as they believe keeping a record of the salient points is critical. Because of possible bias, Karnowski suggests a neutral person to keep minutes. Hallin suggested getting the committee together and deciding who should take the minutes.

D. Baseball Facilities Agreement

Karnowski explained that after several revisions, an agreement between the City and the School District regarding their use of Mark Park is in final form. The City is allowing the School District to use portions of Mark Park for various ballgames throughout the season. The fencing put up by the School District will become ownership of city. Dick Peterson has found funding to build some new dugouts. Steinbrecher stated that agreeing with the School District is important since they donated a lot of money toward Mark Park.

HALLIN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE BASEBALL FACILITIES AGREEMENT. STEINBRECHER SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

E. Personnel Matter

Karnowski stated that Pete Donner has requested a Veteran's Preference Hearing. The City must appoint a panelist. Karnowski suggested William Joynes; a former Administrator of Golden Valley, and White Bear Lake, a teacher at Hamline University. He has been working with the city on the Police Union Contract and is knowledgeable in this area. Karnowski recommends appointing William Joynes as the city representative.

DOBSON MAKES A MOTION TO APPOINT WILLIAM JOYNES AS THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE VETERAN'S PREFERENCE HEARING. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

A. USDP Discharge

Karnowski reported that USDP has requested that their permitted discharge into the City's sewer system be increased from 5,000 gallons per day 5 times per week to 15,000 gallons per day 5 times per week. Karnowski explained that Public Works Director Bob Gerold has discussed the proposal with our WWTP engineer Tracy Ekola, SHE who advises that there should be no problem with the increase. Hallin asked if the site would be tested. Karnowski stated that they sent a sample out to be tested. Dobson asked if building permit applications pick up speed, will this affect the city's ability to issue residential permits in the future. Karnowski stated that this should not affect any future permits.

STEINBRECHER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE USDP DISCHARGE. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Quarterly Finance Update

Jackson explained that most of what is seen in the 2009 general fund transactions are typical expenditures. The restraint from Department Heads and employees has taken affect. The sewer use revenue is down for the past two years; which has some to do with foreclosed homes and lowered activity on commercial properties. Jackson explained that there is nothing unanticipated in sewer fund. In the Liquor fund, sales are down compared to the previous years. Nancy is making good adjustments with operating expenditures to adjust with lesser activity. Thus, the Liquor Store is still turning a profit. Dobson agreed that department heads are doing an excellent job at controlling expenses. Steinbrecher questioned why the Public Works Department shows a usage of three quarters of the budget. Jackson explained that was due to Tom Mismash's severance pay for retirement.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Dobson stated that in the Visionary Committee would like to improve a trail from the Water Treatment Plant to 313th Street. Rick Johnson has volunteered the equipment and it will be at no cost to the city. Dobson has asked for the City Council's approval to improve the trail.

STEINBRECHER MOVED TO APPROVE THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE TRAIL AT NO COST TO THE CITY. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

BILL LIST – \$216,543.97

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE BILL LIST WHICH INCLUDES THE MANUAL CHECKS AS LISTED ON THE MANUAL VOUCHER BILL LIST FOR A TOTAL OF \$216,543.97, AND THE ITEMS LISTED ON THE LIQUOR BILL LIST AND GENERAL CITY BILL LIST WHICH WILL BE CHECKS 60565-60636 FOR A TOTAL OF \$155,788.18. STEINBRECHER SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no further business STEINBRECHER MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:48 P.M. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE VOTE: AYES - 4; NAYS - 0. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Hunter; City Clerk

ATTEST:

Paul Whitcomb, Acting Mayor