

**MINUTES OF A STUDY SESSION OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL  
HELD ON NOVEMBER 5, 2015 4:30 P.M.**

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Mayor Paul Whitcomb called the meeting to order. Council members present were, Thom Walker, Dick Dobson, Jules Zimmer and Victoria Hallin. Staff present, Administrator Mark Karnowski, Finance Director Steve Jackson, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Fire Chief Jim Roxbury, Community Development Director Jolene Foss, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Engineer Mike Nielson, and Attorney Damien Toven.

**Cemetery Issues**

Karnowski advised that the Council and staff have received some comments over the years about the protocol we use at the city cemetery. It was suggested that our processes be reviewed to determine whether changes in how we do things would better serve the needs/wants of the public.

Currently the city public works staff sets monuments twice a year (once in the spring and once in the fall).

Apparently there are some that would like to contract directly with the monument companies and have them set the monuments.

Obviously, the advantage would be that monuments could be set more quickly than they currently are.

One down side is that, if we didn't set it, then it doesn't make sense for us to maintain the monuments. If the footing settles (which it often does) then it would be up to the monument company to fix it...regardless of how many years have passed since it was set. Currently, our staff does that work.

There are other negatives that should come up during the discussion.

Gerold said staff time averages 160 hours twice a year for pouring concrete. That includes new stone settlings and repair. Karnowski replied that allowing monument companies to set the stones would save City staff a lot of time, but there would still be repair needed. Gerold added that if the monument companies were to set the stones, he is not sure how quickly it would get done. Karnowski stated that it may also cause issues in the future if stone setting was not done correctly.

Gerold commented that there have always been a few unhappy family members or monument companies, but staff cannot always work on their timeline. Zimmer asked if a monument company could be allowed to set the stones in cases where the family does not want to wait, then the city would be responsible for any needed repair in the future.

Walker suggested allowing the monument company to do the setting if the family really wants it done. Karnowski added that we could also offer an additional fee for a stone setting if it is out of the regular time frame and the family did not want to wait. Walker added that in the cases of a monument company doing the work, there should still be a "marking" fee for staff to mark the site and that cost could cover any additional future repairs.

**Engineering Selection Discussion**

Karnowski asked the Council and PUC who they would like to interview for engineering now that they have been able to review the RFP's that were received.

Daniels from PUC said they had trouble with Bolten Mink in the past, so they took them off the list of possibilities. The ones they have chosen to interview TKDA, WSN and WSB.

Walker added that when the EDA was looking at Engineers for the Industrial Park Study, they felt Ulteig was too far away.

Walker stated he likes the work WSB has done. Whitcomb added that WSB is actually proposing a new engineer to work with the City, so he likes that. He felt it may be nice to be the only city that an engineer is working with.

Hallin asked how the Council felt if TKDA, WSB and WSN were interviewed. Dobson commented that he was not comfortable with WSN because they were so far away.

Staff and PUC will meet with TKDA and WSB.

### **Snow Emergency Ordinance**

Karnowski advised that the police and public works have had a lot of issues over the years with snow emergency parking issues. They have worked with the City Attorney's to draft an ordinance that would allow cars to be towed. In essence, adopting the ordinance amendment would allow vehicles to be towed.

Walker questioned if a snow emergency can be called if it was not snowing as of yet. Gerold replied that in Elk River for instance, ordinance states a snow emergency can be called if NOA is predicting that many inches of snow.

Frederick reported that the current problem is the delay in which they have to wait to identify owners and try to get them notified to move their car. Officers actually go door to door to try and wake people up to move their cars, but that takes a lot of time.

Karnowski stated that language regarding a NOA prediction could be added to Section 720.00. Frederick commented that they are handing information out to people so people can be forewarned of the process and ordinance change if adopted.

HALLIN MOVED TO INTRODUCE THE SNOW EMERGENCY ORDINANCE AMENDMENT.  
DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### **7<sup>th</sup> Ave North sewer and water hookups**

Karnowski advised that there has been discussion on allowing the private homeowners to roll the cost of their private hookups into their assessment. Whitcomb asked how many properties have homes. Daniels responded that there are a total of 8 lots being assessed, with just 2 being vacant lots. Karnowski added that those 2 vacant properties could also pay the SAC and WAC fees up front at the reduced rate if future development was planned. Those properties would not have any hookup costs at this time, but they could add the SAC and WAC to their assessment if they so choose.

Daniels added that he spoke to all the residents and they are all willing to hook up right away. They are also very happy that the City and PUC are going to be adding some additional funds to help reduce the cost.

Council members confirmed that they all understood those costs could be rolled into an assessment.

### **TED Grant Discussion – Reduce Grant Request**

Nielson reported that Bruce Cochran, Jolene Foss and himself worked on this grant. It would include a round-a-bout at 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and a sewer extension to serve the 200 acres that they are looking to get shovel ready. This is the same site that Solid Ground Development had looked at developing several years ago. DEED has reviewed the project and the grant is right on the bubble of approval of denial. It was asked if the grant could be lowered some, or the local share could be increased.

Karnowski asked if a smaller pipe with a lift station could be used to keep the cost down. Nielson said the lift station cost would exceed the savings on the smaller pipe, as it does not amount to much per foot difference.

Nielson said the trunk fees are about \$6000 per acre, so this grant would really help bring those costs down. He isn't sure if a round-a-bout at County Road 31 is needed right now, but removing that from the grant application would take out more of the important transportation aspect. He suggests agreeing to the lower grant amount to see if we get it, then we can decide not to accept the grant if things don't work out financially.

Daniels asked how the fire flow looks when they get out that far. Nielson said they look fine, but at some point it may need to be looped back.

Foss added that she does have a letter of support from the developers. Nielson commented that with the current trunk fees, it would total about 1.21 million. He said removing the second round-a-bout would lessen the total by about 1.5 million, but then the application won't score the needed transportation points.

Foss stated that she feels the round-a-bout at County Road 31 will be needed at some point, but she would be okay with removing it from this grant application.

Walker commented that a large portion would probably be the data center, but hopefully there would also be many other businesses as well.

Foss suggested taking advantage of what could be done now, then maybe apply again in the future for the second round-a-bout at County Road 31. Nielson added that tying it to the TED Grant would likely be their best opportunity.

Walker asked for clarification on each phase. Nielson responded that Phase 1 would be to the end of the Soule property, and the second would go just past the church. Each Phase equals about a quarter mile section.

Hallin asked if the church would be asked to hook up. Nielson replied that if a property is in the Township they would stay on private well and septic. If they wanted to hook up to water and sewer, the property would need to be annexed.

Walker asked how difficult it would be to start back on for each phase if all were not done at once. Nielson said it would be about \$30,000 – 40,000 to start back up, but it would not be that difficult.

Walker asked if the Soule property would be able to run off Phase 1 and suggested removing the round-a-bout on County Road 31. Karnowski added that the grant needs a strong transportation aspect to be approved.

Karnowski asked if just reducing the size of the sewer would decrease it enough. Nielson replied that it would only save about \$150,000, which is not much when looking at a large project like this. Nielson stated that this project has an opportunity of paying for itself, but the issue would be paying for it until the land was developed.

Walker inquired if there was a size between the 12" and 21" sewer line. Nielson said there is an 18", and while force mains are less expensive, but the cost saving is removed because a lift station is needed.

Foss said from a Community Development aspect, it is a good idea to take advantage of grants as development would be a great asset to the community.

Karnowski added that the Federal money has been sitting for quite some time and should be used soon so the city does not lose it.

Walker stated that he thinks the application should be submitted with both round-a-bouts and Phase 1. Hallin said she thinks Phase 1 and 2 should be done. Nielson added that approximately 120 acres could be developed if Phase 1 and 2 were completed.

Foss another consideration is that sewer and water costs have not come up much since this was looked at in 2006.

Dobson questioned if for some reason PUC did not have the funds or did not want to go out on bond for this project, would the City put sewer in and not water. Nielson said no, both would be done at the same time.

Walker asked if staff has heard of plans for the Soule property to be developed. If phase 1 is done, about 2/3 of the property could be developed. Karnowski added that it is really important to have willing participants. In this case, it would be putting in the utilities to handle future development. He recommends looking at the sewer line size, depths, service area, growth rate, etc.

Walker questioned if it gets more expensive the deeper you go. Neilson said yes, and estimated about \$100,000 for dewatering costs. He also included funds expected in acquiring right of ways. He also added in some costs for utility expansion, and if the pipe size was reduced it could eliminate the need for an Environment Assessment, which also would reduce costs.

Whitcomb said his biggest concern is selling this project to the residents, so he would like to see commitments from the landowners. Foss will reach out to the property owners, especially Saxon and Boo. Karnowski stated that if the grant was received, we could get a commitment before accepting the grant. Nielson added that he does not think it is out of line to ask them to pay at least part of the trunk fees up front if the grant was received. Whitcomb added that growth needs to pay for the growth.

Nielson advised that one of the round-a-bouts could be built with the Federal funds that are already available to the City.

Nielson suggested making it conditional. He would want to see Boo put up a letter of credit for \$800,000 and a commitment to pay the other off at the time of sale. He stated the city is

70% funded on one round-a-bout. If the planned trail was left in, that may help the application a bit as well.

Walker questioned the grant scoring. Nielson said it really depends on who is looking at the application. Walker suggested the application state that the city would like to do both, but can scale back if needed.

Karnowski asked the Council if they would be comfortable with Foss making some calls to the property owners and for Nielson to crunch the numbers. Nielson at this point is suggesting leaving the second round-a-bout in the plan to keep those transportation points, but take the sewer down to Phase 1 and 2. Phase 3 could be added if the property owners will make an official commitment.

Foss and Nielson will work on this.

### **Taxilane Pay application #2 (Final)**

Karnowski reported that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> and final pay request for the taxilane project.

WALKER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PAY APPLICATION #2 FOR THE FINAL TAXILANE PAYMENT OF \$8,328.81. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### **Liquor Store Signage**

Karnowski advised that the city was made aware of a used "Wine & Spirits" sign that was advertised on Craig's List. The sign is 12' 6" long and the LED red letters are 15" high.

The cost for the sign is \$200 and the quote for installing the sign is \$400.

The reason the purchase is being considered is to increase the awareness of the liquor store to Wal-Mart shoppers. The plan would be to mount the sign on the south side of the building.

He checked with Gerold and it was suggested to hire an electrician to do the work. The company selling the sign said they will do it. It does meet the sign ordinance.

Hallin liked the idea. Karnowski said staff believes it may be beneficial to have signage on the other side of the building to let people know it is a liquor store.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE WINE AND SPIRITS SIGN ADVERTISED ON CRAIGSLIST FOR \$200 AND THE INSTALLION OF \$400. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### **2016 Budget Discussion**

Frederick, Roxbury and Foss gave a brief overview of their proposed 2016 budget. Jackson said the rest can be discussed at the December study session, or Council can meet a bit earlier at the Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Council decided to meet at 6:30 pm on Thursday November 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss the rest of the proposed budget.

ZIMMER MOVED TO CONTINUE THE MEETING UNTIL THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> AT 6:30PM. DOBSON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully Submitted,

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Shawna Jenkins  
City Clerk  
ATTEST:

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Paul Whitcomb, Mayor