Acting Mayor Jules Zimmer called the meeting to order. Council members present was Jack Edmonds, Jenny Gerold, and Jeff Reynolds. Staff present, Administrator Robert Barbian, Finance Director Steve Jackson, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Community Development Specialist Stephanie Hillesheim, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Liquor Store Manager Nancy Campbell and Fire Chief Ron Lawrence. Absent was Mayor Brad Schumacher

**Cemetery and Community Garden – Randy Hatch with the Civic Betterment Group**

Jenkins reported that the Community Garden was started on a very small scale at the Depot in 2016 when a Statewide Health Improvement Grant was received. It was very successful and well received, but it was small and only allowed a limited number of volunteers to participate. Randy Hatch had a vision for a Community garden that was modeled after the Isanti County Community Garden in Cambridge. This type of garden allows community members to lease a 10 x 10 plot for their garden. Due to the lack of available space at the Depot, staff requested Council approval to use some space in the parcel adjacent to Oak Knoll Cemetery in which the City uses for their bare-root tree nursery and excess material storage. The Volunteer Group elects a Board of Gardner’s to oversee the garden, assign plots, provide education, enforce rules, etc. In 2017, the City Council approved that on Resolution 17-17 (attached).  

As you are aware, the City received a complaint from Anita and Kevin Gerrard regarding the use of a portion of land in the cemetery for the community garden. It was discussed in the open session of the November 14th meeting:

**OPEN FORUM**

Kevin Gerrard stated he still has concerns about the Community Garden being near the cemetery. He has contacted Valerie Gamble from the Mn Department of Health as well. She was going to look into it more and get back to him.

Andrea Gerrard also commented on the Community Garden. She was not even aware there was one, until there was a heated discussion on the Princeton Bulletin Board Facebook page about other people taking things from the gardens.

She said the staff memo mentions an alleged hayride. She was on that hayride and was not aware that it would be going through the cemetery and watched the tractor go over a stone. The community garden is a good idea, but feels it should be located elsewhere. We need to find a way that it doesn’t appear to be part of the cemetery, and more accessible to everyone. She mentioned a community garden in St Cloud that allows anyone to take some vegetables if they put in an hours’ worth of work.

The Council asked who put on the Tractor and trolley ride. Gerrard responded that Kinship did the tractor ride, and the Fair Board did a trolley ride.

Edmonds said the tractor and trolley ride are different and feels the Council would agree that those should not go through the Cemetery. He will talk with the Fair Board.

It was discussed under “unfinished business” as well.

**A. City Land, Cemetery, Garden and Material Storage**

Jenkins advised that in 2017, the City Council approved a small portion of land adjacent to the cemetery to be used as a Community Garden.
PID 24-029-1000 includes the largest portion of the cemetery. It includes the: Original, enlargement of Original, First addition, Second addition and most of the 3rd addition.

PID 24-029-0902 includes one row from the 3rd addition, the 4th and 5th additions.

PID 24-029-0900 is 10.37 acres and includes the Oak Knoll 6th addition, Community Garden area, and the material storage area that fronts the exit ramp of Hwy 169

The Community Garden use was approved by the City Council in 2017 (Resolution 17-17, and memo follows). In 2017, City Staff took the plot reservations and worked with Volunteer Randy Hatch. Beginning in 2018, The Civic Betterment Club took over the Community Garden. A Board of Gardner’s is chosen yearly and plot reservations begin at the Business Expo in April.

**Analysis**

In my brief research, I found 14 cities that have a community garden located in their Cemeteries.

The locations I found were: Laramie WY, Pittsburgh PA, Orlando FL, Schenectady NY, Milton WI, Tuftonboro NH, Mitchell SD, Watertown WI, Heber City UT, Monongahela PA, Worcester MA, Marquette MI, Almond WI and Hornell NY

I also contacted the MN Department of Health and was forwarded on to the Agricultural Department. Their Response:

There are not any regulations that I am aware of, related to produce safety, that would completely prevent a community garden, especially in a section of the land that does not have any burial sites.

There are state statutes that regulate public cemeteries (MN Statute Ch. 306), but nothing appears to directly address gardens or produce growing.

Thank you,
Valerie Gamble,
 Produce Safety Program Manager

In an additional letter that was received by Mrs. Gerrard, there are allegations of 2 hayride events that went into the cemetery, Garbage being thrown in the cemetery, etc. Permits were requested for the Community Garden Sheds, poles, water, potty, tables and large manure pile.

Permits are not required for sheds less than 200 square feet (per MN State building code), for poles, temporary porta-potties or tables.

The Cemetery has always been used by the City to store excess material, Grow bare-root trees, etc.

The City was not aware of any hayrides, or events that were held in the cemetery.
**Recommendation**

1. To consider directing staff to do an Administrative Lot Line adjustment to move the 6th Addition to Parcel ID 24-029-0902.

2. to consider the uses of PID # 24-029-0900 which currently includes the Community Garden Bareroot tree Growing area and excess material storage.

**Staff will provide how many available sites are in the cemetery. The council agrees that a lot line adjustment needs to be occur to move the 6th addition into the cemetery PID.**

**Staff will invite the civic betterment club to a study session.**

The city’s portion of Oak Knoll Cemetery has a total of approximately 8100 grave sites. Of those, approximately 1000 full grave sites are available to purchase, and approximately 470 cremation sites. The lots highlighted in Orange, are the lots that were recently set aside for cremation only. Each "lot" contains 32 cremation spaces.

6th Addition, Block 2 has 192 cremation spaces. 34 of them include an urn, and 12 are sold with no burials yet. It has 144 full spaces, with burials in 15 of the spaces, and 31 of the spaces sold.

6th Addition, Block 3 has 288 cremation spaces. 2 of the spaces include an urn. No other spaces are sold as of yet. It has 24 full spaces, with burials in 4 of the spaces, and 18 of the spaces sold.

An aerial map was provided that showed the garden area, Block 2 and 3 along with the burials, sold spaces and spaces still available for purchase.

**Recommendation**

1. to consider the uses of PID # 24-029-0900 which currently includes the Community Garden, Bareroot tree Growing area and excess material storage.

Edmonds asked for clarification that this does not cost the city anything. Randy Hatch replied that there is no cost to the city. They have an agreement with the Fairgrounds for the manure after the fair that they compost down and use the next year. Gerold added that Public Works has utilized some of that compost as well.

Hatch reported that there are 60 plots, with approximately 20 gardeners. The Depot is used mostly for perennials and have raised beds that are a great option for anyone that is physically disabled and unable to use the regular gardens. They currently have 9 open spaces, which they will likely fill at the Business Expo in April.

Hatch stated that the Civic Betterment Organization collects the funds and will issue payment for the garden for things like the Porta-potty that is made available at the gardens.

J Gerold asked the Board of Gardeners would consider a rule recommendation by the Council. Hatch said they would. J Gerold said she would like to add a rule that if they would
like to hold a promotional hayride or something similar, that they come to the City Council for approval prior. Randy said they have a monthly meeting, and a picnic once or twice during the year.

Edmonds said the Hayride / Trolly ride that came up in the prior meeting was something that the Ag Society did and is separate from the Community Garden. He said he spoke with Michelle McPherson from the Ag Society and she said if that was an issue, she wishes the complainant had come to her.

Zimmer would like the 2020 rules to come to the Council to review and approve once the Board of Gardeners approve them.

Tim Hennagir asked if the Community Garden pays for the water that they use. B Gerold responded that water is provided to the entire cemetery.

Hatch said he doesn’t foresee the rules changing much. The group gets things squared up in April and planting usually begins around Mother’s Day. Barbian asked if the Council would be okay with approving the 2019 rules and then if any changes are made, the Council can review those then.

J Gerold stated she feels this is a great use of the space. said she thinks it is a great use of space. Randy said it is about the hobby, and people growing for their own use.

**J GEROLD MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2019 RULES, WITH THE ADDITION OF A RULE REQUIRING THEM TO GET COUNCIL APPROVAL IF THEY WISH TO DO ANY HAY OR TROLLY RIDES AS A PROMOTIONAL EVENT. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. VOTE 3:1 WITH EDMONDS OPPOSED AS THE PREVIOUS HAYRIDE AND TROLLY RIDE WERE DONE BY THE AG SOCEITY. THE MOTION CARRIED**

Barbian asked for clarification that the Council would also like staff to contact the AG Society about their use of the City’s property.

**Grant Applications – Otto Bremer and No Child Left Inside Grants**

Hillesheim reported on the Otto Bremer and No Child Left Inside Grants that she would like to apply for to help with the Riverside Park Project and Canoe and Kayak rental program. She will be applying for $40,000 from Otto Bremer and $7000 from the No Child Left Inside grant.

**EDMONDS MOVED TO APPROVE STAFF TO APPLY FOR THE OTTOM BREMER GRANT. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**REYNOLDS MOVED TO APPROVE STAFF TO APPLY FOR THE NO CHILD LEFT INSIDE GRANT. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**City Website Design**

Hillesheim went over 3 different templates and asked the Council which design they preferred. Staff and Council consensus was template number 1.

**Flight Expo Grant Application**
Sharon Sandberg with Flight Expo reported on their desire to expand their program, and has been working with Hillesheim on a grant. Sun Country has approached them as well, as they are very interested in their program.

Hillesheim added that they have been in contact with the school district and Superintendent Ben Barton is also very interested.

Sandberg said she has approached a builder and they are looking at a 60 x 60. She would like to get the numbers finalized. Hillesheim added that they have talked about applying for $100,000 on the grant.

They would be required to have sprinklers, so they would be looking at a private lot adjacent to the airport. There are still some land issues to resolve that would allow this project to continue. The Airport Advisory Board and staff is working on finding a resolution.

Hillesheim stated that Sandberg has been filling out the grant application and she has been reviewing it and offering some suggestions. Sandberg added that she is applying for a few grants.

J Gerold asked where the matching funds would come from. Sandberg responded that she is going to apply for a few grants and do some fundraising. Barbian does not foresee the land issues being resolved in 27 days when the grant is due. Sandberg responded that she is going to talk to them and explain the situation and see what they suggest.

Zimmer said he supports the concept as it would be a great thing. Reynolds added that he knows the land issues need to be resolved, but it has been an ongoing problem for many years.

**Council Goals**

Staff will go through the lists and remove any of the projects that have been completed and put them on the February Study Session

**Adjournment**

ZIMMER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE STUDY SESSION AT 8:25PM. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawna Jenkins Tadych  
City Clerk

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ATTEST:

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Brad Schumacher, Mayor