Mayor Paul Whitcomb called the meeting to order. Council members present were Thom Walker, Jack Edmonds, Jules Zimmer, and Jeff Reynolds. Staff present, Administrator Robert Barbian, Finance Director Steve Jackson, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Liquor store manager Nancy Campbell, and Fire Chief Ron Lawrence.

**Sherburne Lakes 55+ Development update**

Barbian gave an update on the proposed 55+ development with 125 sites in Sherburne County. They are working with WSB to do some engineering work, and to see if the project is feasible. This could give the city a good opportunity to get over that 5000 in population.

**Sidewalks**

Barbian provided a map showing all the sidewalks and reported that the current snow removal practices is for the city to clear the Rum River Drive sidewalk on the East side from the Roundabout to Coborn’s. The north side of First Street from Rum River Drive down to 21st Ave, and the trail on the west side of 21st Ave to the Liquor Store.

In reviewing City Ordinances, it is covered in Chapter 600, Health and Safety; Nuisances. The owner and occupant of any property adjacent to a public sidewalk shall use diligence to keep the walk safe for pedestrians. It allows 36 hours to do so in residential, and 12 hours in the Central Business District.

Sidewalk snow clearance was last discussed by the council in April 2016. At that time, areas covered above as well as the sidewalk route to the school was discussed. With added sidewalk snow routes, more manpower and equipment would be needed. The estimate was a seasonal part time person and approximately $180,000 for a sidewalk machine.

There are a variety of alternatives available to the council. For of which would be:

1. Status quo – Clear snow as it is currently done.
2. Status quo + the west side of Rum River Drive, an end point would need to be established.
3. Change existing policy and only clear sidewalk snow adjacent to public property.
4. Consider establishment of a special services district to clear snow. The district would take on responsibility to clear snow and/or other projects deemed appropriate by the district for the benefit of the district.

Option 3 would be implemented at the council’s direction only after notifying existing owners receiving property snow clearance adjacent to private property that the service will no longer be provided.

Option 4 requires a petition by property owners to initiate implementation.

Whitcomb asked for clarification on what sidewalks are done. Gerold responded that they clean the east side of Rum River Drive from the Roundabout down to Coborn’s. Whitcomb
questioned if the city still needs to plow down to the old liquor store, since that is no longer city property.

Zimmer asked about cleaning sidewalks down First Street. Gerold responded that they clean the sidewalk on the north side down to 21st Ave, and then up 21st Ave as that is considered a Trail.

Barbian stated that in driving around town, he sees a number of sidewalks that do not get cleared, but staff does not seem to get many complaints.

Walker asked if we were to add the west side of Rum River Drive, how much additional time does Gerold think that would be. Gerold responded he estimates that it would be about 2 hours.

Barbian commented on the Safe Routes to School sidewalk that was recently put in on the north side of the city. Gerold replied that the city does their portion along the Civic Center property, but the residents do a pretty good job keeping their sections clear.

Edmonds said he thinks Ossell made a valid points. There are some business owners that are good about keeping theirs clean, and others that do not.

Zimmer stated he feels it is equal now, as the malls do clean their sidewalks adjacent to the building. The only business really benefitting is Princeton Insurance. Gerold responded that they do clean up their sidewalks a bit.

Barbian commented that with the current route, there are about 20 homes that are benefitting. Frederick stated that they did get three complaints regarding sidewalks not cleared on the West side of Rum River last year. Two of those property owners were out of town, and the third residence was not aware that they needed to clean their sidewalk.

Barbian added that there are several residential properties along First Street that also benefit because the city cleans down to 21st Ave.

Reynolds confirmed that they are doing the east side in front of city parking lots, and then the marked bike paths and trails.

Zimmer stated that there has been a lot of discussion at the Park Board as they are really sidewalks and not bike paths. Frederick agreed and said it is a tough one, as bikes shouldn’t be on sidewalks, but you don’t want to tell kids to ride on the street.

Zimmer commented that he feels both the east and west side businesses are doing their part. Staff has a system in place, and feels it should continue for now. He asked how long it takes to clean the sidewalk from the south mall to Coborn’s. Gerold responded it takes about 40 minutes on an average 4 inch snowfall.

Whitcomb asked if they clean the sidewalks if it is just a dusting. Gerold said for a liability standpoint, they do clean the sidewalks in those cases.
Walker understands the budgetary constraints, but he would like to see both sides cleaned. Zimmer said he thinks it is something to look at in the future.

Jackson mentioned the additional WWTP personnel they will be adding this summer. Winter is not a very busy time for the Waste Water Plant, so that person could have some time to spend on sidewalks.

Whitcomb said he thinks it’s a tough situation. If we start doing the west side of Rum River, the property owners along First Street are going to want theirs done as well.

Zimmer said the argument brought up by those property owners is the businesses on the East side do not have to shovel, but they do.

Reynolds said he does not favor any expansion of the current route. He understands why the city is doing the sidewalks in front of the malls, as the city owns those parking lots.

Jackson stated he believed it was originally started so residents could get down to the grocery store.

Zimmer feels it would be unreasonable to make the change now and expect them to be out shoveling right away.

Walker said he thinks we either need to do it, or begin monitoring and enforcing it better. Barbian replied that depending on if it is residential or commercial, they have 12 or 36 hours. If it is not cleaned in that time, a notice should be sent and if it is still not done, staff can clean the sidewalk and bill the property owner. If there is a change made, there needs to good communication with those property owners.

Fredrick added that the communication piece would help. If people move in, they may not know they need to clean their sidewalks. There is also the issue that some people cannot physically clean their sidewalks. If the police know there is an issue and the letter comes back as undeliverable, an officer will try to make contact.

Walker commented that it sounds like from this discussion, that staff should only be doing sidewalks adjacent to city property.

Zimmer would be in favor of keeping the same route for the rest of the winter, and revisit it in the summer and make any changes for next winter.

Barbian responded that if the discussion was held in July, staff could incorporate any changes in the budget.

**Capital Improvements and Tax Increment Financing**

Barbian explained the Small Cities Expanded TIF Powers. The TIF act permits a qualified small city to use tax increment to provide improvements, loans, subsidies, grants, interest
rate subsidies, or assistance in any form to assist the development of a commercial facility. There is no restriction on how the commercial facility can be used. The commercial facility assisted with tax increment must be located within the municipal jurisdiction of the small city and must be separately owned. More than one facility can be constructed at the same time as long as each facility is separately owned. Separate facilities owned by related parties are not considered separately owned. In addition, tax increment generated from the district can be spent only on activities within the district, with the tax increment spent only to assist the commercial facility, or for administrative expenses.

To establish a small city economic development TIF district, the municipality must find that the district will discourage business from moving to another state or municipality; increase employment in the state, or preserve and enhance the tax base of the state. Increment may be collected for 8 years after the date of receipt of the first increment.

The sewer line along Smith systems needs to be upsized, as well as some road improvements to the intersection may be needed. He asked the council if they would like staff to proceed.

Kwik Trip has their plans in and would like to break ground in the spring, so this would need to move forward fairly quickly. Jackson added that he believes once it is certified to the county, they could begin.

Zimmer said he feels we should be careful with how many TIF Districts we do, as it is important to grow the city’s tax base.

Barbian said TIF’s are a great program to use in some instances, and this would be a good fit.

The council is in agreement to move forward

Community Development and Airport Management

Barbian said he had a few thoughts he wanted to discuss with the council. He feels that a part time airport manager may be option. He put some feelers out to see if anyone out there was interested. He thinks someone that is very involved in the airport would be a good fit.

Whitcomb stated that if we were to get an FBO out there, the thought would be to have that person be an airport manager.

Barbian advised that the Community Development Department is going well. One thing he thinks would be a good direction, is to get available properties up on the LOIS Program. He stated it would take some staff time to get things put together and uploaded. He asked the Council their thoughts on having some contract work done on that. Once the information was gathered and uploaded, staff could keep it updated.
Jackson added that if the council is in agreement, a formal motion to move forward would be ideal. Walker said he feels it is important to get that information is available to people.

Walker and Zimmer are both okay with contracting that out.

WALKER MOVED TO APPROVE CONTRACTING THAT WORK OUT, NOT TO EXCEED $2000. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Zimmer went back to the airport discussion and mentioned that the airport manager duties recently changed to the Community Developer. Whitcomb thinks it is most important to get someone on as a community development person, then the council can look at changing it at a later date if needed.

Edmonds gave an update on the Mille Lacs County Board Work Session on Tuesday. The roundabout was brought up and it appears they are going to approve a payment of $61,000 to assist in the project. Zimmer asked how they came up with that number. Barbian said originally that number was estimated to be the County’s share of the construction, not including engineering fees.

** CLOSED SESSION ** - Flushable wipes litigation

Whitcomb advised that the agenda item for this meeting is to discuss the flushable wipes litigation. This portion of the properly noticed meeting of the Princeton City Council will be closed pursuant to Minnesota Statutes under the attorney/client communication exception to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law. The need for confidentiality outweighs the purposes served by the open-meeting law in this case based on the following:

Confidentiality is necessary to protect the City’s interests with respect to the litigation in question.
- The purpose of the closed meeting is not to make a decision behind closed-doors, but instead is to determine what actions are appropriate with respect to the sale of the property.
- The only business to be discussed in this portion of the meeting is the flushable wipes litigation and what action, if any, should be taken.

He said he will entertain a motion to close this portion of the meeting.

EDMONDS MOVED CLOSE THE MEETING AT 6:16 PM. WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Council will now go into a closed session. The time is 6:16pm. Only the officials and consultants of the Council who reasonably require access to this data may be in attendance at any portion of the meeting for this agenda item.
The minutes of this portion of the meeting should reflect only that a meeting was held with its date, time and location; who was present at the meeting; and the purpose of the meeting.

Members of the Council, Mr. Barbian and Attorney Toven to begin our discussion on this matter.

ZIMMER MOVED TO ADJOURN INTO OPEN SESSION AT 6:28 PM. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

WALKER MOVED REAFFIRM THE SETTLEMENT OFFERS AS PRESENTED. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ZIMMER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE STUDY SESSION AT 6:29PM. WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully Submitted,

______________________________
Shawna Jenkins
City Clerk

______________________________
ATTEST:

______________________________
Paul Whitcomb, Mayor