

**MINUTES OF A STUDY SESSION OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL  
HELD ON JANUARY 7, 2021 4:30 P.M.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Mayor Thom Walker called the meeting to order. Council members present were Vicki Hallin, Jenny Gerold, Jules Zimmer and Jeff Reynolds. Staff present, Finance Directors Steve Jackson and Tracy Peters, Public Works Director Bob Gerold, Community Development Manager Stephanie Hillesheim, Police Chief Todd Frederick, Clerk Shawna Jenkins, Wastewater Plant Manager Chris Klinghagen, Liquor Store Manager Nancy Campbell, Fire Chief Ron Lawrence and Engineer Jen Edison.

**Swearing in of Mayor Thom Walker, Councilors Jeff Reynolds & Victoria Hallin**

**Elect Acting Mayor for 2021**

REYNOLDS MOVED TO NOMINATE J GEROLD AS ACTING MAYOR. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION.

Walker stated that it has usually been the council member who has been on the council the longest. Zimmer added that he has done it the last 2 years, and is okay with doing it again. Reynolds said he is fine with either Zimmer or J Gerold.

Hallin wanted to change her vote to Zimmer as the acting mayor.

WALKER MOVED TO NOMINATE ZIMMER AS ACTING MAYOR. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION.

VOTE FOR J GEROLD AS ACTING MAYOR: 1 IN FAVOR, THE MOTION FAILED

VOTE FOR ZIMMER AS ACTING MAYOR: 4 IN FAVOR, ZIMMER ABSTAINED. THE MOTION CARRIED

**Amendment to CKW Memorandum of Understanding**

Walker said he understands that there is just a date change which requires the amendment, which the Developer has agreed with.

ZIMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR CKW. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Streambank Restoration Update**

Edison reported on the Streambank Project.

This annual report has been prepared for the City of Princeton in conformance with requirements for the operation of the City's Wastewater Treatment Facility under Permit #MN0024538. This report provides the following information in accordance with the permit:

- Description of the sites inspected.
- Photographic documentation that the trade is still in place and operating properly.
- If damage has occurred, photographic documentation of the damage.
- Photographic documentation of completed repair work.
- If all repair work has not been completed, a schedule for completion.
- Detailed description of the remaining repair work to be completed.
- Estimate of the total cost for each offset project.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF SITES INSPECTED

The Site Map is attached to this report showing all five of the Rum River Bank Stabilization sites inspected in the City of Princeton. These five Rum River sites provide the offset trading for Permit #MN0024538. The five sites are referenced as:

- Site 1 – Highway 95 (2012 Construction)
- Site 2 – Princeton Middle School (2012 Construction)
- Site 3 – Golf Course (2012 Construction)
- Site 4 – Princeton Elementary School (2014 Construction)
- Site 5 – Abney Salvage Yard (2014 Construction)

## III. PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION THAT THE TRADE IS STILL IN PLACE AND OPERATING PROPERLY

Pages 4 through 11 of the annual report contains the photos of each of the five offset trading sites from the site inspection conducted by City staff and MPCA on September 16, 2020. The photos on these pages represent a sample of all the photos taken at the trading sites during the repair work this year and are meant to highlight the post-construction trading sites and their functionality. All photos taken during site visits in 2020 will be electronically submitted to the MPCA along with this report and will also be available by contacting Amy Anderson at WSB.

## IV. IF DAMAGE HAS OCCURRED, PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION OF THE DAMAGE

The five trading sites were inspected on April 1, May 7, June 2, July 9, August 6, September 1, September 16 (with MPCA), and October 6, 2020. Damage observed at the sites in 2020 was minimal overall. The notes compiled by City staff in their inspection reports are summarized below:

### Site 1 – Highway 95

Issues at the Highway 95 include the following:

- Some minor sloughing and undercutting
- A small hole observed in the bench. The hole was noted in 2019 but does not appear to have grown in 2020.

### Site 2 – Princeton Middle School

Issues at the Princeton Middle School site include the following:

- Bare areas which lack vegetative cover.
- Minor erosion occurring at the upstream end of the site.

### Site 3 – Golf Course

Issues at the Golf Course site include the following:

- Minor bank sloughing
- Erosion occurring downstream of the project site.

### Site 4 – Princeton Elementary School

No significant maintenance issues were reported at the Princeton Elementary School Site.

### Site 5 – Abney Salvage Yard

Issues at the Abney Salvage Yard include the following:

- Some bare spots which need additional vegetation.

#### V. PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETED REPAIR WORK

No major repair work was completed in 2020, but several minor repairs were completed by City of Princeton Public Works staff. Pages 4 through 11 show documentation of the existing conditions at all five sites from the site inspection on September 16, 2020. The City of Princeton spent approximately \$15,000 in 2020 to complete the activities mentioned below.

##### Site 1 – Highway 95

Minor repairs at this site included:

- Install additional blanket, seed, and approximately 180 linear feet of revetments
- Apply fertilizer

##### Site 2 – Princeton Middle School

Minor repairs at this site included:

- Install additional blanket, seed, and approximately 100 linear feet of revetments
- Apply fertilizer

##### Site 3 – Golf Course

Minor repairs at this site included:

- Install additional blanket, seed, and approximately 135 linear feet of revetments
- Apply fertilizer

##### Site 4 – Princeton Elementary School

Minor repairs at this site included:

- Apply fertilizer

##### Site 5 – Abney Salvage Yard

Minor repairs at this site included:

- Planted arborvitae and small pine trees
- Filled minor rills with wood chips to slow runoff erosion

#### VI. IF ALL REPAIR WORK HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED, A SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION

All minor repairs deemed necessary in 2020 have been completed. City staff plan to continue to address minor repairs at all sites as needed through 2021.

#### VII. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE REMAINING REPAIR WORK TO BE COMPLETED

The City does not currently have major repair work scheduled for the trading sites for 2021. However, the City recognizes that additional repair work may be required due to multiple factors, including water levels on the Rum River, success of the revetments that were installed in addressing erosion, and growth of seed installed in 2020, as well as duration and intensity of future rainfall events. The City therefore proposes the following repair and inspection schedule for 2021:

##### Site 1 – Highway 95

The proposed repairs at the Highway 95 are as follows:

- Additional seeding as needed to fill in bare spots.
- Monthly inspection of the site to document bank erosion at the upstream end and determine if additional repair work is required

Site 2 – Princeton Middle School

The proposed repairs at the Princeton Middle School site are as follows:

- Additional seeding as needed to fill in bare spots.
- Monthly inspection of the site to document bank erosion at the upstream end and determine if additional repair work is required.

Site 3 – Golf Course

The proposed repairs at the Golf Course site are as follows:

- Additional seeding as needed to fill in bare spots.
- Monthly inspection of the site to document bank erosion and sloughing areas and determine if additional repair work is required.

Site 4 – Princeton Elementary School

The proposed repairs at the Elementary School Site are as follows:

- Monthly inspection of the site to document bank erosion and sloughing areas and determine if additional repair work is required.

Site 5 – Abney Salvage Yard

The proposed repairs at the Abney Salvage Yard are as follows:

- Continue to water the trees planted in 2019 and 2020 in order to encourage growth and establishment.
- Monthly inspection of the site to document washouts and determine if additional repair work is required.

VIII. ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL COST FOR EACH OFFSET PROJECT

The inspection and maintenance plan described above will be carried out by city staff, with assistance from WSB. Minor repairs such as seeding, staking, and fertilizing will be completed as needed. The current cost estimate for planned work in 2021 is \$5,000. This is less than the City of Princeton's annual budget of \$15,000 per year for repairs and maintenance of the trading sites. However, the City did not use the full \$15,000 budget for repairs in 2019 or 2018, therefore there is additional funding available should the current work plan need to be revised.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL REPORT. REYNOLDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**New Industrial Park Land**

Hillesheim reported that the City has closed on the industrial land purchase. Currently the lots in Aero Business Park are priced at \$130,680 for lots 2 through 5, which are all 1 acre. The Corner lot, which is 2 acres is priced at \$280,600. It is a bit higher per acre due to the road frontage.

J Gerold mentioned checking to see what other industrial land in the area is priced at.

Hillesheim will do some comparables to other industrial properties nearby, and contact some local realtors to get their thoughts.

### **City and PUC Joint Meeting Scheduled for January 19, 4:30pm**

Zimmer requested this be on the agenda. Without a City Administrator, he would like to table this item until an Administrator is hired so they can be on board from the start.

Walker asked if there is a timeline on when a new Administrator will be hired. J Gerold responded that they are hoping to have someone hired by mid to end of March.

ZIMMER MOVED TO TABLE JAN 19<sup>TH</sup> MEETING, TO THE MAY 6<sup>TH</sup> STUDY SESSION. HALLIN SECONDED THE MOTION.

WALKER SUGGESTED A FRIENDLY AMENDMENT TO TABLE THIS UNTIL THE FIRST REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING IN APRIL TO SET A NEW DATE. ZIMMER AND HALLIN ACCEPTED THE FRIENDLY AMENDMENT. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **Council Priorities**

Walker said he asked for this to be put on the agenda to see where everyone is at.

Zimmer started and said the simulcast system is very important to him. Gerold said they have a meeting planned to try and work out a First Net contract. He knows the simulcast system is on Lawrence and Frederick's list and they will be meeting with the County on it.

J Gerold said the Council spent a lot of time discussing these goals, so those that were on the Council last year when this was done likely have the same goals.

Zimmer stated one thing that is not on the list, is the Riverside-Riebe Park improvements

Zimmer also said that a pay study has come up, and thinks it should be added to the list.

### **Personnel Policy Update and Development Head Evaluation process**

Walker said a pay study was what he was leaning towards on the evaluation process. J Gerold said there are 2 types that can be done. One very extensive, but expensive can be done by a company. Or, one that doesn't cost the city anything besides some employee time. She believes it was done a few years ago. Jackson confirmed that Karnowski and Jenkins worked on that together.

Hallin feels it would be best to have staff do it to save some money. Walker likes the frugality of that option

Zimmer understands it can be very costly, but feels an outside consultant would be better.

J Gerold said she believes Jackson had said it created a fair amount of discord among staff when it was previously done. Questions why some got more points than other positions, etc.

Jackson said when it was done in 2017, they come up with a general percent across the board. It averaged 10%, so that was done. However, some were only 6% low, but they went across the board for all employees. He said he estimates a study done professionally would be around \$20,000. It will be costly and take a fair amount of time.

Walker said he knows the process may be very distracting with information gathering like the audit is, so the timing needs to be planned well.

Zimmer would like to see a good administrator on board that could assist in this. Possibly start the process and maybe plan for this in next years budget.

Walker agrees that it may be a good thing to wait on this until a new administrator was hired.

### **Additional Organizational Chart Discussion**

Walker asked what happened on the 29<sup>th</sup> when this was changed.

Reynolds replied that he brought it up, as he was wondering why the Wastewater was not under Public Works as it is in other cities, so he proposed it be moved. Walker asked if it was under Public Works in the past. J Gerold responded that it was. Reynolds stated that it appeared to be changed without Council approval.

Zimmer said he was on the council at the time and believes Karnowski had recommended at that time that it would be its own separate department. He does not understand why this is being changed, as there have been no issues and Klinghagen and the City's plant have won awards. He would have voted to wait until the new Administrator was hired and let them look at it.

J Gerold said she believes the Mayor suggested it be placed on the agenda. Administrator Barbian had always told J Gerold he was so busy he didn't have time to get to a lot of items. So, this may be a way to free up some of that time. She said she went to the League of MN Cities and looked up other cities and where they have their WWTP's located on their Organizational Chart. She found many cities that had it under their Public Works Department.

Walker feels it is questionable that it just happened at a special meeting kind of out of the blue. It may need to be there, but he would like to have a little more methodical consideration of what we are doing is all. He would like to table this until the next meeting, and it can be decided to keep it this way, or rescind the changes that were made on the 29<sup>th</sup>. there are good arguments on either side, he just wants a more public discussion about it, as it was not very public on the 29<sup>th</sup>. It can be put on the next agenda, so the Council has a week to think on it.

Jackson brought up Splash Pad and the Canoe and kayak program, and stated that those should be determined where to be placed as well.

### **Interim City Administrator – Verbal Update**

J Gerold said she spoke to Jenkins and we have had some very good qualified candidates coming in. She feels we will have some good luck finding someone soon. So, we will want to decide

who to weed through those applications. in the meantime, she was asked to reach out to a few interim Administrators. She contacted 5, and was able to talk with 4 of them. The 4 are all very interested, they are all in driving distance. They all agree 2 days a week would be suitable. They did ask if they would be expected to attend council meetings. 3 out of the 4, know previous administrator Karnowski. 3 of the 4 said they charge as an independent contractor. One of them does not have his own insurance, so he would want to be hired on as an employee, with additions to pension plan, and \$50 a week personal expense.

Three of them average about \$50 per hour, one is \$60-90 per hour, depending on how much work is involved, how staff is, etc.

Do we have a need for an interim administrator. We probably won't have someone hired until the end of March. If everyone is comfortable we can do it without someone. If council is not comfortable with waiting that long, there are some options.

Hallin asked Jackson, he knows first hand is it doable to not have an interim. It would be helpful to have staff have some input on this. Jackson, if you knew for sure you could get someone here by April 1<sup>st</sup>, its probably doable.

Walker would like Zimmer to go through them along with J Gerold. If the whole council interviewed the candidates, it would be open and their names will be public.

Peters added that if J Gerold and Zimmer could go through and screen down the applicants down to a couple for interviews, she would be happy to sit in on them as she has a lot of experience interviewing.

Reynolds thinks we may be fine without an Administrator for now.

Walker asked when J Gerold when she thought they may have some interviews set up. J Gerold responded that she was thinking the week Feb 8th, but thinks some could be done sooner. Zimmer asked J Gerold to call him when they want to go through the applicants. She responded that it may be nice to just sit in the Council room and go through them.

### **Adjournment**

HALLIN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE STUDY SESSION AT 6:24PM. ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Shawna Jenkins Tadych  
City Clerk

ATTEST:

---

Thom Walker, Mayor