

**MINUTES OF A STUDY SESSION OF THE PRINCETON CITY COUNCIL
HELD ON MARCH 4, 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 Director 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 and Fire Chief Ron Lawrence.

J Gerold would like to add something to the agenda regarding the Consent Agenda.

Class B foam and Engine 1

Lawrence gave a presentation to the Council about the current usage of Class B foam which has been found to be cancerous. Class B foam is used to extinguish flammable liquids. Class B foam is also very expensive for the business owners to clean up and dispose of. Currently the Fire Department has 12-13 55-gallon drums of Class B foam in storage between the station and Phillips Distilling.

Princeton Fire conducted some tests with a new encapsulating agent called F-500. They tested it on Wood Pallets, Gasoline, Alcohol and Magnesium. The Pro's of F-500 is that it is non-cancerous, environmentally safe, replaces class A and Class B foams, is less expensive to purchase, has a shelf life of 15+ years and has less clean up costs to the property owner.

The proposed plan is to purchase a trailer that will carry the new encapsulating agent. This trailer will replace engine 1. The cost of the trailer and the F-500 is \$55,000.

He would like to work with businesses to help with the funding for the trailer, sell Engine 1, use or sell all the current Class A foam and replace with F-500 and to dispose of all the Class 5 foam.

Walker asked what type of cleanup the F-500 entails for the property homeowner. Lawrence responded that the F-500 can be disposed of along with the regular damaged wood and materials from the fire.

Zimmer asked how long the F-500 has been around. Lawrence responded that it has been around for quite some time, but he just learned about it as Class B Foam was recently found to be cancerous.

Reynolds asked if he has talked to any departments that currently use the F-500. Lawrence replied that one of the departments that assisted with the big junk yard fire in Big Lake last year used F-500. The fire never crossed the line of where they began spraying it.

Reynolds asked how many gallons we be on the trailer. Lawrence responded that there would be 2, 285-gallon toes.

J Gerold asked what Lawrence thought Engine 1 would be worth if it was sold. Lawrence stated he believes it should be worth approximately \$25,000.

Reynolds questioned if the F-500 would work in our current Engines. Lawrence said it can be, the systems would just need to be flushed first as the materials are not compatible.

Zimmer stated that something like this should be budgeted for, and asked what the Department's timeline was. Lawrence replied that they are hoping to get things switched over in the next 6 months or so.

Walker asked if Phillips had purchased the foam they are storing, or did the Fire Department. Lawrence responded that he will have to check on that. Hallin questioned if they would be required to dispose of that, or would the City.

Reynolds questioned if there were some grants available for this type of purchase. Lawrence said it would depend on how FEMA would classify the need.

J Gerold thinks Lawrence is just asking the Council if it would be okay to go out and start seeking donations for this purchase.

Walker asked what type of lead time would be needed to have a trailer and foam ready to go. Lawrence replied that he assumes it would be a couple weeks.

Walker is curious about how the Class B foam can be disposed of. He thinks if we can get rid of it, we need to do that as soon as possible.

Lawrence confirmed that at this point, he is looking for permission from the Council to begin talking to businesses about donations. The Council consensus was he could begin doing that.

Wastewater Plant Dumping issues – letter approval

Klinghagen reported that there have been a few times in the past that the WWTP had issues with a mystery substance that someone had dumped into the system. These substances have created a lot of problems with the plants delicate balance of bacteria, causing a lot of issues and a significant cost.

The most recent situation was found Monday, February 22nd. The water was cloudy and they noticed an extensive amount of foaming. While they do not know for sure when it entered the system, we believe it may have been sometime Sunday or Sunday night.

A post was made on Facebook and shared on a few pages to remind people that they should not dump chemicals.

Monday March 1st, it was discovered that the plant was hit with a second dumping sometime over the weekend.

Staff is requesting approval to send the following letter to our Business's.

City of Princeton Businesses

The Princeton Wastewater Plant has been experiencing some issues with numerous types of chemicals being disposed of through the Waste water system. These incidents have been occurring over the last few months. Our Wastewater Plant contains billions of bacteria that break down the solid materials in the system. The chemicals that are being disposed of into the system is killing the bacteria, which causes our bacteria levels to become dangerously low.

As you know these events are extremely harmful and costly to our systems as well as the possibility of harming the river we protect. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency which oversees our license with Wastewater Plant is aware of the events and could initiate an investigation to identify the place of origin.

Our hope is that this illegal dumping is unintentional and we are asking that nothing besides water, human waste and biodegradable toilet paper be put in the system. Whether it is unintentional or deliberate, it is greatly affecting the City's budget and efforts to keep our community safe.

If you have other materials that you are unsure of or need to dispose please contact our wastewater plant at 763-389-3574 so we can work with you to dispose of them properly.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter and again please help keep our Wastewater Plant running efficiently and keeping our natural resources safe.

HALLIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE LETTER TO BE MAILED OUT TO BUSINESSES IN THE CITY. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Airport Taxiway timeline - verbal

Peters advised that B Gerold and her have discussed this project. They feel it would be better to do the project this year, as next year the cost will be 7% higher.

Reynolds asked when staff needs an answer. B Gerold responded sooner than later, so they can get moving on the project before costs keep going up. Reynolds said he understands not wanting to wait due to the cost savings. J Gerold added that it had been determined that the Liquor fund would pay for the local portion. Peters responded that if we do the project this year, the Council may need to limit the Wine and Spirits Grants that the Council approves this year.

J Gerold asked if the Council should put a moratorium on the grant fund requests again this year. Peters agreed that they should maybe put a hold on them entirely, or decide on a capped amount.

Zimmer asked how much is in the Liquor Fund. Peters responded that she was looking at it recently with Jackson. The expenses used in the budget were pretty conservative, she believes there would be approximately \$175,000 – \$200,000 available to use. Peters added that when she spoke with Airport Engineer Braunagel thought the estimate of \$125,000 for the local share was on the high side. Zimmer said we will likely be in the same boat next year with needing to limit the Liquor Fund grants, so it doesn't matter a whole lot when the project is done.

B Gerold said there is also \$30,000 in Covid airport funds that we can be used towards the local portion.

Walker suggested using future CIP project funds to replenish what was used from the Liquor Fund.

Peters would like to see the project be approved to move forward as the City will save money doing it this year, versus next.

Consent Agenda – J Gerold

J Gerold said she has been thinking, it may be nice to recognize businesses publicly when they donate to the City, instead of just approving them on the consent agenda. Walker agreed and suggested a brief overview of items on the consent agenda so they are recognized.

Adjournment

ZIMMER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE STUDY SESSION AT 5:25PM. J GEROLD SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawna Jenkins Tadych
City Clerk

ATTEST:

Thom Walker, Mayor