

Princeton City Council  
and  
Princeton Township Board  
Joint Meeting – August 15, 2019 – 7pm  
Princeton Town Hall

1. **Call to Order; Town of Princeton & City of Princeton**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Adoption of Agendas**

EDMONDS MOVED TO DROP 6, 7, 8 AND 9 ON THE AGENDA, AS IT IS DOES NOT MAKE SENSE TO TALK ABOUT ROADS PRIOR TO BOUNDARY AND ANNEXATION DISCUSSION  
ZIMMER SECONDED THE MOTION, VOTE 2:3 EDMONDS AND ZIMMER IN FAVOR,  
SCHUMACHER, REYNOLDS AND GEROLD AGAINST. THE MOTION FAILED

JULES MOTIONED TO INCLUDE THE ITEM THAT WAS HANDED OUT BY EDMONDS, UNDER 12.5. EDMONDS SECONDED IT. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **Introductions; by self-introductions**
5. **Discussion-Program Overview**

Princeton Township Chair Gene Stoeckel stated that the recent article in the Union Times is the reason the City and Township are meeting. Marsha Anderson wants to correct the paper and said she was not looking for annexation, she was just asking a few questions about it. Barbian added that there has been discussion at the Township level on the condition of these roads for about a year. Some residents along the road are looking to get those roads improved. The city is not looking to annex properties into the city, land is only annexed if a resident petitions annexation.

6. **Road Conditions & recommended work; Bob Gerold, Public Works Superintendent**

B Gerold gave a report on the recommended work and estimates on each of the following. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street from 85<sup>th</sup> Ave to 4<sup>th</sup> Ave N, and 82<sup>nd</sup> Street are both gravel and not consistent in width with the city standards. The road tops are less than the city's 24feet width minimum. In one area, it was only 22 feet with deep ditches on each side. If brought to City standards, it would need to be widened and the ditches flattened a bit.

82<sup>nd</sup> Ave south of 33<sup>rd</sup> is a bit narrow and slopes need be flattened a bit.

7. **Engineers Estimate; Bob Gerold**

Opinion of probable cost

<u>Street</u>	<u>Total estimate, with 15% contingency</u>
33 <sup>rd</sup> Street West of 82 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue	\$115,443.00
33 <sup>rd</sup> Street east of 82 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue	\$88,021.00
82 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue North of 33 <sup>rd</sup> Street	\$229,853.00
82 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue South of 33 <sup>rd</sup> Street	\$119,645.00

Barbian stated there are many different ways to look at these projects. The Township Engineer has looked at it, as well as other individuals. The range of repairs / work needed range anywhere from \$100,000 to \$600,000 or \$700,000. Very little of these roads are in City limits as of this time, so the city can only be cooperative of the areas that are in the City limits.

B Gerold stated that the engineers estimate for the work needed was looked at, but assessments were not went into at all Went through the engineer estimates, assessments were not looked at as of yet, so he does not have numbers for that

Township Supervisor Bill Whitcomb said the numbers above seem very high and using MnDOT numbers, he estimates it to be about 43% high. B Gerold replied that the numbers above would be estimates for this time of year, so they are going to be on the high side.

Schumacher stated it is nice to go through this process and start having discussions about these issues.

Gene Stoeckel asked Bill Whitcomb what his estimates came up to. Bill Whitcomb replied that his estimates were about \$562,000

Barbian added that he would encourage the Township's Engineer to put an estimate together.

## 8. **Funding sources to pay for improvements Stephanie Hillesheim, Community Development Specialist**

Hillesheim advised that there are a variety of ways road projects are funded. It is important to consider all of the possibilities.

**State:** The State of MN, through the MN Department of Transportation offers state aid to townships, cities and counties are only allowed to be allocated on state aid routes.

**Local road Improvement Program (LRIP):** the projects anticipated appear to be eligible and the adjacent school may add priority due to the regional significance of the route. Project applications were accepted for the 2019 funding cycle through March 1, 2019. There is currently no funding available for this program, but it is encouraged that those with projects signup on a list to enable transportation partners and local agencies the ability to demonstration legislative support for funding the program. In 2018, the state approved 35 million from General Obligation funds to award money to 56 projects state wide.

**County Local Option Sales Tax.** This money was appropriated to specific projects in 2016 at a public hearing, the projects completed and planned in 2019 will absorb the cash flow for the next 8 years.

**County Wheelage Tax:** currently the funds are going into the County operating budget to keep the local levy as low as possible. The County Board did not approve an increase.

**County Street Maintenance Fund:** covers routine resurfacing and only can be used on County Roads

The County has not levied for or funded any township or city roads

**Township and City:** both have the ability to levy funds and assess their corresponding residents.

Edmonds spoke about the local option sales tax, and stated they are in the third full year and it was set for ten years. At the time, there were a half a dozen road projects identified for construction in those 10 years. There are zero projects in the south end of the County, and the vast majority of that sales tax revenue come from Princeton. The road could be changed to a County road, and a hearing held to add it to the project list.

Mille Lacs County Commissioner Genny Reynolds responded that Edmonds is not correct. The County already held the public hearings and bonded for the approved road projects. The City could also implement a local options sales tax, they would just need to go to the legislature.

Barbian asked Township Engineer McLouth if he was aware of any other funding sources. McLouth replied that he does not.

Barbian said the school is along one of these roads and maybe there are additional grant funding due to that. Schumacher clarified that there could be some grant funding to improve the infrastructure due to the location of the schools.

B Gerold added that the School district only has about 15% of the lineal frontage on these roads.

## **9. Assessments Todd McLouth, Loucks Corp**

McLouth advised that as Hillesheim stated, both the City and Township have methods to assess projects. When the Township looked at it doing it, it failed the referendum.

Barbian added that someone would need to take the lead, but each body would need to assess their properties. There are a lot of different ways to do the projects. Most of the roads are in the Township. Whitcomb asked if a joint powers agreement would be suitable. Schumacher asked McLouth if he was aware of any Cities and Townships in a similar situation. McLouth responded that he does not. He knows of agreements for maintenance, but not for improvements.

Barbian stated if any residents were interested in annexing their property into the City, they would need to petition the city to do that. In the packet, there is some good information in the agenda packet from the League of MN Cities on the annexation process.

If the residents want the projects done, a way can be found to get them done.

## **10. Options for Boundary adjustments, orderly annexation agreements and annexations**

Barbian stated that the City is not looking to annex any properties into the City. A property owner can request to do that, and an orderly annexation agreement is an option as well. Landowners have the ability to object those as well.

Barbian added that the City does have a Rural Taxing District available for those properties that are in an area where sewer and water are not available.

B Gerold said Branch and North Branch had a very well-done annexation. They also have Urban and Rural taxing districts as well. did a good annexation.

Barbian commented that we need to work together as neighbors to determine what is best for the residents.

## **11. Council & Board thoughts & Comments**

Zimmer stated in listening to the various options of funding, he feels the one that makes the most sense is with a local option sales tax. We have to have our commissioners support. He asked Commissioner Wilhelm if there are any projects on the south side. Wilhelm there was not, and he would support it this project being included.

Zimmer said the main purpose of tonight's meeting is not to discuss annexation, but how to improve these roads. We all live in Princeton, and have different responsibilities. He asked how a joint powers agreement would benefit the city, as only a small portion of the roads discussed are in the city.

Zimmer asked if the Township has taken any steps to look at these roads. Gene Stoeckel replied that when the ballfields were put in, they were told the roads would need to be improved. Zimmer asked if there was any money set aside for it. Gene Stoeckel said there was not.

Zimmer stated that the City has their own projects to do. A local option sales tax would be a great option, as people shopping here would be paying for the improvements.

Edmonds added that when the local option tax was originally discussed, it was stated that the projects could be amended.

Schumacher asked if the County has ever taken a city or township road and turned it into a County Road. Wilhelm responded that he was not aware of any. Genny Reynolds said she is not either.

Jeff Reynolds said we have pushed forward to get a transportation plan in place and there appears to be a real lack of planning with these schools.

Schumacher stated that the goal is to start that planning process today. We should move forward with a transportation plan. The Townships and City should all be on the same page to determine how the community will look in the future. He feels this meeting was successful and a great way to open the communication. The schools are a big asset to this community.

Edmonds said there are 4 projects being discussed here, and he does not think Princeton residents would be happy to see us doing work on streets when they are not in the city. He mentioned 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and how the City has been wanting to expand that into the Industrial park for 30 years. There are other projects that are needed that are in the City.

Edmonds mentioned looking into an orderly annexation agreement

Gene Stoeckel mentioned that it would be foolish for the Township to improve the roads, and then have the properties annex into the city. Barbian stated that if they used their general fund to pay for that improvement, yes that would be foolish, but it would not be if those properties were assessed for the improvements.

## **12. Next Steps**

Barbian stated a transportation plan is a good idea. We want to plan for the area and determine what would be best for the whole community. If the Township wants to lead a project, the City would work with them on it as there is some of the roadway in the City.

Barbian said there is general overall support for transportation planning. If the township wants to lead a project, the city would work with them on it as there is some in the City. Reynolds reiterated that the City cannot spend money outside our jurisdiction.

Edmonds commented that we are due for a new comprehensive plan and there should be input from the surrounding townships.

Bill Whitcomb stated it is not all or nothing, one portion can be done at a time. It depends on what the residents want to do. The Township doesn't have a budget that will allow the big projects.

Zimmer stated 33<sup>rd</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> would solve all the issues. Greg Anderson replied that they do have some funds set aside specifically for that. The Township could do their portion, and the City their portion.

Barbian suggested both the City and Township get a bid from their Engineers and see where they come in. Schumacher stated that one would need to lead the project. Anderson said he believes that the Township engineer was a little cheaper when they looked at it a couple years ago.

Zimmer said he would still like to explore the local option sales tax. He asked if it could be brought to the county board to maybe look at changing their project list to add this project.

Schumacher added that the City has their CIP meetings coming up, and it may be a great time to add something there for this as well.

Schumacher asked G Reynolds if the County's Local Option Sales tax projects were coming in under budget and if there is a surplus of funds there. G Reynolds responded that they will not know for a few years yet.

Gene Stoeckel added that the City recently opened the airport project bids and the projects came in considerably lower than expected. B Gerold said the Great Northern Trail bids came in much higher than expected. Gene Stoeckel said it would be smart to go out for bid in the fall, for a spring start. Greg Anderson asked how soon the Engineering would need to start. McLouth replied now.

Edmonds would not support a joint powers agreement, but feels the next step would be an orderly annexation agreement.

Greg Anderson stated that the City and Township need to determine which road to work on first.

### **13. Adjournment**

ZIMMER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:45PM. EDMONDS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY