

Prior Lake City Council and Spring Lake Township Conduct Historic Joint Annexation Public Hearing

Using a neutral presiding officer, the Prior Lake City Council and Spring Lake Township Board conducted a 3 ½ hour public hearing before just over 100 Township residents to receive input on a proposal to annex 3000 acres of township property into the city over 20 years. After learning about the pervasiveness of annexation in the history of the city and township, the attendees received a detailed review of the annexation proposal by Spring Lake Township Board member Steve Pierson. City staff then clarified how city ordinances address such lifestyle issues as farming, houses, snowmobiling, hunting and subdivision of properties. A complete packet of information detailing all of the above information is available at the Prior Lake City Hall.

Twenty four of those in attendance addressed the elected officials. It was apparent that while most in attendance had concerns or opposed the proposal that others favored annexation. Concerns most commonly cited were added costs in taxes and special assessments, loss of rural character of the area and a desire for more specific information.

Following closure of the public input portion of the meeting, the Township Board members and City Council addressed each of the questions raised by the 24 speakers. From the comments it became apparent that the annexation proposal is a joint effort in long range planning intended to address the concerns of those impacted. Each of the key provisions was then reviewed and discussed. The joint body agreed that four issues merit further discussion.

The meeting concluded as first, the City Council and then the township board unanimously adopted a motion directing their annexation representatives and attorneys to prepare a final joint resolution within the next 30 days for consideration by the respective bodies. Once the joint resolution is adopted by the City Council and Township Board, it is submitted to Municipal Boundary Adjustment at the state which has 30 days to review and comment. Following that, the annexation agreement becomes effective.