



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 12, 2021 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes- Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, City Planner Adam Williams

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Jake Barley-Requesting Adjustment To Utility Bill

Jake Barley and his wife Christina approached the Council to dispute a water bill that had a usage of over 63,00 gallons for the previous billing cycle. Mr. Barley informed the Council that the property that accrued this high usage was vacant, and after doing diligent research, he did not find any leaks and the security footage presented no foul play. Mrs. Barley noted that there is always water usage on the property despite it being vacant and believes it to be a meter issue. Billing Manager Roberts informed the Council that this account was red flagged due to an abnormal surge in usage, a tech was sent out to verify the high read, however it was too late for a usage

report. Billing Manager Roberts explained the policy and encouraged the Barley's to get an accuracy test to which they refused. Councilman Martin asked for clarification on the accuracy test and all it entails. Water Supervisor Tuggle explained to the Council that the accuracy test took a total of 3 weeks to complete with a \$120 upfront cost. If the issue is found to be with the meter, then the \$120 fee is refunded to the customer. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that City staff was abiding by the policy guidelines set in place by the Council, therefore they would need to make the final decision on the matter. Mr. Barley stressed that there was no way possible for such a high usage to occur to which Mrs. Barley noted that once each year they experience a spike in the water bill. Councilwoman Green questioned the logic behind their refusal of the accuracy test, noting that it could possibly remedy the situation. Councilwoman Green continued by offering alternative solutions that aligned with the policy. Mrs. Barley noted that she and her husband did not want to pay the \$120 fee to have the accuracy test conducted, she encouraged the Council to review previous bills for justifications in the once-a-year spike. Councilwoman Brannon expressed her sympathy for the situation, noting that the Council cannot deviate from the policy, thus she encouraged the accuracy test. Councilwoman Green made a motion to deny the Barley's request. Mayor Barley encouraged the couple to meet with Billing Manager Roberts for further assistance moving forward.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To DENY the Barley's request for a bill adjustment.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

4. Recognition of Guests

None.

5. Consent Agenda

a. Revenue and Expenditure Report

b. Bills

c. City Council Meeting Minutes- December 8, 2020

Councilwoman Green noted that with the previous City Clerk she requested that all votes be displayed in the roll call format, however it has not since been done. Councilwoman Haffner expressed that she had also noticed this and would like as much detail as possible in the minutes. City Clerk Robinson informed the Council that she was recently informed that the Council would like the votes to be written in the roll call format and would do so moving forward. Councilwoman Green acknowledged City Clerk Robinson's good work with the minutes and encouraged her to revise the previous minutes to clarify votes for members in the community. City Clerk Robinson expressed her concerns in ability to do so without a visual recording of the previous meetings. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he would assist City Clerk Robinson with identifying voices on past audio recordings. City Attorney Adkinson inserted legal counsel to assist the Council in approving items on the Consent Agenda.

6. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE Tab 2 and Tab 3 of the Consent Agenda.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

8. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

None.

9. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

None

10. Staff Reports

a. Water

b. Sewer

c. Parks

1. Parks Update

Parks Director Digges updated the Council on the following items in the Parks Department:

- The shades at the Sports Complex playground have been installed.
- The Boat Ramp additions at Marsh Landing have been completed.
- The baseball net canopy has been installed.
- The pool area will be the next focus of the Parks Department with plans to update the bathroom area and to add more seating.

d. City Manager

1. FY 2021-22 Legislative Appropriations Projects

City Manager Simmons introduced Liberty Partners, who would be giving a presentation on the 2021-22 Legislative Appropriation Projects selected by the City. Mrs. Jennifer Green of Liberty Partners opened the presentation by expressing gratitude for City Manager Simmons responsive and punctual work relationship, which has allowed them to better gauge the needs of the City. Mrs. Green noted that they have since hired a director of grants management, which is included in their fees, to scour for any funding that may be of use for future projects for the City. Councilman Martin wanted verification from City Manager Simmons and the City's engineer that they were confident in the selection of the four projects being the priority. City Manager Simmons and Engineer Rouchaleau confirmed that they were confident in the projects selected, noting that the US 331 Project has been on the City's agenda for years, therefore they would break it down into segments for completion. Engineer Rouchaleau noted that the Lift Station Upgrades project was a necessity following the aftermath of the previous hurricane to keep the City prepared for disaster relief, commenting on the City being an ideal candidate for funds. Engineer Rouchaleau also remarked to the benefits of having South Jackson Street Roadway stormwater improvements, reminding the Council that it was a previous project that failed to get funding. The Community Center, according to Engineer Rouchaleau, was an ideal selection based on the diversity of funding the City could acquire for it. City Manager Simmons also noted that following a meeting with Senator Gainer, he became aware of the need for an incentive to convince residents to convert from a septic system to the City's public sewage system, noting a potential source of additional funds that the City could seek for the US 331 project. Councilwoman Green added that the City should network with County Commissioner Trey Nick regarding the water quality and septic systems, as the County was also tackling a similar project. Councilwoman Brannon also noted that County Commissioner McCormick was an additional person to work alongside. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he had been conversing with the two commissioners regarding collaboration.

Mrs. Green noted that the focal point for pushing the City's project list would be Senator Gainer and Representative Drake through the legislative process. Mrs. Green began the Liberty Partners presentation by addressing the political advantages within the Florida House and Senate, informing the Council of key session dates and committee weeks for lobbying the Appropriations Projects list. The Liberty Partners presentation gave insight to new processes within the Legislature this year due to the Governor's plan to reduce inflation, noting the \$93 billion budget cuts. Mr. Tim Parson of Liberty Partners took the floor to state his positive political prospects of securing the septic to sewer conversion funding, noting that Governor DeSantis has made this as a top priority. Mr. Parson continued by informing the Council on their proposed narrative to lobby for funding for the appropriation projects and opened the floor for questioning from the Council.

Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council of the bid update with the treatment plant, noting that it had been approved by USDA; he informed the Council of key dates for re-advertisement and bid submissions. Engineer Rouchaleau projected that the work on the project would begin in March. Councilwoman Green inquired on how far down they would be able to get on U.S Highway 331 S. Engineer Rouchaleau presented the Council with a handout that presented plans for advancement down U.S Highway 331 S, broken down into segments, noting that they were likely to get more funding by breaking the project into smaller segments. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that Senator Gainer was a supporter of the vision of development for the City.

2. Sewer Operator

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that his goal is to hire a Class A Operator during developments of the old plant into the construction period of the new plant, that way they have a clear understanding of how the City is being put together. City Manager Simmons spoke on the importance of the City having forward thinking with new projects, noting why the ideal candidate would have water and sewer knowledge, would be beneficial for business, eventually turning into a Utilities Director. City Manager Simmons added that his research into the salary range for such a candidate ranged from \$80,000-\$100,000 and sought the Council's opinion. Councilwoman Brannon thanked Charlie for his progressive thinking and for bringing it to the Council's attention, noting her approval for finding that candidate soon. Councilman Farris remarked his favor in being proactive and hiring a candidate that can move the City forward. City Manager Simmons added that with the City being proactive, it looked good to future investors seeing them progress on their own, as opposed to seeking a handout. City Manager Simmons asked for a motion to move forward with looking for a Class A Operator.

Councilwoman Green wanted to discuss agreeing to a salary range for hiring a Class A Operator. City Manager Simmons noted that the salary range gave the City flexibility in finding the right person with all the experience and qualifications. City Manager Simmons informed that many of the candidates that would meet the requirements were local. City Attorney Adkinson added that an amended motion including the salary range was needed.

Councilwoman Green wanted to thank Sewer Supervisor Fawcett for all his hard work and for getting the City to this point in development. City Manager Simmons also commented on Sewer Supervisor Fawcett's work.

City Manager Simmons updated the Council on several items:

- Blueberry Road new traffic panel had been installed to clock speeding; the direction of the panel will be changed periodically.
- City Manager Simmons is still working on an All-Stop with the County. On February 2, he will be meeting with DOT and the County to discuss the four-lane road that will be coming through the City, along with the possibility of new light locations. Traffic studies will need to be conducted on traffic flow throughout the City.
- City Clerk Robinson will be looking into recorded lines for City Hall phones to assist with customer service and options will be presented at the following meeting.
- The City Survey is now active on the City's website.
- The County and City Road Maintenance Agreement is being drafted and currently being worked on, hopefully by the next Council Meeting he can have it presented for review.
- City Attorney Adkinson, Supervisor of Elections Bobby Beasley, and Planning Director Hughes-Neel are working on redistricting for the City. They will weigh all options and present it to the Council.
- A forensic audit special meeting is needed to have the audit presented to the Council. City Manager Simmons would like to schedule the special meeting for the end of February and will pull dates and correspond with the auditor to set a date.

Councilwoman Haffner commented on her availability, Councilwoman Green inserted that members in the community have been inquiring about the audit and would prefer it to be held in the evening.

Councilwoman Green asked for clarity on the All-Stop, noting rumors she heard regarding it. Engineer Knauer presented the guidelines for installing an All-Stop,

noting the criteria for the warrant study. Engineer Knauer noted that the City currently lacked a warrant study, informing them that the fee to have one conducted would be \$4,000, and that he felt it would not be a good investment for the City. Engineer Knauer informed the Council of issues that may arise by installing an All-Stop, noting that there are safety issues to consider validating the installation of it, such as speeding and pedestrian safety. Councilwoman Green thanked Engineer Knauer for clarity and sought legal counsel from City Attorney Adkinson on the matter. City Attorney Adkinson reminded the Council that they have the authority to regulate City streets, however it depended on the justification of factors that warrant a need for certain traffic regulations. Councilman Farris expressed his concern for public safety with speeding and pedestrians, acknowledging that actions are needed. City Manager Simmons remarked that he could shift radar systems to that area to regulate speeding.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To move forward with hiring a Class A Sewer Operator.

Amendment:

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To hire a Class A Operator with the salary range of \$80,000 - \$100,000.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

- e. City Clerk
- f. Finance
- g. Billing
- h. Planning

1. Trails at Hammock Bay Final Plat

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Trails at Hammock Bay Final Plat requesting approval.

Planning Director Hughes-Neel also introduced the new City Planner Adam Williams. City Planner Williams took the opportunity to greet the Council and thanked them for the position, noting that he was excited for his new venture with the City.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Trails at Hammock Bay Final Plat.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

i. Legal

j. Engineering

11. Old Business

a. Pending Items

City Clerk Robinson noted that the Pending Items list was submitted for informational purposes for Council members. Councilwoman Green queried about the status of the Mainstreet Program. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that due to COVID-19 and understaffing the Planning Facilities Committee has not had the opportunity to have meetings to move forward with the program. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the process of the Mainstreet Program was very strenuous and required a lot of focus, noting that she would speak to City Manager Simmons about it. Planning Director Hughes-Neel also expressed that the downtown area, Highway 20, Madison Street, and Shipyard area should be the focus, she would present an update at the end of February.

Councilman Farris inquired about the status of the Education Reimbursement Program. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that all prior research conducted had been lost due

to the death of the staff member who was spearheading it, noting that she will redo the research to present to the Council.

12. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

Mayor Barley informed the Council of two groundbreaking ceremonies invitations sent out by Superintendent Russel Hughes for Thursday afternoon at Freeport Elementary School and the Freeport Transportation Facility. Mayor Barley also reminded the Council that he would be traveling to Orlando to accept The City of The Year Award from a local veteran's group.

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

d. Councilwoman Green

e. Councilwoman Haffner

f. Councilman Martin

13. Public Comment

Engineer Knauer wanted to commend City Manager Simmons on his forward thinking, expressing his excitement for the growth in departments to keep up with the increasing population. Engineer Knauer noted his excitement to advertise bids for the new sewer plant, highlighting that the new hire may potentially be the manager of that facility. Engineer Knauer informed the Council that a Utility Director will be needed in the future to manage the supply and demand for the growing population, cautioning about being behind on the development curve.

14. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:24 AM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 2021, 6:00 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin

Council Members Absent: Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Revenue & Expenditure Report through December 2020
- b. Bills
- c. City Council Meeting Minutes- December 8, 2020
- d. City Council Meeting Minutes- January 12, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

Councilwoman Green expressed concerns about misspellings and typos in the Meeting Minutes that she felt needed to be addressed before being approved. City Clerk Robinson asked for clarity on these errors to which Councilwoman Green advised she would discuss with her following the Council Meeting. Councilwoman Green sought clarity on making the appropriate motion from City Attorney Adkinson.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the consent Agenda subject to corrections.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

City Manager Simmons requested to add Appropriations Submittal to the Agenda. Mayor Barley requested to add the State City of the Year Award and the Upcoming Easter Egg Drop/ Festival to his section of the Agenda.

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To approve the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks

1. Pool Seat Shade Replacement Quotes

Parks Director Digges informed the Council that he would like to add new shading to the pool area, noting that the current shade needed to be removed due to damage. Parks Director Digges presented quotes to the Council from several companies noting the pros and cons of each option. Parks Director Digges recommended that the City take the lowest bid from WeCanShadeIt which also matched the shade installed at Casey Park. A request for accepting the bid from WeCanShadeIt was made.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To ACCEPT the WeCanShade bid.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

d. City Manager

1. Incentive for Sewer Treatment Plant Construction

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he had been discussing possible incentives with City Attorney Adkinson to present to contractors for the Sewer Treatment Plant facility. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the funds for the project were USDA Rural Development which caused him to be on high alert for the language included in the bid documents they would use to possibly sway contractors to expedite the project. After careful review of the drafted contract submitted by

capabilities, as well as furnish a fence around the new Water Department property. A motion to approve the budget amendment was requested.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To Approve Budget Amendment #1.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

- g. Billing
- h. Planning
- i. Legal
- j. Engineering

1. Appropriations Submittal

Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council that after discussion with the lobbyist on the Appropriations Projects they believed that the City should seek an alternative approach to secure funding for the U.S 331 Water and Sewer Project. The City would address Segment 4 of the project and over a five-year period would ask \$380,000 from the legislature and match it with \$100,000, which would dedicate \$480,000 to that project each year. Councilwoman Green asked for clarity on what segment of the project the funding would be allocated towards. Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council that the funds would be for Segment 4, however it did not limit the City in pursuing additional funds from other sources or from asking for more funding in other years. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that with the new 50% Rule he did not find it wise to seek a larger amount that the City would have to match. City Manager Simmons also informed the Council that with budget cuts the State would not be giving out large amounts of funding therefore he believed the approach to be the safest route. Councilman Farris noted that it made a huge difference for the State to see that the City could add funding towards its own projects, especially in today's political climate. City Manager Simmons noted that he made sure to inform the State of the City's rapport of funding its own projects. Councilwoman Green noted her concerns about cutting the City too short by asking

for such a generous amount of funding from the State. Councilman Martin noted that the City needed to be ahead with development, cautioning of problems that could arise because the City failed to lay the groundwork. Engineer Rouchaleau reminded the Council that the City had been denied for 5 years with requesting larger amounts of funding, so he felt that this was a wise starting point. City Manager Simmons noted that this would be a great route to getting the City's foot in the door with State funding. Councilman Martin noted that Engineer Knauer was good with finding grant money for the City.

Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council that the Treatment Plant Pre-Bid Meeting had 20 attendees and included a tour of the build site. The official bid would take place on February 18.

10. Old Business

11. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. State City of The Year Award

Mayor Barley informed the Council that while on his trip to Orlando to accept the Local City of The Year Award, the veteran's group Vouture Locale also submitted the City for the national award in Missouri. Mayor Barley noted that if the City won the national award that Vouture Locale would pay for all expenses.

2. Easter Egg Drop/Festival

Mayor Barley informed the Council that The Destiny Church had reached out to him regarding approval of conducting the annual Easter Egg Drop. City Manager Simmons noted that he and Mayor Barley have discussed it being an open-air area making room for COVID safety accommodations. City Manager Simmons continued by adding that several events have been canceled in the past year, however he is looking into the City doing something for the 4th of July due to it being further out and the anxiousness of the public. Councilwoman Green remarked that if the plan to conduct the Easter Egg Drop was traditional then she would be against it due to no social distancing amongst the children, she would prefer an alternative method to the Easter Egg Drop. Councilman Farris noted that although he loved the idea he was concerned about social distancing and children spreading COVID, he would feel more comfortable with events being held further out into the year. Mayor Barley asked for clarification on either canceling the event or encouraging the church to find an alternative method for conducting the Easter Egg Drop. Councilwoman Green noted that she felt that the event needed to be canceled for safety precautions.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To CANCEL the Easter Egg Drop.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

d. Councilwoman Green

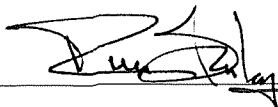
e. Councilwoman Haffner

f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

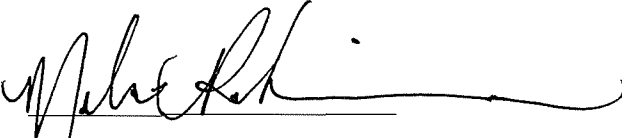
13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:38 PM.



Mayor





City Clerk



City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 9, 2021, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, Planning Tech Samantha Graves

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Haffner, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. City Council Meeting Minutes- January 28, 2021
- c. City Council Meeting Minutes- January 12, 2021
- d. City Council Meeting Minutes- December 8, 2020

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To APPROVE the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- Councilman Farris- Destiny Worship Center Extravaganza
- City Manager- Updates

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

2. Hammock Bay Blood Drive

Planning Tech Graves presented the Hammock Bay Blood Drive event permit and fee waiver for approval.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To APPROVE the event permit and fee waiver.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

i. Legal

j. Engineering

1. Rate & Capacity Fee Study 2021

Engineer Rouchaleau presented a proposal for engineering to update the City's rate and capacity fee for this year and sought Councils approval. City Manager Simmons wanted to confirm that this study would reexamine both commercial and residential rates, Engineer Rouchaleau agreed that it would.

Engineer Rouchaleau briefed the Council on the pre-bid meeting progress for the Wastewater Treatment Facility, noting that it was on track for the bid opening set for February 18, 2021 at 10 AM. Engineer Rouchaleau continued by informing the Council of the Scott Municipal application will open in which he will provide the Council with recommendations at the next Council Meeting.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To ACCEPT the rate and capacity fee study proposal

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris

1. Destiny Center Extravaganza

Councilman Farris opened by noting that although at the previous Council Meeting, he voted to cancel the Destiny Worship Center Egg Drop, he has since received several phone calls from members of the community who felt that attendance of the event should be left to the discretion of the parents. Councilman Farris noted that this decision was tricky being that schools were still hosting sporting events; however, he believed the event to be a positive tool to bring the community together and that parents should have the final say. Councilman Farris made a motion to allow the Destiny Worship Center to host their Egg Drop at the Sports Complex. Councilwoman Green remarked that at the previous meeting she stated that she would be willing to consider the event occurring if they created an alternative method to ensure safety measures were taken to reduce the spread of COVID. Councilwoman Green noted that she could not agree to moving forward with the event unless there was a different plan of action. Councilwoman Haffner noted that she would agree to the event if there was a more uniform way of handling the Egg Drop to ensure space amongst the children. Mayor Barley noted that he would be willing to meet with Pastor Rob to discuss alternative methods for the event if the Council would like. Councilwoman Brannon noted that if the event was sponsored by the City then she agreed to some intervention to ensure COVID regulations were being considered. City Manager Simmons sought clarity on the event being sponsored by City Funds, Councilwoman Green clarified that the City sponsors the event by allowing the

church to utilize the Sports Complex for free. Parks Director Digges inserted that there were a plethora of options for the church to conduct the event safely, noting that the Sports Complex had several fields which afforded sufficient spacing. Parks Director Digges noted that the church always had a ton of volunteers to supervise the event, he offered to meet with Pastor Rob to discuss options. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council to withdraw the motion and to return to the discussion after speaking with the pastor on alternative options. Councilman Farris and Councilman Martin withdrew their motions.

- d. Councilwoman Green
- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

Linda Taylor approached Council to dispute water meter fees. Mrs. Taylor informed the Council that she inherited a property which held two houses, unfortunately she was unaware that the property split two lines on one water meter. Mrs. Taylor requested an extension until March 31 to get the funds to buy an additional water meter. Mayor Barley wanted to clarify that Mrs. Taylor wanted to keep two houses connected on one water meter until March 31 until she raised the funds. Manager Simmons informed the Council that there was no policy in place for extensions on water meters.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To APPROVE an extension on the meter fees until March 31.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

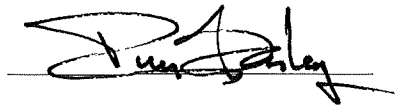
Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

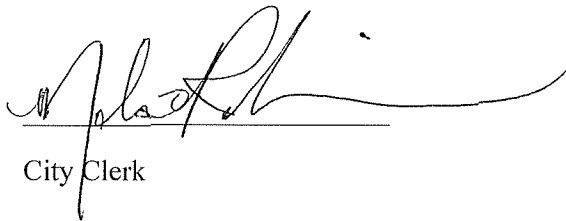
13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn at 9:16 AM, due to a public comment the meeting reopened. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 AM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 16, 6:30 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Council Member Absent: Councilwoman Brannon

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Parks Director Travis Digges

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Easter Egg Drop

Parks Director Digges opened the discussion by discussing the plan of action the Destiny Worship Center intended to take to abide by COVID-19 Safety regulations. Parks Director Digges cited the handout he gave to Council which gave details as to how the church would utilize the entire park to warrant space, follow a strict timeline, and stage children by their age group. Park Director Digges noted that the volunteers would direct the flow of traffic on and off the field to the next event. Councilwoman Haffner noted her approval of the time gaps between the age groups, and recommended use of the portable hand sanitizers on site. Parks Director Digges confirmed that there will sanitation stations.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the 2021 Easter Egg Drop.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

Mayor Barley asked the Council if they wanted to continue with the Spring Festival arts and crafts events, spacing out the booths. Councilwoman Green expressed her hesitancy to agree to the event without having seen the flow plans. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that the booths would be scattered throughout the park with drawn out lines for order. There would also be limited parking around each event. Councilwoman Haffner also expressed a need to see the flow chart for a visual. City Manager Simmons agreed to work with the Mayor to present the requested item.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To APPROVE the Spring Festival.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

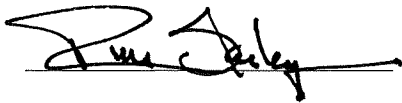
Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

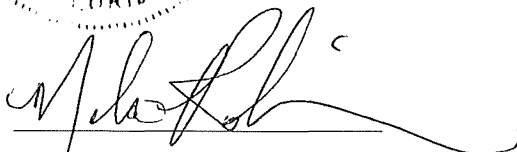
Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 25, 2021, 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Council Members Absent: Councilwoman Amanda Green

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Tedd Barr- Fee Waiver Request

Mr.Barr informed the Council that due to the pandemic the Little League experienced significant financial loses after being denied their refunded charter fees for the year, making a \$4,000 investment in concession food, purchasing new gear, as well as updating the storage doors for their equipment. Now that the Little League has grown to the largest that it has ever been Mr.Barr requested a fee waiver to assist the league in expenditure cost. Councilwoman Haffner thanked Mr.Barr for all his hard work with the Little League and made a motion to approve the waiver. Mr.Barr invited the Council out for Opening Day on March 27 for recognition.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To APPROVE the fee waiver request.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

4. Recognition of Guests

Mayor Barley recognized County Commissioner "Boots" McCormick.

5. Consent Agenda

a. Revenue & Expenditure Report

b. Bills

c. City Council Meeting Minutes- February 9, 2021

6. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

8. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- City Manager Simmons- Disconnect Policy

9. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Agenda with the specified addition as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

10. Staff Reports

a. Water

b. Sewer

1. Quote Approval

Sewer Supervisor Fawcett presented the Council a quote for a new spare pump that would have the ability to work in 3 different locations around the City. Sewer Supervisor Fawcett requested a motion to approve the purchase of the spare pump.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To APPROVE the purchase of the spare pump.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

c. Parks

d. City Manager

1. Appropriation Changes

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that after speaking with Representative Drake he was advised to raise the appropriations ask amount to \$1,000,000, however he wanted the Council's approval. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that they would need to make a motion to ratify that change and authorizing staff to make reports to support the request.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To RATIFY the appropriations, request amount to \$1,000,000.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

2. Alternative Water Supply Grant Ratification

City Manager Simmons reminded the Council that he began an aggressive pursuit of grants to compliment the Highway 331 Project with the Bay Initiative. Alongside County Commissioner McCormick and Engineer Knauer, City Manager Simmons has been seeking alternative ways to get residents from septic to sewer. City Manager Simmons sought the Council's approval to pursue the grant by submitting the application. County Commissioner McCormick approached the Council by expressing his personal commitment to see the Bay Initiative succeed, noting his support of the project in prior years.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE submitting the application for the grant.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

3. Disconnect Policy

City Manager Simmons informed the Council of the contradictory nature within the current disconnect policy, noting the need to enforce boundaries to protect City Staff. Despite City Manager Simmons's commitment to customer service, he noted that the afterhours workday for some staff members to fulfill request needed to come to halt. Councilwoman Haffner asked for clarity on the disconnect policy regarding the same day request reconnect after 5PM. Water Supervisor Tuggle informed the Council that to fulfill same day request his workers will go out to reconnect after hours. Mayor Barley wanted to confirm that the future use of the on-call person would be for emergency situations only, Water Supervisor Tuggle confirmed. Councilwoman Brannon queried on the number of reconnects after hours, Water Supervisor Tuggle noted that the usual amount was significant however the numbers have been reduced. City Manager Simmons noted that Billing Manager Roberts currently took her work laptop home to fulfill request that came after hours and suggested that all request submitted after 4PM be reconnected the following business day. Councilwoman Haffner suggested that the change in policy be reflected on the bottom of the bill, Councilman Martin suggested following the disconnect list and notifying them of the

change via robo call. Billing Manager Roberts noted that she could add the notice to the robo calls.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To APPROVE next business day reconnects with no more fee.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

4. Updates

- City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he tasked City Clerk Robinson with the responsibility of looking into recorded lines for the City, noting the need to improve the customer service experience. City Manager Simmons congratulated City Clerk Robinson's on her ability to not only find a company that reduces the City's phone expense by 50% but also grant recorded lines with an updated phone system. City Manager Simmons expressed his concern for time the recorded calls would need to be kept abiding by Florida Sunshine Laws. City Attorney Adkinson advised that the calls would need to be saved for seven years. Councilwoman Brannon expressed her concerns for having all the lines recorded, suggesting that it be conducted by certain departments only. Council members discussed the departments they would like recorded for customer service purposes, agreeing to exempting the administrative departments from call recordings.
- City Manager Simmons sought guidance on a date to have Marcum honor their contract by presenting their audit findings before the Council. Council members suggested the March 25 Council Meeting to which City Manager Simmons agreed to make arrangements.
- City Manager Simmons informed the Council that there were currently four interviews scheduled for the dual certified Class A Sewer Operator position.

- City Manager Simmons introduced Officer Pendleton as the new Head of Security for Blight Control, noting his plan to handle the blight issue in the City with a personal approach before resulting to legal intervention. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he would be using his personal equipment to assist residents with resolving their blight issues, noting his desire to make it a town initiative. Officer Pendleton expressed her plan to implore community outreach organizations and local organizations to get involved with resolving City blight. Officer Pendleton discussed arranging a media blast to make it an event for City clean up. Councilman Martin reminded the Council that a former commissioner conducted a city-wide dumpster day that had positive results, since then no one continued the effort. Councilman Martin also noted that the City purchased five dumpsters that could be useful in the event. Council members expressed their favor of the initiative.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To IMPLEMENT call recording lines for customer service with the EXCEPTION of the administrative departments.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

- e. City Clerk
 - f. Finance
 - g. Billing
 - h. Planning
1. Marina Village Phase IV Revised Plat

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the revised plat with the suggested language for approval and signature.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Marina Village Phase IV Revised Plat.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

2. Updates

- Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that now that the Planning Department is fully staffed, they have had the ability to focus on other projects to assist the growth of the City. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she has been reviewing the draft Walton County Mobility Plan that could reap monetary benefits for the City by collecting mobility fees that could be used for CIP plans for the City. Planning Director Hughes-Neel mentioned the pros and cons of pursuing a Mobility Plan, noting that the revenue collected could not be used on repair or maintenance projects. After speaking with consultants Planning Director Hughes-Neel would be investigating alternative options that would be presented at a later meeting.
- Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that last year she was given permission to work on a grant with the Choctawhatchee Bay Estuary Coalition which resulted in them finding a Green Stormwater Infrastructure Grant. This grant uses an eco-friendly and natural approach that could be tested as a pilot in a small section of Marse Landing and Four Mile Creek. The Green Stormwater Infrastructure grant would cover all expenses as the City monitors it with a three-year education proponent, the initiative is to encourage green stormwater improvements across the City. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she along with Engineer Knauer, Engineer Rouchaleau, and City Manager Simmons are currently working on site plans and a proposal for this grant to present to the Council for approval.

- Planning Director briefed the Council on the new City Planner's adaptability to the position, noting his creation of a comprehensive table of uses that will assist the land development coding. The table will be a helpful research tool which Planning Director Hughes-Neel will present a draft for Council's approval and or suggestions at a later date.
- Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the Masonic Lodge was now registered as a historic landmark which qualifies it for a new series of grants to assist with restoration. Planning Director Hughes-Neel offered her support of assisting the progress of restoring the Masonic Lodge, referencing her discussions with County Commissioner McCormick and City Manager Simmons regarding options for assistance. Mayor Barley noted that the Masonic Lodge recently applied for a grant that was denied, however Liberty Partners were assisting.

i. Legal

j. Engineering

1. Freeport WWTF Expansion- Bid Results

Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council that despite Sawcross Contractors & Engineers having the lowest bid of \$27,392,000 it was extremely over budget along with the other bids. Engineer Rouchaleau proposed that the City reject all bids and conduct a Special Meeting on March 2 to discuss a plan of action. City Attorney Adkinson gave counsel to the Council on the appropriate motions, noting that the purpose of the Special Meeting would be to approve the re-advertisement of the project.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To REJECT all bids based on price exceeding allotted funds.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To CONDUCT a Special Meeting on Tuesday, March 2 at 4PM.

Absent (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris,
Councilman Martin, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried

2. Municipal SCOP Application

Engineer Rouchaleau presented the Council the drafted Municipal SCOP Application for South Jackson Street, opening the floor for changes and requesting a motion to proceed.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To APPROVE the application for submittal.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

11. Old Business

12. New Business

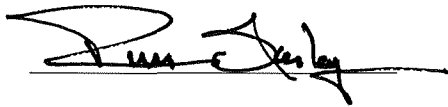
- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Green
- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman Martin

13. Public Comment

Engineer Knauer gave clarity to the Council on the techniques that would be used in the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Grant, noting how plants are used to absorb harmful chemicals in the water which would benefit the environment.

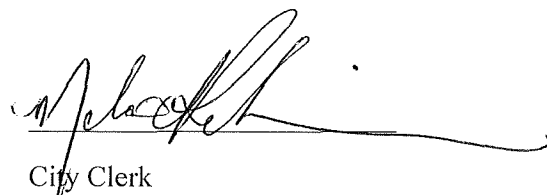
14. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk



City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 2, 4:00 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Council Member Absent: Mayor Russ Barley

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM by Councilman Farris in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Haffner, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion Bid Readvertisement

Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council that the bid documents that were prepared for today's meeting would not suffice for proper bid documents. After speaking to City Attorney Adkinson regarding the documents Engineer Rouchaleau discovered there was a miscommunication on what the Council requested, however, he expressed his ability to explain the new bid documents if Council were willing to listen to the alternative solution. Councilwoman Green reminded Engineer Rouchaleau that the Council agreed to hold a Special Meeting if the bid documents were prepared and ready for review. The Council expressed their disappointment and disapproval

of the lack of preparedness for the scheduled meeting, noting that Engineer Knauer should have intervened or helped. City Manager Simmons explained that the conversation with Rural Development did not occur until today to outline the type of bid documents that were efficient, and that he was just as disappointed as Council. Council Members expressed the need to enforce a strict timeline on Dewberry to ensure that items and projects are completed by deadlines set by Council. Councilwoman Green noted her concerns about meeting the deadline to submit the documents to Rural Development. City Attorney Adkinson gave counsel recommending that Council approve a bid package as soon as possible, noting the standards Council approved in the previous Council Meeting. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the competitive negotiation rule the Council chose to implement in the new bid documents was a new process for the City, however it allowed them to keep the project within budget throughout each phase. City Attorney Adkinson elaborated on the criteria set by Council to ensure Engineer Rouchaleau understood that the City wanted a two-phase plan to get the facility running at two-million gallons a day. Councilman Farris noted the importance of Engineer Rouchaleau working closely and communicating with City Attorney Adkinson on projects, to keep the City on schedule with projects. Engineer Rouchaleau was given the opportunity to present the plan of action for obtaining grant funding and the revised design for the plant build. Councilwoman Green expressed her concerns about revisions on the plant build, specifically the digester. Engineer Jones noted that Dewberry initially designed a plant with 1.5 MDG however the City requested a 2 MDG, therefore the initial digester they had in mind would not have the capacity to meet the requirements. Councilwoman Haffner queried on who would be working alongside Engineer Rouchaleau to ensure that the bid documents would be prepared in a timely manner. City Manager Simmons assured the Council that the documents would be prepared by Saturday at the latest and ready for presentation at the next Regular Council Meeting.

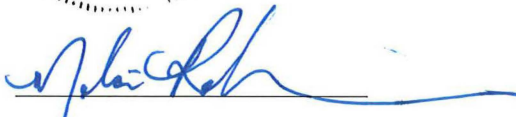
4. Adjournment

Councilman Farris motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:27 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 9, 2021, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Special Council Meeting Minutes- February 16, 2021
- c. Regular City Council Meeting Minutes- February 25, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

Councilwoman Green noted that she would like the Municipal SCOP Application item on the February 25, 2021 Minutes to include the name of the street that the application was for. City Manager Simmons noted that the SCOP Application was for Jackson Street. Councilwoman Green also expressed concerns about the "Dewberry Letters" item in the Bills, noting that the expense was significant for a letter. Engineer Rouchaleau noted that the letters were development review letters which varied in price depending on the type of project. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council of the development review letter fees associated with each type of project.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To APPROVE the consent agenda with the recommended change.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Councilwoman Green- Parks

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Agenda with the specified addition.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager

1. Liberty Partners Presentation

City Manager Simmons opened the floor to Tim Parson of Liberty Partners who would give updates before the Council. Mr.Parson relayed their president Mrs.Jennifer Green's apology for her absence due to attending legislative meetings in Tallahassee on the behalf of the City. Mr. Parson continued by noting that their organization has been working on the preparation of the Legislative Appropriations Request, in which The House sub-committee Agriculture and Natural Resources, announced its approval of their U.S 331 Water Sewer Utility request which will now go to the full Appropriations Committee for consideration. Mr.Parson informed the Council that The Northwest Florida Water Management District Executive Director Mr.Brett Cyphers is scheduled to attend the next City Council Meeting to discuss grant opportunities. Mr.Parson presented City Manager Simmons with a jersey sighting him as the quarterback of Team Freeport for his dedication to the City's projects.

Katie Taff of Liberty Partner's approached the Council to brief them on the CDBG-CV Grant that the City met the criteria for, which aims to "prevent, prepare, and respond" to the coronavirus pandemic. The City would utilize this grant by constructing a new Community Center, which would in return would provide services to the community such as covid-19 vaccinations, covid-19 testing, and act as a food distribution center. Ms.Taff noted that Planning Director Hughes-Neel was able to identify The Health Department as a partner who would provide some of the services at the new Community Center, however she was open to alternative suggestions from the Council. Ms.Taff noted that the grant award amount ranged from \$250,000 to \$5,000,000 and with no monetary match requirements, the deadline for submittal is March 15. Councilwoman Haffner cited local churches and

various organizations that could use the Community Center as a food distribution center which had partnerships with Publix. Councilwoman Green also noted that the Community Center could also benefit the School Backpack Program by providing adequate space for sorting. Ms. Taff informed the Council that City Manager Simmons planned for her to present the final application before the Council in a public meeting on Monday, which is a requirement of the grant. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that the advertisement for the grant would be ran in the Wednesday paper of The Northwest Florida Daily News, however he would need to set a Special Council Meeting on March 15 at 12:30 PM to abide by the grant guidelines. Ms. Taff added that she anticipated on pursuing the FEMA Infrastructure Grant on the behalf of the City this summer, however she has several grants in mind.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To SET a Special Council Meeting for March 15, 2021 at 12:30 PM.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

- e. City Clerk
- f. Finance
- g. Billing
- h. Planning
- i. Legal
- 1. Regency Acquisitions Annexation
- 2. Kelly Layman Annexation

City Attorney Adkinson noted that the ordinance granting the annexations were not included in the agenda package, however he read the item and requested a motion to

hold 1st Reading. City Attorney Adkinson added that the Public Hearing for Adoption and the 2nd Reading would be held on April 13, 2021.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

Motion to Hold 1st Reading of the ordinance.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

j. Engineering

1. WWTF Upgrade Bid Documents

Engineer Rouchaleau presented the revised bid documents before Council for approval, noting that they had been reviewed by City Attorney Adkinson. City Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council that the bid documents would be submitted to USDA promptly, some of the reflected changes included an incentive for the contractor up to \$500 a day to finish quicker, an extension of the contract time, and the negotiations with the lowest bidder to bring within budget if too high. Councilwoman Green thanked Engineer Rouchaleau for his phone call which made her feel comfortable and confident in the changes being made to the bid documents. Engineer Rouchaleau noted that the increase in the Rural Development Loan Application was to ensure that the City secured enough funds so that USDA would not take away grant funding.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To APPROVE the revised bid documents.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To SUBMIT a revised Rural Development Loan Application reflecting a total cost of \$29,000,000.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To APPROVE the Mayor signing the application and if he is unavailable the City Manager.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

a. Tap and Impact Fee List

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he intended to remove the item and to present it at a later Council Meeting to verify information. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that there was a list of paid impact and tap fees, however there were a few discrepancies with the recorded receipts and lack thereof. Councilwoman Haffner queried as to how the verification process of paid and unpaid tap and impact fees would be conducted. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that throughout the years there was an inconsistent method of documenting receipts, varying from handwritten statements to carbon copy receipts. The compiled list from the Planning Department is conflicting with the Billing Department records, which has caused City Manager Simmons to seek guidance from Ordinance 20-199 to ensure staff is fulfilling their obligations. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that Ordinance 20-199 was enacted to protect customers with old rates from the new rates, and to also protect the City from developers. Councilwoman Brannon requested a private meeting with City Manager Simmons and Attorney Adkinson to discuss the issue at hand and to also get insight on which list the auditor used to get the found figures. Councilman Martin queried on whether the funds collected for the fees were currently in a bank, and if there were statements with a deposit record for the money collected. City Attorney Adkinson explained that the money collected for the impact and tap fees were used to fund various City projects throughout the years, noting that they were not tied to a specific project, therefore it was highly unlikely for the funds to currently be in a bank. City Attorney Adkinson added that there should however be a record of how much money came in, along with bank deposit statements. Councilman Martin sought clarity on how to fix the issue of receipts moving forward, City Attorney Adkinson responded that the City would follow the ordinance put in place on the matter. Planning Director Hughes-Neel assured the Council that tap and impact fees were collected prior to the issuance of building permits, noting the changes the City had experienced throughout the years that would have contributed to the gaps in receipts. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she was confident in the list compiled, despite the spotty record keeping of receipts.

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Green

1. Parks

Councilwoman Green thanked Parks Director Digges for his cleanup of the trash along Highway 331 near the post office. Park Director Digges informed the Council that whenever they see a problematic area that needs attention to inform him so the issue can be resolved promptly.

- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman McCormick

12. Public Comment

Mike Crook approach the Council requesting a letter for the title company he is working with stating that the road that gives access to his property (Lincoln Street) is a City street. Mr. Crook presented documents showing the location of his property, a map, and a description of the information needed in his letter. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that they could not issue a letter stating this due to there being a lack of public record supporting it, noting that the map Mr. Crook presented has been disputed for years. City Attorney Adkinson emphasized to the Council that there was no record that could conclusively say that the road was City property and could become a bigger issue down the road. Mr. Crook and City Attorney Adkinson discussed the legality of the documents he presented. City Attorney Adkinson discussed the email that was sent to him and City Manager Simmons from the title company, noting that the underwriter did not send a formal request for any document. The discussion ended with City Attorney Adkinson advising the Council that this was not a City issue and they could not establish ownership at this time.

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:06 AM.


Mayor

ATTEST:




City Clerk



City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 15, 2021 12:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Mark Martin

Council Members Absent: Councilman Farris, Councilwoman Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Mayor Barley, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. CDBG-CV Grant/Program

Mayor Barley announced the opening of the Public Hearing on the CDBG-CV Grant. Mrs. Katie Taff of Liberty Partners acknowledged that she would be submitting the pre-application for the CDBG-CV Grant on the behalf of the City of Freeport. Mrs. Taff noted that the grant was funded by the Department of Economic Opportunity and is to "prevent, prepare, or respond" to the coronavirus pandemic, in which the City will use the funds towards a Community Center. City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council on the appropriate motion to authorize the submittal of the application. The floor was opened to public comment.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To AUTHORIZE the submittal of the CDBG-CV pre-application with Mayor Barley's signature.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

5. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn at 12:33 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2021, 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes- Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Revenue & Expenditure Report Through February 2021
- b. Bills
- c. Special Council Meeting Minutes- March 2, 2021
- d. Regular City Council Meeting Minutes- March 9, 2021

e. Special Council Meeting Minutes- March 15, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To APPROVE the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- City Manager Simmons- Forensic Audit Scheduling
- Engineer Rouchaleau- Construction Cost for Hwy 331 South Sewer Expansion-Amendments to Engineering Agreement for Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade
- Councilwoman Green- Homeless in the community

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

9. Staff Reports

a. Water

b. Sewer

c. Parks

d. City Manager

1. NFWFMD- Brett Cyphers

City Manager Simmons opened the floor to Jennifer Green of Liberty Partners who introduced Brett Cyphers who is the Executive Director of the North West Florida Water Management District. Mr.Cyphers opened by presenting a PowerPoint which illustrated what the North West Florida Water Management District organization does, while informing the Council that the City of Freeport falls under a district containing sixteen counties. Due to the lack of representation across the district Mr.Cyphers explained that the organization helps municipals establish connections with those who could assist in securing alternative sources of funding for projects. Mr.Cyphers gave examples of strategies and partnerships used by other counties in the district which contributed to the success of various water projects. Mr.Cyphers noted that after reviewing the applications the City of Freeport submitted for grant funding, he wanted to stress the importance of the City networking with local government to make funding initiatives successful. Mr.Cyphers applauded the City for deciding to plan ahead for the future, noting that there were several angles and strategies the City could make to secure multiple sources of funding. Mr.Cyphers opened the floor for questioning from the Council. Councilwoman Brannon thanked Mr.Cyphers for coming and noted that she looked forward to the City partnering with his organization. Councilwoman Green queried on Mr.Cyphers thoughts of the City's approach to addressing the septic to sewer dilemma, stormwater control, and another items the City may not have on its radar. Mr.Cyphers remarked that he believed that the City was headed in the right direction, noting that it was all about the timeline for development. Mr.Cyphers continued by recommending that the City engage more with DEP for loans and funding, noting that there were a plethora of financial incentives for being a small City. City Manager Simmons noted that the City was targeting a plethora of places for additional funding and thanked Mr.Cyphers for his attendance. Councilman Farris thanked Mr.Cyphers for assisting the City with moving forward.

- City Manager Simmons encouraged the Council to set a date for a public meeting to discuss the Forensic Audit from Marcum. City Manager Simmons

encouraged the Council to set the public meeting on April 22, 2021 before the Regular Council Meeting. The Council agreed to set the Forensic Audit for April 22, 2021 with the Regular Council Meeting to follow immediately after.

- City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he met with DOT and the County regarding the four-lane generic drawings. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he was told that the project was far down the line, however they did discuss problematic traffic areas in the City. The County and City Manager Simmons gave DOT input for data and suggestions for what would work for the City.
- City Manager Simmons noted that he met with Jill Smith from the School District to discuss the entrance and exit strategies for the new middle school. Once the architect begins to work on the plans for the school, they will meet City Manager Simmons to discuss the plans.
- City Manager Simmons noted that BBC accepted the new site that was proposed for the new library.
- Councilwoman Green thanked City Manager Simmons for his work noting that the light sequencing was causing major issues with the traffic flow within the City. City Manager Simmons noted that the sequencing of the lights was a topic of discussion with DOT at their previous meeting. Councilwoman Green also expressed her concerns with the sustainability of the Blue Ridge Road and the high traffic volume, noting her uncertainty of Publix keeping it as a public access road. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that as part of their agreement the Blue Ridge Road must remain a public access.
- City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he was in negotiation with the new dual certified Sewer Operator and hoped to bring him to the next meeting.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To schedule the Public Meeting for the Forensic Audit for April 22, 2021 at 5:30 PM with the Regular Council Meeting to immediately follow.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. FDEP Green Stormwater Grant/Approval to Submit Application

Planning Director Hughes-Neel briefed the Council on the Green Stormwater Grant, noting that it was a pilot grant that could potential be used in various projects around the City. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the project sought to use an eco-friendly approach to clean stormwater and that she had been working on the site plans with Engineer Knauer. Planning Director Hughes-Neel sought permission to move forward with the application for the grant. Councilwoman Green expressed her concerns regarding the additional funding of the project after reviewing the terms of the grant. Planning Director Hughes-Neel assured the Council that in case of the need to address larger problems she would use in-kind resources for the expenditures.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To move forward with the application for the grant.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

2. Planning Updates

- Due to new builds along the Choctawhatchee Bay, Planning Director Hughes-Neel will be making updates to the Comprehensive Plans for the City by adding new policies. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that there were available grant funds for costal resilience that included policies for the Comprehensive Plans for the City. Planning Director Hughes Neel noted that by working with the Choctawhatchee Bay Estuary Coalition to secure grants the City would be given the opportunity to tackle items such as education for converting from septic to sewer and Bay clean-up.
- The City Planner and Planning Tech are cross training to perform all duties within the Planning Department.
- The Planning Department has received nine new development projects this week and will continue to update the Council with updates via email. Planning Director Hughes-Neel expressed that the Council could contact her anytime for questioning.

i. Legal

j. Engineering

1. West Bay Loop Sewer Improvements Project- Approval To Bid

Engineer Rouchaleau sought approval to bid the West Bay Loop Sewer Improvements Project, which includes upgrades to existing lift stations.

Engineer Rouchaleau presented a handout to Council which outlined the cost estimate for the U.S 331 North Sewer Improvements. Based on projections of development along 331 Engineer Rouchaleau felt that it would be in the City's best interest to upsize to get ahead of the development curve up to a ten-year projection. The revised designed was a million dollars over budget, however Engineer Rouchaleau noted that the water, impact, and sewage fees could cover the expense. Councilman Martin noted that he was impressed with the Engineers Rouchaleau's plan to stay ahead of development, rather than waiting for developments to appear.

Engineer Rouchaleau presented an amendment to the engineering agreement to include an extension of the project timeline due to the upgrades and included the breakdown of the expenditures . Engineer Rouchaleau noted that he was actively working with USDA to get the application finalized for the \$29 million request. Engineer Rouchaleau requested approval to amend the agreement. Councilwoman Brannon queried on whether the 2% in legal fees included the bond. City Attorney Adkinson clarified that the 2% was the total dollar amount that included the bond fees.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the project for bidding.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To APPROVE moving forward with the revised design.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To APPROVE the amended engineering agreement.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Green

Councilwoman Green noted that with the growth of the community she has noted that the epidemic of homelessness has been growing throughout the City. Councilwoman Green remarked that although it may not be visible, functional homelessness was present and she would like to take the initiative to research homelessness in the area. Councilwoman Green sought permission from the Council to work alongside Lieutenant Pendleton and City Manager Simmons to address this matter.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To APPROVE Councilwoman Green to research and work on the homelessness crisis in the City.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

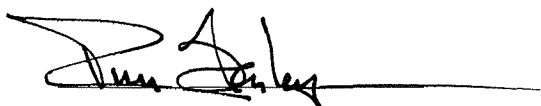
- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman McCormick

12. Public Comment

Mayor Barley reminded the Council that they had been invited to attend the Opening Day of the Little League Games for recognition, and that on April 3 the EGGSTRAVAGANZA and Spring Festival will be taking place. Councilwoman Green noted that DOT would be having a public meeting on April 20, 2021 6PM at the Heritage Church to discuss the Highway 20 expansion.

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 2021, 9:00 AM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

4. Wayne and Tami Scott- Kona Ice Dispute

Mr.Scott informed the Council that he and his wife vend shaved ice at the park during the week to raise funds for the Little League as agreed with Mr.Tedd Barr. Mr.Barr the President of The Little League, informed the Council that due to the League being unable to host their annual golf tournament to raise funds Mr.Scott volunteered to assist the League by operating at the park as a fundraising effort. Mr.Scott and Mr.Barr sought approval from the Council to continue doing so. Councilwoman Green queried on any concerns that Parks Director Digges may have. Parks Director Digges informed the Council that he had been approached by a similar business to operate out of the park, however due to policies set in place against vending at the park he

informed the business that they could not. Parks Director Digges noted that although he had no issue with Mr.Scott vending at the park for the Little League he did not want to seem biased and wanted Council's direction. Councilman Farris noted that he had no problem with Kona Ice vending at the park for The Little League, however he would like for the Council to re-examine the policy so that the City Manager can make calls on these types of issues. City Attorney Adkinson noted that to avoid discriminatory practices Kona Ice would have to operate under the agreement that The Little League has with the City. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that due to the nature of the situation this was a unique case therefore the Council must be careful to stay in compliance of the codes put in place to protect the City from discriminatory claims. City Attorney Adkinson noted that during the application process for parks and public facility usage that the applicant include the vendor so that the City Manager can utilize his authority, this eliminates arguments of discrimination and keeps the City Manager operating under the codes put in place. Mr.Barr informed the Council that would include Kona Ice in next year's application to avoid conflict.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To ALLOW Kona Ice to operate under The Little League's agreement for the rest of the season for fundraising purposes.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. City Council Meeting Minutes- March 25, 2021

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Councilwoman Haffner advised City Clerk Robinson of changes that needed to be made in the minutes.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To APPROVE the consent Agenda with the recommended changes.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- City Attorney Adkinson noted that he would like to add Regency Acquisitions as a title correction to the Annexation since all other owners were listed for the record.
- Councilwoman Haffner- Construction Trailer
- Mayor Russ Barley- City Manager Position, Mileage Rate Reimbursement for Atlanta Trip, Forensic Audit Reminder, and National Day of Prayer
- Councilwoman Green- Upcoming Community Meetings

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

City has taken a strong initiative to clean up the environment by converting to a sewage system. Engineer Knauer and Engineer Rouchaleau have identified an opportunity for the City, where the City would acquire one or more package plants as identified in the agreement. The package plants would allow the City to afford developers the ability to get up and running while the City would receive the payment of their fees upfront, which in this case is 1.9 million dollars. The developers would assemble the city owned plants at their expense and connect to the City's system. The funds collected would allow the City to purchase a brand-new package plant, which they have identified a certified vendor out of Pensacola with verifiable references. City Attorney Adkinson stressed that the developers' fees collected would be used to fund other projects in the City not strictly package plants. City Attorney Adkinson believed that once the language has been finalized the agreement would be very beneficial to the City, satisfying a range of items for the City.

Engineer Knauer informed the Council that package plants are widely used and would be an essential tool in the toolbox that the City does not currently have. The benefits included would be the flexibility to provide sewer before infrastructure is in place for development. Engineer Knauer then described the installation process of the portable package plants to the Council. Engineer Knauer noted that the City could use the capacity fees to purchase the new package plants which include a warranty, with the assembly factory in Pensacola. Engineer Knauer informed the Council that they have the storage space to store the package plants when they are not in use, noting that the plants were technologically advanced and could be controlled via smart phone. Engineer Knauer noted that a standard package plant cost \$360,000 (25,000 gallons per day) and would need a minimum of 15 houses connected to generate enough flow to run. Engineer Knauer also noted that a provision in the agreement called for the developer to install an 18-inch water line, which is necessary for planned future developments along Highway 331 outside of this project. Councilwoman Green queried on whether the 18-inch water line would be sufficient for the projected growth for the next 5-10 years. Engineer Knauer informed the Council that the 18-inch water line would suffice for 5-10 years depending on the build out. Engineer Knauer noted that with projected plans for over 4,000 lots the City would benefit from installing bigger lines. Engineer Knauer continued by informing the Council that the City would have to install a second water plant and create a dividing line north of Highway 20 to service the projected growth. Councilwoman Green asked for clarity on the placement of the package plants, Engineer Knauer informed the Council that the developers would be responsible for assembly and running the device on their own property. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that acquiring an 18-inch line was inevitable for the plans of the City, however the developer is willing to supply the line. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that the agreement would give the Developers a credit towards the capacity fee, however they would only apply it to Phase 1 of the project. After discussion, the Council agreed to move forward with the agreement with the suggested changes. Councilwoman Green inquired on the total size of the line that would be needed for development. City Engineer Rouchaleau explained to the

Council that the size of the line would depend on the development, however nothing less than 10 inches per install.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To APPROVE the Developers Agreement with the suggested changes.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

1. Bluffs at Lafayette Map

2. 2nd Reading of Shaw Securities, Inc. & Shamrock Dunes, LLC Annexation

City Attorney Adkinson opened by giving the second reading of the Ordinance for the Regency Acquisition, Shaw Securities Inc, & Shamrock Dunes LLC Annexation. A public hearing was opened. City Clerk Robinson advised on the proper ordinance number.

A representative from Shaw Securities, Inc. and Shamrock Dunes, LLC Annexation thanked the Council for accepting the annexation noting that she appreciated the Council's support and recommended that the City reduced the price of the application (\$750 to file as an individual) to incentive others to follow suit.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To APPROVE Ordinance 2021-01.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

1. Notice of Intent

2. Ordinance

j. Engineering

1. Barrier Free Park Phase I Improvement- Approval to Bid Project

Engineer Rouchaleau noted that the finalized bid documents were forward to the Council as a read ahead and opened the floor for feedback. Engineer Rouchaleau requested approval to bid the Barrier Free Park Phase I Improvement.

Engineer Cliff informed the Council that on October 15 the Furdap Grant application is due. Engineer Cliff noted that the \$50,000 grant was a no match grant, however the \$150,00-\$300,000 grant required a 50% match. Engineer Cliff expressed that the Furdap Grant would be done free of charge to the City, including the plan designs and application process. Engineer Cliff advised the Council to think of ideas of where the funds for the grant could be used, noting that the due to the competitiveness of the grant Barrier Free Park would be a wise decision to accumulate more points for funding. The Council thanked Engineer Cliff for finding opportunities for the City.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To bid the Barrier Free Park Phase I Improvements.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

11. **Old Business**

12. **New Business**

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. City Manager Position

Mayor Barley reminded the Council that the current contract for the City Manager will be expiring in four months, however no effort has been taken to advertise or find a permanent City Manager. Mayor Barley noted that City Manager Simmons agreed to stay given that a few changes were made to his contract. Councilwoman Green noted that the Council should discuss the matter now given that City Manager Simmons preferred not to be present for the discussion of his contract. Mayor Barley informed the Council that City Manager Simmons works for half of the salary of the City Manager position and goes above and beyond for the City, noting that his commitment to the success of the City is hard to come by. Councilman Farris noted that City Manager Simmons has deep love and commitment to the City and felt that the Council should keep him to see his projects completed. Councilman Farris expressed that the language of the contract needed to be adjusted for the Council to do so. Councilwoman Green noted that the mileage clause in the contract needed to be updated. City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council that changes to the agreement for the City Manager would need to be for any candidate and not limited to City Manager Simmons. City Attorney Adkinson requested time to review the agreement and to present at the next Council Meeting due to many qualifications needing to be amended to qualify City Manager Simmons and to fit those after. Councilwoman Green suggested the language limiting the mileage the City Manager must stay from City Hall be amended to Walton County. Councilman Martin inserted that the language of the City Manager job description should be broad with few regulations to give the Council the authority to hire the appropriate candidate based on the current situation. City Attorney Adkinson noted the City Manager position is not in the Charter and that the current document allows the Mayor to decide whether the position is needed.

2. Mileage Rate Reimbursement for Atlanta Trip

Mayor Barley informed the Council that City Manager Simmons paid for a trip out of pocket to meet with an individual regarding a piece of property for the new Wastewater Treatment Facility, and that he would like to reimburse him for it.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To reimburse City Manager Simmons mileage for the trip to Atlanta.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

3. Forensic Audit

Mayor Barley reminded the Council that the Forensic Audit was scheduled for April 22 before the Regular City Council Meeting and would take a minimum of two hours to complete. Council members discussed rescheduling the meeting to a separate date and tasked City Clerk Robinson with speaking to the representatives from Marcum for a solution. Attorney Adkinson informed City Clerk Robinson that the event would need to be publicized on the site once the arrangements had been made.

4. National Day of Prayer

Mayor Barley informed the Council that he was approached by Pastor Brown who sought permission to hold the National Day of Prayer at City Hall. Mayor Barley sought guidance for an appropriate motion, City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that no motion needed to be made being that City Hall was public property and could be used at the public's discretion.

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

1. Sound System at The Sports Complex

Councilman Farris brought to the attention of the Council that the sound system at the Sports Complex was outdated and barely audible. Councilman Farris suggested that Parks Director Digges be given permission to update the system to provide better quality for The Little League and all other organizations who made need to use it. Parks Director Digges noted that he was very eager to address the sound system and would do so promptly. City Attorney Adkinson advised Parks Director Digges to speak with Finance Officer Bowers for guidance.

2. Flagpole Behind Outfield Fence on Field #2

Councilman Farris informed the Council that he noticed that the American flag was pinned to a pole at the Sports Complex, and he would like to see it better displayed. Councilman Martin gave suggestions on placement of the flag for dual view. Parks

Director Digges informed the Council that he could use a spare pole from Marse Landing that had been vacant due to an issue of flags being stolen. Parks Director Digges also informed the Council that he would investigate purchasing a tamper proof pole with lights for the parks, so that the flag could be seen 24 hours.

3. Display Motto "In God We Trust"

Councilman Farris gave a brief introduction to the legality of the "In God We Trust" motto in public spaces, noting that he was in favor of how the County Commissioners Office had the motto displayed in its meeting chambers. Councilman Farris noted that he appreciated the symbolism of the message and would like for the Council to have the motto displayed in the Council Chambers on a plaque of sorts, a motion was made.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To purchase a plaque with the motto "In God We Trust" for the Council Chambers.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: nay

Carried

d. Councilwoman Green

1. Upcoming Community Meetings

- Councilwoman Green noted that there would be a School Board special meeting on April 20 at 3:45PM in South Walton regarding the Freeport School District therefore she strongly encourage members from the community to attend.
- Councilwoman Green reminded the Council that DOT would be hosting a meeting at the Heritage Church regarding the four-lane expansion in Freeport on April 20 at 5:30PM.

- Mayor Barley informed the Council that there will be a Town Hall Meeting at City Hall on April 21 at 6:30PM. The event will be publicized on the website and the newspaper.

e. Councilwoman Haffner

Councilwoman Haffner inquired on the construction trailers at Larry Walsh's across from Texaco and whether they would be moved. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that the construction trailer had a development order and dumpster permit for cleanup and remodeling of their building. Planning Director Hughes-Neel elaborated on the building design they were currently working, informing the Council that it would go away once it was complete.

f. Councilman Martin

13. Public Comment

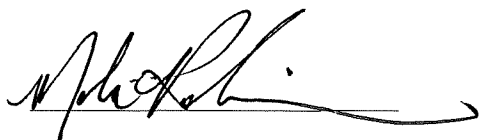
14. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:36 AM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 22, 2021 5:30 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Council Member Absent: Councilwoman Green

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Marcum Audit

Mr. Ricardo Zayas and Mr. Bryan Fleming, representatives of Marcum Advisory and Consulting presented the Council a PowerPoint presentation to discuss the findings of the audit.

Initial Analyses and Interviews identified following concerns:

Inconsistencies in utility billing / write-off of utilities in 2014 dating from 2009 through 2011.

Billing "problems" related to water and sewer funds dating back to 2008.

Misuse of impact fees and grant funds (i.e. transfers from restricted funds to general funds).

Unauthorized expenditures made from restricted funds.

Misuse of City of Freeport credit cards.

Self-dealing by a former City Council member.

A 2016 qualified opinion by the independent auditor on the City of Freeport financial statements.

Anomalies in the accounting records including:

Unreconciled cash accounts

Omitted / unrecorded cash transactions.

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED / PROCEDURES PERFORMED

Business Records of the City of Freeport including:

- Electronic Accounting records
- Financial Statements and Audit Reports relating to services provided by Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC ("Carr Riggs")
- Bank and Credit Card Account Records for selected accounts
- Selected supporting documentation relating to 2016 / 2017 reconciliation procedures

Interviews:

- City Councilwoman Elizabeth Hafner
- City Councilwoman Amanda Green
- City Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon
- City Clerk Becky Podraza
- City Finance Officer Sara Bowers
- Mayor Russell Barley
- City Councilman "Boots" McCormick.

Workplan

Some concerns lacked specificity or were dated. We focused investigative efforts on:

- City of Freeport general ledger transactions for the period of 2014 through 2018.
- Adjustments to FYE September 30, 2016 cash accounts made by the City Accountant in 2017.
- Inspection of transactions within the Water and Sewer impact fee accounts.

- Adjusting entries to the City of Freeport accounting records relating to FYE's September 30, 2014, September 30, 2015, and September 30, 2016.
- Assessment of additions and deletions to Chart of Accounts.

FINDINGS FROM INSPECTION AND INTERVIEWS

Accounting Overview

The general ledger serves as a summary record of all financial transactions occurring within an entity.

Daily activity (i.e. collections and disbursements) are recorded in journals and "posted to" the general ledger by account codes. Account codes describe the nature of the transactions recorded in the journal.

The general ledger and trial balance report constitute the foundation from which the [financial statements](#) of the reporting entity (i.e. the City of Freeport) are prepared.

General ledger entries are customarily adjusted before finalizing the entity's financial statements. Adjustments are made by journal entries which may be necessary for:

- ▶ Correction of errors
- ▶ Recording of non-recurring entries (i.e. depreciation)
- ▶ Transfer of general ledger account balances

Journal entries can also be used to conceal improper activity, as such, inspection of journal entries is a routine test when performing a financial statement audit or forensic analysis.

Accounting Record Observations

Inspection of accounting records included those outlined below:

- Unexplained accounting adjustments in the "Impact Fee" accounts exceeding \$1,200,000 (See slide 24).
- Unrecorded disbursements from USDA loan sinking fund accounts exceeding \$1,000,000.
- Large number of general journal adjustments (over 700 for 2014 totaling more than \$700,000, increasing to more than 1,000 general ledger journal entries totaling more than \$9,000,000 for 2016).
- Carr Riggs issued "qualified" opinion for FYE September 30, 2016 due to inability to reconcile certain accounts and attest to general ledger opening balances. Multiple cash account transactions had not been contemporaneously recorded in the City of Freeport accounting records.

- Multiple general ledger account balances remained unchanged from one period to the next (i.e. failure to record fixed assets and related depreciation expenses). Potential violation of the State of Florida Department of Financial Services Bureau of Local Government.
- Conversely, more than 100 new general ledger accounts were established in the Chart of Accounts.
- Questionable use of the City of Freeport MasterCard including:
 - Purchases at retail outlets and elsewhere inconsistent with historic purchase patterns.
 - Use of a City of Freeport credit card assigned to a former employee more than twelve months after that employee resigned from the City of Freeport.

Sara Bowers

Sara Bowers, the current City of Freeport Finance Officer:

- Hired in fall of 2016 as Finance Officer for the City of Freeport
- Identified inaccuracies / inconsistencies in the accounting records including:
- Accounting records for FYE September 30, 2016 did not agree with corresponding bank account records.
- Not all receipts and disbursements transacted through the City bank accounts were recorded in the accounting records.

Sara Bowers- Corrective Measures

- Initiated corrective measures continuing into Spring 2017
- Entered corrections into the accounting records via journal entries
- Identified and corrected other inaccuracies / inconsistencies in the City accounting records pre-dating FYE September 30, 2016
- Updated the City of Freeport Chart of Accounts to comply with municipal accounting guidance issued by the State of Florida; and
- updated general ledger in 2018 to account depreciation and fixed assets

Carr Riggs Audits- Overview

Carr Riggs performed audits of the City of Freeport financial statements for FYE's 9/30/14, 9/30/15, 9/30/16 and 9/30/17.

Audit reports issued for FYE's 9/30/14, 9/30/15 and 9/30/17 presented unqualified / unmodified opinions, as follows:

- In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City of Freeport, as of September 30, 2014, and the respective changes in financial position, and where applicable, cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.*

The audit report on the 9/30/16 financial statements presented the following opinions, raising concerns of members of the City Council:

Summary of Opinions

<i>Opinion Unity</i>	<i>Type of Opinion</i>
<i>Governmental Activities</i>	<i>Unmodified</i>
<i>Business-type Activities</i>	<i>Unmodified</i>
<i>General Fund</i>	<i>Qualified</i>
<i>Water Fund</i>	<i>Unmodified</i>
<i>Sewer Fund</i>	<i>Unmodified</i>

Carr Riggs Qualified Opinion (Report Excerpts)

Basis for Qualified Opinion on the General Fund

- *In the process of reconciling bank accounts for the general fund during the year ended September 30, 2016, corrections were made for prior year and current year posting errors. Some of those adjustments could not be specifically identified as to the appropriate revenue and expenditure accounts or identified as to the proper fiscal year to which they applied. The effect of these adjustments on the financial statements could not be determined.*

Qualified Opinion

- *In our opinion, except for the effects of the matter described in the "Basis for Qualified Opinion on the General Fund" paragraph, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the general fund of the City of Freeport, Florida, as of September 30, 2016, and respective changes in financial position for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.*

Basis of Qualification (Report Excerpts)

- The “Independent Auditor’s Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance”. The “report” issued for the FYE September 30, 2016 identified both, “material” and “significant” deficiencies in the internal controls over financial reporting for the City of Freeport. The following table identifies areas where internal controls were deemed deficient.

Issue	Deficiency
"2016-01 Capital Assets" "City does not have a capital assets software package."	Significant
"2016-02 Audit Adjusting Journal Entries" "Adjustments had to be proposed to record unearned revenue and accounts payable"	Material
"2016-03 Budget to Actual Financial Reports" "No budget to actual reports are prepared for council meetings."	Significant
"2016-04 IT Controls" "Passwords on Banyon general ledger and UMS software system are not changed once issued."	Significant
"2016-05 Bank Reconciliations" "Bank reconciliations are not prepared on timely basis. Bank reconciliations of the year ended September 30, 2016 were not prepared until March 2017."	Material
"2016-06 Billing Reports" "Information from the Banyon UMS software system for utility billings and collections"..."did not match"..."Banyon..."	Material

The Clearing Accounts

- Deposits to the clearing accounts were to be allocated to either the Freeport Water account or North Bay, as appropriate. Clearing accounts are typically "\$0" balance / pass-through accounts. Inspection identified disbursement transactions to City of Freeport Bank accounts to fund payroll obligations and checks to individual payees. This activity is unusual for a clearing account.
- General ledger detail identified 54 "return item" fees totaling \$648 between October 2014 and September 2016. These "return item" fees indicate recurring overdrafts and are consistent with a failure to accurately record transactions in the City of Freeport accounting records.

Vendor Overpayments

- During 2015 and 2016 the City of Freeport made excess payments to HD Supply Waterworks ("HD Supply") totaling approximately \$168,495. HD Supply reported these overpayments to the City of Freeport and returned funds.
- Payments to HD Supply were issued from the General Fund (PNB Acct. xxx94) and from the Sewer Impact Fees account with Trustmark (Acct xxx-xxx-0890).
- Payments to HD Supply arose from sewer repairs being performed during 2016. The Bowers' reconciliation working papers identify payments to other vendors from both the General Fund and the Sewer Impact Fees account.

Janice McLean

- McLean served on the City of Freeport City Council during 2015 and 2016. In July 2015 McLean assumed an active role in the City of Freeport accounting operations. This role continued through FYE September 30, 2016.
- As a City Council member, McLean was charged with legislative oversight responsibility for City affairs including fiscal activities. Simultaneous assumption of an active role in the City accounting operations may violate State of Florida statutes and accepted accounting controls. McLean's dual role was known to other City Council members.

Identified Payments to Janice McLean- McLean Drilling

Date	Check #	Payee	Amount	Account
01/08/15	6960	Janice McLean	(559.88)	People National Bank #31294
04/09/15	25221	Janice McLean	(184.15)	Peoples National Bank #31336
04/28/15	25287*	Janice McLean	(86.02)	Peoples National Bank #31336
05/19/15	7022	Janice McLean	(100.00)	People National Bank #31294
08/05/15	25391	Janice McLean	(125.49)	Peoples National Bank #31336
12/07/15	25844	Janice McLean	(174.39)	Peoples National Bank #31336
		Janice McLean Total	(1,229.93)	

09/09/15	25618	McLean's Well Drilling Service	(9,220.00)	Peoples National Bank #31336
09/16/15	25644	McLean's Well Drilling Service	(8,037.00)	Peoples National Bank #31336

		McLean's Well Drilling Service Total	(17,257.00)	
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City of Freeport Mastercard

- The City of Freeport maintained several MasterCard credit card accounts during calendar years 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, as follows:

Account (last 4 digits)	Title	Period Maintained
9415	City of Freeport – Robin Haynes	Jan 2014 – Sept 2014
2633	City of Freeport – Robin Haynes	Oct 2014 – May 2015
2633	City of Freeport – Gary Mattison	June 2015 – Oct 2015
2872	City of Freeport – Gary Mattison	Nov 2015 – Dec 2015
2872	City of Freeport – Sidney R. Barley	Dec 2015 – Jan 2017
3482	City of Freeport – Sidney R. Barley	Feb 2017 – August 2017

Credit Card Observations

MasterCard statements identified \$87,964 of charges from January 2014 to August 2017. The following additional observations were made:

- The City of Freeport maintained a single card which would be provided to employees upon request. A sign-out log identifying personnel using the credit card was not maintained.
- The City of Freeport credit card assigned to Robin Haynes reflected charge activity into May 2015, approximately one year after Robin Haynes resigned from her position in April 2014.
- Credit card charges were not uniformly supported by receipts or documentation evidencing items purchased and business purpose.
- Monthly credit card charges were not accurately and completely posted to the City of Freeport general ledger accounting system.

Our inspection identified purchases at retail outlets and elsewhere suggestive of personal use or inconsistent with historic purchase patterns.

General Ledger Account Changes

- As noted, Ms. Bowers determined the City of Freeport Chart of accounts did not comply with municipal accounting guidance issued by the State of Florida. Bowers updated the City of Freeport Chart of Accounts to comply with state guidance.
- Our research confirmed that the Florida Department of Financial Services issued a report titled “CHART OF ACCOUNTS – Final Report” in January 2014. The report recommended the “...a uniform list of accounts for the reporting of assets, liabilities, equities, revenues, expenditures, and other sources and uses to the public.” It applied to “reporting entities” within the State of Florida.
- Final regulations implementing provisions of this report were issued in July 2015.

Sewer Impact Fees

- The FYE September 30, 2016 journal entries included approximately \$1,200,000 of adjustments to the Sewer Impact Fee account. Our analysis identified a \$1.2 million variance from historic averages, as follows:

420-15400	Impact Fee Account	Increases	Decreases	Balance
2014		64,300.17	(49,405.05)	1,266,930.93
2015		693,634.71	(173,401.14)	1,787,164.50
2016		23,818.85	(1,228,170.96)	582,812.39
2017		1,384,565.87	(310,774.59)	1,656,603.67
2018		425,159.47	(98,642.36)	1,983,120.78
Total		2,591,479.07	(1,860,394.10)	7,276,632.27
Average 15, 17, 18				1,808,962.98
2016 Difference to Average				1,226,150.59

MARCUM ASSESSMENT

Audit Opinion- Marcum LLP Assessment

While serious, the qualified opinion was limited to the general fund and not deemed applicable to the other City funds. Carr Riggs also performed the audit of the City of Freeport financial statements for the FYE September 30, 2017 and issued the following “unmodified” opinion:

- “In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-

type activities, and each major fund of the City of Freeport, Florida, as of September 30, 2017, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.”

When the audit opinions for FYE’s September 2015, 2016 and 2017 are read in chronological sequence several observations can be made including:

- The qualified opinion on the September 30, 2016 General Fund financial statements arose from an inability to ascertain the proper accounting for transactions (i.e. revenue and expenditures) occurring during FYE September 30, 2016.
- Carr Riggs did not qualify its opinion on the balance sheets (i.e. assets and liabilities) for any of the FYE September 30, 2016 audits suggesting that opening and ending account balances were fairly presented.
- Carr Riggs issued an “unmodified” opinion on its audit of the City of Freeport financial statements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017 including the General Fund. The “unmodified” opinion for FYE September 30, 2017 indicates factors leading to its “qualified” opinion on the General Fund for FYE September 30, 2016 were isolated to FYE September 30, 2016 and were addressed by FYE September 30, 2017.

Bowers Reconciliation- Marcum Assessment

Ms. Bowers’ reconciliation process entailed the following steps:

- The reconciliation was performed for each bank account maintained by the City of Freeport during the FYE September 30, 2016. The reconciliation process continued into 2017.
- For each account, Ms. Bowers:
- Compared account balances recorded in the City of Freeport general ledger to respective bank account balances.
- Resolved variances between the general ledger and the bank statements by performing a “transaction by transaction” reconciliation which included inspection of cancelled checks where applicable.
- Adjustments (i.e. debits and credits) were aggregated by account and posted as a single journal entry for each bank account to the general ledger.

Ms. Bowers did not fully update disbursement records to reflect names of all payees / recipients of City funds. Prior year payments made by the City may be difficult to track to a specific payee.

The reconciliation files prepared and maintained by Ms. Bowers:

- Evidenced a thorough and detailed process to address and correct deficiencies / inaccuracies in the City of Freeport accounting records attributable to a failure to contemporaneously record cash transactions.
- Neither Ms. Bowers nor Marcum identified transactions which were deemed to be for personal use.
- Provided explanations for the nature and volume of the adjusting entries as accounting transactions were not recorded contemporaneously, but were summarized and entered as a single entry to account for financial activity over an extended time period (i.e. entire fiscal year).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Persons charged with responsibility for maintenance and oversight of the fiscal operations of the City of Freeport failed to perform their duties in an appropriate manner. Rudimentary internal control procedures were disregarded or not properly in place.

These failures included:

- Failure to contemporaneously record disbursements and other transactions occurring within City cash accounts leading to corollary failures to properly account for transactions and failure to reconcile cash account balances, contributing to the “qualified” opinion on the general fund for FYE 9/30/16.
- Identified overpayments to vendors totaling more than \$168,000.
- Failure to properly record accumulated depreciation as required by Florida law.
- The reversal of CPA/auditor suggested adjustments to the general ledgers.
- The closing, subsequent reopening, and subsequent closing of various general ledger accounts, creating confusion in the general ledgers.
- Failure to adhere to controls regarding the authorization of disbursements. Janice McLean’s dual role as an “accounting” department employee and City Council member with check signing authority, placed McLean in a position to account for and authorize disbursements, creating opportunities for misuse of City resources. Further, the fact that McLean signed a check, albeit in conjunction with Mayor Barley, that directly benefited a family member, is an internal control violation.
- Failure to exercise controls over City of Freeport credit card accounts. City personnel were permitted to use a credit card account issued in the name of

Robin Haynes for approximately 12 months after Haynes terminated her employment with the City.

Our inspection did not identify specific instances of misuse of municipal funds. However, the internal control failures listed above, exposed the City of Freeport to potential misuse and misappropriation of assets. These control failures were not exclusively within the purview of Janice McLean. Other City Council members, and the Mayor, knew or should have known of McLean's dual role, ostensibly in furtherance of City activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While our inspection did not identify specific instances of misuse, potential irregularities are not readily discoverable due to the extensive confusion in City accounting records. The City of Freeport should:

- Review internal control procedures to ascertain compliance with of the State of Florida requirements and other guidance. The Mayor and/or City Council must regularly review reconciliations of cash and related receivables and payables accounts.
- Ensure City employees are adequately trained in internal control procedures and appropriate segregation of duties / separation of processes is in place.
- Particular attention should be paid to transactions that are broken down into two amounts, such that they are may not be subjected to specific City Council scrutiny.
- Extensive or unusual adjustments to the ledgers should be discussed in advance with the City's auditors.

City of Freeport payment practices caused payments to be made to vendors from multiple bank accounts resulting in excess vendor payments as evidenced by the \$168,000 of excess payments to HD Supply. Other vendors received payments from multiple accounts totaling more than \$100,000. Knowledgeable City personnel should:

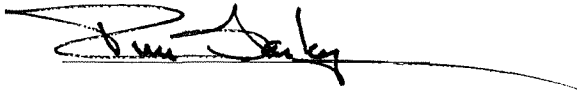
- Inspect a selection of these vendor accounts to assess the likelihood of further excess vendor payments.
- Inspect records of payments to recipients of City payments during FYE's September 30, 2015 and September 30, 2016 to assess whether the payments were made in furtherance of a City purpose.

- Inspect credit card purchases to assess whether the identified credit card purchases were made in furtherance of a City purpose.
- Inspect impact fee accounts in 2016, in line with our previous commentary.
- Implement accounting systems and procedures for capital assets. This was identified as a “significant” internal control deficiency in multiple audit reports issued by the Carr Riggs firm.
- Other matters requiring inquiry include:
 - Multiple account balances that did not change (i.e. no recorded activity) from 2014 through 2018. This list was provided to City of Freeport.

Councilmembers expressed their thanks for the presentation and for Marcum Advisory and Consulting’s extensive work. The floor was opened for public comment.

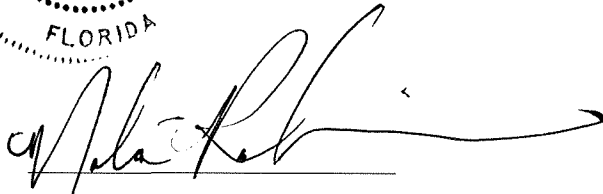
4. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 22, 2021, 6:30 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Council Members Absent: Councilwoman Amanda Green

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Keith Kelly- Freeport Football & Cheer Assoc.

Mr.Keith Kelly, President of the Freeport Football and Cheer Association approached the Council requesting continued use of the multi-purpose fields at the Sports Complex for the association. Mr.Kelly stated that the association would need use of the fields from July 5- November 5 every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 5:30PM-8:00PM for practice. The association has been using the fields for three years and would like to continue doing so.



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 11, 2021, 9:00 AM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin

Council Member Absent: Councilwoman Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Mayor Barley presented Councilman Farris with an appreciation plaque as a token of gratitude from the Northwest Florida League of Cities to applaud his leadership, dedication, and membership to the organization.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Bills

- b. City Council Meeting Minutes- April 22, 2021
- c. Special City Council Meeting Minutes- April 22, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

Councilwoman Green noted that due to her absence at both meetings and the audio not being available online she would only approve the Bills and would drop the minutes from the consent agenda until she has a chance to listen to the audio. City Attorney Adkinson explained the legality of her request and directed the appropriate motion to Council.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Councilwoman Green advised City Clerk Robinson of changes that needed to be made in the minutes.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To APPROVE the consent Agenda which would only include the Bills.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- Legal- Wastewater Treatment Plant Bid Protest Update
- Councilwoman Green- Special Meetings
- City Clerk Robinson- Recorded Lines Update

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To APPROVE the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager

1. Marcum Audit

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that following the Special Meeting with the Marcum Audit he and Finance Officer Bowers did thorough research to offer clarity on items in question. City Manager Simmons opened the floor to Finance Officer Bowers to discuss the findings. Finance Officer Bowers noted the following:

- The Audit failed to include employees that received their pay through direct deposit into the payroll process.
- Unexplained accounting adjustments in the Sewer Impact Fee Account totaling up to \$1,237,864.69 resulted from reimbursements, checks to contractors for supplies and services, as well as a correction to a previous entry.
- The three missing checks totaled \$180,867 were caused by USDA withdraws for outstanding bond issues with an overdraft fee due to the North Bay Sinking Account not having sufficient funds.
- Transfer made to Janice McLean in the amount of \$78,000 was withdrawn from the North Bay Water System Operations account and deposited into the North Bay Sinking Account to keep the account from having a negative balance after paying two outstanding USDA bond issues.

Council members thanked Finance Officer Bowers for her research into concerned items discussed at the Marcum audit. Councilwoman Green expressed her concerns on the amount of time it took for the City to discover

where the \$1.2 million went and recommended that the City keep finance records properly moving forward. Councilman Farris noted that the audit was failed from the beginning and could have been prevented, noting that it was very misleading. Councilwoman Brannon expressed her appreciation for having a qualified audit conducted to put the matter in the past, noting her disappointment with Marcum.

e. City Clerk

1. Recorded Lines Update

City Clerk Robinson informed the Council that the recorded line system had been delayed. City Clerk Robinson expressed that while trying to keep current city phone numbers she ran into a plethora of issues including:

- Various phone numbers of the City's belonged to various phone companies.
- Unknown phone numbers belonged to unexplained lines.
- Presumed land lines belonged to the wells.

City Clerk Robinson explained that once she was able to identify and map the various phone lines the transfer to the new company would begin.

f. Finance

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. Verandas Phase 1-C-4 Record Plat

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Verandas Phase 1-C-4 Record Plat requesting approval.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To APPROVE the Verandas Phase 1-C-4 Record Plat requesting approval

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

2. Walton County Mobility Plan/ County Staff

Planning Director Hughes-Neel introduced Mac Carpenter the Growth Management Director for Walton County and Kristen Shell the Planning Manager for Walton County who would present the preliminary mobility plan to the Council. Mr.Carpenter informed the Council that at a previous public hearing regarding the County's Mobility Plan it was decided that the County would approach municipalities to see if there was a date to meet with Board of County Commissioners to get as much public engagement as possible and feedback on the proposed Mobility Plan. Mrs.Shell expressed that she wanted to formally bring all municipalities into the conversation to discuss the proposed plans. Mrs.Shell noted that the Mobility Plan included a Needs Plan (long range plans) for each municipality in Walton County that she recommended the City review with staff to discuss revisions based on the land development and economic development plans for the City. Mrs.Shell further explained the Mobility Plan are the projects they would join forces with the City on, given their permission, to seek funding that they usually lose to Okaloosa County each year. Mrs.Shell noted that working together and making their presence known would yield better results for gaining funding. Mrs.Shell noted that if the City decided to participate in mobility fees all the funding collected within the City limits would return to the City and have to be spent on projects listed in the Mobility Plan. Mrs.Shell noted that a revised scheduled which would consider affordable housing and non-residential fees would be coming out a later time. Mrs.Shell expressed the implementation of benefit districts within the plan and how they would benefit the people that are paying. Councilwoman Green noted her excitement of the Mobility Plan and her eagerness to discuss more. Mrs.Shell noted the importance of having plans vetted through by the public to advocate in a more effective and cohesive manner. Planning Director Hughes-Neel expressed the importance of having justification of projects from the public, noting the lengthy process of getting U.S. 331 into a four-lane highway by working alone. Planning Director Hughes-Neel stressed to the Council the need to review the fees associated with the Mobility Plan as well as the plans on the map. Planning Director Hughes-Neel advised the Council to review the two maps listed in the Mobility Plan for Freeport and to give her feedback with corrections so she can compose a revised map to present to Mrs.Shell. Mrs.Shell noted that the Needs Plan Map for the City of Freeport would be a priority and assist with better land use. Councilman Martin asked for clarity on the Board of County Commissioners position on developers paying a proportionate fair share. Mrs.Shell informed the Council that following an audit the Board was advised to find an alternative solution which made them investigate a Mobility Plan, noting that proportionate fair share had faced challenges across the state. Mrs.Shell informed the Council that she would like to schedule a meeting with them and the Board of County Commissioners to discuss the Mobility Plan. City Manager Simmons and Councilmembers discussed an appropriate time for the special meeting.

Councilwoman Green requested a workshop with Planning Director Hughes-Neel before the next Council Meeting, to further discuss the maps within the Mobility Plan and the development maps of the City. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she would like to work with engineering to give a presentation and present a large-scale map to the Council that indicates where development would occur along with actual population clusters. Councilman Martin noted that an in-depth discussion was needed to sort through the material provided in the Mobility Plan. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the meeting will offer clarity to the plans of the City. Engineer Rouchaleau noted that the Mobility Plan presented the opportunity to have a connector road from 83A to U.S. 331 would be huge for the City, and that connector roads are a priority for the City. Engineer Rouchaleau continued by adding that in his opinion the City needed to do something to assess fees. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he had no input on the Mobility Plan Maps, Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she was approached for very brief input on the plans and since had no communication. City Attorney Adkinson briefed the Council on matters to be attentive to within the Mobility plan, noting that the plan itself and the fees presented a plethora of restrictions. City Attorney Adkinson noted that if the City were to participate in the plan there were alternative options to the impact fee, which the City from prior experience knew presented immense restrictions. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that updated language to Florida law allowed the developer who paid impact fees in one zone would have the freedom to transfer their credit to any project within that zone or to an adjacent zone, which could ultimately leave the City. City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council to consider alternative options to fund the plans listed in the Mobility Plan such as an infrastructure sales tax. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the Council should investigate how the Mobility Plan would affect the Interlocal Agreement and the maintenance of the roads. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that affordable housing issues were associated with the implementation of impact fees from the Mobility Plan, noting that the City would need to devise a plan that works best for the City and keep funding options open. City Manager Simmons noted that he was weary of fee increases noting that the City would experience significant jumps, to which City Attorney Adkinson reminded the Council to remember their history of increased rates and public feedback. Councilwoman Green noted that alternative options would need to be discussed at the special meeting. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she would compile a list of concerns to present before the Board of County Commissioners.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To schedule a Special Meeting with the Board of County Commissioners for June 8, 2021 at 10:30AM.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To schedule a Workshop for May 27, 2021 at 5:30PM.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

i. Legal

1. Wastewater Treatment Plant Bid Protest Update

City Attorney Adinkson presented to the Council the letter that was sent on behalf of the City informing the company that the City rejected their bid on the Wastewater Treatment Plan, and that engineering would send a copy to the bonding company. City Attorney Adkinson continued the discussion by noting the grounds for which the City declared the company as non-responsive and non-responsible. A motion was requested.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To ratify the City Manager's rejection of the bid protest.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

j. Engineering

1. Proposal for Engineering Services for Wastewater Package Plant Design & Permitting

Engineer Rouchaleau requested a motion for approval of the proposal plans for the Wastewater Package Plant design and permitting. Councilwoman Green wanted to ensure that the Council would only be approving the design and not the actual units, Engineer Rouchaleau confirmed.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To APPROVE the proposal for the Wastewater Treatment Plant design and permitting.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. Updates

- USDA was currently working on the funding application for the treatment plant. The bid protest is not affecting the progress.
- There will be an on-site preconstruction meeting regarding Washington Street following the Council Meeting. They will get mobilize and begin working on the project this week with a 6-8 week turn around.
- The Barrier Free Park bids are due in 2 weeks which will be awarded soon after at Council Meeting.
- 331 North permitting is in process of being submitted

- Master Lift Station- Chelco will begin installation of lights.

10. Old Business

a. Pending Items List

- Council members reviewed the pending list with City Manager Simmons, noting completed items. City Manager Simmons noted that he, City Attorney Adkinson, and Planning Director Hughes-Neel met with Bob Beasley regarding the redistricting of the City. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that two districts needed to be rebalanced, however they will reconvene with the redistricting of the City in August-September. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that they goal would be to create a ten-year districting map that will not have to be updated until the next census release. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the redistricting will comply with Florida law, and that after discussion with Mr. Beasley looks forward to aligning City Elections to the State primary elections.
- City Manager Simmons noted that the Road Agreement with the County was a work in progress, noting that he has a few more meetings scheduled with District 4 Commissioner and will present the updates with City Attorney Adkinson hopefully in the first meeting in June.
- Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the SRTS Grant Phase II was submitted and is currently under review.
- The Main Street Program has been suspended due to the four-lane project that will interfere with plans.
- Planning Director Hughes-Neel requested to withdraw the Education Reimbursement Program due to a plethora of projects. Councilwoman Green asked that the item be taken off Planning Director's Hughes-Neel plate but remain on the list as a to-do item later.
- Councilwoman Green noted that she and Lieutenant Pendleton were currently working on the homeless project.

Councilmembers noted that they would like to keep the pending list updated and present once a month on the agenda.

11. New Business

- City Manager Simmons noted that the City will be hosting a Fourth of July Celebration at the Park along with a parade, and a golf tournament.
- City Manager Simmons noted that he will be relaxing the mask mandate with staff, however he will be keeping the social distancing in the Council Chambers.
- Work with infrastructure along the U.S 331 corridor is coming together.

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Green

- 1. Special Meeting

Councilwoman Green expressed her concerns with seeing a special meeting for the Planning Board, noting that request in the past have always been turned down. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that due to a staff error with planning and advertisement she chose to have a special meeting so that the applicant would not be put at a disadvantage.

City Attorney Adkinson noted that he would like to have the audio from the April 22 Meeting available online regarding the bid protest item and for Rural Development. Councilwoman Green noted her concerns for staying transparent with the public and for putting information back on the site, expressing her concerns with I.T issues. Councilwoman Brannon noted that there were issues with CRC and tech with her personal devices as well. Councilman Farris noted that potentially hiring an in-house I.T department would be ideal. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that hiring new I.T was underway and had been a work in progress for quite some time.

- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman Martin

- 1. Special Events Permit

Councilman Martin wanted to address the matter of the City staying out of private property events, noting that if the City is not affiliated in any way, then it is not the role of the City to intervene. Councilman Martin wanted to review the policy for revisions, noting he sent suggestions to City Attorney Adkinson for legal review and recommendations. Planning Director-Hughes Neel noted that the Planning Department enforces the policies on books, noting that there is a special six-month process involved with updating or removing items in the special permit code.

Councilwoman Brannon noted that she was under the impression that the private property issue with special events had been addressed last year, Councilwoman Green concurred. City Attorney Adkinson noted that there needed to be a cleanup of language within the development code to only

regulate public property events or events serving a public purpose. Councilwoman Brannon expressed her opposition of regulating private property. Councilman Farris noted that there needed to be language in the policy that allowed the City Manager the authority to decide on special event permits. Council members expressed they would like City Attorney Adkinson to revise the policy and to present it to Council.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To task City Attorney Adkinson with revising the special permit ordinance and to present it to Council.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. Audit Follow-Up Recommendations

Councilman Martin made suggestions to getting a quicker response or solution to financial issues by:

- Doing quarterly reviews with an outside company for transparency so the public can see that it is CPA certified.
- Having financial statements easily accessible on the City Website for the public's review.

Councilwoman Green noted that it would be more cost effective to have Finance Officer Bowers conduct the quarterly statements noting that she was already qualified to do the work and that monthly she could conduct reports for better organization of records. City Manager Simmons noted that Finance Officer Bowers already sends out monthly reports to each department. Finance Officer Bowers noted that it would be cost effective to have her do the work as opposed to hiring an outside entity which would dig into the City's budget.

12. Public Comment

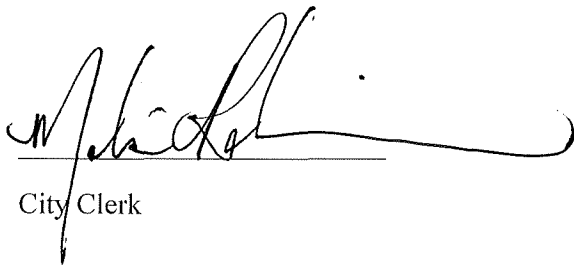
13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:49AM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 27, 2021 5:30 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner, Councilwoman Green

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Walton County Mobility Plan/ Mobility Fee

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented to the Council a planned development projects map for the City of Freeport, which illustrated projected population clusters based on single family and multi-family unit projects. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that several projects along Highway 331 were awaiting the construction of the new wastewater treatment facility before building. After reviewing the layout of the City based on the planned development projects map it was established that:

- North of Hwy 20 expected 7,154 units to be built out within 20 years.
- 331 South expected an estimated 3,813 units to be built.
- 331 North is expected to have 6,200 units to be built.
- There would be a need for an additional wastewater treatment plant north of Highway 20 to sustain growth.
- The City would experience an influx of mass growth, based on the current FDEP the population would rise to 32,901 within the next 20 years.

- The City is moving in the right direction by focusing on improving its water and sewage systems.

Councilman Farris inquired on the status of the City using portables to allow projects to commence ahead of the wastewater treatment plants being built. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that the option to use portables is available to developers if needed and is a tool the City is willing to use. Councilwoman Brannon wanted to assure that the City would keep their options open and be willing to work with any project that is ready to build, ahead of . Planning Director Hughes-Neel assured the Council that the City is working hard to deliver on the planned projects and is willing to work with anyone. City Manager Simmons emphasized that the City is willing to accommodate serious developers that are ready to work and move forward. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that once plans have been submitted and a developer's agreement has been signed the City would do its part to ensure that the project succeeded.

Councilwoman Green queried on how the city would facilitate space for schools based on current development projects and the expected increase in population. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that she would be presenting a comprehensive plan amendment within the next month which will address this concern. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that with changes in legislation it was time for the City to update its interlocal school agreement with the school district to ensure all entities are on the same page. Planning Director Hughes-Neel added that the school district has a seat on the Planning Review Board to ensure that they can give feedback and request land usage on certain projects.

Councilwoman Green noted that the multiplier for population growth and the numbers presented by the Department of Education are predictive that the City will encounter a huge issue with the incoming of school ready students and no space to accommodate them. Councilwoman Green reminded the Council that money from the state to assist with schools does not come quickly therefore the City should be making plans to address this concern beforehand. Planning Director Hughes-Neel remarked that the comprehensive plan will have tools to assist the City with addressing this concern.

Planning Director Hughes-Neel continued the discussion by noting the correlation between the Mobility Plan and the City's development projects. Planning Director Hughes-Neel reviewed the Mobility Plan Map with the Council noting that it presented the opportunity for :

- Connector Roads to alleviate traffic from Highway 20
- Potential sites for traffic Lights
- Bypass roads
- Bridges

Planning Director Hughes-Neel discussed discrepancies within the Mobility Plan with the Council, leaving room for critiques.

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Needs Plan within the Mobility Plan noting that the drafted map was confusing for her to follow. Planning Director Hughes- Neel noted that the Needs Map needed additional traffic lights, lacked appropriate mediums, and called for major upgrades to roads which infringed upon private properties. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that Council should create notes on items they needed clarification on and would like change so they could be addressed at the Special

Meeting with the County. Councilwoman Brannon sought clarity on who advised the County for drafting the maps. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that the conversation with the County was very brief and focused on the alleviation of traffic from Highway 20. Councilmembers noted the importance of relieving traffic from Highway 20. City Manager Simmons noted that there was talk of creating a connector road from Publix to the Hammock Bay which would assist in better traffic flow. City Manager Simmons noted that Marquis Way would also be a hot topic at next week's meeting to ease traffic issues. City Manager Simmons expressed his concerns on how the conversation initiated between the County and the City regarding the maps, however he noted that the Board of County Commissioners were ready to open the floor for discussions and to collaborate. City Manager Simmons also noted that the Council should be aware of the cost of the projects and discuss who would be funding it. Councilman Martin noted that every project listed came with a cost and the upgrading of the roads was a necessity for the City. Councilman Martin continued the discussion by highlighting that the sewer and water efforts would be key to the economic growth of the City, noting that he was in favor of the sewer and water department operating as a separate entity further down the line. Councilman Martin emphasized the need for the City to become creative with ways to secure funds being that the City was behind.

Councilman Martin highlighted his concerns regarding the plans sketched out in the maps, noting that a planner from Gainesville designed the future plans for the City. Councilman Martin noted that the top engineers for the City regarding roads were not consulted prior to the design of the plans which raised an area of concern. Councilman Martin furthered the discussion by cautioning Council of the adjacent zones hazards within the mobility plan, noting the importance of local input being vital to the overall success of the City. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the mobility plan fees posed a great threat to affordable housing in the community. Councilwoman Green queried City Attorney Adkinson on the use of sales tax fees as an alternative to the impact fees of the mobility plan.

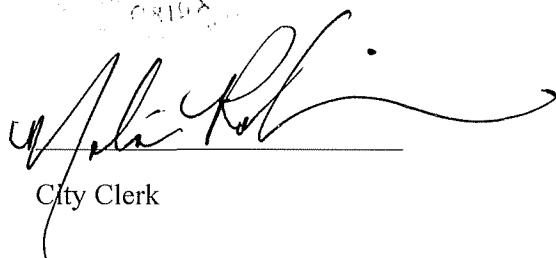
3. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:19 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 27, 2021, 6:30 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Planner Adam Williams

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Miss Freeport Queens, Miss Walton County Queens, and Miss DeFuniak Queens

Mayor Russ Barley presented the visiting queens as ambassadors of Walton County for 2021. The Miss Freeport Queens, Miss Walton County Queens, and Miss DeFuniak Queens gave introductions to the City Council and thanks for the invitation.

4. Recognition of Guests

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Revenue & Expenditure Report through April 2021
- b. Bills

- c. City Council Meeting Minutes- April 22, 2021
- d. Special Council Meeting Minutes- April 22, 2021
- e. City Council Meeting Minutes- May 11, 2021

6. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

- Councilwoman Haffner noted a name error in the minutes of May 11,2021.
- Councilwoman Green noted her concern of the vagueness of the Special Council Meeting Minutes of April 22,2021 seeking the opinion of the other Council members for critiques. The Council recommended that the City Clerk add the PowerPoint from the meeting into the minutes for transparency.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To approve the consent Agenda with recommended changes.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

8. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- Billing- Automated Call Provider
- City Manager- Delete items under Engineering due to their absence.

9. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the agenda with the specified additions and deletions.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

10. Staff Reports

a. Water

b. Sewer

c. Parks

d. City Manager

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

1. Interim Financing Advertisement Approval

Finance Officer Sara Bowers presented the Interim Financing Advertisement for approval to the Council to abide by USDA guidelines.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the Interim Financing Advertisement.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

g. Billing

1. Automated Call Provider

Billing Manager Roberts informed the Council that after careful investigation she discovered that there were certain phone companies that excluded customers from receiving the automated disconnect reminder calls. Billing Manager Roberts sought permission to investigate an alternative company that could provide call, text, email or all services to produce better customer service.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To authorize Billing Manager Roberts to look for an alternative company for automated call reminders.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. Sensus Analytics Update

Billing Manager Roberts informed the Council that with the help of Water Supervisor Tuggle she was able to get the new sensus analytics up and running. Billing Manager Roberts noted that the new system provided hourly updates which assisted her in finding water leaks quicker. After testing the new software with Water Supervisor Tuggle to confirm accuracy, Billing Manager Roberts noted that she expects the system to go live next month.

h. Planning

1. Joe Campbell Road Re-Zoning (2nd Reading)

City Planner Williams presented the Joe Campbell Road Re-Zoning before the Council for approval.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the Joe Campbell Road Re-Zoning.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. Brannon Re-Zoning (1st Reading)

City Planner Williams presented the Brannon Re-Zoning before the Council which would amend the zoning assignment from residential to commercial use.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To authorize first reading and to advertise the second reading.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

3. Regency Acquisitions SSA (1st Reading)

City Planner Williams presented the Regency Acquisitions SSA before the Council which would change the parcel of land from rural village to urban development future land use designation, amending the City's Comprehensive Plan. City Attorney Clay Adkinson directed Mr.Scott Jenkins to swear in his statement of intent of use. Councilwoman Green asked for clarity on the location of this parcel.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To authorize first reading and to advertise second reading.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

4. Regency Acquisitions Re-Zoning (1st Reading)

City Planner Williams presented the Regency Acquisitions Re-Zoning before the Council for approval, which would convert this land usage from rural development to high intensity commercial. Mrs.Sherry Parris inquired on the owners knowing about how close it would put them to Highway 20, Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed her that the owners were aware and had design plans to accommodate that.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To authorize first reading and to approve advertisement of second reading.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

5. Hammock Bay Phase III PDP Modification

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Hammock Bay Phase III PDP Modification before the Council seeking approval. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that the modification was requested due to the location of Phase B of the project, which is surrounded by wetland buffers, the developer is seeking the reduction of the setback from 15 feet to 10 feet only for Phase B. Councilwoman Green expressed her concern and confusion over the language in Resolution 2018-19 which was the original agreement for this project. Planning Director Hughes-Neel assured Council that the language was what was approved at that meeting. Councilwoman Green encouraged the Council to allow her to research the original agreement and audio from that meeting to confirm. Councilmembers agreed to postpone approval of the Hammock Bay Phase III PDP Modification until the next City Council Meeting.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To continue the Hammock Bay Phase III PDP Modification until the next meeting to allow Councilwoman Green to research.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

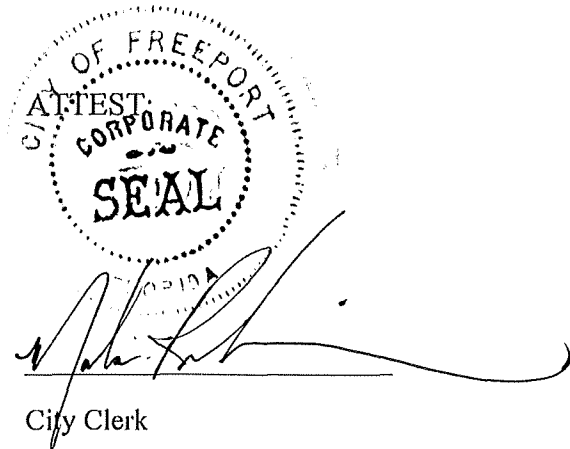
Carried

- i. Legal
- j. Engineering
 - 1. ~~Bid Results for 83A Wastewater Improvements~~
 - 2. ~~Barrier Free Park Phase Improvements~~
- 11. Old Business
- 12. New Business
 - a. Mayor Russ Barley
 - b. Councilwoman Brannon
 - c. Councilman Farris
 - d. Councilwoman Green
 - e. Councilwoman Haffner
 - f. Councilman Martin
- 13. Public Comment
- 14. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:12PM.



Mayor



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 8, 2021, 9:00 AM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin

Council Members Absent: Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Special Council Meeting Minutes- April 22, 2021
- b. Special Council Meeting Minutes- May 27, 2021
- c. Regular Council Meeting Minutes- May 27, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

None.

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

9. Staff Reports

a. Water

b. Sewer

c. Parks

d. City Manager

1. Walton Co. Broadband Agreement

City Manager Simmons presented the Walton County Broadband Agreement that was presented to every municipality within Walton County. City Manager Simmons noted that if this were a venture the City would like to pursue then he recommended amending some of the terms within the contract. City Manager Simmons noted that he and Water Supervisor Tuggle inspected the proposed sites for the antennas which would be placed at North Bay, Portland, and Wind Swept and found them to be sufficient. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that his initial concern was the type of antenna that would be used and its impact on other City devices.

Councilwoman Green queried on the size of the antennas to which City Manager Simmons explained would be relatively small. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that the antennas would need to be placed on the top of the well towers, which would give their company access to the well house. City Manager Simmons noted that he recommended amending that part of the contract and having someone

on site to assist them when needed. City Manager Simmons noted that the partnership with the County is geared towards making internet accessible to everyone within the City. City Manager Simmons requested a motion to work with City Attorney Adkinson to make changes within the contract and to present it at the next Council Meeting. Councilwoman Green sought legal counsel on the contract. City Attorney Adkinson noted that he had no issue with the City not relinquishing a key, noting that the one-year term of the contract will protect the City. City Attorney Adkinson expressed that the City would benefit by following the City of Defuniak's standard with the contract and request data to ensure it's worth it to the City. City Attorney Adkinson that the goal is to get broadband accessible at an affordable rate and accessible to the public. City Manager Simmons expressed his interest in giving it a try. Councilwoman Green queried on how this agreement would affect the ordinance in place on having items on towers. City Attorney Adkinson noted that at the time the ordinance was enacted it was prior to the State's regulation that ended the City's preemption to interfere with communication devices, noting that it was up in the air. City Attorney Adkinson further explained that the intent of the ordinance was to keep individuals from attaching devices to billboards. Planning Director Hughes-Neel clarified on the City codes, noting that new billboards were prohibited within City limits. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the agreement had already gone through several changes as it has passed through municipality, and they were willing to abide to the terms the City lays out. City Attorney Adkinson noted that they would request the exact radio frequency to ensure no disruption with the water towers systems, to be informed of what they are doing to stay consistent with technological advancements, and if willing they can build their own facility on the ground to maintain the antenna.

Public Comment: Kat Pellegrino wanted to confirm the planned location of the antennas and to know if it would be 5G. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the device was not cellular and would not consist of 5G. City Attorney Adkinson noted that upon approval they would make the broadband website available so that the public could sign up for it and get information on available dates.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To allow City Manager Simmons to work with City Attorney Adkinson on amending the Walton County Broadband Agreement and to present it at the next City Council Meeting.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. CRC

City Manager Simmons noted that the Council approved the hiring of CRC, however he would like to look at an alternate company for taking over the City's IT.

Councilwoman Green queried on the terms of the contract, City Attorney Adkinson noted that he would need to review the original contract before giving direction. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the following discrepancies have been noted by City staff:

- The expected level of service and performance are not meeting the needs of City staff to satisfaction.
- Public record research requests have not been performed in a timely or efficient matter.
- Cloud drive backup failures were not able to come back online quickly.
- Anti-spam and firewall software installed has blocked numerous emails from City Attorney Adkinson's office without notice, and the ability to retrieve them has been difficult.
- The standard of work to meet government needs is not sufficient.

City Attorney Adkinson gave legal counsel to how the City could terminate their contract with CRC and gave language for the appropriate motion that would be needed for City Manager Simmons to seek an alternate company. Councilwoman Green sought clarity on the process of exiting the contract and terms. Councilwoman Green noted that previous City Clerks have encountered difficulties with managing CRC and have had issues with them adhering and upholding to their end of the contract.

City Manager Simmons gave the following updates:

- City Manager Simmons is currently working with the County to obtain their surplus truck to take care of the City of Freeport's own personal code enforcement cans on site.
- The 331 Sewer site PowerPoint is almost complete.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To authorize City Manager Simmons to begin the process of exiting the CRC contract, finding a replacement service, and to develop a transitioning plan.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

e. City Clerk

1. FACC Conference 2021

City Clerk Robinson sought permission from the Council to attend the summer FACC Academy in Fort Myers, FL to begin pursuit of her CMC certifications. Councilwoman Green queried on the dates of the conference. City Clerk Robinson informed the Council that the event will take place on June 26-June 30.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To approve City Clerk Robinson's attendance to the summer 2021 FACC Summer Academy.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

f. Finance

1. Water and Wastewater Capacity Fees

Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that there are capacity fee funds from two developments that will not be developed this year that are sitting in the City's operating account. Finance Officer Bowers requested permission to remove the funds from its respective operating account to the respective capacity fee account to avoid spending the money on other projects.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To move the funds from their respective operating account to the respective capacity fee account.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. Hammock Bay PDP Phase III Revision (continued from May 27,2021 RCM)

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Hammock Bay PDP Phase III Revision that was continued from the previous meeting seeking approval. Planning Director Hughes-Neel requested the feedback of Councilwoman Green's research into Resolution 2018-19, which was the original document for the project. Councilwoman Green expressed that she found several discrepancies, noting to City Clerk Robinson that audio posted by previous clerks does not have a toggle which limits one's ability to fast-forward through audio. The following items were:

- There was a play on language which does not match the intention of the agreement.
- Fingering was promised for wet land spacing however minimum standards were met which was 5-foot setbacks.

Councilwoman Green noted that the area is low lying and already experiences flooding with major drainage issues. Councilwoman Green expressed that she believed the proposed revision would contribute to existing issues and would not do well with neighborhood building. Councilwoman Green noted that she was disappointed by City Staff's poor advice on the matter. Councilman Martin queried as to whether an engineering review had been conducted. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the rear setback would be the only area requesting an additional 5-foot setback and opened the floor for the consultant Mr.Scott to speak on the behalf of the project. Mr.Scott gave clarity to the Council on the pod area that would be impacted by the additional and the specific lots that would require the additional 5 foot setback. Mr.Scott informed Councilman Martin that a full environmental assessment had been conducted on the entire site, noting they exceeded the standards put in place by the city and state. Mr.Scott continued by explaining to Councilman Martin on where the wetland area was, explaining the lots that would be impacted by it. Councilwoman Green highlighted that based on the research presented only lots 9-33 in Pod B would need the additional setback, however the request was for the entire pod. Councilwoman Green elaborated that the Council needed to be thorough in examining request brought before them to ensure the language matches the request. Councilman Martin suggested amending the language to approve the additional 5-foot setback for lots 9-33 in Pod B only.

Public Comment: Kat Pellegrino queried on a study being conducted regarding the animal issue in the community, flooding, and traffic. Mrs.Pellegrino noted that the area does not have sufficient space for roadways and evacuations in the event of the storm, recommending a bridge. Mrs.Pellegrino continued the discussion by reminding the Council that a new school would be built in the area as well which would cause major traffic issues if actions were not taken place. Councilwoman Green invited Mrs.Pellegrino to attend the following meeting which would focus on her concerns of roadways. Mr.Scott noted that the full environmental study conducted contained information on endangered species, flooding, as well as archaeological findings.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve the Resolution with the conditions that only lots 9-33 of Pod B would get the additional 5-foot setback.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. Petition to Vacate Lot 1 Riverwalk Phase 1/ Bob McGill

Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that there was an error in Mr.McGill's paperwork that vacated Lot 1 unintentionally. Planning Director Hughes-Neel explained that Mr.McGill did his due diligence by following the appropriate procedures to advertise the corrected petition.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the Petition to Vacate Lot 1 of Riverwalk Phase 1.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

3. Walton County School District Interlocal Agreement

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Walton County School District Interlocal Agreement before the Council for approval, noting that it was the same approved agreement that the City approves ever so often.

Public Comment: Kat Pellagrino noted that she was a part of a Republican Group that informed her of the issue of non-English speaking students within the school district. Mrs. Pellagrino expressed that it not only impacts the teachers but the students who need help. City Attorney Adkinson informed Mrs. Pellagrino that it was outside the jurisdiction of the City and an issue for the Walton County School District.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the Walton County School District Interlocal Agreement.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

4. Hammock Bay Master Assoc. Special Event/ 3rd of July Parade on Great Hammock Bend

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented the application for the Hammock Bay Master Association 3rd of July Parade seeking approval.

Councilwoman Green expressed her concerns for having a major road blocked off for an hour to accommodate the parade, noting residents of Hammock Bay would need the ability to move in and out. Councilwoman Green continued by adding that adequate security and patrol by the Walton County Sheriff's Department would need to be involved for her approval. Councilwoman Green noted that the current security that is used at Hammock Bay events acts as if it is above the law, which is a cause for concern. Councilwoman Brannon noted her concern for the traffic repercussions of the road closure as well as EMS access. Councilman Martin suggested a change of route for the event to allow sufficient access. Councilman Farris recommended the

use of the Sheriff's Department to avoid liability issues. Planning Director Hughes-Neel requested to continue the item and to present it to the association for reviewing and adjustments. City Attorney Adkison stressed the importance of a deadline for information on the event, noting that the Council only had one more meeting before the proposed event date. Councilwoman Green suggested the bike path being used to host the event.

Public Comment: Kristina Bacon noted her concerns for the lack of a First Aid Station which is never at any of the Hammock Bay events, although it is stated in the agreements. Mrs. Bacon also expressed her concern for conflict of interest between the two events noting that the City of Freeport was hosting a parade the following day. Mrs. Bacon also noted that the multipath would be a great alternative to the road usage.

City Planner Hughes-Neel advised on the appropriate motion to withdraw the original motion and second, continuing the item to the next Council Meeting. City Planner Hughes-Neel informed the Council that she would contact the items presented to the organizer and give them the opportunity to submit a revised application. Councilwoman Green noted that impeding traffic and finding sufficient parking would be an additional concern.

~~Moved by: Councilman Farris~~

~~Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon~~

Defeated

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To continue the item to the following City Council Meeting.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

- i. Legal
- j. Engineering
- 1. Barrier Free Park Phase I Improvements

Engineer Rouchaleau informed the Council that only two bids were submitted despite reaching out to several vendors. Engineer Rouchaleau notified Council of the following:

- RBM Contracting Services submitted a bid of \$342,036.50 and Gulf Coast Utility Contractors submitted a bid for \$539,657.50.
- The project is for the parking, stormwater improvements, and the roadway addition to the property.
- The proposed budget for the project is \$258,000 which puts the bids significantly over budget.

Engineer Rouchaleau sought approval to award the bid to the lowest bidder contingent to negotiation of the price not to exceed \$325,000. City Manager Simmons informed the Council that the City was under strict guideline of the grant to produce the completion of the project.

Updates:

- The Wastewater Treatment Plant will have a pre-construction meeting next week.
- Washington Street is currently under construction.
- Engineer Rouchaleau has discovered a new 100% grant for the City, with a deadline of mid-July. Engineer Rouchaleau will propose some ideas and bring it back for Council's review.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To award the bid to the lowest bidder contingent of the negotiation of price not to exceed \$325,000.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Green
- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:58 AM.



Mayor



City Clerk



City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 24, 2021, 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Barley opened by delivering the 2021 State of the City Address for the City of Freeport, highlighting major milestones and achievements for the City in the past year. The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Haffner, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Revenue & Expenditure Report through May 2021
- b. Bills
- c. Regular Council Meeting Minutes- June 8, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- Legal- Consideration of City Manager Ordinance and Special Event Policy Updates
- City Clerk- Council Workshop
- Councilwoman Green- Special Event Flyer and Hammock Bay Parade Report

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks

1. Freeport Farmers Market at Freeport Regional Sports Complex

Parks Director Digges informed the Council that he received a special event application and fee from Gary Parks regarding hosting a Farmer's Market Event at the Sports Complex. Parks Director Digges noted that the event will be partnering with the Lunch Buddy Foundation which is a non-profit organization. Parks Director Digges disclosed that the event anticipated an estimated 40 vendors, affirming that there would be safety measures in place provided by EMS and the local Fire Department. Parks Director Digges requested approval of the special event permit. Councilwoman Green pointed out to the Council that since the event was a part of a 501c non-profit she recommended waiving the fees.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the special event permit and waive the fees.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

- d. City Manager

e. City Clerk

1. New I.T Proposal

City Clerk Robinson informed the Council that City Staff had interviewed three companies to potential replace CRC and have chosen to go with SLE98 LLC. City Clerk Robinson noted that the company had sent over a draft contract which was under review by City Attorney Adkinson. City Attorney Adkinson noted that he had a few amendments he would like to make in the contract and opened the floor for Council discussion. Council members discussed the price and services that would be provided. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the contract was a standard consumer contracting, noting it needed different language for a government entity. City Attorney Adkinson pointed out that the contract had a disclaimer against ransomware which is an area the City needs to improve upon, especially during an I.T transition. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the City insurer may have concerns about the disclaimer and recommended continuing the item until the next meeting. Councilwoman Green noted her concerns on the selection process of the vendor. Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that the process was initiated by reaching out to several companies, discussing the needs of the City, and reviewing quotes. City Attorney Adkinson noted that City Staff complied by the purchasing policy although it was a different method than the one Council was used to. Councilman Martin requested that the City Manager compose a list of what the City was currently paying for in I.T and compare it with the potential new vendor for Council review.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To continue the item to the next meeting.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. Council Workshop

City Clerk Robinson informed the Council that City Manager Simmons requested that the Council set aside a date to hold a workshop to create a priority list on the behalf of the City of Freeport for the mobility plan. Mayor Barley concurred that at a recent meeting with the Board of County Commissioners they requested that the City draft its priority list as soon as possible. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the Board of County Commissioners wants the City to meet with its engineers, staff, and Public Works to discuss all roads in the City regarding traffic and road improvements which can be used towards grant proposals, the Capital Improvement Program, and to provide a more detailed list for the Mobility Plan. Councilman Martin noted that he has been having discussion with Engineer Knauer and City Attorney Adkinson regarding a connector road from Shipyard to Marquee, noting that Engineer Knauer sees it as very feasible project. Councilman Martin urged the Council to start looking for ways the City could initiate progress on traffic alleviation rather than wait years for funds from FDOT. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the list needed to be a City Council endorsed list. Councilmembers discussed the possibility of staff drafting a list to present to them for approval, as well as a prior list composed by Councilwoman Brannon in the past on various roads in need of attention. Engineer Rouchaleau gave feedback on to the Council regarding the priority list noting that he had a good idea of the top five priorities for the City, noting that the he felt confident in preparing a list to present before Council. Engineer Rouchaleau noted that the current Capital Improvement Project list needed updating. Councilwoman Brannon suggested holding a Special Meeting instead of a workshop to discuss the items for the priority list. Mayor Barley informed the Council that the deadline was for October 1, however they needed the City's list by the end of July. Councilwoman Haffner requested that the priority list drafted by staff be submitted to the Council a few days in advance for review to ensure an efficient meeting. Councilmembers agreed to hosting the Special Meeting on July 19 at 5PM.

Public Comment: Kat Pallegrio noted that the intersection of Hwy 20 posed a safety hazard for hurricane evacuations and had been the topic of discussion at a recent meeting with DEP. Councilmembers noted that Highway 20 was a state road that the City had no control over, Mrs. Pallegrio insisted that the City petition for that road to be included as a top priority in the Mobility Plan noting her willingness to present more information following their next meeting.

Update: City Clerk Robinson informed the Council that there would be no 2021 Election due to each candidate going unopposed.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To host a Special Meeting on July 19 at 5PM.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

f. Finance

1. Council Memo- Budget Workshops

Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that it was budget time for the City noting that she outlined a timeline for the Council to finalize items in accordance to the deadline. Finance Officer Bowers suggested July 15 at 5:30PM and July 29 at 5:30PM for Budget Workshops. Finance Officer Bowers noted that on the July 22 Regular Council Meeting she will be presenting the proposed millage rate for the year along with the date of the first public hearing.

Update: Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that staff hosted the pre-construction meeting with the contractor for the USDA Sewer Plant Expansion and will have a recommendation for interim financing which will close later in July.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To set Budget Workshops for July 15 at 5:30PM and July 29 at 5:30PM.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. Brannon Re-Zoning/ 2nd Reading Adoption

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the following ordinance for approval:

Ordinance 2021-03.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve and adopt the ordinance.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

2. Regency Acquisitions Small Scale Amendment/ 2nd Reading-Adoption

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the following ordinance for approval:

Ordinance 2021-04.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve and adopt the ordinance.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

3. Regency Acquisitions Re-Zoning/2nd Reading-Adoption

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the following ordinance for approval to hold a second reading:

Ordinance 2021-05.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To approve for a second reading.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

4. City of Freeport Large Scale Amendment/ 1st Reading- Notice to DEO-Advertise for 2nd Reading

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the amendment noting that it correlated with the comprehensive plan amendments that are needed to the current code. The following changes were made:

- Conservation Elements- added coastal management objectives, codes, and policies. This is to protect the City's 2.45 miles of waterfront and shoreline properties. The environmental elements coincide with the City's initiative to clean up the Choctawhatchee Bay.
- Repeal the current Public Schools element- changes in Florida Statutes made the City unable to enforce its code therefore the repeal is to the section the City cannot enforce. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she has been

working on drafting language for school comprehensive plans which would include the design for schools under land use policies, define how schools and the City would coordinate with the Planning Department (interlocal agreement).

Planning Director Hughes-Neel requested approval to hold 1st reading of the ordinance, to authorize staff to transmit the drafted ordinance to DEO, and to then allow them to advertise for 2nd reading after coordinating with DEO. Councilwoman Green questioned the legality of the amendment that states that if a connection to sewer is available then the citizen MUST hook up. Councilwoman Brannon sought clarity on it being applied to every resident in Freeport. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that the requirement is a state requirement and is also being enforced by the Health Department.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve holding 1st reading of the ordinance, to authorize staff to transmit the drafted ordinance to DEO, and to then allow staff to advertise for 2nd reading after coordinating with DEO.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

5. Request Approval for staff to attend Florida APA Conference

Planning Director Hughes-Neel requested approval to attend the Florida APA Conference along with City Planner Williams to maintain their AICP certifications. Planning Director Hughes-Neel outlined the cost of the conference noting that the cost would be covered by the Planning Department's budget. Councilwoman Green queried on the price of attending the conference as well as information on the special rates for lodging.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve Planning Director Hughes-Neel and City Planner Williams attendance to the Florida APA Conference.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

6. Live Oak Harbor Final Plat

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Live Oak Harbor Final Plat for approval.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve staff signature of the Final Plat.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

i. Legal

1. Handicap Accessible Parking Inside City Limits

Mayor Barley informed the Council that a concerned resident had submitted photos to the City regarding ADA compliance violations throughout the City requesting City intervention. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that handicap enforcement was not a City regulatory issue, noting that a few of the items if found in fault would have to be enforced by the Sheriff's department, the County Building permit office, or through the ADA for federal compliance issues if it were a private business. City Attorney Adkinson concluded that the issues reported were outside the authority of the City and an alternative form of authority must be notified by the reporter.

2. City Manager Ordinance

City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that he had amended the ordinance following the guidance of the City Council noting that the qualifications were now broaden to give the City flexibility in selecting a candidate. The residential standards of the City Manager had now been broadened to anywhere in Walton County, noting that the qualifications of the City Manager were now to be determined by the City Council with preference elements. City Attorney Adkinson noted that due to the lack of consensus on the number of votes needed for firing and hiring an employee he did not amend it. Councilmembers discussed their favor of a 4:1 hiring and firing ratio. City Attorney Adkinson noted his reasons for not using the language of a super majority. City Attorney Adkinson requested a motion to hold 1st reading with the added clause of the firing and hiring ratio, which would be presented at the second meeting in July.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To hold first reading of the amended ordinance with the added clause.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Carried

3. Special Event Policy Update

City Attorney Adkinson noted his favor of:

- Adopting the new policy by resolution or to include it in the code of ordinance, however the option to include the policy by amending the land development code was an option.
- Having the Planning Board to review and repeal the permits.

City Attorney Adkinson noted that the definition of a special event had been defined, noting that based on previous Council discussions a clause for private property events needed to be added. City Attorney Adkinson opened the floor for Council discussion and feedback. Councilman Farris noted his favor of a private property clause and the ability to adopt it via resolution or code of ordinance. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the private property clause would include language that called for reporting the event to the Sheriff's Department if the event may potentially disrupt regular traffic flow, commenting that it leaves room for crowd control. Councilwoman Green queried on the process of obtaining and submitting a special event permit, noting that she believed the City Clerk should have more clerical involvement in the application process. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the City Manager and his designee would be responsible for issuing out the applications, noting that the City Manager would also have the ability to waive special event permit fees. City Attorney Adkinson and Councilmembers discussed the importance of issuing special event permits closer to the deadline, adding that the City Council should also be notified of the permit submission.

Public Comment: William Blykin informed the Council that it would be greatly appreciated by residents if the rules were spelled out clearly to guide them in obtaining paperwork for special event permits.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To amend the special events permit policy with the discussed changes.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

j. Engineering

1. RIB Site Assessment Proposal

Engineer Rouchaleau presented the RIB Site Assessment Proposal before Council noting that it was for the site of the new 331 Wastewater Treatment Plant site. Councilwoman Green expressed her concerns over getting proposals before the Council approved looking at a site or assessing funds to see if the City could afford to purchase land at this time. City Attorney Adkinson noted that Engineer Rouchaleau and City Manager Simmons would need the authority of the Council, in writing, before looking at properties on the behalf of the City. Councilwoman Green announced that no authority to purchase property had been given by the Council. Councilman Martin asked for clarity on the purpose of City Manager Simmons's trip to Atlanta to discuss purchasing property. Engineer Rouchaleau informed Council that he believed there had been some preliminary conversations about identifying possible sites for the Wastewater Treatment Plants, noting he would do his due diligence and re-present at a following meeting. Councilmembers discussed the importance of not skipping steps when going after projects, noting that the City could choose to change priorities given circumstances. City Attorney Adkinson informed Council that they broadly gave approval to identify possible sites, noting that City Manager Simmons would need to present a list of properties explored and update Council on the potential sites with cost estimates. City Attorney Adkinson gave legal counsel to Engineer Rouchaleau on processes needed moving forward.

Updates:

- The pre- construction for the 1.5 MDG Upgrade meeting that took place this morning went well, expected to break ground in 2 weeks.
- The prior engineers who designed the old treatment plants will be assisting with the new project.
- Closing on interim financing by July 30.

10. Old Business

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Green
1. Special Event Flyer

Councilwoman Green presented a flyer she received that had been used by the city of Mexico Beach to secure funds for special events. Councilwoman Green informed City Staff to explore this model of securing funds, noting it was deemed appropriate by City Attorney Adkinson. City Attorney Adkinson affirmed that the model presented was legal and had been used by neighboring Cities often.

2. Hammock Bay Parade Report

Councilwoman Green requested an update on the Hammock Bay 4th of July Parade event. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that she had no idea on the final decision of their committee. Noting that she relayed the message of them using the multi-service pads which would make it a Hammock Bay issue.

Councilwoman Green expressed her concern over potential shutting down the roads in Hammock Bay. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that without a permit they only had access to use the multi-paths noting if they cross any streets, they will need a permit from the City.

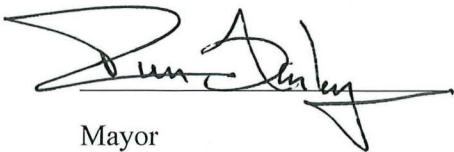
e. Councilwoman Haffner

f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:13PM.



Mayor



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

July 13, 2021, 9:00 AM
Freeport City Hall
112 Hwy 20 West
Freeport, Florida 32439

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. City Council Meeting Minutes- June 24, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- Councilman Farris- Little League Administrator Comments on Softball Tournament
- Mayor- Florida League of City Conference, Floral Art Exhibit on City Grounds,
- City Manager Simmons- July 19 Meeting Re-schedule
- Councilwoman Haffner- Highway 331 Traffic on Saturday
- Councilwoman Green- Farewell

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager

1. Contract for New Wastewater Treatment Plant

City Manager Simmons opened the discussion by first clearing the air on any confusion from the previous Council Meeting, regarding property searches for the new wastewater treatment plant on Highway 331. City Manager Simmons referred to an email he received from Mr. Douglas Duncan, who offered to sell or exchange his property to the City of Freeport for water and sewer capacity fees. City Manager Simmons petitioned to the Council to enter a contract with Mr. Duncan to initiate the process of the City doing its due diligence by working with the property appraiser and geotechnical surveyors to verify that the property is feasible for the wastewater treatment plant project. City Manager Simmons stressed the importance of beginning research, negotiating and starting the process for the wastewater treatment plant construct. City Manager Simmons requested permission to work with City Attorney Adkinson to draft a real estate contract with an offer for the property. City Manager Simmons noted that Engineer Knauer could attest to that the property in question was ideal based on location. City Manager Simmons provided the Council with a rough estimate of the cost of geotechnical surveying of the property (\$53,600) as well as the appraisal (\$15,000), noting that regardless the City would have to spend these funds on any property they chose to pursue. Councilwoman Haffner queried on whether a motion was needed on the floor to approve a 2nd wastewater treatment plant prior to beginning research, noting she had no knowledge of a second treatment plant ever being approved. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that prior to their terms she had been authorized to begin research for a second wastewater treatment plant. City Attorney Adkinson gave legal counsel noting that the motion would need to specify that the purpose of this property would be for a wastewater treatment plant and proceeded to guide Council on the appropriate motions needed. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that if they chose to exchange the property for water and sewer capacity fees that the City would be providing a current

day credit ledger towards the capacity fees that the developer will draw against. The credit amount will remain the same despite an influx in capacity fee prices.

Councilwoman queried on a previous property that had been discussed as a potential location and if the new property would address the southern area of the franchise. Engineer Knauer informed the Council that there was a preliminary geotechnical survey conducted on the 25-acre property which revealed severely restricted areas which would inhibit the City from expanding the way it planned. Engineer Knauer noted the new property afforded the following benefits was centrally located, had already been zoned industrial, and provided sufficient land space for the City to upgrade from a 3million GDP to 5million GDP. Engineer Knauer continued by adding that the only reason a geotechnical survey was being requested was to assure City Manager Simmons that the site would be able to sustain the intended growth of the plant size. City Manager Simmons remarked that the property for the new plant would be easily expandable, without having to break down parts to move. City Manager Simmons also informed the Council that he has met with five other property owners regarding sites for the new wastewater treatment plant, which produced dead end conversations. City Manager Simmons noted that the current wastewater plant was less than 30 acres, and that the new area was in a discreet location with 84 acres of land. City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council that due to concerns of the State that the proximity of wastewater treatment plants to residential areas and wetlands that buying more property to create a buffer would be beneficial. Engineer Knauer noted that environmental studies had already been conducted by the owner, Planning Director Hughes-Neel affirmed that the studies were in her office.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the drafting of a real estate contract by City Manager Simmons and City Attorney for the 84.07 acres of land in the Freeport Industrial Park in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 per acre with the contingencies: that the appraised value of the property meet that price or exceed that price; that the geotechnical data includes that this piece of property would be an appropriate site for the City's needed use (wastewater treatment plant), and that the language of the contract includes that the purchase price be based on the City paying by a credit in the amount of the purchase price based on the current rates in the existing water and sewer rates.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To authorize the City Manager to order geotechnical data studies not to exceed \$53,600 and to acquire two independent appraisals not to exceed \$5,000.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. 331 South Sewer Project

City Manager Simmons noted that when County Commissioner McCormick took office, he asked how the City of Freeport could assist him in being successful, which led to the discussion to clean up the presence of septic tanks along the McDaniels Fishcamp/Black Creek area. City Manager Simmons indicated that the Choctawhatchee Bay is one of the greatest natural assets to the Walton County area and needs to be taken care of. City Manager Simmons noted that Engineer Knauer prepared a presentation with a master plan to clean up the Choctawhatchee Bay, and upon the Council's approval will present before the County later that evening.

Engineer Knauer delivered a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the following:

- Cleaning up the Choctawhatchee Bay requires City and County cooperation.
- DEP studies on the Choctawhatchee Bay indicate high contamination levels of nitrate and fecal matter.
- DEP studies indicate that there are 15,000 septic tanks currently dumping into the Bay.

- Vacuum System would be an easier and cheaper method to get residents onto a sewer system, there is a grant that can finance this (McDaniel's Fishcamp area).
- Estimated cost of \$6.3 million.
- The five major areas of Freeport (illustrated in map) with the amounts of septic tanks currently dumping into the bay.

Engineer Knauer proposed to the Council that the City should secure an SRF grant which will fund the vacuum systems for residents dumping along the Bay, and to petition to the County to put a force main on Highway 331 which will not only assist in getting residents on septic but speed up development. City Manager Simmons noted that it would be advantageous for the City to accomplish both goals simultaneously to save time. Councilwoman Green expressed her excitement for the project, noting that a quick call to the County Commissioners before their meeting would be a great help. Engineer Knauer noted that this project was going in the direction that satisfied everyone's needs and was a great opportunity to get multiple items addressed.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To grant the permission of Engineer Knauer and City Manager Simmons to present the PowerPoint presentation before the County.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

3. DEP Grant Opportunity

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that Liberty Partners with the assistance of Engineer Rouchaleau put together the paperwork for a 100% grant. After various conversations with the Northwest Florida Water Management District,

Engineer Rouchaleau and Liberty Partners believed this to be a perfect project for the City.

Updates: City Manager Simmons wanted to thank City staff for assisting with the 4th of July Celebration along with the donors. City Manager Simmons noted that he received great feedback and planned to make it an annual event for the City.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Motion to submit the paperwork for the DEP Grant and to authorize the signage of documents by Mayor Barley and City Manager Simmons.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

4. ~~July 19 Meeting Reschedule~~

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

1. Interim Financing

Finance Officer Bowers recommended to the Council to award Trustmark Bank with the interim financing being that they were the least expensive. Finance Office Bowers noted that on July 27 the city will be closing on its interim financing, Mr. Jonathan Ox a representative from Trustmark thanked the City for the opportunity.

City Attorney Adkinson gave legal counsel on the appropriate motions needed, noting that the resolution for this item will be presented at the following City Council meeting.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To award the interim financing to Trustmark Bank.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye
Councilman Martin: aye
Councilwoman Brannon: aye
Councilwoman Green: aye
Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To authorize the Mayor's signage of the documents needed to execute the interim financing.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye
Councilman Martin: aye
Councilwoman Brannon: aye
Councilwoman Green: aye
Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. Water & Wastewater Capacity Fees

Finance Officer Bowers requested Council's approval of her taking the collected water capacity fees and wastewater capacity fees from their primary operating

account, and to place them into their respective capacity fee accounts. This will ensure that the funds are available once the developer's request water and wastewater services for their projects, noting that the funds will then be transferred back into their respective primary operating accounts.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the transfer of the wastewater and water capacity fees from their primary operating accounts into their respective capacity fee accounts; and to then return them to their respective primary operating accounts upon the developer's request for services.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

g. Billing

1. Annual Write Off List

Billing Manager Roberts requested the approval of moving 72 delinquent accounts totaling \$10,479.28 to bad debt to write off the books for the July 1, 2019- June 30, 2020, year. Councilwoman Haffner requested the list. Billing Manager Roberts informed the Council that two accounts accounted for \$4,000 of the debt, noting they were sewer loans from previous years. Councilwoman Brannon inquired as to if liens were ever placed on those properties for failure to pay the lien, noting that the City should have pursued the issue. Councilwoman Brannon sought legal counsel on pursuing the original owners for compensation, City Attorney Adkinson noted that the process would be challenging, and that the City had never foreclosed on a property that it placed a lien on. Councilwoman Brannon inquired on the language of the loan agreement at the time, City Attorney Adkinson noted that he would look back at the agreement for review. City Manager Simmons noted that he would work with Debbie and approach City Attorney Adkinson for a thorough investigation. City

Attorney Adkinson noted that agreements given at that time were poorly constructed and not legally binding. City Attorney Adkinson advised Council to table the item to the next meeting.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

To table the item to the next Council meeting.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

h. Planning

i. Legal

j. Engineering

10. Old Business

11. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. National City of the Year Award

Mayor Barley informed the Council that the City of Freeport had been selected as the National City of the Year award for their work with the Veteran's Memorial. Mayor Barley stated that he would be going to Missouri to accept the award, all-expense paid by the veteran's group that nominated the City.

2. Florida League of Cities Conference

Mayor Barley informed the Council that the FLC Conference would be taking place 8/12-8/14 in Orlando, FL and had already been budgeted for those who were interested in attending. Councilwoman Brannon noted that she would be interested in attending, noting that it was a great opportunity to network and advocate on the

behalf of the City. Mayor Barley noted that City Clerk Robinson would make the reservations.

3. Floral Art Exhibit on City Grounds

Mayor Barley requested permission to execute a floral art exhibit on a tree situated on the outer area of Casey Park. Mayor Barley noted that the project was a part of a scholarship with the American Institute of Floral Design and would be at no cost to the City. Mayor Barley noted that the design was entitled Phoenix Rising and would something for the City to enjoy.

Mayor Barley noted that this would be Councilwoman Green's last meeting as a Councilmember and acknowledge his appreciation for her 4 years of service to the City of Freeport. Mayor Barley presented Councilwoman Green with an appreciation plaque.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To permit Mayor Barley to display a floral art exhibit on city grounds.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

Councilman Farris informed the Council that Mr. Ron Coby the Little League District Administrator spoke highly of the City's Sports Complex while attending the girls' softball tournament this past weekend. Mr. Coby stated that the City of Freeport would be a top priority for all tournaments, acclaiming it to be home to the best program with exceptional hospitality.

d. Councilwoman Green

Councilwoman Green gave her farewell speech to the City of Freeport, noting her honor to have served as a Councilmember for the past 4 years. Councilwoman Green attested to her commitment to see the City succeed although she would no longer be serving as a Councilmember. Councilwoman Green acknowledged how proud she was of the growth of the City and its accomplishments noting she would be available to assist the new Councilmember, Mr. Hope transition into his position.

e. Councilwoman Haffner

Councilwoman Haffner spoke on her concern of the traffic through residential areas because of GPS routes. Councilwoman Haffner informed the Council that she received complaints from residents who had issues getting out of their homes along 331 North Business. City Manager Simmons noted that he would speak to Officer Pendleton for guidance on the matter. Councilwoman Green disclosed that the City had been advised that it was a light issue and that she was under the impression that the matter was being addressed; referring to a letter from DOT that stated that the County was in control of the light. Councilwoman Brannon suggested that City Manager Simmons would discover the person of contact regarding the light. City Attorney Adkinson gave legal counsel to City Manager Simmons. Councilmember Martin stated that the County had been approved of purchasing a system that allowed the lights to communicate with one another. Engineer Knauer informed the Council that the County was in possession of a control center for the lights, however it was pending setup. Engineer Knauer furthered the discussion by informing the Council that the company Genesis and ITS company was under contract with the City and advised them to pursue them in including 331 into its survey. Engineer Knauer Cliff suggested use of flashing yellow arrow to sway traffic into an alternative route. Councilwoman Brannon attested that prior use of that method resulted in several wrecks however the City may have no choice but to reinstitute it.

Public Comment: Kat Pallegirino attested that the City needed to speak with Governor DeSantis and State Representatives for assistance with traffic alleviation.

City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that based on Florida Sunshine Laws that the new Councilmember will officially begin his term at 7:01PM therefore they were to abide by Sunshine Laws with him.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To direct City Manager Simmons and Mayor Barley to approach the County in including highway 331 into the ITS.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Green: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

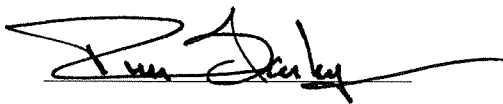
1. Highway 331 Traffic on Saturday

f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

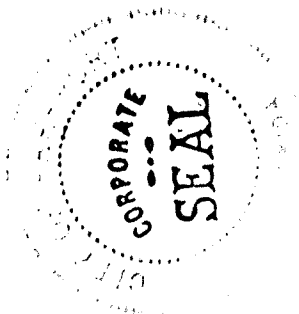
13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:24 AM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. L. P. H.", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

City Clerk



City of Freeport

BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES

July 15, 2021, 5:33 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Parks Director Travis Digges

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. 2021 BUDGET WORKSHOP

Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that she recommended that the City retain the same millage rate from last year which is 4.7302. Finance Officer Bowers continued by reminding Council that they needed to discuss possible dates for the 1st Public Hearing, citing the Florida statute that requires the meetings to occur after 5:00PM. Councilmembers discussed setting the 1st Public Hearing date to September 9, 2021 5:05PM.

Finance Officer Bowers notified Council that there will no longer be a North Bay Water System in the budget, noting it will be merged with the Freeport Water System and will maintain the inside of city limits and outside of city limits rates. Councilmembers discussed having Finance Officer Bowers discuss the legality of this action with City Attorney Adkinson. Councilwoman Brannon encouraged Finance Officer Bowers to investigate the North Bay account, noting that it was originally established to pay off a loan that was used to put a water line out to service the area.

Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that she and City Manager Simmons had been in discussion regarding the federal increase in minimum wage. Finance Officer

Bowers with the assistance of City Manager Simmons decided that it would be best to move the minimum wage from \$11.18 an hour to \$12.50 with the ability to move up to \$13 after the 90-day probationary period. Councilwoman Haffner expressed her concerns for the wage not being sufficient, as Councilman Farris noted the need to be competitive with the County. City Manager Simmons stated that the benefits that the City provided were attractive and advised the Council to gradually raise the wages. Councilwoman Brannon voiced her desire to see the City raise the pay scales of current employees out of longevity and respect. City Manager Simmons expressed that raises would be given on a merit based system, where based on performance they could get up to a 5% raise. Councilwoman Haffner expressed her approval of a merit-based system, noting that it would motivate employees to get to the higher percentage. Councilman Farris queried on how current employees felt about their salaries/wages. City Manager Simmons informed Council that current City employees were content with their wages, noting that he wants to pace the City through the lengthy process of wage increases.

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that the City created four positions that would be given to High School Students in an after school program, paying \$10 an hour at 3 hours a day. City Manager Simmons stated that this was an attempt to get High School students interested in local government by giving them job skill training. Parks Director Digges encouraged City Manager Simmons to be flexible with student activity schedules. City Manager Simmons stated that the High School would be in charge of selecting the students, who would then work for a 3-4 month window.

Finance Officer Bowers discussed possible workshop dates for the Council to select, which led to August 2nd at 3PM and August 17th at 3:30PM being viable dates. Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that she should have the findings from the rate study by next week. Councilman Farris noted that he would like for the City to ensure that it maintains a good insurance company in any attempt to be frugal. Councilwoman Brannon concurred noting that many employees were experiencing difficulties with obtaining certain medications because of the drastic changes in the prescription drug plans. Councilwoman Brannon stressed the importance of being aware of the needs of employees and to keep in mind that going cheap may not be in the interest of the employees. Councilwoman Haffner mentioned her wish for the City to increase its Christmas budget and to obtain more Christmas décor for the Sports Complex. City Manager Simmons stated that with growth would come more funding, noting that the City would be undertaking one road project a year.


4. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:02 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk



City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

July 19, 2021, 5:00 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Parks Director Travis Digges

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Engineer Rouchaleau opened the meeting by presenting Council a drafted project list that would be used in the Needs Plan for the City of Freeport, to be adopted in the Walton County Mobility Plan. Engineer Rouchaleau based on his professional opinion presented the top seven projects for the City of Freeport alongside a summary review with cost estimates of each recommendation. The following recommendations:

1. Marquis Way West Connector Road
2. Marquis Way East Connector Road
3. 83A East Intersection Improvements
4. Blueridge Parkway and SR-20 Intersection Improvements
5. SR-20 and U.S 331 Intersection Improvements
6. Water Tower Road Connector Road
7. Four Mile Road Improvements

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that he and staff members had been in lengthy conversation with the County Commissioners to discuss the problem areas in the City. Councilmembers thanked Engineer Rouchaleau for his preparation of the list. Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed the Council that the Needs Plan would go hand in hand with the CIP, affording them the opportunity to go after additional funding. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that the list would ultimately be apart of a master plan for the City.

City Manager Simmons discussed the traffic issues over the weekend, noting that he spoke to a Mr. Duncan who approved property use for temporary traffic signage. Councilmembers briefly discussed possible signage language. Councilman Martin suggested the City acquire deputy reinforcement to monitor neighborhood street usage. City Manager Simmons notified Council that the County had received the traffic control signal box and was awaiting DOT installation.

4. **Adjournment**

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 5:29 PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

July 22, 2021, 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner
Councilman Mark Martin

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Swearing- In Ceremony

Judge Green conducted the swearing-in ceremony for the following Councilmembers:

- Mayor Russ Barley
- Councilman Tripp Hope
- Councilman Mark Martin
- Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon

Judge Green declared all officers dually involved.

4. Recognition of Guest

None.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. City Council Meeting Minutes- July 13, 2021
- c. Revenue & Expenditure Reports through June 2021

6. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

8. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- Billing Manager Roberts- Delete Write-Off Memo
- City Manager Simmons- Add SLE98 Contract and City & County Road Maintenance Agreement

9. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

10. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager

1. SLE98 CONTRACT

City Manager Simmons presented the SLE98 Contract before Council noting that after discussion with City Attorney Adkinson he recommended the following amendments:

- 30 day written termination/exit clause
- 15-day transitional period between I.T. companies.

City Attorney Adkinson added that he would like to extend the confidentiality provision being that this was a government entity.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the SLE98 contract with the recommended changes.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

2. City and County Interlocal Road Agreement

City Manager Simmons informed Council that after many discussions with the County Commissioners they have amended the Interlocal Road Agreement to better assist the City. City Manager Simmons noted that there were additional roads added and would include road resurfacing only on the roads already with the City. City Manager Simmons continued by adding that the amended agreement would allow the City to add roads when deemed necessary as well as pay for 2 miles of road resurfacing per year. City Manager Simmons disclosed that this year they would be resurfacing Washington Street and next year South Jackson Street. Councilwoman Brannon asked for clarity on the agreement. City Attorney Adkinson informed Council that this agreement called for more County expenses with expanded services for the City, thus accomplishing what the City wants.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the amended Interlocal Road Agreement.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

3. Updates

City Manager Simmons announced to the Council that he will be hosting a Town Hall Meeting on August 9, 6PM in the Council Chambers to get input from residents on the new rate study. City Attorney Adkinson advised Council not to attend to avoid having to notice and take minutes. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the Town Hall session would be informational only, not policy setting. City Attorney Adkinson assured Council that by not attending they would have a chance to review the content, adding that Town Hall Meetings were a useful tool to assist the Council in their decision-making process.

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

1. Set Tentative Millage Rate and 1st Public Hearing Date

Finance Officer Bowers advised Council to maintain the millage rate at 4.7302 and explained that if the millage rate were to increase that the City would have to pay a significant cost as well as send mailouts to every resident. City Attorney Adkinson concurred, noting that raising the millage rate was not advisable.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To maintain the millage rate at 4.7302.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

2. Workshop Dates Scheduling

Finance Officer Bowers asked Council to approve the Workshop date and First Public Hearing date discussed at the previous Budget Workshop.

Moved: Councilman Farris

Seconded: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve Budget Workshops for August 9th at 9AM, and August 17th at 3:30PM.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

g. Billing

~~1. Write Off Memo~~

h. Planning

i. Legal

1. 2ND Reading of City Manager Ordinance

City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that the amended ordinance reflected the following changes:

- Residential requirements for the City Manager would now be to dwell in Walton County.
- Qualifications for the City Manager would now be code based minimum qualifications.
- Repealing the section that states the City Manager would be a temporary hire.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To hold 2nd Reading and to adopt the City Manager Ordinance.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

2. Employment of City Manager

City Attorney Adkinson called for Council to act in appointing City Manager Simmons as the permanent City Manager. Councilman Farris expressed his gratitude to City Manager Simmons for serving as the City Manager. Mayor Barley informed the Council that City Manager Simmons was currently working for half the salary of a city manager, therefore he would request that City Manager Simmons also receive the full salary. Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that they had \$100,000 in the budget for a city manager. City Attorney Adkinson also advised Council to retroactive City Manager Simmons's pay; Finance Officer Bowers noted that the amendment would be effective for the July 19 pay period.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To appoint City Manager Simmons as the permanent City Manager until the Council no longer wishes to have his services.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To increase the City Manager salary to \$100,000.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

3. Resolution for Interim Financing

City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that the City would need their signage of the certificate Resolution as a requirement for the interim financing for the wastewater treatment expansion. City Attorney Adkinson quickly briefed Councilman Hope on the plans for funding the project and requested signage of the document. City Attorney Adkinson informed Council that the City would be closing on the interim financing next week.

City Attorney Adkinson noted that the following Resolution 2021-04 would be to authorize the issuance of the wastewater system revenue bond, not to exceed \$23,060,000 based on figures presented by Engineer Rouchaleau at the previous meeting.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve signage of Resolution 2021-03 for Interim Financing.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve Resolution 2021-04.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

j. Engineering

11. Old Business

12. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

Mayor Barley expressed his thanks for being able to serve with the re-elected Councilmembers and gave well wishes to serve the next four years with newly elected Councilman Hope.

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

d. Councilwoman Green

e. Councilwoman Haffner

f. Councilman Martin


13. Public Comment

14. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:04PM.


Mayor




City Clerk



City of Freeport

BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

July 29 ,2021 5:30 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilman Mark Martin

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Parks Director Travis Digges, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Budget Workshop

Finance Officer Bowers opened the discussion by noting Mayor Barley received an email for renewal of the Walton County Economic Development Alliance. Councilmembers discussed the practicality of renew the contract being that the City was out of industrial space. Councilmembers noted that they would like for the Mayor to invite the director of the organization to the following meeting to discuss the matter.

Salary Studies

Finance Officer Bowers presented Council the proposed pay scale increases based on the increase in minimum wage on all positions. Councilman Hope noted that he wanted to ensure that City staff were being given livable wages alongside the increase in costs of living. Finance Officer Bowers noted that staff members could receive merit increases

based on their evaluations, also giving reference to the benefit package included. Mayor Barley informed Council that City Clerk Robinson had started under the salary range for the City Clerk, had the highest qualifications of previous City Clerks, continued her education for the City Clerk certifications, and had not received a salary increase. Finance Officer Bowers noted that she needed direction to apply a salary increase. Councilman Hope noted that employee salaries should reflect education alongside merit increases. City Manager Simmons noted that he would discuss the matter with Mayor Barley privately. Councilmembers asked for clarity on how the merit raises were administered based on hourly and salary employees. Councilmembers added that the salaries for previous City Clerks was on a case-by-case basis, therefore they would like to table the matter to discuss later. Councilman Hope noted that would like for the City to look into the matter and to administer a raise.

Budget Highlight

- The budget included the hiring of 4 student interns
- Christmas décor
- Fourth of July festivities
- Storage facility usage
- Soft Service playground updates

Councilmembers discussed each category individually for clarity.

Planning

- The planning department budget would include funds to give Planning Director Hughes-Neel private office space.

Billing

- City Manager Simmons noted that the billing department was now sufficiently staffed

Streets

- City Manager Simmons noted that the City would use CARES Act Funds to work on sewer and water projects and use other funds to assist with road maintenance.

Parks

- The parks department was slowly getting parts to update the sound system
- The parks director would be working on getting an agreement for score boards, possibly working with Pepsi or Coke (Councilman Hope gave direction as to how to secure sponsorship).

Water

Councilwoman Haffner asked for clarity on the budget giving one employee the opportunity to get credentials for growth, City Manager Simmons gave clarity.

- The budget included funds to try to alleviate some of the water pressure issues.

Planning

- Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she would like to allocate 40,000 in the planning budget towards hiring a planning intern, saving \$10,000 on a salary.
- Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that she would like to allocate \$10,000 towards her student aide to work throughout the summer.

Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted the importance of the planning department staying proactive in order to address the needs of the City. Councilman Tripp Hope added that forward thinking would assist with employee retainment.

Councilmembers discussed the chain of command for the planning department if Planning Director Hughes-Neel were absent. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that having an individual who were AICP certified would be best. Councilwoman Brannon noted the Florida Regional Planning Council could assist in the absence of Planning Director Hughes-Neel. Councilman Hope queried on the salary of a deputy planner, Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that it would be \$55, 000-\$65, 000.

Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:27PM.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 10, 2021, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Budget Workshop Minutes- July 15, 2021
- c. Special Council Meeting Minutes- July 19, 2021
- d. City Council Meeting Minutes- July 22, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- City Manager Simmons- Board of Appointees

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks

1. Updates

Parks Director Digges informed Council of the following updates:

- The pool will be closing on September 6.
- The last day for swim lessons and water aerobics will be August 17.
- The Farmer's Market hosted it's first event by Gary Parks at the Sport Complex the previous Sunday, showcasing an estimated 40 vendors. The Farmer's Market was extremely successful.
- The p.a. system for the parks is still awaiting parts
- Parks Director Digges has been receiving many inquiries from residents on having a pickleball court at the Sports Complex.

Councilwoman Brannon noted that the request for pickleball courts had been discussed in the past, leaving her under the impression that they were in the works. Parks Director Digges responded by informing Council that they have courts that are not properly sized for the game, however he is working on getting that adjusted. Councilman Farris requested that Parks Director Digges provide quotes along with possible locations to erect pickleball courts. Parks Director Digges provided Council with possible ideas and locations for the pickleball courts and agreed to do more research.

d. City Manager

1. Board of Appointees

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that Councilwoman Haffner's schedule conflicts with her attending board meetings on the behalf of the City this year, therefore he would like to appoint an alternate. Councilwoman Brannon remarked that majority- of the board meetings take place via Zoom and based on other municipalities the city manager usually holds a board seat, hence she recommended City Manager Simmons sit on a board. Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that it was crucial to have an appointee on the TPO Board to advocate on the behalf of the City. City Manager Simmons recommended Councilman Martin as the appointee on the behalf of the City, Councilman Martin obliged.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Hope

To appoint Councilman Martin to serve on the TPO Board.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

1. City Insurance

Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that the City insurance would remain the same with the Florida League of Cities, noting that she would need approval from the Council to accept the renewal.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To maintain the City insurance with the Florida League of Cities.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. Health, Life, & Dental Quote

Finance Officer Bowers noted that the City's life insurance policy experienced no rate increase, noting she recommended that we accept the standard life insurance policy for the fiscal year.

Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that the rate for dental insurance increased by 4%, however it was at the employee's expense.

Finance Officer Bowers relayed that the City's health insurance policy increased by 4.58%, which was at the expense of the City. Councilwoman Haffner noted that option 1 of the quote looked better than what the City currently has. City Manager Simmons asked for the deadline to decide for the policy, Finance Officer Bowers informed Council that they had until the September 1 however Council will meet on August 26. Councilman Hope recommended giving Council time to shop around and to make an informed decision at the next Council Meeting.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To accept the standard life insurance policy.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To accept the dental insurance policy.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

g. Billing

1. ~~Write Off Memo~~

2. Sewer Liens

City Attorney Adkinson opened the discussion by informing Council that moving forward they would have to create a policy that addressed liens, since the current policy does not. City Attorney Adkinson noted that to pursue liens on properties would be a challenge based on the lack of guidelines the City had in the past. City Attorney Adkinson commented that the City would have to address the liens on a case by case basis noting that the inefficient errors were prior to Billing Manager Roberts hiring. Councilwoman Brannon queried as to why the City could not at least pursue the sewer liens, noting that it presented a significant amount of money for the City to collect. Councilwoman Brannon explained that despite transfer of ownership, property owners had an obligation to perform a municipal lien search prior to purchasing property. City Attorney Adkinson noted that the City needed to be certain that they had language that specified liens, however he did have other options for addressing the issue which included:

- The mayor could tie bad debt to a home or address making it the landlords responsibility, making debt track with the property
- Customer accounts- to consolidate accounts for users paying multiple addresses

Planning Director Hughes-Neel noted that her office tracks lien searches that come through her office, noting she would work with City Attorney Adkinson in comparing data of the addresses. City Attorney Adkinson noted that by adding a specification of in-person interaction for certain processes would allow the owners to address unpaid balances when tenants moved out. City Attorney Adkinson continued by adding that 90% of the write-offs on the list could have been resolved if there were in person engagement. The matter was tabled to the next meeting.

h. Planning

1. Verandas 1-C-5 Final Plat

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Hope

To approval the plat for signage.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

i. Legal

1. Carr Property Annexation

City Attorney Adkinson advised Council to table the Carr Property Annexation giving Council the following options for addressing:

- Instruct staff to contact the property owners surrounding the Carr property to see if they would voluntarily annex into the City
- Give Mayor Barley and City Manager Simmons permission to create an incentive to get the surrounding property owners to annex into the City

Councilwoman Brannon queried on the number of acres the Carr property annexation would bring into the City. Councilwoman Brannon recommended that Council take time when considering an annexation because it becomes the City's responsibility and the same services rendered to other residents is required. Councilman Farris suggested that City Attorney Adkinson, Mayor Barley, and City Manager Simmons contact the owners for discussion. David Smith the attorney for Mr.Carr presented Council a display of the area that would be annexed into the City, noting the challenges it faced with several other property owners surrounding the area. Mr.Smith noted that Mr.Carr desired to have the entire piece of property annexed into the City. City Attorney Adkinson advised that Council table the matter to allow contact to be made to the other property owners, and to save Mr.Carr from having to re-advertise the annexation. Councilwoman Brannon inquired on the current zoning of the property, Planning Director Hughes-Neel informed Council that the property held multiple designations however no rezoning had been requested at this time.

Councilwoman Brannon requested a map that listed the land use for the property as well as outlined the City limits. Councilman Martin made a motion to table the matter.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To table the Carr property annexation and to allow Mayor Barley and City Manager Simmons to contact the owners.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

j. Engineering

1. S. Jackson Street Improvements- Engineering Proposal

Engineer Rouchaleau informed Council that the City received a grant for engineers to perform the design of South Jackson Street improvements, therefore he was seeking permission to submit the proposed plans. City Manager Simmons wanted to verify that there was money in the upcoming budget year to fund the project. City Attorney Adkinson noted that none of the proposal would be paid until October 1, the beginning of the fiscal year.

Engineer Rouchaleau also informed Council that Washington Street would be paved the current week by the County.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the proposal contingent upon not being paid until after October 1.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Haffner
- e. Councilman Hope
- f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

Gary Parks the founder of the Farmer's Market, expressed his thanks to Parks Director Digges and the City for the great condition of the Sports Complex. Mr. Parks noted that the event had a successful turnout, affording him the opportunity to donate a significant amount of food to local food banks. Mr. Parks expressed his desire to host a Farmer's Market once a month from 4PM-8PM, offering various charities the opportunity for exposure.

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:51AM.



Mayor



City Clerk



City of Freeport

BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

August 17, 2021 3:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilman Mark Martin

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Malani Robinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Parks Director Travis Digges, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Budget Workshop

Finance Officer Bowers discussed the budget highlights for the 2021-2022 fiscal year binders. Finance Officer Bowers noted that the only changes were and additional vehicle for the lead plant operator, as well the salary. Finance Officer Bowers noted that the City now had \$112,900 in reserves for the budget. Councilman Hope acknowledged his pleasure of having a reserve within the budget, noting how it was proactive. Councilman Hope continued by adding that he would like to see the reserve grow to support any incidentals and to alleviate pulling from the general fund so frequently. Finance Officer Bowers noted that the budget for the upcoming year increased by 48.8% due to the exponential growth in population the City had experienced. City Manager Simmons commented that the demand for water projects had increased as many residents are experiencing poor water pressure, because of the growth. Finance Officer Bowers opened the floor for questioning. Finance Officer Bowers suggested that the Council arrange for a workshop 30 minutes prior to the August 26 City Council meeting for her to present a true balanced budget before all Councilmembers. City Attorney Adkinson advised that the Council hold a Special

Council Meeting leaving room for actions to be made, as well as making it a public hearing before the public.

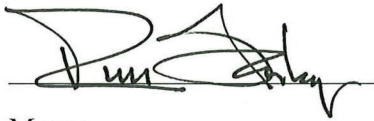
City Manager Simmons called for Engineer Knauer to present the PowerPoint from the townhall meeting on the updated utility rate and capacity fee study. Engineer Knauer informed the Council of the following findings:

- The City had been experiencing major financial loss from installing meters by charging \$800, however after parts and labor of the water department added up to \$1800 per meter.
- The commercial rates for the City were behind by 3 years in increases.
- The residential rates were lower than most municipalities; over 40% of customers in the City only pay the base rate.
- The largest percent of revenue loss comes from the water department
- In 5 years capacity fees only increased by \$500, which has resulted in the City losing money on every lot where services are installed.
- At the current rates it costs too much for the City to produce services and produce them at a quality level for residents.

Engineer Knauer advised Council to gradually increase rates in the water and sewer department over a period of 3 years. Engineer Knauer noted that there is a lot of old infrastructure underground that needs to be replaced, however with the current water rates the City is only barely maintaining it. Councilman Hope noted that by band aiding the situation the City was losing money, therefore it needed to grow its funds to fix the problem. Councilman Hope noted that the City would need to increase its prices in order to prepare for the growth. Councilman Hope noted that new builds in the City would need to pave the way for expansion and to increase the City's reserve funds. Councilman Martin noted that the water and sewer department were a for profit entity therefore it needed to start conducting itself as a business. Councilman Martin continued by elaborating that the City could not continue to absorb continuous loss, which was making the current system not profitable. Engineer Knauer applauded the efforts of the billing department and its ability to manage accounts and bring in funds. Councilman Martin noted that he wanted to ensure that the City was being fair to its residents alongside fund the growth of the City. Councilman Hope added that by being transparent with the residents of Freeport they would render their support. Engineer Knauer noted that the City of Freeport faced a unique situation based on geography which caused the City to be stretched out over larger land areas (Eglin Air Force Base and bodies of water). Finance Officer Bowers noted that City Attorney Adkinson would give guidance regarding the utility and capacity rate increase.

Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:11 PM.



Mayor



City Clerk



City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 26, 2021, 6:00 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner, Councilman Mark Martin

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, Interim City Clerk Samantha Graves, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:59pm by Mayor Russ Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The Invocation was given by Councilman Farris, Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. 2021-2022 Budget


Finance Director Sara Bowers told the Council that this is the last meeting prior to the first public hearing of the budget. She asked them to do a final review of the proposed budget that will be advertised. There has been no change since the last Budget Hearing.

The Council members requested no changes. Sara informed them that the First Public Hearing is scheduled for September 9th at 5:05pm.

4. **Public Comments**

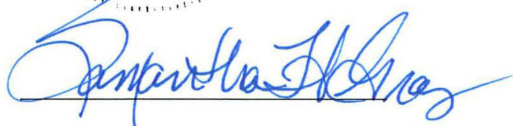
5. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Barley at 6:02pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barley", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, written over a horizontal line.

Interim City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 26, 2021, 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner, Councilman Mark Martin

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, Interim City Clerk Samantha Graves, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

Mayor Barley recognized Bill Imfeld, Director of the Economic Development Alliance (EDA). Mr. Imfeld gave the Council an update on the EDA activities in Freeport. He informed them that the last EDA lot in the Industrial Park had been sold to Waste Management. The plan to purchase the 100 acres adjacent to the Industrial Park is no longer in effect because the owner decided not to sell the property to the EDA.

The EDA is currently working with a developer in Texas to bring a large clean-industry state-of-the-art manufacturing business to Freeport. This project would bring 200 jobs to Freeport and be located on a couple of hundred acres east on Highway 20; the developer is currently in touch with a realtor.

Mr. Imfeld reminded the Council that Mayor Barley is on the Board of the EDA. He invited them to bring any suggestions for Industry they would like to see in the area to either Mayor Barley or himself.

Mayor Barley opened the floor for questions from the Council and then from the public; there were none. The Council thanked Mr. Imfeld for the update.

4. Daughter's of the American Revolution Proclamation

The Mayor recognized Connie Lee, Chris Keating, and Larae Sorrell as representatives of the Daughters of the American Revolution. He then read a Proclamation declaring Constitution Week to be September 17 - 23, 2021. The DAR members thanked the Mayor for his continued support of their organization.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Budget Workshop Minutes- July 29, 2021
- c. City Council Meeting Minutes- August 10, 2021
- d. Budget Workshop Minutes- August 17, 2021
- e. Revenue & Expenditure Report

6. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

8. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- City Manager Simmons: Hire a temp for City Clerk Duties; Authorize Interim Clerk for signatory duties
- Engineer Rouchaleau: Update to Barrier-Free park
- Mayor Barley: Christmas decorations; Freeport is City of the Year; Bayfest

9. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

To approve the agenda with the specified additions as presented.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

10. Staff Reports

- a. Water

- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager

City Manager Charlie Simmons updated the members on a few items. He informed the Council members that he has been nominated to the Walton County Redistricting Board by Boots McCormick; the Board will be meeting on September 1st.

He met with Reynolds Henderson regarding Triumph and obtained some good information for putting in applications and what needs to be done to move forward; Freeport will be taking the lead on our own projects.

The I.T. changes are happening. The transfer is going smoothly with the two companies working together, mostly on weekends. Toward the end of next week it should be complete.

The Carr property annexation should be back on the agenda for the next Council meeting. Manager Simmons said he has been out trying to talk to the owners of the additional parcels that we would like to bring in to do the entire annexation north to south; there are 4 parcels on the south side of CR 3280 that would need to be included to bring in the remainder of the Carr property on the north side of 3280.

1. Ratify State of Emergency Declaration

City Manager Simmons explained that the previous State of Emergency, for Tropical Storm Fred which has already passed, just needs to be formally ratified.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To ratify the previous State of Emergency Declaration for Tropical Storm Fred.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. Hiring of Dual Certified Wastewater Operator

City Manager Simmons informed the Council that the new Dual Certified Wastewater Operator was Paul Johnson. Mr. Johnson introduced himself to the Council.

Attorney Adkinson reminded the council that they had already budgeted for this position.

Mayor Barley asked the Council if they had any questions; Councilwoman Haffner asked what the hierarchy would be between Mr. Johnson and Robert Fawcett, the current Wastewater Supervisor. City Manager Simmons replied that in the beginning they would work together, and then Mr. Johnson will be focusing on Plant Operations while Mr. Fawcett will be focusing on the Outside Services.

There were no further questions. The Council members welcomed Mr. Johnson.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To ratify the hiring of Paul Johnson as the Dual-Certified Wastewater Operator that was previously budgeted.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

3. Capacity Fee & Rate Study Discussion

City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau addressed the Council. He asked if they would like him to give a summary of the Capacity Fee and Rate Study at this time or if they would prefer to schedule a special meeting. The Council decided to table the presentation until a special meeting could be held.

Councilman Mark Martin pointed out that the summary report on page 32 of the packet showed that the Water Department was operating at a loss. He thanked City Accountant Sara Bowers for providing the new summary report.

Kelly Layman, a member of the public, addressed the Council. She asked several questions to determine if any changes to Capacity Fees and Rates brought about by the Rate Study would be retroactive; the Council members and City Attorney

informed her that any change in Capacity Fees would be effective on the date adopted, not retroactively.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To schedule a Special Council Meeting at 8:00am on September 14, 2021 before the regular Council meeting to discuss the results of the Capacity Fee and Rate Study.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

4. Hiring Temporary for Clerk duties

City Manager Simmons addressed the Council. He explained that he would like to find a temp to come in and do the clerical duties of the City Clerk until a new City Clerk is hired. Samantha Graves, Planning Technician, will fill in temporarily for meetings and to do minutes, but the Planning Department is too busy at this time for her to perform all of the duties of the City Clerk.

Councilwoman Haffner asked if he had a pay range in mind for the temp; Manager Simmons replied that he did not have a pay range yet. Once he has the Council's approval to hire one he will begin the process.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To hire a temporary employee to perform clerical duties while searching for a full-time permanent City Clerk.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

5. Addition of an Interim Clerk as a signatory

City Manager Simmons told the Council members that he would like to officially add Samantha Graves as the Interim City Clerk for signatory purposes until a new City Clerk can be hired.

The Mayor asked if the council had any questions or comments, they did not. Mayor Barley asked for public comments, there were none.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To add Samantha Graves as Interim City Clerk for signatory purposes.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

1. Employee Health Insurance

City Accountant Bowers directed the Council members to the options for Employee Health Insurance provided in the meeting packet. All agreed that renewing the current plan seemed to be the best option. The Council members thanked Accountant Bowers for researching and providing the information.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To renew the current Employee Health Insurance plan for another year.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. LSA Property Rights Element

Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel addressed the Council members. She introduced the Property Rights Element and explained that it is an addition to the Comprehensive Plan that is a legislative mandate.

Attorney Clay Adkinson informed the members that this version includes language that other jurisdictions have chosen which is in addition to the minimum required language. The additional language is protective toward the City. He added that he would not be surprised if the DEO kicks it back, but if they do they will give the City some suggested language to substitute.

Director Hughes-Neel said that she is seeking approval to hold the 1st reading, submit it to the DEO, and then advertise for the 2nd Reading and adoption. Until such time as the Council adopts a Property Rights Element, no other amendments to the Comprehensive Plan may be adopted. The Council members asked if it would hold up the LSA for the Carr annexation if the DEO kicks it back; Director Hughes-Neel stated that as long as it has been forwarded to the DEO and is in process other amendments may move forward as usual.

The Council members stated they would prefer to put all three steps in one motion. After the motion was carried, Director Hughes-Neel performed the 1st Reading of the LSA Property Rights Element.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To hold the 1st Reading of the LSA Property Rights Element, to submit the LSA to the DEO, and for staff to advertise for the 2nd Reading/Adoption.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

i. Legal

j. Engineering

City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau addressed the Council members regarding the Barrier-free Park Phase 1 improvements. He distributed a revised project budget totaling \$313,146.50, a reduction of approximately \$35,000.00. He summarized the changes.

Engineer Rouchaleau requested Council approval to award the contract for the project to RBM Contracting.

Once the Council members approved the award of the contract, Engineer Rouchaleau requested approval to issue the Notice to Proceed.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Approval for City Engineer Rouchaleau to award the contract for the Barrier Free Park Phase 1 Improvements to RBM Contracting in the amount of \$313,146.50.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

Approval for City Engineer Rouchaleau to issue the Notice to Proceed for the Barrier Free Park Phase 1 Improvements project.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

11. Old Business

12. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. Liberty Partners Contract Renewal

Mayor Barley informed the Council members that it is time for the annual contract renewal with Liberty Partners. City Manager Charlie Simmons said that the first year had been rough, and he really had not been very happy with it. This past year was much better though; they had all worked well together and accomplished a lot for the city. He invited Tim from the Liberty Partners to speak to the Council.

Tim agreed that 2020 was a rough year and said the budget had been cut and everything they had put in had been vetoed. This past year was much better though. When the budget went before the Governor they had almost 2 million dollars in it for Freeport, for the US Hwy 331 Sewer project, the S. Jackson St. improvements, and the new community center. Unfortunately the governor vetoed the community center along with several other community centers across the state.

Since then they have worked on a couple of grants, one for the community center and a Wastewater grant with DEP. They work closely with City Manager Simmons and their president Jennifer Grant would like to set up a bimonthly phone call to coordinate everything. There are several new opportunities coming up; the Job Growth Grant fund is looking to "push money out", and they are working on the Triumph grant for Walton County.

Interim Committee week begins September 20, 2021. Legislative session begins early this year; it will be back January 11, 2022. If any of the Council members

would like to come to Tallahassee and speak with the legislative members he would be happy to try to arrange it.

Liberty Partners is very excited to work with the City. Mayor Barley thanked Tim and asked for questions; there were none.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve Mayor Russ Barley to sign the contract with the Liberty Partners for another year.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. Christmas Decorations

Mayor Barley has been working on the Christmas decorations for the City; the Council had wanted some new ones throughout the city and he has many coming that he thinks they will be pleased with. There is one thing that he is a little hesitant about though, so he wanted to bring it before the Council members.

Mayor Barley had a company come out and give him an estimate for lighting the large oak tree in front of City Hall. The quote is for \$855 for one year. They will install the lights in October and will remove them in January. He is just a little hesitant because it is only for one year, not for decorations that can be used year after year.

Councilwoman Haffner said that she is all for it; the community loves the decorations the city installs and this would give people a place to come out and take pictures. Councilman Farris agrees.

Parks & Recreation Director Travis Digges said it takes the city employees a week to put up the decorations we already have, not counting the new ones that have been ordered.

Councilman Farris pointed out that another benefit of hiring a company to do the install is that if one of the lights goes out, they will come and fix it. Councilwoman Brannon agreed, saying she thinks it is a good idea as well.

Mayor Barley told the council members he has the money in the budget. He requested approval from the council.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve Mayor Russ Barley to hire a company to light the large oak tree in front of City Hall at a cost of \$855.00.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

3. City of the Year

Mayor Barley said that Freeport is being awarded the City of the Year because of the Veteran's Memorial Park. He will be going to Springfield, MO on September 16th and 17th to accept the award on behalf of the City. He will be flying.

4. Bayfest

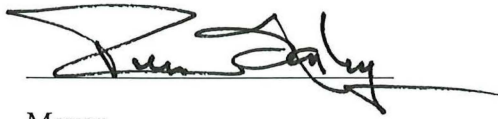
Mayor Barley told the Council members that the Bayfest committee had been meeting and there were a few additions he wanted to bring to their attention. The flyers are almost ready to go out, and all of the entertainment is in place. The main attraction will be a band called The Springs; they are out of Nashville. There will also be cornhole, a Mullet toss, a cookoff, and horseshoes. Also, this year for the first time there will be a Miss Bayfest competition on October 9, 2021.

- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilman Hope
- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman Martin

13. Public Comment

14. **Adjournment**

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:22pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barley", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, written over a horizontal line.

Interim City Clerk



City of Freeport

FIRST PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING

Minutes

September 9, 2021, 5:05pm

Freeport City Council Chambers

Council Members present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin. Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner arrived after the vote.

Staff present: City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Manager Charlie Simmons, Interim City Clerk Samantha Graves.

1. Meeting Called to Order

The September 9, 2021 Freeport City Council Budget Hearing was called to order at 5:05p.m. by Mayor Russ Barley.

2. First Public Hearing 2021-2022 Budget

Mayor Barley turned the meeting over to City Attorney Clayton Adkinson.

Attorney Adkinson announced that this was the first Public Budget Hearing. Adkinson announced that the advertised proposed millage rate of 4.7302% is greater than the roll back rate of 4.2327 mills by 11.75%.

Adkinson announced the intended budget is \$ 24,820,980

Moved by Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon
Second by Councilman Eddie Farris

To adopt the intended millage rate of 4.7302%

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Public Comment:

Mr. David Hewins of Freeport asked the Council members if the intended millage rate is double the current rate. The Council informed him that it is not; the intended millage rate is the same as the current rate.

Mr. Hewins then asked if maintenance of the lift stations is included in the budget proposal; the Council members confirmed that lift station maintenance is included.

Moved by Councilman Eddie Farris

Seconded by Councilman Tripp Hope

To adopt the intended budget of \$24,820,980.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Public Comment: None

Moved by: Councilman Hope

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To schedule the Final Public Budget Hearing for September 20, 2021 at 5:05pm at Freeport City Hall.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Martin: aye

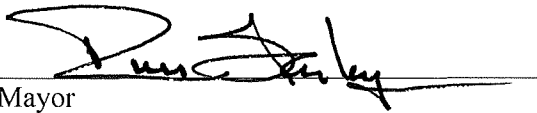
Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

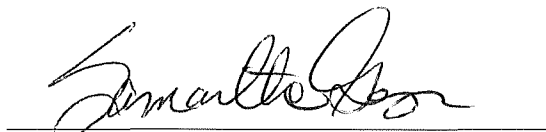
3. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 5:10pm.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk



City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

September 14, 2021, 8:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, Interim Clerk Samantha Graves

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:00am by Mayor Russ Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Capacity Fee and Rate Study Discussion

City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau introduced himself and stated that this is the third meeting for the Sewer and Water Rate Study review. He explained that the Council had hired him to do a study of the Rates and Capacity Fees for the City utilities.

Engineer Rouchaleau then presented the results of the study. The study showed that while revenues are covering the expenses, they are not covering expenses, Capital Improvement Projects to benefit current customers, and depreciation. He then showed a slide of the current base rates vs. the proposed rates, explaining the current base rates include some usage while the proposed base rate would be a flat rate with any usage being additional.

Mr. Crawley asked if the current annual increase was for depreciation. City Finance Officer Sara Bowers explained that the annual increase was based on the Consumer Price index. She then pointed out that the increase in rates proposed would be brought into effect gradually over the next three years. After that time either a new rate study could be done or the Consumer Price Index would once again be the basis for the automatic annual increase.

David Crawley asked the Council how many current customers were on the system. Utility Billing Manager Debbie Roberts responded that there are approximately 7,000 customers. Mr. Crawley then asked how many of the customers were in Hammock Bay; there are approximately 2,000 in Hammock Bay.

Councilwoman Brannon said that it was hard to accurately compare the proposed rates with the rates shown of other utility companies in the surrounding area because some included usage in their base rates and some did not, and different usage amounts are included in the base rates of those that do include usage.

Another member of the public asked why North Bay is separated out in the current billing; The system in North Bay was permitted separately so the rates have traditionally been different. In the proposed rate schedule North Bay would be the same as Outside City Limits. Upon further questioning, the Council explained that the rate for Outside City limits was different for multiple reasons, including distance of lines which increases costs and also the fact that citizens outside city limits do not pay ad valorem taxes to the city.

Engineer Rouchaleau explained that the rates for commercial would be increasing more than residential because their usage is generally more stressing on the system than that of residential users. In the past the rates became cheaper as usage increased, but the City is required to have a conservation element. The new structure increases rates as usage increases.

Councilman Mark Martin said that the city's water and sewer system should be a for-profit enterprise and should support itself separate from ad valorem taxes.

Engineer Rouchaleau clarified that the Rate study and proposed rate changes were for existing customers and did not address the costs of new development.

The next part of the study focused on Capacity fees. Engineer Rouchaleau explained the difference between tap/impact fees and capacity fees. The Tap fee is the cost for installing a water meter. Impact fees are the fee for new growth, ensuring that new growth pays its share of the impact on the system. Capacity fees are charged for all new connections and represent the extra cost to connect and provide capacity for the new service. Attorney Adkinson explained the Capacity fee ordinance which was adopted in 2019 in place of the old Tap and Impact fee system. Capacity fees are only charged for new growth.

City Attorney Adkinson explained that Impact fees are severely restricted on how they can be used and for what geographical area. They have to be used for improvements in the same area in which they were collected. Capacity fees are much more flexible. During the "building boom" from 2004 - 2008 the City collected a lot of impact fees from developers for areas that never actually came on board the system. The City was unable to use those funds because they were for specific areas.

Engineer Rouchaleau added that the Capacity fee is a charge that the existing users will never see.

Capacity fees can be used for upgrades or maintenance. Attorney Adkinson said that Impact fees were good for the City when there was little or no growth, but with growth the shift to capacity fees is better. Also, in the past developers would pre-pay the fees; this would lock in the capacity for their development even though it was not actually being used for years. It would also be at a lower cost, so that when the developments were actually built the cost was much higher than what

had been contributed. For that reason the City no longer allows pre-payment; the Capacity fees are paid at the time the Development Order is issued.

Engineer Rouchaleau then showed the proposed rates for Sewer. Traditionally Sewer charged a base rate that did not include usage; usage tiers are now being added. After showing a summary of the proposed rates he asked for questions; there were none.

The presentation then moved on to Sewer Capacity fees. Engineer Rouchaleau explained that an ERU or ERC is the average usage of a single-family home. Usage for development other than single-family homes is calculated based on a structure detailed in the Land Development Code.

City Manager Simmons asked how Engineer Rouchaleau arrived at the proposed rate; Alex replied that he looked at future projections and calculated the cost. The current future improvements needed for Wastewater that need to be funded equal 44.5 million dollars. The projects include:

- 1.5 MGD Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade: \$20 million
- 500,000 gallon upgrade: \$5 million
- Land acquisition for a new treatment plant to the north of the City: \$4.5 million
- Hwy 331 North Wastewater improvements (from Riverwalk to Owls Head): \$5 million
- Hwy 331 South Wastewater improvements: \$6 million
- CR 3280 septic to sewer conversion: \$5.5 million
- SR 20 East force main: \$3.5 million
- CR 83A West Wastewater improvements: \$1.1 million

He explained that these improvements were all needed in the next 5 years.

Engineer Rouchaleau then explained that the future improvements to the Water system would cost approximately \$13.1 million. These would include:

- Hwy 331 water main upgrade (from LaGrange Road to Owls Head): \$8.5 million
- CR 83A West water main improvement: \$2.4 million
- Joe Campbell Road water main improvement: \$500,000
- CR 3280 water main improvement: \$1 million
- Aultman Road: \$150,000
- Kylea Laird Road: \$600,000
- Land acquisition on SR 20 for a new well and storage tank: \$300,000

Jay Odom addressed the Council. He asked why they needed to raise the capacity fees to pay for a new plant, when the construction of the plant is already in process. Engineer Rouchaleau explained that the fees for construction came from a loan from the USDA that needed to be paid

back. Mr. Odom said he understood that, but the loan could be paid back over time. Mr. Odom felt that the estimates of cost were not accurate and did not reflect grant money that the City may be awarded for these projects.

Alex replied that it is impossible to know what grants the City may get; a new study could be done in three years and if grants have been received the capacity fees could be adjusted back down.

Mr. Odom then asked what happened to the money that was raised with the capacity fees instituted in 2019. City Manager Simmons responded that because fees were not increased at all from 2005-2019 there was a big jump in 2019 just to catch up.

Jay Odom pointed out that when a new development is built, the developer pays for and installs all of the water and sewer infrastructure for that development, then the City just has to connect it to their lines and install the meters. The developer then gives the system to the City. He stated that if this proposed increase happens, the City of Freeport will be the most expensive utility in the area for new developments.

City Engineer Rouchaleau pointed out that costs have gone up significantly in the recent past, and these improvements need to be made in the next 5 years. If the City cuts back on the increase in capacity fees it means that developers will not be able to develop here.

Matt Parker with JP Engineering asked how the ERC/ERU was calculated, and if it was actually the average use per household per month. Engineer Rouchaleau explained that he used the ERC/ERU set by the DEP. Mr. Parker inquired if the DEP number is accurate for this area, or if it could possibly be overstated; the developer may be paying for something that isn't being used. Engineer Rouchaleau explained that there are so many variables that have to be considered that it is difficult to get an accurate ERU. That is why he uses the DEP figure, as does Regional Utilities.

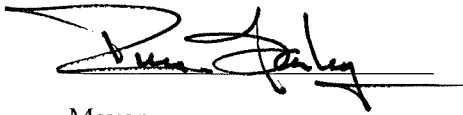
Mr. Parker then asked how many homes the new improvements will be able to accommodate, and if the cost could be spread over that number of homes to make the cost per connection lower. Alex answered that for this proposal he looked at it several ways; the number that would be permitted was highest, the number of units that have been submitted was lowest, so he went with a middle number. He then pointed out that the capacity for water is harder to calculate since it depends on many things, and is based on the pressure.

Attorney Adkinson reminded the Council that this meeting had overrun into the time scheduled for the Regular Council meeting. Mayor Barley stated that the discussion would be continued under Old Business in the Regular Council Meeting.

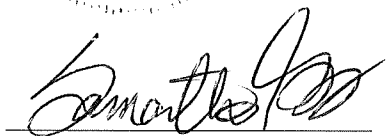
3. Public Comments

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Barley at 9:16am.



Mayor



Interim City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

September 14, 2021, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner, Councilman Tripp Hope

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, Interim City Clerk Samantha Graves

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:17am by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Special Council Meeting Minutes - August 26, 2021
- b. City Council Meeting Minutes - August 26, 2021
- c. Bills

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager
- e. City Clerk
- f. Finance

1. Water and Wastewater Capacity Fees

Finance Officer Sara Bowers told the Council that two developments had paid their capacity fees. She requested the Council authorize her to move the money from Operating to the Capacity Fee account in the amounts of \$108,354.54 for Water and \$171,675.00 for Sewer.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To authorize Finance Officer Sara Bowers to move the money paid for Water and Wastewater capacity fees as requested.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. Check Signers

Finance Officer Bowers told the council members the City's accounts require two signatures on checks. There are currently two authorized check signers, so if one of them is unavailable to sign checks cannot be written. She requested authorization to add the City Manager position as a signer.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To add the City Manager position as an authorized signer on the checking accounts for the City.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

3. Additional City credit card

Finance Officer Bowers explained the city only has two credit cards, one for the Mayor and the other for all other employees to use. When the city manager travels for business, if he takes the card for travel expenses then no one at the city offices can use it for City business until it is returned. She is requesting authorization to get another card to insure there is a card available for authorized uses.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To authorize Finance Officer Bowers to obtain another credit card for authorized city use.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

- g. Billing
- h. Planning
- i. Legal

1. Carr Annexation

Attorney Adkinson explained the city has not yet been able to reach all of the owners in the area in the southern portion that is creating an enclave. Mr. David Smith of Innerlight Engineering told the council members the Carr Foundation would like to move forward with the annexation of the northern portion; this part is approximately 2,009 acres.

Attorney Adkinson requested a motion from the Council authorizing him to prepare and advertise the Ordinance for the annexation of the parcels lying to the north of CR 3280. If the owners in the southern portion come onboard later and the Carrs wish to annex the southern portion, they will not have to pay a second annexation fee.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To authorize Attorney Adkinson to prepare and advertise an Ordinance for annexation of the parcels lying to the north of CR 3280.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. Sewer Lien Policy

Attorney Adkinson explained he has researched the issue of the two properties that have been sold while owing money for City Utilities. He found two main issues:

1. If a property is sold before the lien is recorded, the City cannot place a lien against the property.
2. If a property is a rental property and the lien is for money owed by a renter, a lien cannot be placed against property they don't own.

He asked if the council members wish to pursue debt collection services against owners with no attachable property. Councilwoman Brannon said that only two properties had been sold while owing the City money. Those two owners owed the City for loans extended to them to install sewer. How do we pursue, and to what extent, the individuals we cannot place a lien against? Councilwoman Brannon pointed out the owners did not disclose they had municipal liens and the title company apparently failed to do a lien search.

The council members then discussed when utility account past-due amounts exceed the amount of the deposit. Attorney Adkinson advised the City should place a lien as soon as the debt exceeds the deposit amount. Councilwoman Haffner explained the cutoff currently is before the amount of the deposit is reached. Finance Officer Bowers asked how the lien searches were to be paid for; Attorney Adkinson explained that the fee Resolution will need to be added to add the cost of the lien to the individual's account.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To authorize staff to reach out to the Title companies that were involved in the sales of the two properties that owe money to the City for sewer loans and request copies of the closing documents and lien searches.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To set the Internal policy so when a utility account becomes delinquent in an amount exceeding the deposit, staff records a lien with the Clerk of Court.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

j. Engineering

1. Preliminary Engineering Report Proposal - WWTF Capacity Upgrade

City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau explained this proposal is for a report to meet the USDA's requirements for additional grant funding for the 1.5-2 MGD upgrade to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. City Manager Simmons asked Alex what would be next if the grant is approved; Alex said creating a design would be next. This proposal is just for the report to get funding.

City Manager Simmons requested the Council table this so he could have more time to review it with Engineer Rouchaleau. The council agreed.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To table the Preliminary Engineering Report Proposal for the WWTP Capacity Upgrade until the Regular Council Meeting scheduled for September 23, 2021.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

2. WWTF Capacity Re-rate Proposal

Engineer Rouchaleau explained the purpose of this is the re-permitting of the plant. This report needs to be provided to the USDA to prove we can increase capacity of RIB's 1-3 to .7 MGD. City Manager Simmons recommended approval of this.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To accept the WWTF Capacity Re-rate proposal provided by Dewberry Engineering.

A roll call vote was ordered and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

- a. Continuation of discussion of Wastewater and Water Rate and Capacity fee study from Special Council Meeting

The council members continued the discussion from the Special Council meeting.

Councilwoman Haffner voice concern about the sharp increase in the water capacity fees. She said she was particularly concerned with the impact on a person building a single-family home. She is okay with the proposed change in monthly rates, but fears that such a large increase in capacity fees will be detrimental. Perhaps the City needs to re-evaluate the "wish list" and pursue a smaller increase.

Finance Officer Bowers said that Water has no reserves for these improvements. Councilman Martin reiterated there were no changes in rates for 15 years. He said if someone pays a fee today but doesn't build for 15 years, the City will once again be spending more than it charged for the install. He asked if there could be a time limit from the time fees are paid until connection. Engineer Rouchaleau said that issue has already been taken care of since fees cannot be paid in advance.

David Crawley complained that the sewer fees don't include a grinder pump. The cost to an owner for the grinder pump and a plumber to install it is over \$4000.

Engineer Rouchaleau clarified the city installed grinder pumps in the past, but lost money in providing this service. Now the city does not install grinder pumps.

Councilman Farris said he had an issue with such a large increase, he doesn't want the city to hurt anyone. He would like to see some way to help those outside the city limits to connect to the system and get off of septic tanks.

Engineer Rouchaleau suggested to assist single customers perhaps the city could establish criteria to offer discounts for single customer single-family homes and incentives for septic-to-sewer transitions.

Councilwoman Haffner voiced her concern that such a large increase in capacity fees might cause some developers to choose not to develop in the city.

Engineer Rouchaleau pointed out that one reason all the projects have to be bid out is that the city does not have the staff nor the equipment to do the work in-house. In-house projects would be less expensive.

Councilwoman Brannon thanked City Engineer Rouchaleau for the rate study and all of the information. She said she is trying to go through all of the historical documents she has and determine how the city arrived at this point. When the City enacted the Capacity Fee Ordinance in 2019 the council hoped that would be sufficient. She suggested the city might need to review the "Wish List" and determine which project are necessities and which ones are just desires.

Alex reiterated that he prefers to stick with the DEP number for ERU's, but if the city chooses to direct him to determine what the city's actual numbers are the process would be very involved and would lock us into using that number for other things. He added that he is not looking for a motion today.

Jay Odom told the council members he agrees there need to be incentives for individuals transitioning from septic tanks to sewer. Mr. Odom added that we have seen materials jump up in price, but the pricing will level out. The city needs to look at the big picture and long-term ramifications.

Engineer Rouchaleau said the proposed rates for water were increased so steeply because prior to 2019 fees were based on connection cost, not cost of capacity. When the Capacity Fee Ordinance was enacted in 2019 the rates used were already two years behind. At that time the main focus was on sewer.

Attorney Adkinson reiterated capacity fees were first instituted in 2019 and have never been increased.

Councilman Martin said again the utilities need to be run as a profit and loss entity.

City Manager Simmons told the council members rate studies are currently scheduled to be performed every three years. It might be necessary to change the schedule to perform them annually.

Matt Parker told the council members he is currently working on a development submittal for a project that consists of 1,500 single-family homes. Based on the rates proposed the capacity fee cost would be approximately \$15 million. He asked if there is a time frame when the new rates are likely to be adopted. He said that if the developer pays the fees at the time of the issuance of the Development Order, the fees will not be recouped until the homes are built. Is it possible the city might consider charging half to the developer and half to the builder instead?

Councilman Martin pointed out there is another side to that; if the developer pays \$15 million at the time of the Development Order, but the cost to the city is actually \$20 million at the time of build-out then the city once again loses money.

Attorney Adkinson said this is an ongoing question. Yes, developers carry the cost for a while, but capacity is booked in our plant at the moment the fees are paid; the city will already be laying lines and putting in improvements if the developer then goes out of business. In the past everyone wanted to pay at the time the building permit application was submitted. The city made infrastructure improvements in advance, and then some of the developers went out of business. That is how we arrived at this situation today.

Planning Director Latilda Neel said the time for the Development Order approval process was currently 3 - 6 months. If it were a benefit to the city, the city could choose to negotiate payments of the capacity fees over time.

Councilwoman Haffner said she would like some more information and discussion. She requested the opportunity to discuss it further at the next meeting. She would like more information on the projects and cost calculations as well as more detail on the calculations used to arrive at the proposed rates. Councilman Hope agreed.

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley

Mayor Barley reminded the council members that he will be travelling to accept the City of the Year award. He will have the Award for the next meeting.

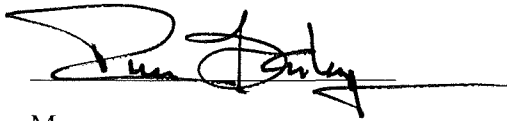
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilman Hope
- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

None.

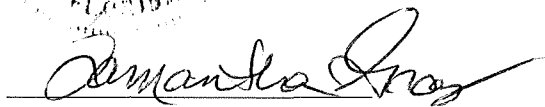
13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:33am.



Mayor

ATTEST:



Interim City Clerk



City of Freeport

FINAL PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING

Minutes

September 20, 2021, 5:05pm
Freeport City Council Chambers

Council Members present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner.

Staff present: City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Manager Charlie Simmons, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Interim City Clerk Samantha Graves.

1. Meeting Called to Order

The September 20, 2021 Freeport City Council Final Budget Hearing was called to order at 5:05p.m. by Mayor Russ Barley.

2. Final Public Hearing 2021-2022 Budget

Mayor Barley turned the meeting over to City Attorney Clay Adkinson.

Attorney Adkinson announced this was the final Public Budget Hearing. Adkinson announced the advertised proposed millage rate of 4.7302% is greater than the roll back rate of 4.2327 mills by 11.75%.

Adkinson announced the intended budget is \$ 24,820,980

Moved by Councilman Tripp Hope
Second by Councilman Eddie Farris

To adopt the intended millage rate of 4.7302%

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Resolution 2021-05 would reflect adoption of the millage rate.

Moved by Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Seconded by Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon

To adopt the intended budget of \$24,820,980.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Resolution 2021-06 would reflect adoption of the budget.

Public Comment:

None

3. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 5:06pm.



Mayor

ATTEST:





City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

September 23, 2021, 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Tripp Hope,
Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Mark Martin
Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Council Member Absent: Councilman Eddie Farris

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, Interim City Clerk Samantha Graves,
City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers,
Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Parks Director Travis Digges, Water
Supervisor Larry Tuggle
Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau,

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

4. Consent Agenda

a. Bills

(TAB 1)

b. First Hearing of 2021-2022 Budget Minutes - September 9, 2021

- c. Special Council Meeting Minutes - September 14, 2021
- d. Regular Council Meeting Minutes - September 14, 2021
- e. Revenue and Expenditure Reports through August 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Finance Officer Sara Bower requested three additions to the agenda under Finance. First, there was an additional payment of capacity fees by a developer that she would like added to the request provided in the meeting packet under TAB 6. Second, she would like to request approval of a Budget Amendment for the paving of the Barrier Free Park. Finally, she is requesting approval of a Resolution to obtain a second credit card for city use as authorized at the Regular Council Meeting on September 14, 2021.

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

9. Staff Reports

a. Water

b. Sewer

- c. Parks
- d. City Manager
- e. City Clerk
- f. Finance

Finance Officer Bowers informed the Council that the credit card company was requiring a resolution for staff to obtain an additional credit card for city use. The Council directed staff to obtain an additional card at the Regular Council Meeting on September 14, 2021.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve Resolution 2021-07, authorizing staff to obtain an additional credit card for city use.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

1. Water and Wastewater Capacity Fees

Finance Officer Sara Bowers told the Council with the additional payment of capacity fees, she is requesting authorization to move \$60,613.80 from Water Operating and \$86,242.81 from Sewer Operating into the Reserves account.

After the Council approved the transfer, Finance Officer Bowers asked if the Council would authorize her to automatically transfer funds each time capacity fees were paid by developers, since it is becoming a more frequent occurrence. The council members asked Attorney Adkinson if that would be legal; he said it would be. The council members then said they would prefer to get a memo each time, as they do now. Finance Officer Bowers asked about the option of providing a memo each time but having it listed as part of the Consent Agenda. The Council agreed and directed staff to change procedure to include the memorandum of request for transfer of capacity fees as part of the Consent Agenda in the future.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To authorize the movement of \$60,613.80 water capacity fees and \$86,242.81 sewer capacity fees from the Operations account to the Reserves accounts.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Carried

2. Budget Amendment #2

Finance Officer Bowers requested Council approval of Budget Amendment #2, which calls for the transfer of \$62,900 from the R & M City Roads expense account to the Street Road Material & Supply expense account for the purpose of paving the road to the barrier-free park.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To transfer \$62,900 within the Street Department from Expense account R & M City Roads to Expense account Street Road Material & Supplies for the purpose of paving the road at the barrier-free park.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

3. Resolution 2021-XX for an additional credit card for city use

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve Resolution 2021-XX authorizing staff to apply for an additional credit card for city use.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

g. Billing

h. Planning

i. Legal

1. Carr Annexation - First Reading

City Attorney Adkinson directed the council members to the map in their packet showing the revised area for the annexation, which does not include the southern portion that created an enclave. He requested Council approval to hold the first reading of the Ordinance for Annexation.

After the First Reading, Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that the Second Reading would be advertised and scheduled for the Regular Council Meeting on October 28, 2021.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To perform the First Reading of the proposed Ordinance for Annexation.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

j. Engineering

1. Preliminary Engineering Report Proposal - WWTF Capacity Upgrade

City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau presented the council members with a revised proposal. The purpose of this proposal is to enable Engineer Rouchaleau to perform

the work necessary for the city to apply for USDA funding for the 1.5MGD to 2.0MGD upgrade of the WWTF. He pointed out this proposal is slightly less than the proposal presented at the Regular Council Meeting on September 14, 2021. Engineer Rouchaleau further explained this report proposal is slightly higher than the proposals he usually presents because of the amount of detail required by the USDA.

Councilwoman Brannon asked if the study is performed now, would it be outdated by the time the upgrade is needed in 2024. Alex explained that it would not, because it will be reviewed for award as soon as it is submitted. Ideally by submitting it early the funds should be awarded in time to begin the second upgrade as soon as the first upgrade is complete.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To accept the Preliminary Engineering Report Proposal for the WWTF Capacity Upgrade as presented for the purpose of applying for USDA funding.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

a. Capacity Fee and Rate Study Discussion

City Manager Simmons asked the council members if, due to Councilman Farris' absence, they would like to table the discussion until the October 12, 2021, meeting so that he could be present. Councilwoman Haffner agreed and pointed out that she was pleased to see that the revised fee suggestions were lower than those presented at the Special Council Meeting on September 14, 2021.

City Engineer Rouchaleau asked if the council members had any questions; they did not.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To table the Capacity Fee and Rate Study Discussion until the Regular Council Meeting on October 12, 2021.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried

11. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. City of the Year

Mayor Barley informed the council members that he had travelled to Springfield, Mo. the previous weekend and had accepted the National City of the Year award on behalf of the city. He explained the award was from an honorary group of the American Legion. Engineer Rouchaleau translated the French inscription to read "The Society of Forty Men and Eight Horses."

Mayor Barley added that he originally was under the impression the award was for 2020, but it is actually for 2021. The city received the Local and State awards in 2020 but this is the National award. He was proud to bring it home for the citizens of Freeport. The award will be put on display in City Hall.

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

d. Councilman Hope

e. Councilwoman Haffner

f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 6:56pm.



Mayor

ATTEST:



Interim City Clerk



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

October 12, 2021, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, Utility Billing Manager Debbie Roberts

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

None.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
(Tab 1)
- b. Minutes – Regular Council Meeting September 23, 2021
(Tab 2)
- c. Minutes Final Public Budget Hearing September 20, 2021
(Tab 3)

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

None.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Councilman Martin – Update on TPO

Mayor Russ Barley – Hiring of City Clerk

City Manager Simmons – Proposal by Jay Odom Group

City Manager Simmons – Appropriation Project State

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager

1. Proposal by Jay Odom Group

City Manager Simmons invited Jay Odom to the podium. The Odom Group stated they are in the process of starting to develop a Single-Family Project on Hwy 3280 about three miles east of Black Creek. This project is within Walton County's planning jurisdiction and the City of Freeport's water and sewer area of service. This project will require 790 Water and Sewer ERU's from the city. The project includes 775 single family homes plus an Amenity Center with a clubhouse and pool. Odom has already completed the county's Land Use change process, with a completion of the first 200 lots anticipated around November 2023. The final planning and approval through the county and first phases of development infrastructure will take about two years.

Odom proposed to enter into a Water and Sewer Agreement with the city for these 790 ERU's. The total for the 790 capacity fees for water and sewer outside the city limits is currently: \$7,927,673.70. With approval, Odom is proposing the following: a 40% down payment of \$3,171,069.48 and the Developer agrees to design, permit, and install water line from Black Creek to the project. The Developer (Jay Odom Group) will front the cost of the water line design, permit and installation and receive credit for this cost to be deducted from the remaining 60%. One-third of this cost will be deducted from each 20% payment at months 24, 36, and 48. The proposal was thoroughly discussed. To note, City Attorney Adkinson, stated the city's engineers would have to determine if any upgrade in sizing would be needed for other developments with a nearby 200 acre parcel of land. Adkinson deemed that city Planner Neel would need to communicate with the County Planner to ensure the proper procedures would coincide between the county and city.

Moved by: Councilwoman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Farris

To accept proposal from Jay Odom Group for current capacity fees associated with the Single Family Project on Hwy 3280 about three miles from Black Creek estimated to be 790 ERU's reflecting 775 Single Family Homes plus an Amenity Center with a Club House and Pool subject to the following: staff determining the proper number of capacity fees, determining the anticipated cost of water line improvements from Black Creek to Faulkner Drive, determining the size line needed for this development (from Faulkner to this Development) and any upsizing the city needs, and awarding appropriate credits that are the city's responsibility not the Developer's, and for Planning to confirm with the county that their process for PUD mirrors the city's development stage for PDP. Assuming those contingencies are met, to use these current rates and for the final word to be brought back to the Council to confirm.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

2. Appropriations State Project

City Manager Simmons initially intended to bring this up again at the first council meeting in November, but the deadline for submission is November 15, 2021. City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau was invited up to discuss these projects. The first project Rouchaleau discussed was for the cost estimate of 83A West Water Line Improvements, about \$2.4 million, which would bring in a new water line all the way down 83A to help with the development activity and existing pressure issues. The second project includes CR 3280 East Water Line Improvements, estimated around \$865,000, which would improve existing water line pressure and support development activity. The third project would be the 83A Wastewater Improvements, including two lift stations to support the development seen in Hammock Bay and other areas, estimated about \$1.5 million. The fourth project is Lagrange Road Sewer Extension, part of the US 331 S Sewer Project, estimated around \$900,000, this project would pick up the proposed developments and existing septic systems. The fifth and final project to discuss is the Marquis Way Connector Road, estimated around \$8 million, for construction and engineering of a road and bridge. City Manager Simmons stated that the Marquis Way Project was the city's number one transportation project. This will be pursued with Liberty Partners and the county.

Moved by: Councilman Hope

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve moving forward with the discussion and action of these five projects.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

3. Event Discussion

City Manager Simmons announced on November 1st at 11:00am the ground-breaking of the 331 Sewer Project would commence. He stated that several important representatives would be present for the event because \$1 million from the House has turned into a total of \$18 million from the county and grants, exponentially increasing this project.

4. Discussions on a joint venture for combined Treatment Plant

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve permission to start the discussion of a joint venture with the City of DeFuniak Springs on the Treatment Plant.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

g. Billing

h. Planning

i. Legal

j. Engineering

1. US 331 North Sewer Improvements- bid results and award recommendations (Tab 4)

- City Engineer Rouchaleau stated that four bids were received for this project. The low bid came from North Florida Construction at \$5,139,806.00. All bid documents were reviewed and approved.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the bid received from North Florida Construction for the US 331 North Sewer Improvement Project, pending legal documentation.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

10. Old Business

a. Water and Sewer Capacity Fee and Rate Study Discussion (Tab 5)

City Manager Simmons briefed the Council on the history of capacity fees. Up to 2019, it had been fifteen years since any changes had been made to water or sewer fees. The price increased from \$750 to \$1,094 when capacity fees were proposed. Outside the city limits services were \$1,912 and decreased to \$1,307 because for the \$600 difference was not warranted.

The Original Proposed Rates and Updated Proposed Rates were presented. City Engineer Rouchaleau stated all the rates were based on numbers from the study. Councilwoman Haffner stated the Updated Rates Proposal will prevent the city from losing \$400 with each meter installed from the water capacity. Therefore, these Updated Rates are required for the city to move forward.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve the Updated Proposed Rates of the Water and Sewer Capacity Fees and Rates.

City Attorney Adkinson proposed an Amended Motion. Finance Officer Bowers proposed the allocation of capacity funds received would be a 50/50 split of the water capacity fees between its primary operating account and a reserve account for future growth of the water system. The allocation of the wastewater capacity fees received would be maintained with 25% going to its operating account and the remaining 75% being placed in a reserve account for future growth of the wastewater system.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To adopt a Resolution of the Rates and an Ordinance of the Capacity Fees within the near future with adaptations proposed by Finance Officer Bowers.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

11. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. Hiring of City Clerk

Mayor Barley informed the Council that there were over 50 applicants for the City Clerk position. After review by himself, Finance Officer Bowers, and City Manager Simmons they selected the best applicant. Kathie Gatewood was the chosen applicant, and with her previous experience Mayor Barley requested her pay to be set at \$47,500. Councilwoman Haffner and Councilwoman Brannon emphasized that after interviewing Gatewood, she would be an excellent fit for the position.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the hiring of Kathie Gatewood as City of Freeport's new City Clerk.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Hope: aye
Councilwoman Haffner: aye
Councilman Martin: aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Carried

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

d. Councilwoman Haffner

e. Councilman Hope

f. Councilman Martin

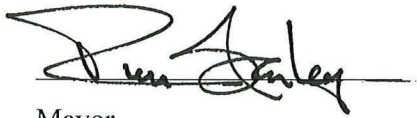
1. Update on TPO

Councilman Martin informed the Council that he recently attended the TPO meeting of Walton/Okaloosa Counties. He stated the proceedings of meeting that took place with one man from DOT and several representatives from Okaloosa and Walton Counties. Councilman Martin also discussed the Emerald Coast Transportation Symposium scheduled for November 4th and 5th.

12. Public Comment


13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:33 AM.



Mayor

ATTEST:





City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 28, 2021,
6:30pm, Council Chambers, Freeport
City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope,
and Councilman Mark Martin.

Council Members Absent with Notice: Councilwomen Elizabeth Brannon and Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, City Attorney
Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts,
Parks Director Travis Digges, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer
Supervisor Robert Fawcett and City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau.

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of the Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

4. Consent Agenda

a. Bills

b. Regular Council Meeting Minutes of October 12, 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilman Hope

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Parks Director Travis Digges requested to include the Walton County Health Department Multigeneration Park designation for the Freeport Sports Complex to the agenda.

Finance Officer Sara Bower requested an addition to the agenda under Finance to add the new City Clerk Kathie Gatewood as a check signer.

Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

8.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

9. Staff Reports

a. Water

b. Sewer

c. Parks

1. Parks Director Digges advised the City Council of the following updates:

- The Westonwood Ranch proposed March 25 & 26, 2021 for use of the Sports Complex for their annual rodeo event. Parks Director Digges requested the City Council waive usage fees for the event. Mayor Barley called for public comment, to which Westonwood Ranch Owner, Lindy Woods, thanked the City for their support and noted this is their largest fundraiser each year with approximately 1,400 spectators each day. She said the event is good for the city, everybody loves and appreciate the community and family-oriented feel of the city.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To waive usage fees for the Westonwood Ranch Rodeo Event at the Freeport Sports Complex on March 25 & 26, 2021.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

- Parks Director Digges gave a Parks Update stating the public address (PA) system is complete, save for the microphone which is on backorder. The department borrowed microphones to test the system and everything is working well. He also informed the Council they installed a new disc golf kiosk sign and thanked residents Larry Cato for helping to install it and Neil Kelly for donating his artistic talent to create the sign.
- The Council was provided a Pool Earnings report by Parks Director Digges showing there has been a steady increase each year with exception of year 2020, which was due to running the pool at half capacity due to COVID-19. He reminded the Council the fees have not been raised in a few years and he would like to keep them the same for affordability reasons but would like to possibly consider raising the swimming lesson fees for a second swim instructor. He stated they had to turn people away this year and he would like to possibly hire another swim instructor for next year. The report mentioned can be viewed at City Hall upon request. Councilman Farris expressed how thankful he was that the City spent the extra money to upgrade the pool and keep it open and thanked the department for their work. He said it gives all children an opportunity to use it and that it looks great. City Administrator Simmons commended the department on their efforts.
- The Splash Pad closed for the season on October 18, 2021. The notice was posted on the City Hall sign and on the website. Parks Director Digges told the Council he is considering reopening on May 1, 2021, and maybe earlier than that if the weather is favorable.
- Ryan Mims and Jill Breslawski both representing the Florida Department of Health in Walton County told the Council the department has deemed the Freeport Regional Sports Complex to be a Multigenerational Park after meeting their program criteria. An informational brochure with the program details and criteria was given to each member and a copy can be viewed at City Hall upon request. A sign was placed in the park near the softball field press box and a ceremony is taking place on Monday, November 1, 2021, at 10:00am with city and county officials.

- d. City Manager
- e. City Clerk
- f. Finance

Finance Officer Bowers requested the City Council to add City Clerk Kathie Gatewood to become an additional signer for city checks, while still maintaining the Mayor, Russ Barley; the Council President, Eddie Farris; and the City Manager, Charlie Simmons as check signers. She explained two signatures will still be required per check.

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve City Clerk Kathie Gatewood as an additional check signer for city use.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye
Councilman Hope: aye
Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

- g. Billing

Billing Manager Roberts requested the City Council delay the November and December disconnects to January 2022 as were done last year. She noted the November disconnect date was two days before Thanksgiving Day.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To delay November and December utility disconnects to January 2022.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye
Councilman Hope: aye Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

- h. Planning
- i. Legal

1. Carr Annexation - Second Reading

City Attorney Adkinson requested Council approval to hold the second reading of the Ordinance for Annexation. Attorney Adkinson advised the Ordinance number is 2021-007.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To perform the Second Reading and to adopt the proposed amended Ordinance for Annexation.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

2. Proposed Water and Sewer Capacity Fees and Rates – First Reading

City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council this action is to amend Ordinance 2019-03. Raising the utility rates will be done by Resolution, which will occur at the Second Reading and adoption of the Ordinance set before them. He stated it increases the water capacity fees to the numbers proposed and similarly adds language stating the increase begins immediately upon adoption, with an annual increase thereafter. It also changes Section 20-200 to reflect that 50% (fifty percent) of water capacity fee revenue will be placed in the primary operating account for the City's water system and the remaining 50% (fifty percent) will be placed in the reserve account for future growth of the water system.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To hold first reading of the proposed ordinance amendment to the Capacity Fee ordinance.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

After first reading, there was a discussion that the amount of \$2,995.00 on page two for the Water Capacity Fees – inside city limits was incorrect and all of the amounts needed to be amended.

Moved by: Councilman Hope

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To amend the proposed ordinance to the fees are as follows:

Water Capacity Fees: Inside City Limits \$2,500.00 and Outside City Limits \$3,125.00

Wastewater Capacity Fees remain at: Inside City Limits \$7,015.13 and Outside City Limits \$8,768.91

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

Engineering

1. Wastewater Package Plants – binding agreement with property owner for effluent disposal.

City Engineer Rouchaleau advised the Council the agreement provides an easement for the property the treatment plant is being installed on and discusses maintenance and related matters. He told the Council it was a requirement of the Department of Environmental Protection permit being submitted by his department.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve and execute the proposed agreement.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

10. Old Business

11. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. 2022 Holiday Schedule

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve the 2022 Holiday Schedule.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Hope: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

- b. Councilwoman Brannon

- c. Councilman Farris

- d. Councilman Hope

- e. Councilwoman Haffner

f. Councilman Martin

Councilman Martin provided an update for the most recent Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) meeting. He expressed the Florida Department of Transportation commonly said, "we don't have the budget for that" during the meeting when it came to projects. He suggested the Council, at some point, could fund their projects like they did in the past, so they do not have to rely on government funds and a long waiting list. City Administrator Simmons stated that those who have up to a 50% match of funds, go to the top of the TPO list. Councilman Martin expressed it still could take several years, and a sales tax fund would allow for projects to move faster. He said the next TPO meeting will be held on December 9, 2021, at 3:00pm at the South Walton County Annex Boardroom.


12. Public Comment

Mayor Barley called for public comment.

Kristine Bacon, Hammock Bay resident, expressed frustration with people parking on the streets of Hammock Bay, stating people are being displaced from their assigned parking spots and there has been damage to mailboxes. She asked for clarification on being able to fine violators, to which the City Attorney replied the City cannot weigh in on HOA matters.

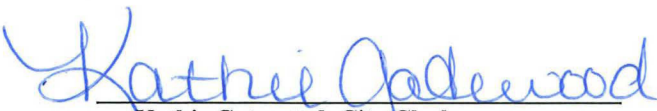
13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 7:01pm.



Russ Barley, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk





City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2021, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Haffner, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

Mayor Barley recognized guests Mr. Bill Imfeld, Walton County Economic Development Alliance Executive Director and Mr. Keith Kelly, Head of Freeport Football and Cheer.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Bills

(Tab 1)

b. Minutes – Regular Council Meeting October 28, 2021

(Tab 2)

1. Purchase of a generator

Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle asked the Council for permission to purchase a budgeted generator from Taylor Power Systems for \$119,450.00.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the purchase the of a generator from Taylor Power Systems for \$119,450.00.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

- b. Sewer
- c. Parks

1. Freeport Football and Cheer Fee Waiver

Parks and Recreation Director Digges told the Council Keith Kelly, Freeport Football and Cheer Chair was present for the meeting. He said Freeport Football would oversee flag football for the first time this year. He told the Council Freeport Little League was unable to oversee flag football this year and Freeport Football, after being approached by him, immediately agreed to oversee the program, which has over 200 children participate a year. He requested the Council waive the park and concession stand fees for Freeport Football & Cheer. Mr. Kelly thanked the Council and the City for their continuous support.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To waive park and concession stand fees for Freeport Football and Cheer.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

Councilman Farris agreed with Councilman Hope that the land meets the city's needs. He also stated land prices will continue to rise in Freeport. He said if the city can work this out it will be a huge opportunity to get one or more defense contractors to relocate to Freeport to provide our community with good paying jobs. He expressed his thanks to everyone for their work on this transaction.

Councilwoman Haffner asked if the Council could give direction to continue price negotiation and then come back and do a revote when it is on the agenda.

City Attorney Adkinson told the Council if they are not willing to go above appraised value then the city is wasting their time and should stop the process.

Councilwoman Haffner said she was not against going above appraised value because it will bring the city more on the backend.

City Attorney Adkinson told the Council if they approved the property purchase, for example, with 700 (Seven Hundred) ERCs, which is approximately 5.6-million-dollars, Mr. Duncan may still say no, and their decision today is not a final action at this point. He said if the Council does not authorize City Manager Simmons to go back to negotiate a number that the city will go above appraisal value within reason then there is simply no way for the city to move forward. He said he regretted an item of this size being an add-on, there's a secondary issue of City Manager Simmons having a Letter of Interest for the defense contractor which has a deadline date. He said the city will give a timely response contingent on acquiring the property and the Council approving authorization above appraised value. He agreed that a special meeting with advertising for this discussion would be very appropriate.

City Manager Simmons stated this meeting, with Council approval, would give permission to start negotiating and hear the Council's feelings on the matter.

Councilwoman Brannon said she was not against paying above appraised value for a piece of property with value, but she wanted to be sure they are careful about how many ERCs would be committed and all other portions of the process to be sure a plant is not built that nobody will ever use. She stressed that ultimately it is money and not just credits and the city should be cautious with each step. She raised concern over previous defense contractors who wanted to relocate here and then backed out, to which City Attorney Adkinson said the city has received a Letter of Interest from the defense contractor. He said the city has not gone this far with any other defense contractors. He asked if the Council would be willing to authorize City Manager Simmons to further negotiate and bring back to the Council a revised contract and closing documents for consideration.

Councilman Martin weighed in telling the others he believes the benefits far outweigh the city paying a little more than we probably could or should. He agreed with Councilwoman Brannon that it is money, but it is interest free money and that the landowner is willing to do a swap with the city is a huge benefit. He expressed concern that someone else could step in and offer the landowner more money and the city would be out of luck. He said he did not see how the city could not purchase the land.

Bearing relocates to Freeport, it creates an opportunity to recruit their subcontractors and suppliers to bring other similar businesses here and establish something more diversified than tourism. He said this could be the start of a tremendous long-term economic engine for diversification for good jobs. He said American Metal Bearing has many years of contracts lined up for continued growth. He said their California facility is very modern so he believes they will be building a similar facility in Freeport. He praised everyone's efforts to date and offered to answer questions.

Councilman Farris showed appreciation for Mr. Imfeld's involvement. He said this is an opportunity to have something good come to the City of Freeport that will benefit everybody. He expressed how proud he is of the city and that people are looking at Freeport to relocate to which could be just the beginning. He said he wants to see our kids be able to graduate from college and come back to the city to live and have families. He expressed interest in making a motion to avoid missing the deadline.

Councilwoman Brannon said she did not have an issue negotiating with American Metal Bearing to give them the property, the taps and expedited permitting but it must be contingent on them promising a certain number of jobs, etc. City Attorney Adkinson replied that would part of a standardized reply to ask for things of that nature. He said if the Council was agreeable the city could choose to allow the Walton County Economic Development Alliance to conduct private, confidential negotiations under Florida Law and bring it back to the Council.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve a response to the American Metal Bearing Letter of Interest, to reciprocate interest with an offer contingent on the city acquiring the property and adequate development assurances.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

3. City Manager Simmons gave the following updates:

He thanked the Council and Mayor Barley for attending the 331 South Sewer Project groundbreaking event along with all their work and relationship building with the Walton County Commissioners to accomplish how far this project has come.

City Manager Simmons said he has been meeting with officials and engineers to discuss potential road improvements throughout the city.

- The existing reuse system only needs the monitoring wall completion report. With the new treatment plant, they were relocating the monitoring well and DEP is waiting for those completions reports that should hopefully be completed this week so an inspection can be scheduled.
- 331 North Sewer Project has a meeting scheduled next week with all the utility providers in the area. We will be issuing a notice to proceed, and work should be able to begin after Thanksgiving.
- RBM Construction will be starting work on the Barrier-Free Park on November 15, 2021.

City Manager Simmons told the Council they will be posting photographic updates regularly to the city website and social media.

10. Old Business

11. New Business

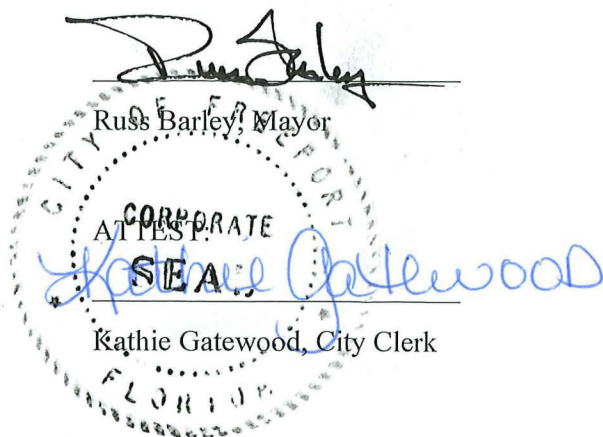
- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Haffner
- e. Councilman Hope
- f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

Tim Ard, Project Chair for the Freeport Veterans Memorial, addressed the Council giving them a summary of this year's upcoming Veteran's Day Ceremony itinerary at Freeport's Memorial Park. He thanked Parks and Recreation Director Travis Digges and his crew for helping to beautify the park for the event. He also thanked Tom and Barbara Tillman for their dedication to the park. He informed the Council the Memorial Park will be debt-free after November's fundraising golf tournament and any monies left over will help to offer up to eight scholarships countywide to students who intend to further their careers in military service.

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.





City of Freeport

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 19, 2021,
4:00 PM Council Chambers, Freeport
City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. 331 Land Purchase

City Attorney Adkinson told the Council they were bringing back the proposed purchase of 85-acres from Mr. Doug Duncan after they approved negotiating Equitable Residential Credits (ERCs) as part of the deal rather than alternatives and to look at exceeding the appraised value. He said after discussions, they learned Mr. Duncan is not prepared to come down to a number that would meet the average between two appraisals, and City Manager Simmons will present the Council with a number, which the city would purchase the property with in exchange for creating a capacity ledger and no dollars would change hands from the city to the landowner. He said the landowner would receive actual fully invested ERCs in the city system for water and sewer. He informed the Council the number discussed is for 700 (Seven Hundred) ERCs which comes out to just under 0.2 MGD for a total amount of roughly 5.685-million-dollars. He said Dewberry Engineer Cliff Knauer was present to discuss any questions or concerns the Council may have. City Attorney Adkinson said Dewberry completed a site analysis and the property is suitable for rapid craft infiltration basins for the RIBS and would allow the city to go far above that on the site. He told the Council

Moved by: Councilman Martin
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve an 85-acre land purchase with 700-ERCs, fully vested

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

Councilman Farris thanked City Manager Simmons, City Attorney Adkinson and everyone involved for being proactive. Councilman Hope echoed the comment.

Mayor Barley thanked Cliff Knauer and Tim Parsons of Liberty Partners for their efforts.

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:21 PM.



Russ Barley, Mayor





City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2021, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman Tripp Hope, Councilman Mark Martin, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, Parks Director Travis Digges, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Recognition of Guests

a. Mayor Barley recognized Ernie Godwin, retiring City of Freeport employee, for his 13 years of service. Mayor Barley, Councilmembers and City Manager Simmons thanked him for dedication, hard work, and wished him well in his retirement.

b. Mayor Barley welcomed the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce 2021/2022 Leadership Walton Class to the meeting and thanked them for their willingness to learn about government.

4. Request for Placement on the City Council Agenda

City Attorney Adkinson told the Council the requesting party, Debbie Roberts, former employee, requested to be removed from the agenda.

(Continued on next page)

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Regular Council Meeting Minutes - November 9, 2021
- c. Special Council Meeting Minutes - November 19, 2021
- d. Revenue and Expenditure Report for year ended September 30, 2021
- e. Revenue and Expenditure Report for month ending October 31, 2021

6. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

8. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Planning Director Hughes-Neel – Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Grant

9. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the Agenda with the specified additions as presented.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

(Continued on next page)

10. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer
- c. Parks
- d. City Manager

1. City Manager Simmons told the Council the School Superintendent reached out to him requesting a letter of support from the City Council for the Freeport High School Aquaculture Center. Councilman Hope explained the program noting it provides a new discipline of science that leads to many job opportunities for students and allows them to earn certifications to help with employment placement.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve a City Council Letter of Support for the Freeport High School Aquaculture Center.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

A copy of the Letter of Support can be viewed in the City Clerk's office.

2. City Manager Simmons requested a much-needed additional person for the Utility Billing Department. He stated the department is currently budgeted for four people and requested approval for a fifth person to be hired. He said if approved, Finance Officer Bowers will present the Council with a Budget Amendment at a January 2022 meeting. Councilman Hope commented with the growth of the city an additional person is needed to and will help the department with efficiency.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the hiring of a fifth person for the Utility Billing Department.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

(Continued on next page)

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

3. City Manager Simmons asked the Council for permission to offer approximately 11-acres of land to American Metal Bearing (AMB) in California as an incentive to persuade the company to relocate to Freeport. He reminded the Council he would bring any agreement back to them for final approval. City Attorney Adkinson said an offering of the 11-acres would be contingent upon AMB committing to a certain number and level of jobs and payrates to the City of Freeport.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve City Manager Simmons to offer approximately 11-acres of land to American Metal Bearing as part of negotiations contingent upon AMB committing to a certain number and level of jobs and payrates. City Council will give final approval of negotiations.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

City Manager Simmons requested permission to travel to the American Metal Bearing plant in California to see how their business system operates and report findings back to the Council. He noted the trip would likely be the first week of January.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve City Manager Simmons and one elected official to travel to the American Metal Bearing Company plant in California.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

(Continued on next page)

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

4. City Manager Simmons updated the Council regarding the 6.312-million-dollar McDaniels Fishcamp grant telling them he has researched and found property that could house a vacuum station. He said the parcel owners are willing to work with the city and he would be bringing a proposal to the Council soon. He thanked the Council for understanding the growth of Freeport and what they have done to approve projects. He said in 2021-2022 Freeport will have installed over 40-million-dollars of water/sewer infrastructure, which is amazing for a city this size.

City Clerk Note: Order of items above differ from the agenda.

e. City Clerk

1. City Clerk Gatewood informed the Council the 2022 City Council meeting dates have been added to the city website.

f. Finance

1. Finance Officer Bowers requested approval to move Lourdes Johnson from Utility Lead Billing Clerk at \$16.00 per hour to Utility Billing Manager at the same rate as the previous manager, which starts at \$43,000 a year. She also requested approval to move Yvonne Holleran from Utility Billing Clerk at \$13.00 an hour to Utility Lead Billing Clerk at \$15.00 per hour. City Manager Simmons commended Lourdes Johnson, Yvonne Holleran and Sara Bowers for stepping up in a time of need and ensuring the department is well run. Councilman Hope commented he loved the idea of promoting within to reward employees for loyalty.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve to move Lourdes Johnson from Lead Billing Clerk at \$16.00 per hour to Utility Billing Manager at the same rate as the previous manager, which starts at \$43,000 a year and move Yvonne Holleran from Utility Billing Clerk at \$13.00 an hour to Utility Lead Billing Clerk at \$15.00 per hour.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

(Continued on next page)

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

2. Finance Officer Bowers asked the Council for approval for Employee Uniform Allowance and presented a list of employees who were eligible.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve to Employee Uniform Allowance for eligible employees.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

A copy of the eligible employees for the Employee Uniform Allowance is available to view in the City Clerk's office.

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. Owls Head Farms Re-Zoning - Planning Director Hughes-Neel advised the Council on the proposed rezoning for a portion of the Owl's Head Project, located just south of the Farmer's Market. She said the land is 23-plus acres and currently zoned C-1 Commercial, which allows all general commercial uses and four stories of 50 feet and the landowners prefer to use it for multi-family use in that location, which would be a maximum of 14 units per acre and a height limitation of three stories or 45 feet. She explained that with C-1 zoning if you have multi-family you are required to put commercial on the bottom floor and the landowners do not wish to put commercial on the bottom floor. She stated they received comments from Eglin Air Force Base. She explained in 2014 the city adopted the required statutory language regarding military installations which allows Eglin to sit as a non-voting ex officio member of Freeport's Planning Board. She further commented this also allows them to review land use changes and development projects as

(Continued on next page)

they appear before the Planning Board. She said Eglin submitted a large packet about the current joint land use project in their military overlay zones. She informed the Council representatives Jack Kiger and Scott Davidson both of Eglin Air Force Base were present to speak; as well as representatives from the rezoning applicant Owl's Head: Jim Martelli, Shelton Stone and Doug Duncan.

Jim Martelli of Owl's Head gave a presentation with renderings to the Council regarding the property and their intended use for rezoning and offered to answer any questions they may have. Councilman Hope asked if the multi-family units would be to rent, own or both, to which Mr. Martelli replied to rent. Councilman Martin asked if they would install good windows, to which Mr. Martelli replied they would. Councilman Farris asked what the timeframe would be for completion from the start to which Mr. Martelli replied approximately one and a half years. City Manager Simmons commented this has been a long time coming for Mr. Duncan and the City has been watching him in this process for a while and we are glad he is finally getting there.

Jack Kiger, Eglin Air Force Base representative reminded the Council that Eglin submitted a robust set of comments for consideration and offered to answer any questions. He told the Council Eglin's main concern is the land is in a military training route and these routes are specifically set aside by the FAA for hazardous military activities and is a risk when introducing higher density underneath this corridor. He noted the Air Force would find it helpful to have the opportunity to work with developers with rezoning requests to make recommendations including technical ones and perhaps a cap on density that would not hinder the development but would provide a greater degree of compatibility.

Planning Director Hughes-Neel told the Council staff is recommending to approve the project as presented and to approve first reading of the proposed zoning ordinance to allow staff to advertise for the second reading.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the Owl's Head project as presented and to hold first reading of the proposed zoning ordinance.

Mayor Barley called for public comment. Scott Davidson, Eglin Air Force Base representative asked provide comment in mid-roll call. He told the Council approving this rezoning would have a mission impact for the Air Force. Councilwoman Haffner asked City Attorney Adkinson what the procedure was, to which he replied unless the Councilmembers who made the first and second motion rescind their motion, they can proceed. Councilwoman Haffner asked if it could be opened back up for discussion, to which City Attorney Adkinson replied only among Councilmembers. Councilman Martin told Mr. Davidson to relay to Eglin Air Force Base the need for them to become more developer friendly because Freeport is developing, and it is unfair to ask the city not to

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when there are high-rise buildings along the coastline. He expressed he understands the Air Force has a mission but there needs to be a way to coexist. He said we need more housing in Freeport. Roll call once again resumed.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

Planning Director Hughes-Neel held first reading for the ordinance by title into record:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING MAP SERIES INCLUDED BY REFERENCE IN ARTICLE 3 OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, SPECIFICALLY THE PARCEL IDENTIFIED WITH PROPERTY REFERENCE NUMBERS 26-1N-19-17000-001-0000 CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY 23.32 ACRES MORE OR LESS AND DESCRIBED BY THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION CONTAINED IN SECTION 1 BELOW AMENDING THE ZONING ASSIGNMENT AND ASSIGNING ZONING FROM C-1 GENERAL COMMERCIAL TO R-3 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL.

2. Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Council with the Hammock Oaks Estates Phase II Final Plat and asked for approval and that Councilmembers sign it after the meeting adjourns.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the final plat for Hammock Oaks Estates Phase II

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

3. Re-Use Verbiage for the Development Process - Planning Director Hughes-Neel explained the city's reuse facilities at the wastewater treatment plant, the technology there is almost up and running and there will be opportunities based on several factors where developers might be able to participate in

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using reuse water for landscaping of their common areas among other things. She said after discussions with City Manager Simmons and engineering they felt as the city gets close to completing reuse technology it would be a good idea for staff to inform the public regarding reuse opportunities during the development process. She told the Council they came up with standardized language to use during the pre-application process and that they could also use during the development process. She asked for Council approval to utilize the language for developer meetings.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve Re-Use Verbiage for the Development Process

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried

4. Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Grant - Planning Director Hughes-Neel reminded the Council she applied for the Safe Routes to School grant in 2020 for the remainder of the path on Business 331 from Village Apartments to the high school. She said it took a long time, but they have received feedback on their application. She explained that while the application is fine, the grant program only has seven-million dollars and Freeport's project is one-million dollars. The city was requested to divide the project into two or three projects and phasing the remainder improvements, so they are not awarding one-seventh of the money they have for the entire state to one project. She requested approval to work with Dewberry to divide the remaining phase into several phases and resubmit the project before the extended deadline of January 31, 2022. Councilman Farris expressed the importance of getting the sidewalk constructed to help parents and children off the road while walking to and from school.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve Planning Director Hughes-Neel to work with Dewberry to divide the remaining phase of the Safe Routes to Schools project into several phases for grant application resubmittal.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

(Continued on next page)

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried

i. Legal

1. Proposed Water and Sewer Capacity Fees and Rates Ordinance – second reading and Resolution to increase Utility Rates.

City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council for the second reading and public hearing for adoption of the revised capacity fees, that they made the changes discussed by the Council confirming for the Council and having matched the prior minutes, the new inside municipal limit water capacity fee will be set at \$2,500 up to one-inch meter of water service, outside municipal limits will be \$3,125 for up to one-inch meter of water service, wastewater capacity fees will remain where they were with CPI increases respectively seven-thousand-fifteen-dollars and thirteen cents inside the municipal boundaries and outside municipal boundaries at the amount of eight-thousand-seven-hundred-sixty-eight-dollars and ninety-one cents with a cpi increase due to continuing effect at approximately one percent on October 1st each year at the rate established by the Florida Public Service Commission, the other changes were the allocation of monies to the revenue accounts which would allow 50 -percent of water capacity fee revenue to be placed in the primary operating account rather than 100-percent for the remaining 50-percent going into the reserve account so this time. He requested, after public comment, a motion to hold second reading and to adopt.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To hold second reading and adopt the proposed Water and Sewer Capacity Fees and Rates Ordinance.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

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City Attorney Adkinson held second reading of Ordinance 2021-08:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING, IN PART, ORDINANCE NUMBER 2019-03 AND THEREBY AMENDING, IN PART, CHAPTER 20 “WATER AND SEWERS”, ARTICLE III “RATES AND CHARGES”, DIVISION 2 “CAPACITY FEES”, SECTION 20-197 “CAPACITY FEES FOR DEVELOPMENT, METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINATION” TO PROVIDE FOR NEW FEE AMOUNTS, AND CHAPTER 20 “WATER AND SEWERS”, ARTICLE III “RATES AND CHARGES”, DIVISION 2 “CAPACITY FEES”, SECTION 20-200 “ALLOCATION OF REVENUE GENERATED, RESERVE ACCOUNTS”; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS AND SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Manager Adkinson discussed the previously discussed resolution to increase Utility Rates and asked the Council for a motion authorizing the Mayor to execute the resolution that memorializes the previously adopted rates. Finance Officer Bowers stated if the resolution has an effective date of October 1, 2021, that she needs it today in order to update the system. City Attorney Adkinson advised the resolution would be retroactive. He stated the resolution number would be 2021-08.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the proposed Utility Rates increase resolution.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

2. Needs assessment for wastewater

City Attorney Adkinson told the Council that in a recent Florida Legislature session, House Bill 53 was adopted, which required certain changes to the needs assessments that local governments must conduct. He explained that Freeport was now required to conduct both a stormwater and a wastewater needs assessment and provide a 20-year needs assessment for both stormwater and wastewater in separate documents with five-year phased increments and to update it every five years thereafter to the Walton County Board of County Commissioners by June 30, 2022. He said in turn, the County will compile everything received from cities into one document plus any wastewater or stormwater needs that they oversee and submit it to the state. He said they will have 30

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days from June 30, 2022 to complete this and the state will then in an undefined period of time put every county's needs list together and tell us what everybody in the state needs in the next 20 years. He said because the city is mandated to provide this noting that City Manager Simmons will work with the county on the details. He asked the Council for a motion to authorize City Manager Simmons to task order that out under the Freeport's continuing contract to our engineer to handle wastewater and to proceed with discussion with the county about how the stormwater could be handled and whether or not the restore dollars could offset the cost of the stormwater assessment if they choose to handle that for us.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To authorize the City Manager to task order under the city's continuing contract with our engineer to handle wastewater needs assessment and proceed with discussions with Walton County regarding the handling of stormwater assessment and if restore dollars could offset the stormwater assessment costs if the County handles that assessment.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

3. Hammock Oaks Estates Phase II Cost Estimate for site improvements to be bonded.

City Attorney Adkinson directed the Council to look at the sample document presented in the meeting package, which is a Power of Attorney and Insured Bond form that would be issued on behalf of the developer, specifically D.R. Horton, providing the obligation our code provides that 110% of the cost of improvements must be bonded when we move forward with this transaction. City Engineer Rouchaleau stated he has not received an actual cost from the developer yet. City Attorney Adkinson asked the Council for a motion to authorize the city to accept a bond as soon as Dewberry receives and agrees to an actual cost of improvement amount.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To authorize acceptance of a bond as soon as provided with an actual cost estimate for improvements of 110% and is agreed to by the City Engineer.

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Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

j. Engineering

1. Proposal for 331 South Sewer Project

City Engineer Rouchaleau presented the Council with the proposal for engineering services for the 331 South Sewer Project. He asked the Council for a motion to approve the proposal as presented.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve the proposed 331 South Sewer Project for engineering services.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

A roll call vote was ordered, and the vote was as follows:

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

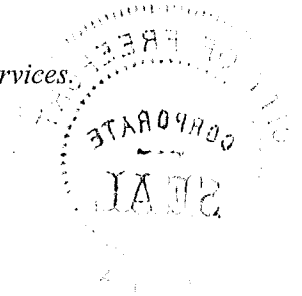
Carried.

11. Old Business

12. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Haffner
- e. Councilman Hope
- f. Councilman Martin

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13. Public Comment

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

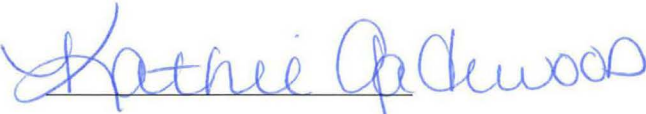
14. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:04 AM.



Russ Barley, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk

