



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

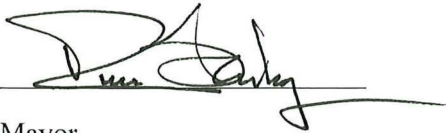
- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Haffner
- e. Councilman Hope
- f. Councilman Martin

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