



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 11, 2022, 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, Sr., 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, and Utility Billing Supervisor Lourdes Johnson

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 and welcomed Liberty Partners and Bill Imfeld of the Walton County Economic Development Alliance to the meeting.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – December 14, 2021
- c. Memo to City Council – Capacity Fees

(Continued on next page)

d. Revenue and Expenditure Report through November 2021

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was 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 Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

8. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Councilwoman Brannon – Appointments to the Planning Board and Recreation Board.

Liberty Partners – 2022 Legislative Session Presentation

9. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

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.

10. Staff Reports

a. Water

(Continued on next page)

b. Sewer

c. Parks

1. Parks & Recreation Director Digges gave the following updates:

The college level football goals have been installed and the drainage for field two is complete. The repainting of the Splashpad has also been completed.

The Barrier-Free Park trails have been flagged and the pavilion has been staked off. He invited the Council to visit the area and provide any feedback they may have for possible changes. The Council thanked him for his hard work.

d. City Manager

1. City Manager Simmons gave the following American Metal Bearing visit update to the Council:

City Manager Simmons told the Council details of his trip to the American Metal Bearing (AMB) plant in California with Walton County Commissioner Boots McCormick and EDA Director Bill Imfeld. He explained they took a tour of the plant and saw how their business operates and what they could offer the county in the way of the economy if they relocated. He said it was exciting and impressive to see equipment he had not seen before and what they were building. He noted AMB told him no other city has taken the time to visit their plant. He said Walton County and Freeport are working hard to bring AMB here and he believes their chances of making that happen are high. He said AMB will be in Walton County in February. He expressed the importance of them working with the local schools for training and internships and how this will allow young adult residents to stay in Freeport with excellent higher paying job opportunities. He said the AMB California plant is just two-and-half acres and the Freeport land offered is 11-acres. He explained the large parcel is important to AMB because they have new technology to implement, and the 11-acres would allow them to expand their business.

Bill Imfeld said the trip was enlightening and they were able to have one-on-one conversations with some of the employees who are looking forward to relocating to Florida. He said they are happy employees and they expressed that some would like to live near the bay or the forest areas, which makes Freeport a good fit. He said the company makes products not only

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for the United States but also for Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada. For product creation, an individual employee, after a one-to-two-year training program, is then able use to take raw materials from start to finish of the product, so it is not like a traditional assembly line. He told the Council should AMB choose to relocate to Northwest Florida that they would approach their subcontractors and vendors to also relocate. He thanked City Manager Simmons for all his work on this project and commended City Attorney Adkinson for his continued efforts to make this successful.

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

1. City of Freeport LSA 2021-01 - 2nd Reading

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented two ordinances as part of the large-scale amendment (LSA) proposed for second reading, one for the amendment and the other for Property Rights as now required by state law. She said staff is recommending to hold second reading and a motion to approve.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

Approval to hold second reading for City of Freeport LSA and Property Rights Ordinances

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 second reading.

Clerk's Note: the above-mentioned ordinances are 2022-01 and 2022-02.

2. Destiny Worship Expansion

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Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Council with the Destiny

Workshop proposed expansion, which she told them was needed due to the church’s rapid growth. She said the Planning Board unanimously approved to recommend the Council approve the project. She asked the Council for a vote to approve the project. Pastor Steve Vaggalis of Destiny Worship summarized the history of the church’s growth and showed appreciation for the city support they have received.

Councilwoman Haffner commented that she has worked for Destiny Worship Center over three years and noted the extensive community work the church has done with charity work such as, a School Backpack and Shoes Program and a Christmas Outreach Program for children in foster care to receive gifts. She said how much of a blessing they have been to not only her family but the community at large.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Farris

To approve the Destiny Worship Center expansion project

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. Carr LSA 2020-21 - 1st Reading

Planning Director Hughes-Neel reminded the Council of the previous annexation of 2,000-plus acres of land for the Carr Family and told them the ordinance presented pertains to that. She said the land will have a mixed zoning designation and the developers will submit specific zoning applications in the future. She told them staff is recommending approval and there was no correspondence received from anyone to oppose it. She noted they meet all requirements of the city comprehensive plan and land development code. She asked the Council for approval to hold first reading.

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Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve first reading for Carr LSA 2020-21 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.

i. Legal

1. City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Sr. asked the Council to give City Manager Simmons approval to schedule an Executive Session meeting for a pending litigation matter.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve City Manager Simmons to schedule an Executive Session meeting for a legal matter.

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. Resolution for FDOT SCOP Municipal South Jackson Roadway Improvements.

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City Engineer Rouchaleau asked the Council to approve a resolution for the FDOT SCOP Municipal South Jackson Roadway Improvements to close out the project.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve a Resolution for the FDOT SCOP Municipal South Jackson Roadway Improvements

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.

Clerk's Note: the above-mentioned resolution is 2022-01.

11. Old Business

12. New Business

1. Cliff Knauer of Dewberry provided the Council with a Community Center update. He presented the Council with a revised site plan. He said the primary changes made were removing some parking spots for landscaping and added double row parking on the east boundary line. He stated they also shifted the building forward to avoid taking our oak trees. He said they will be proposing a 50 by 80 community center with access on the east and west side. He said this update was the first step towards planning efforts and they are also working on sketches of the interior of the community center which he will share with them at a future date. He said the interior will have bathrooms, a kitchen, a large stage area with some seating to be elevated for acoustics.

2. Liberty Partners presented their 2022 legislative session update PowerPoint presentation and report to the Council. In attendance were Jennifer Green, Tim Parsons, and Katie Taff.

Jennifer Green asked the Council for a motion to give Mayor Barley authority to sign an appropriation attestation for submitted projects.

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Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To give authority to Mayor Barley to sign an appropriation attestation for submitted projects.

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.

Clerk's Note: A copy of the above-mentioned Liberty Partners PowerPoint presentation and report can be viewed in the City Clerk's office.

- a. Mayor Russ Barley
- b. Councilwoman Brannon

- 1. Recreation Board and Planning Board appointment changes.

Councilwoman Brannon stated she needed to make two board appointment changes. She requested to move Racyne Digges from the Recreation Board to the Planning Board.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve moving Racyne Digges from the Recreation Board to the Planning Board.

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.

Councilwoman Brannon requested to appoint Larry Cato to the Recreation Board.

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Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To approve the appointment of Larry Cato to the Recreation Board.

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.

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

13. Public Comment

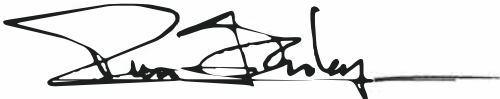
Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

14. Adjournment

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

Clerk's Note: An audio copy of this meeting is available on the city's website.

Minutes prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on January 27, 2022.



Russ Barley, Mayor

ATTEST:


Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk



The seal is circular with a dotted border. The text inside the seal reads: "CITY OF FREEPORT" at the top, "CORPORATE SEAL" in the center, and "FLORIDA" at the bottom.