



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 14, 2022, 9:00 AM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

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

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Planning Intern Summer Ammirata-Mall, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, Billing Supervisor Lourdes Johnson, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Wastewater Treatment Supervisor Paul Johnson, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Parks & Recreation Director Travis Digges, and City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau

City Clerk's Note: Councilman Hope with absent with notice. The order of some items during the meeting differed from the posted agenda.

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. 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 welcomed Ryan Messer, candidate for Walton County Supervisor of Elections, for attending the meeting. Walton County Commissioner Boots McCormick was also in attendance.

Mayor Barley also welcomed City of Freeport employee Barbara Moore and announced she was nominated by the employees to be Employee of the (second) Quarter. Mrs. Moore was presented with an award certificate and gift card.

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4. Consent Agenda

a. Bills

b. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – May 26, 2022

5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

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

Carried.

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Mayor Barley asked the Council for a motion to move Finance before the City Manager report.

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions/Changes

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the Agenda change to allow for Finance to be presented before the City Manager report.

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

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

Carried.

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9. Staff Reports

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

1. Freeport Football and Cheer

Parks and Recreation Director Digges asked for a motion to waive fees for Freeport Football and Cheer for field usage, concession stand use and light usage for their upcoming season.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Mayor Barley called for public comment or further Council discussion and there was none.

To waive Regional Sports Complex field usage, concession stand use, and light use rental fees for Freeport Football and Cheer for the 2022 season.

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

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

Carried.

- d. Finance

1. Audited Financial Statements

Finance Director Bowers introduced Adam Nelson from the accounting firm Warren Averett. He explained that they performed the City's Financial Statement Audit and was available to answer questions after giving an overview of the results. He stated there were no reportable matters and the City received the highest level of assurance available. He thanked Finance Officer Bowers and staff for their professionalism and courteousness.

City Clerk Note: A copy of the above-mentioned audit is available to view in the City Clerk's office and has been posted on the city website.

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

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1. Sewer Capacity Fees

Finance Director Bowers requested to transfer 4-million-dollars of sewer capacity fee funds to the Sewer Operating Account which will allow sewer to meet its obligations through the end of this fiscal year.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment there was none.

To approve transferring 4-million-dollars of sewer capacity fee funds to the Sewer Operating Account.

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

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilwoman Brannon: aye

Councilwoman Haffner: aye

Councilman Martin: aye

Carried.

e. City Manager

1. Transportation Survey

City Manager Simmons told the Council he was asking for approval to engage with Walton County and local cities to talk about a Transportation Study. He said the Transportation Board was coming along great and Councilman Martin has been representing Freeport very well. He explained that a Transportation Study regardless so he wanted to start conversations about a county-wide study now which include discussions about cost sharing which would be brought back to the Council later.

Councilwoman Haffner expressed that this was a great idea and the other Council Members agreed.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment or further Council discussion and there was none.

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To approve City Manager Simmons to coordinate with local governments regarding a county-wide Transportation Study and present the results to the Council at a later date.

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

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

Carried.

f. City Clerk

1. City Telephones

City Clerk Gatewood advised the Council the City has had continual issues for over six months in all departments with the Digium phones they use. She explained that the current bill is approximately \$1,100.00 a month and the City is in a month-to-month contract. She asked the City IT consultants NetData for a recommendation for another company. She introduced Jonathan Howell from NetData to speak about the RingCentral proposal.

Mr. Howell described the features of the phone service including that it has an option to use an app on a cellphone which would eliminate employees from having to use two cellphones (one for work and one for personal use). City Clerk Gatewood told the Council that RingCentral has all of the features the City needs; such as, recording lines, capturing data and storing/archiving it. Mr. Howell added that RingCentral would reduce the number of ports required for operation, hence enhancing security. He explained the RingCentral application would also help if there were emergency situations such as a hurricane and employees could not come to City Hall. Employees would be able to access their work phones through an application.

Councilwoman Haffner mentioned the proposed contract would be for three years and asked City Attorney Adkinson if he had reviewed it. City Attorney Adkinson said he had not reviewed the entire contract and said before a finalized contract would be brought in front of the Council that they should discuss it. He said the contract is for three years and if the Council felt uncomfortable with that, they could discuss an early-out clause within six months if the City had an issue

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Councilwoman Haffner said she liked the features of the system but is cautious about long term contracts and believes contracts should have a termination clause in case something goes wrong. She asked Mr. Howell if there was an upfront equipment cost, to which he replied yes and would have to come back with those amounts.

Councilwoman Brannon liked the idea of being able to use a personal phone and putting an application on it for the city phone number so employees do not have to carry two phones. She inquired about the cost of the city cell phones, to which City Clerk Gatewood replied approximately \$2,000.00 a month. City Clerk Gatewood stated the RingCentral system would archive all the data so in the event of litigation data would be gathered from RingCentral and not from the personal phone.

Mr. Howell said the default for archiving with RingCentral is 90 days but with the proposed plan data can be downloaded and archived for as long as the city wants.

Councilwoman Haffner asked City Attorney Adkinson if an employee uses the RingCentral application and information is needed, will the application keep someone from digging through someone's personal phone. City Attorney Adkinson replied that there's nothing stopping someone from issuing a subpoena if there is a reason to believe someone used their personal phone for official city business but if someone certifies they did not and the City provides all of the records showing phone calls went through the application you should be fine.

City Attorney Adkinson said he did not need a motion but did need consensus of the Council to continue moving forward to bring a finalized proposal back to the Council. He stated it would not be the next regularly scheduled meeting.

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. School District Presentation/School Needs

Planning Director Hughes-Neel asked the Council for a motion to move this item to the June 23, 2022 Regular Council Meeting.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Mayor Barley called for public comment or further Council discussion and there was none.

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To approve moving School District Presentation/School Needs item to the June 23, 2022 Regular Council Meeting.

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

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

Carried.

2. Steamboat Landing Final Plat

Planning Director Hughes-Neel asked the Council for approval of the Steamboat Landing Final Plat. She also requested, if approved, for all Council Members to sign the document after the meeting adjourned.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment or further Council discussion and there was none.

To approve the Freeport Steamboat Landing Final Plat as presented.

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

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

Carried.

3. Land Development Code Revisions/1st Reading of Ordinance

Planning Director Hughes-Neel explained the proposed Land Development Code Revisions to the Council. She stated that she received technical standard feedback the morning of this meeting from various sources and provided a copy to each Council Member and the City Clerk.

City Engineer Rouchaleau spoke about the technical standards of the revision and said he had not read the feedback the Planning Director had received yet.

Councilwoman Brannon thanked both for their work on the revision but said she did not want to pass the ordinance without reading the technical standards

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feedback. Councilwoman Haffner agreed and asked City Attorney Adkinson if they must table the entire ordinance, to which he said yes so proper advertising can occur.

City Clerk's Note: A copy of the above-mentioned proposed ordinance and feedback received is available to view in the City Clerk's office.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment.

Jay Odom, developer, asked the Council to consider costs when reviewing the ordinance to be sure the changes will not become a financial burden for what ultimately the home buyer will have to pay.

To approve moving the Land Development Code Revisions/1st Reading of Ordinance to the next regularly scheduled council meeting.

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

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

Carried.

- i. Legal
- j. Engineering

10. Old Business

11. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. FLC Annual Conference – Mayor Barley informed the Council of the Florida League of Cities Annual Conference taking place August 11-13, 2022 in Hollywood, Florida. He requested if any Council Member wanted to attend to speak with City Clerk Gatewood so she could make their arrangements.

- b. Councilwoman Brannon
- c. Councilman Farris
- d. Councilwoman Haffner

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- e. Councilman Hope
- f. Councilman Martin

12. Public Comment

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

13. Adjournment

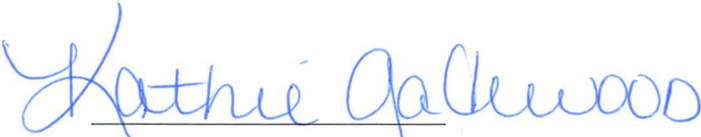
Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Minutes were prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on June 23, 2022.



Russ Barley, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk

