



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 23, 2022, 6:30 PM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

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

Staff Members Present: City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Planning Technician Samantha Graves, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, Billing Supervisor Lourdes Johnson, Wastewater Treatment Supervisor Paul Johnson, Parks & Recreation Director Travis Digges, and City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau.

City Clerk Note: City Manager Simmons was absent with notice.

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. 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. State of the City Address

Mayor Barley gave the State of the City Address to the City Council and meeting attendees.

City Clerk Note: A copy of the 2022 State of the City Address can be found on the city website in the Mayor & City Council section under Mayor Barley.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – June 14, 2022
- c. Revenue Expenditure Reports through May 2022

(Continued on next page)

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: Councilman Hope

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 Hope	aye
Councilman Martin	aye

Carried.

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

1. Planning Director – State Planning Conference

8. 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
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Hope	aye
Councilman Martin	aye

Carried.

9. Staff Reports

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

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- d. City Manager
- e. City Clerk

1. City Server

City Clerk Gatewood explained to the Council that one of the rented city servers has reached its end-of-life and needs to be replaced. She directed the Council to the three written quotes to purchase a server in the meeting package. Councilwoman Haffner asked who would maintain the server, to which City Clerk Gatewood replied NetData, the city IT company. She advised the Council that purchasing a server would eliminate past rental maintenance contracts and their associated costs. City Clerk Gatewood said staff recommended the lowest of the quotes, which was written by NetData in the amount of \$10,212.00.

Mayor Barley asked for public comment and there was none.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the purchase of a server in the amount of \$10,212.00 from NetData.

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

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

Carried.

- f. Finance

1. Budget Workshops

Finance Officer Bowers asked the Council to approve the first Budget Workshop for July 14, 2022, at 5:00pm.

Mayor Barley asked for public comment and there was none.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the first Budget Workshop meeting for July 14, 2022, at 5:00pm.

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

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

Carried.

- g. Billing
- h. Planning

1. Brannon Acres Mixed Use PDP

City Attorney Adkinson advised that Councilwoman Brannon has recused herself from the Brannon Acres Mixed Use PDP matter pursuant to Florida Law because there is a conflict as she is related to the party making the project request.

City Clerk Note: A copy of the recusal form 8B completed by Councilwoman Brannon is attached to the end of this document.

Planning Director Hughes-Neel explained that the proposed development is located at 95 Brannon Drive. She explained that its 17.93 acres for a development of mixed use which includes 21,242 square feet of commercial space, office retail space, a restaurant with a drive-through and eighty (80) multifamily units. She said there was no variance request for the project which is very unusual. She said the planning department received one reply letter from a nearby property owner, Mr. John Blackwood, who lives in the adjoining subdivision who expressed concern at the planning board meeting about adequate buffering. She told the Council that Mr. Scott Jenkins, the project owner agent working on the project was present if needed to address the residents concern and provide an update of changes to the project to provide adequate buffering. She further stated that at the last planning board meeting the project passed by unanimous vote.

Scott Jenkins told the Council the project is on 17.93 acres and the owners gave them a lot of latitude to do things to not max the site out. He said the project is well below the commercial densities and has more open space than is required. He said there were a few nearby residents that attended the planning board meeting which resulted in good, positive discussions that alleviated their concerns regarding buffers. He let the Council know there is a 50-foot buffer on the south side of the property and natural buffers on both sides that can act as wildlife corridors but also buffer from the neighbors about 70-feet and 60-feet width on either side.

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Councilwoman Haffner thanked Mr. Jenkins for the extra buffers and space. She commented that this was a quality project with no variances being requested and she is 100% in favor of it.

Mayor Barley asked for public comment and there was none.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the Brannon Acres Mixed Use PDP development as presented

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

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

Carried.

2. Scenic Walton Presentation – Leigh Moore

Leigh Moore, Executive Director of Scenic Walton gave a presentation to the Council explaining how their organization works and how it would be beneficial to the city to collaborate with them.

Councilman Farris expressed how he thought it would be a great idea to collaborate with the organization. City Attorney Adkinson advised that a motion was needed to collaborate on future projects.

City Clerk Note: A copy of the above-mentioned presentation can be found on the city website in the June 23, 2022 meeting package.

Mayor Barley asked for public comment and there was none.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve collaboration with Scenic Walton on future projects.

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

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

Carried.

3. Walton County School District – School Needs

Jill Smith, Director of Facilities and Maintenance and Michelle Doggett, School District Facilities Planner for Walton County School District gave a presentation of the current state and future of Walton County Schools as it pertains to the City of Freeport. They reminded the Council of a component of the interlocal agreement with the city for collaboration in asking developers for viable and suitable land donations for future school sites to serve the community with so much growth.

City Clerk Note: A copy of the above-mentioned presentation is available in the City Clerk's Office.

3. APA Florida Chapter Planning Conference

Planning Director Hughes-Neel requested a motion to approve her attendance at the APA Florida Chapter Conference in Orlando, Florida in October. She informed the Council that her travel budget would cover the entire expense.

Mayor Barley asked for public comment and there was none.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve Planning Director Hughes-Neel attendance at the 2022 APA Florida Chapter Conference in Orlando, Florida in October.

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

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

Carried.

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4. Sister City Event

Planning Director Hughes-Neel told the Council she received an invitation from the city's sister city to attend and enjoy their Heritage Day event on September 10, 2022, from 10:00am to 4:00pm. She recalled her past attendance and positive interactions. She invited the Council to also attend this year's event.

i. Legal

1. American Metal Bearing Update

City Attorney Adkinson updated the Council regarding the American Metal Bearing Company relocation to Freeport. He said after trying to offer the company the property at a discounted rate of exchange for jobs. He said based on discussions with Space Florida it appears Space Florida may be the partner interest in acquiring the property or arranging a land lease on the property which will likely put the city on a slightly different trajectory. He explained that if Space Florida is interested in being the leasehold interest in the property the city would have to partner with an executive agency with the state to help facilitate it. If this were to happen, Space Florida would then become involved in financing the construction building. He let the Council know there are upcoming meetings in July to keep this moving forward and he would bring any updates to the Council.

j. Engineering

10. Old Business

11. New Business

a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. City Manager Position

Mayor Barley told the Council he spoke with City Manager Simmons prior to the meeting, and he could not be present. He reminded the Council that we have been in the process of finding a City Manager replacement and have had three interviews with applicants to date. He asked the Council if they would like to discuss the position opening.

Councilwoman Brannon said of the three applicants that one stood out, which was Mark Martin. She expressed that she believed Mr. Martin would do the best job and could step right in where Charlie Simmons left off. She made a motion to hire Mark Martin.

Councilman Farris agreed with Councilwoman Brannon stating he was torn between the applicants, but Mark Martin had local government experience and

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knows the city’s existing projects and it would be seamless to have him step in. Councilwoman Haffner also said she was torn between the candidates but ultimately Mark Martin because he has local government experience, and she would vote for him. Councilman Hope agreed with the other Council Members.

City Attorney Adkinson reminded the Council of the employment agreement he drafted for the hiring of Charlie Simmons and noted he will work with Mayor Barley to negotiate with Mark Martin and bring it back to the next regular council meeting. He explained that Mark Martin, according to the city charter, will vote on all matters until he is officially replaced unless there is a conflict of interest. He encouraged the Council and Mayor to bring back to the next council meeting a nomination to replace Councilman Martin.

Mayor Barley asked for public comment and there was none.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve hiring Mark Martin as City Manager.

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

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

Carried.

City Clerk Note: A copy of the recusal form 8B completed by Councilman Martin is attached to the end of this document.

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

12. Public Comment

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

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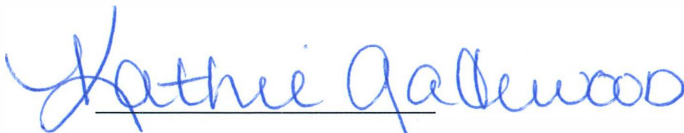
13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Minutes were prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on August 25, 2022.


Russ Barley, Mayor

ATTEST:


Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk



APPOINTED OFFICERS (continued)

- A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency.
- The form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

IF YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION EXCEPT BY DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING:

- You must disclose orally the nature of your conflict in the measure before participating.
- You must complete the form and file it within 15 days after the vote occurs with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who must incorporate the form in the minutes. A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency, and the form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

DISCLOSURE OF LOCAL OFFICER'S INTEREST

I, Elizabeth Brannon, hereby disclose that on June 23, 20 22 :

(a) A measure came or will come before my agency which (check one or more)

- inured to my special private gain or loss;
- inured to the special gain or loss of my business associate, _____ ;
- inured to the special gain or loss of my relative, Laurela Brannon (mother) ;
- inured to the special gain or loss of _____, by whom I am retained; or
- inured to the special gain or loss of _____, which is the parent subsidiary, or sibling organization or subsidiary of a principal which has retained me.

(b) The measure before my agency and the nature of my conflicting interest in the measure is as follows:

If disclosure of specific information would violate confidentiality or privilege pursuant to law or rules governing attorneys, a public officer, who is also an attorney, may comply with the disclosure requirements of this section by disclosing the nature of the interest in such a way as to provide the public with notice of the conflict.

6/28/2022

Date Filed



Signature

NOTICE: UNDER PROVISIONS OF FLORIDA STATUTES §112.317, A FAILURE TO MAKE ANY REQUIRED DISCLOSURE CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR AND MAY BE PUNISHED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: IMPEACHMENT, REMOVAL OR SUSPENSION FROM OFFICE OR EMPLOYMENT, DEMOTION, REDUCTION IN SALARY, REPRIMAND, OR A CIVIL PENALTY NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000.

<p>STATE OF CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDS ACT</p>	
<p>Requester Name: _____</p>	<p>Requester Address: _____</p>
<p>Requester Phone: _____</p>	<p>Requester Email: _____</p>
<p>Requester Title: _____</p>	<p>Requester Organization: _____</p>
<p>Requester Signature: _____</p>	<p>Requester Date: _____</p>

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
 PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDS ACT

Requester Name: _____

Requester Address: _____

Requester Phone: _____

Requester Email: _____

Requester Title: _____

Requester Organization: _____

Requester Signature: _____

Requester Date: _____

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
 PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDS ACT

Requester Name: _____

Requester Address: _____

Requester Phone: _____

Requester Email: _____

Requester Title: _____

Requester Organization: _____

Requester Signature: _____

Requester Date: _____

* * * * *

ELECTED OFFICERS:

In addition to abstaining from voting in the situations described above, you must disclose the conflict:

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN by publicly stating to the assembly the nature of your interest in the measure on which you are abstaining from voting; *and*

WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE VOTE OCCURS by completing and filing this form with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who should incorporate the form in the minutes.

* * * * *

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Although you must abstain from voting in the situations described above, you are not prohibited by Section 112.3143 from otherwise participating in these matters. However, you must disclose the nature of the conflict before making any attempt to influence the decision, whether orally or in writing and whether made by you or at your direction.

IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION PRIOR TO THE MEETING AT WHICH THE VOTE WILL BE TAKEN:

- You must complete and file this form (before making any attempt to influence the decision) with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who will incorporate the form in the minutes. (Continued on page 2)

APPOINTED OFFICERS (continued)

- A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency.
- The form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

IF YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION EXCEPT BY DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING:

- You must disclose orally the nature of your conflict in the measure before participating.
- You must complete the form and file it within 15 days after the vote occurs with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who must incorporate the form in the minutes. A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency, and the form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

DISCLOSURE OF LOCAL OFFICER'S INTEREST

I, Mark Martin, hereby disclose that on June 23, 20 22 :

(a) A measure came or will come before my agency which (check one or more)

- inured to my special private gain or loss;
- inured to the special gain or loss of my business associate, _____ ;
- inured to the special gain or loss of my relative, _____ ;
- inured to the special gain or loss of _____, by whom I am retained; or
- inured to the special gain or loss of _____, which is the parent subsidiary, or sibling organization or subsidiary of a principal which has retained me.

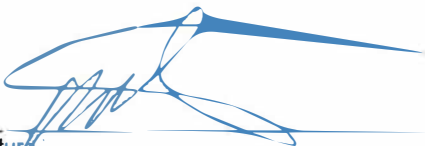
(b) The measure before my agency and the nature of my conflicting interest in the measure is as follows:

I was an applicant for the position of City Manager.

If disclosure of specific information would violate confidentiality or privilege pursuant to law or rules governing attorneys, a public officer, who is also an attorney, may comply with the disclosure requirements of this section by disclosing the nature of the interest in such a way as to provide the public with notice of the conflict.

6/24/2022

Date Filed



Signature

NOTICE: UNDER PROVISIONS OF FLORIDA STATUTES §112.317, A FAILURE TO MAKE ANY REQUIRED DISCLOSURE CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR AND MAY BE PUNISHED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: IMPEACHMENT, REMOVAL OR SUSPENSION FROM OFFICE OR EMPLOYMENT, DEMOTION, REDUCTION IN SALARY, REPRIMAND, OR A CIVIL PENALTY NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000.