



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2022, 6:30 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, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Wastewater Treatment Supervisor Paul Johnson, and 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. Recognition of Guests

Mayor Barley welcomed Walton County Commission Danny Glidewell and Liberty Partners to the meeting.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2022
- c. Revenue and Expenditure Report for month ending December 31, 2021

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5. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
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 Hope:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Martin:	aye

Carried.

7. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

City Manager Simmons – Utility Disconnect Delay

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

Carried.

9. Staff Reports

- a. Water
- b. Sewer

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c. Parks

1. Freeport Little League

In Parks and Recreation Director Digges absence, City Manager Simmons asked the Council for a motion to waive the Sports Complex fees for the 2022 Freeport Little League season.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To waive Sports Complex fees for the 2022 Freeport Little League season

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.

d. City Manager

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

American Metal Bearing has chosen the City of Freeport for their site relocation. He said AMB will be at the February 8, 2022, Regular Council Meeting to give a presentation to the Council. He explained the city is still in negotiations with AMB, but those items will be worked out shortly. He expressed what a good fit AMB will be for the city and the county. City Manager Simmons asked Commissioner Glidewell to give the Council updates.

Commissioner Glidewell told the Council there were many things the city and the county have been working on together such as the 331 Sewer Project and the Defuniak Springs project north of that. He said once they are complete, it will be difficult to recognize US 331 once the growth begins. He expressed confidence in the Marquis Way extension becoming a reality. He said Walton County working with Freeport and the surrounding cities as started yielding very good results. He commended City Manager Simmons for being a good partner in these cooperative efforts. He said one of the big changes has been with the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), which has been a past challenge. He said this year the county received more money from the TPO than ever before. He

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commended Councilman Martin for his role in helping to achieve that. Councilman Martin noted in the past that the city and county didn't always work together, and he is hopeful that it continues. Councilwoman Brannon thanked Commissioner Glidewell for helping Freeport. She thanked them for working for the city's benefit when in Tallahassee. She commended the Walton County Commission, Charlie, and Councilman Martin for all their efforts.

2. Ratifying Utility Disconnect

City Manager Simmons explained to the Council that due to Billing Department staff illnesses disconnects needed to be delayed by one week. He asked for Council approval to move January 2022 disconnects to Tuesday, February 1, 2022.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve ratifying the January Utility Disconnects until February 1, 2022.

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.

e. City Clerk

1. Change to Personnel Policy – Employment Separation and COVID-19

City Clerk Gatewood asked the Council for motions to approve each Personnel Policy. Councilwoman Haffner asked what type of test PCR was, to which City Clerk Gatewood replied it was a laboratory test. Councilman Farris asked if the policy would deplete employee Paid Time Off (PTO) hours if they filled out the required Leave Request Form. City Clerk Gatewood explained employees would be required to fill out the Leave Request Form initially to use PTO, but once the employee provided written COVID-19 test results showing positive that the PTO hours would be rescinded, and the employee would receive COVID-19 pay instead.

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Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve the Employee COVID-19 Policy as presented.

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 Haffner commented the word “emergency” in the separation policy was vague and said she preferred the policy give the City Manager discretion to approve situations on a case-by-case basis. She asked City Attorney Adkinson for wording guidance, to which he recommended to remove “except in the case of an emergency” and recommended to add, “except when approved by the City Manager upon showing of good cause.”

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the Separation Policy as amended by the Council.

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 told the Council staff will be presenting them with updates to the Employee Policy Handbook soon now that the city has a City Manager.

- f. Finance
 - 1. Budget Amendment

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Finance Officer Bowers asked the Council for a motion to approve the Budget Amendment as presented.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the proposed Budget Amendment.

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.

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. Owls Head Commercial Re-Zoning/2nd Reading- Adoption of Ordinance

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Council with the above-mentioned proposed ordinance and a map showing the area location. She stated her department has not received any correspondence or comments regarding the proposed ordinance. She asked the Council for a motion to hold second reading

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve holding Second Reading of the Owls Head Commercial Re-Zoning Ordinance 2022-03

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:

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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 and 26-1N-19-17000-001-0030 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

Clerk's Note: The above-mentioned map can be viewed in the City Clerk's Office.

i. Legal

1. First Reading – Wright Annexation Ordinance

City Attorney Adkinson told the Council the land being discussed was a small piece of land approximately three-quarters of an acre which is located on US 331 and directly north and across from Riverwalk Boulevard. He asked the Council for a motion to approve first reading.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve holding first reading for the Wright Annexation 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.

City Attorney Adkinson held second reading (Ordinance number to be determined upon second reading):

AN ORDINANCE ANNEXING TO THE TERRITORIAL LIMITS OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, FLORIDA, CERTAIN PROPERTY AND REDEFINING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY FREEPORT, FLORIDA, SO AS TO INCLUDE THEREIN THE PROPERTY ANNEXED HEREIN, IN

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ACCORDANCE WITH THE VOLUNTARY ANNEXATION PROVISIONS OF FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 171.044, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

j. Engineering

City Engineer Rouchaleau gave the following updates. He said the 331 North Sewer Project is going well, noting that Chelco is adding power poles in the area (separate from project). He said the 331 South Sewer Project is moving along well. He presented the Council with some budgeted utility project proposals for approval.

1. CR3280 Water Main Upgrade Phase I Proposal

City Engineer Rouchaleau asked the Council for a motion to approve the CR3280 Water Main Upgrade Phase I Proposal.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the CR3280 Water Main Upgrade Phase I Proposal

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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.

2. 83A West Sewer Improvements Proposal

City Engineer Rouchaleau asked the Council for a motion to approve the 83A West Sewer Improvements Proposal.

Moved by: Councilman Martin

Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve the 83A West Sewer Improvements Proposal

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

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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. Bay Area Sewer Expansion Phase I (McDaniels Fish Camp Area)
Proposal

City Engineer Rouchaleau asked the Council for a motion to approve the Bay Area Sewer Expansion Phase I Proposal.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilman Martin

To approve the Bay Area Sewer Expansion Phase I Proposal

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. 83A West Water Main Improvements – Phase II Proposal

City Engineer Rouchaleau asked the Council for a motion to approve the 83A West Water Main Improvements – Phase II Proposal.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman Hope

To approve the 83A West Water Main Improvements – Phase II Proposal

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

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

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

Carried.

10. Old Business

11. New Business

1. Liberty Partners - Update on 2022 Legislative Appropriations Project Requests

Jennifer Green, Katie Tuff and Tim Parsons of Liberty Partners provided the Council with a legislative session update.

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

1. Master Sidewalk Plan

Councilman Farris expressed the importance of a City Master Sidewalk Plan and said he has been a strong advocate for more sidewalks in Freeport for years. He stressed the need to keep children and families safe on the side of the roads. He told the other Councilmembers he has been working with Planning Director Hughes-Neel, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau and Dewberry Engineer Cliff Knauer on this project and they will be presenting a plan to the Council soon.

- d. Councilwoman Haffner
- 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 7:11 PM.

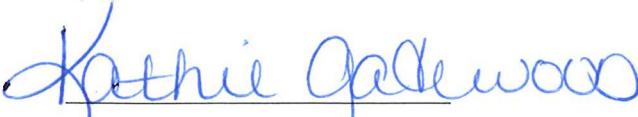
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Minutes were prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on February 8, 2022.



Russ Barley, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk

