



City of Freeport

FIRST PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING MINUTES

September 8, 2022, 5:05 PM

Council Chambers,

Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Farris, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Bud Day, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Manager Mark Martin, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, and Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle

City Clerk Note: Councilman Hope was absent with notice.

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. First Public Budget Discussion

City Attorney Adkinson announced the millage rate of 4.7302 which is greater than the rollback rate of 3.9810 mills by 18.82%. He also announced the budget amount of \$50,825,150.00. He asked for a motion for the tentative milage rate of 4.7302.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

To approve the milage rate 4.7302

Mayor Barley asked for public comment.

Resident Jacqueline Dabney told the Council she opposed to any type of an increase, to which City Attorney Adkinson and Councilwoman Haffner let her know there has been no increase. City Attorney Adkinson further explained that the millage rate for approval was the same as last year. Councilwoman Brannon stated the millage rate has been the same for at least fourteen years. City Attorney Adkinson explained that when the property values increase, the taxes increase. Ms. Dabney suggested the city use the rollback rate due to the increase in property taxes and everyday cost of living.

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Resident David Hewins said he did not have an objection to the millage rate proposed, but he said it would be a huge help to everyone if the city made the financial audit available to everyone. City Attorney Adkinson replied that the information is available on the city website and available through public record request with the City Clerk. Mr. Hewins commented that each year the city expenses grow in a linear way and sooner or later the milage rate will have to increase.

City Clerk Note: Financial Audits are available on the city website under Finance or by Public Record Request through the City Clerk's Office.

Resident Lynn Edwards said she understood the city was not increasing the milage and that property assessment values are increasing and asked who oversaw those increases. City Attorney Adkinson replied the Property Appraiser's Office. She asked when residents are given an opportunity to make a statement about those increases, to which he replied there is a Value Adjustment Board that the city has no connection to that residents can request to appear before their board.

Resident Gerard Amend said he understood the property values have gone up, but he does not understand the statement the city sent residents, to which Councilwoman Haffner said was from the county not the city. Mr. Amend discussed the notice regarding the rollback rate. City Attorney Adkinson explained the rollback rate is 3.9810 and it the city has not had a millage rate below 4.0 in over thirty-five years. Mr. Amend said the tax base has increased and asked where the money is being spent. City Attorney Adkinson said the city did not increase utility costs and have expanded municipal services. Councilwoman Haffner stated the city costs have increased as well but they have not increased utility costs and the materials have increased by 200-300%. Mr. Amend said his property taxes will double. City Attorney Adkinson said he should contact the property appraiser.

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

Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon:	aye
Councilwoman Haffner:	aye
Councilman Day	aye

Carried.

City Attorney Adkinson asked the Council for a motion to accept the budget.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

To accept the 2022-2023 budget for \$50,825,150.00.

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 Day aye

Carried.

City Attorney Adkinson asked the Council for a motion to set the Final Budget Hearing for September 19, 2022 at 5:05pm at City Hall.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

To approve September 19, 2022, at 5:05pm for the Final Budget Meeting at Freeport City Hall.

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

Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon: aye
Councilwoman Haffner: aye
Councilman Day aye

Carried.

3. Adjournment

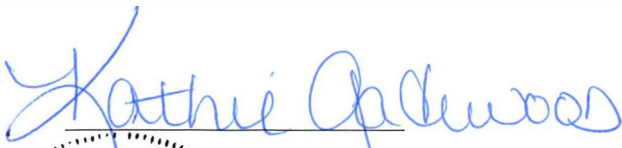
Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

Minutes were prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on September 13, 2022.



Russ Barley, Mayor

ATTEST:



Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk

