



## City of Freeport

### SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 28, 2022, 5:15 PM

Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

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

Staff Members Present: City Manager Charlie Simmons, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, and City Clerk Kathie Gatewood

#### 1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

#### 2. City Manager Position Discussion

Mayor Barley said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the City Manager position and turned the meeting over to City Manager Simmons. City Manager Simmons felt it was appropriate to discuss a timeline regarding when the City Manager position would change hands to a new hire. He told the City Council he still had three things on his list of things to complete and he wanted to see them through. He believed his departure would happen at the end of May; to which Councilman Farris asked him if it would be possible for him to stay through mid to the end of June. City Manager Simmons agreed providing it was still necessary. Councilman Hope expressed that it would take more than one week for someone new to learn the ropes of the position. City Attorney Adkinson noted the previous two hiring searches for City Manager took entirely too long and the city needs to prepare for the budget process very soon. He also commented that Walton County recently used an executive search, and it took about 180 days to complete. He suggested that City Manager Simmons recommend someone to carry about the existing goals of the city. Councilman Hope said transition is tough with some much going on with the city and they should think of someone to step in. Councilwoman Haffner expressed a need to hire someone familiar with Freeport and has connections in the county and Tallahassee. She said she didn't feel an executive search was the best option. City Attorney Adkinson said according to the charter that the City Council can't appoint

someone. Councilman Farris said they need to find someone who can carry out existing goals still look at the broader vision and future of the city. City Manager Simmons suggested that he could bring a job candidate forward; to which Councilman Farris said he would make sure it was the right person. Councilwoman Brannon thanked City Manager Simmons for his service to the city and stated he set the bar high. City Attorney Adkinson said based on the discussion a motion would be appropriate to give City Manager Simmons direction.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon  
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

*To authorize City Manager Simmons to begin looking at and entering discussions as necessary with potential city manager replacements.*

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

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

Carried.

## 12. Public Comment


Mayor Barley called for public comment.

Jay Odom thanked City Manager Simmons for all his work. He said the city can't thank him enough for all the big accomplishments he has given to the community. He offered to sponsor a farewell event for City Manager Simmons.

## 13. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Minutes were prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on May 26, 2022.

  
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Russ Barley, Mayor

