

CITY OF FREEPORT
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 13, 2023, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Bud Day, Councilman Tracey Dickey, and Councilman Eddie Farris

Staff Members Present: City Attorney Clay Adkinson, City Manager Mark Martin, City Clerk Kathie Gatewood, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Senior Planner Samantha Graves, Parks Director Travis Digges, Wastewater Supervisor Paul Johnson, City Engineer Cliff Knauer, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, and Billing Supervisor Rebecca King

City Clerk's Note: Councilwoman Haffner was absent with notice.

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Councilman Farris gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited.

3. Recognition of Guests

4. Consent Agenda

a. Bills

b. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – May 25, 2023

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

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve the consent agenda as presented.

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

Councilman Day: aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilman Brannon: aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

7. Consideration of Additions and Deletions to Agenda

1. City Manager – Addition – Rocky Bayou Christian School Pool Use
2. City Manager – Addition – Chelco Lights for Sewer Plant

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilman Day

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve the agenda additions proposed.

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

Councilman Day: aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilman Brannon: aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

9. Staff Reports

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

1. It Takes the Town Special Pool Event Fee Waiver Request

Parks Director Digges asked the Council for a motion to waive the private pool event fees for Non-Profit It Takes the Town, which is located in Freeport. The Non-Profit helps underprivileged children learn life lessons to better prepare them for adulthood.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for additional Council discussion and public comment.

To waive private pool event fees for It Takes The Town events on June 23, 2023 and August 25, 2023 from 6:00pm-8:00pm in the amount of \$300.00 per event.

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

Councilman Day:	aye
Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Brannon:	aye
Councilman Dickey:	aye

Carried.

2. WCSO Back to School Splash Bash

Parks Director Digges explained a Walton County Sheriff Office upcoming free event in the Regional Sports Complex on July 29, 2023 from 11:00am-2:00pm, which benefits local underprivileged children who need school supplies. Over one-thousand children are expected for the event. No action was taken.

After the item was discussed, Councilman Farris and Councilwoman Brannon wished outgoing Parks Director Digges the best moving forward and thanked him for all he has done for the city.

d. City Manager

1. Four Mile Creek Bore

City Manager Martin summarized the details of this item that was recently before the council. The bore is from the lift station then under the creek and must be extended. He asked for a motion to approve.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilman Dickey

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve the Four Mile Creek Bore as presented

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

Councilman Day:	aye
Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilman Brannon:	aye
Councilman Dickey:	aye

Carried.

2. Chelco Lighting for Sewer Plant

City Manager Martin explained that the older side of the sewer plant has older lighting equipment that needs to be updated. The city reached out to Chelco to

see what they could offer. Chelco will install, free of charge, (3) 35-foot poles, (2) transformer, and (8) flood lights and the monthly charge for the equipment will be one-hundred sixty-five dollars per month. City Attorney Adkinson said there was no action needed for the item.

3. Rocky Bayou Christian School Pool Use Request

City Manager Martin was approached by the Niceville school about having a flat rate for bringing large groups of children to the pool during regular pool hours. There was a discussion about season pass holders having limited access or turned away if large numbers of children attend as requested, to which Parks Director Digges expressed how upset the passholders would be if this occurred. Mayor Barley was opposed to an approval that would take anything away from the citizens of Freeport and Councilman Farris agreed. City Attorney Adkinson shared the same concerns as Mayor Barley and told the Council there is an unwritten policy not to allow group bookings for the pool. Along with those concerns, he expressed liability concerns as it is unclear if the group will be providing their own lifeguards and staff, and if so, will they be adhering to proper safety requirements.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Branon

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To adopt a policy that requires group usage, a group defined as 8-10 or people in total who desire to use the Freeport swimming pool and must be booked in advance and subject to the approval and sole discretion of the city manager upon consulting with the Parks Director and pool staff. Effective immediately.

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

Councilman Day: aye

Councilman Farris: aye

Councilman Brannon: aye

Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

g. Billing

h. Planning

i. Legal

j. Engineering

10. Old Business

11. New Business

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

1. Holiday Decorations at the Sports Complex

Councilman Farris suggested holiday decorations for the Regional Sports Complex much like the decorations in other parts of the city. After a short discussion, Mayor Barley volunteered to work with Parks Director Digges to gather costs for decoration for the location. One issue to overcome is the lack of power in the park.

- d. Councilwoman Haffner
- e. Councilman Dickey
- f. Councilman Day

12. Public Comment


Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

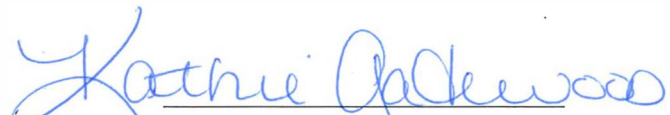
13. Adjournment

With no other business, Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn at 9:22 a.m.

Minutes were prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on July 11, 2023.

ATTEST:


Russ Barley, Mayor


Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk

