

**CITY OF FREEPORT
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

August 8, 2023, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Bud Day, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner, 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, Parks Directors Charles Bartlett, Wastewater Supervisor Paul Johnson, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, City Engineer Cliff Knauer, Billing Supervisor Rebecca King, and Recreation and Events Manager Anne McKenzie

City Clerk's Note: Councilman Day was absent with notice.

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Councilwoman Haffner gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited.

3. Recognition of Guests

Mayor Barley welcomed Walton County Economic Development Alliance Executive Director Uriah Matthews, and Walton County Commissioner Danny Glidewell.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Bills
- b. Budget Workshop Minutes – July 13, 2023
- c. Budget Workshop Minutes – July 27, 2023
- d. Budget Amendment #4

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 Haffner

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:

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

7. Consideration of Additions, Changes and Deletions to Agenda

1. City Manager – Change – Move Library item to end of the agenda.

8. Approval of Agenda with Additions

Moved by: Councilman Dickey
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve the proposed agenda change.

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

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

9. Staff Reports

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

1. Ballfield Lights

City Manager Martin presented the Council bids from Musco and Qualite for ballfield lights. He asked the Council for a motion to approve Qualite, the higher of the two, because it came with a twenty-five-year warranty while the other company offered ten years.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve moving forward with Qualite for ballfield lights.

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

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

d. City Manager

1. Walton County Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA)

City Manager Martin explained the item is to establish a contribution dollar amount for the budget. Walton County Economic Development Alliance Executive Director Uriah Matthews offered to answer any questions or concerns.

Moved by: Councilman Dickey
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve funding the Walton County Economic Development Alliance for the 2023-2024 budget at 4.95 per capita subject to Walton County funding at the same 4.95 per capita amount, in the event Walton County does not fund at 4.95 per capita, the City will fund at 4.64 per capita.

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

Councilwoman Haffner nay
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon nay
Councilman Dickey: aye

City Attorney Adkinson advised that because there was a tie in voting that the Mayor is authorized to vote in the matter.

Mayor Barley aye

Carried 3-2, with Mayor Barley breaking a 2-2 tie.

2. Freeport Library

Kaitlin Ward, Freeport Branch Manager, asked the Council for a motion for approval to seek grant funding for a library branch expansion.

Moved by: Councilman Dickey
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To authorize Liberty Partners to assist Walton County in seeking grant funding for a library branch expansion.

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

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

Tim Parsons of Liberty Partners informed the Council the above-mentioned grant could also be applied for to possibly use for the Freeport Community Center.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

For authorize Liberty Partners to apply for a non-competing grant for the community center.

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

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

e. City Clerk

f. Finance

g. Billing

h. Planning

1. Starburst at Hammock Bay Phase 2 Final Plat

Planning Director Hughes-Neel presented the Starburst at Hammock Bay Phase 2 final plat to the Council. She asked for a motion to approve the plat map as presented.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve the Starburst at Hammock Bay Phase 2 Final Plat as presented.

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

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

2. Freeport Hotel/Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council the city Land Development Code requires a Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law within ten days of a decision and explained the process. He informed the Council that although the city has not received a pre-lawsuit notice to date, the applicant has indicated there may be one forthcoming.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To reject the Freeport Hotel Project Finding of Fact.

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

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To reconsider the motion to adopt the Freeport Hotel Major Development Project.

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

Councilwoman Haffner aye
Councilman Farris: aye
Councilwoman Brannon aye
Councilman Dickey: aye

Carried.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve the Freeport Hotel Major Development Project with conditions for the applicant to work with the Planning Department on acceptable modifications inline with the city technical standards.

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

Councilwoman Haffner	aye
Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon	aye
Councilman Dickey:	aye

Carried.

i. Legal

j. Engineering

1. WWTF Permit Renewal

City Manager Martin asked for a motion for the WWTF Permit Renewal for the sewer plant.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Mayor Barley called for public comment and there was none.

To approve the WWTF Permit Renewal

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

Councilwoman Haffner	aye
Councilman Farris:	aye
Councilwoman Brannon	aye
Councilman Dickey:	aye

Carried.

11. Old Business

12. New Business

a. Mayor Barley

b. Councilwoman Brannon

c. Councilman Farris

d. Councilwoman Haffner

e. Councilman Dickey

f. Councilman Day

13. Public Comment

Mayor Barley called for public comment.


Manny Vitale – thanked the Council for the amazing fireworks show.
Cliff Knauer – thanked the Council for moving forward on the Waterfront projects.

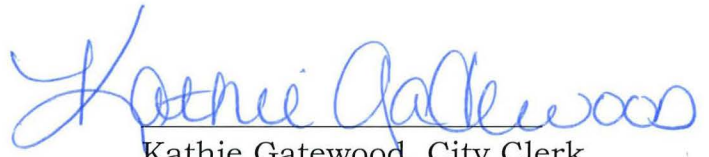
14. Adjournment

With no other business, Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn at 9:57 a.m.

Minutes were prepared by City Clerk Gatewood and approved by the City Council on September 12, 2023.

ATTEST:


Russ Barley, Mayor


Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk

