



**City of Freeport**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
6:30 p.m./Council Chambers/Freeport City Hall  
October 26, 2017 Minutes

**I. Meeting Opened**

The October 26, 2017 Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 6:30 a.m. by Mayor Russ Barley. The meeting was held in City Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

Council Members present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilwoman Kasey Cuchens, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilwoman Amanda Green, and Councilman William “Boots” McCormick.

Staff present: City Clerk Rebecca Podraza, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel, Parks Director Charles Simmons, City Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, City Lead Sewer Operator Bridget Hilgenberg, City Engineer William Menadier, and City Engineer Cliff Knauer.

**II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Cuchens, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**III. Recognition of Guests**

- Mr. Billy Williams, RESTORE Act Coordinator
- Mr. Robert Jones, Program Administrator, Jones-Phillips & Associates, Inc.

**IV. Public Comment on Consent Agenda: None**

**V. Approval of Consent Agenda**

1. Bills Paid
2. Revenue/Expenses September 2017
3. October 10, 2017 Regular Meeting

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

**VI. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda**

Additions:

- Finance – Recommendation for Billing/Customer Service Clerk
- Clerk – Resolution for Government Week

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- Mayor – Approval for Christmas Parade
  - Amanda Green – Forensic Audit
- Deletions:
- Parks Dept. – Recreational Trails Program Grant Agreement

**VII. Approval of Agenda with Additions/~~Deletions~~**

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve the Agenda with specified Additions and ~~Deletions~~ as presented. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

**VIII. Billy Williams**

1. Triumph Update
  - Billy Williams, RESTORE Act Coordinator & Larry Jones, Walton County Administrator approached the podium to address the Council. Mr. Jones made clear that Walton County has no interest in being in the water and sewer business. They have interest in seeing the facilities needed to support growth, particularly on the 331 North Corridor. It is the Freeport Council who decides the future and the destiny of the Municipal Water System that Freeport currently owns and operates. Mr. Jones stated on behalf of Walton County that the County does not want the Council or the Public to think there is an underlying current of trying to make that any different.
  - Mr. Jones discussed the One Walton Interlocal Agreement that was entered into by Walton County, DeFuniak Springs & the City of Freeport in December 2016. This agreement is top priority between the three Municipalities. Walton County appreciates the coming together and the fact that the document is in place and that it has been approved by all three elected bodies.
  - The intent of the County is to move forward with the request of Triumph Funding for the water/sewer project on 331, along with the City of Freeport and the City of DeFuniak as cohabitants. Time frames have been compressed as to when the applications must be submitted. Walton County is prepared to complete the application in time for the appropriate consideration. This will be moved through the County's process which has been established and set up with the first meeting being held next Wednesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Mr. Jones did not believe any action was needed by the Council. They will continue to move forward according to the agreement. City Attorney Clay

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Adkinson agreed that no action is required by the Council at this time for the County to move forward with the application process.

- Mr. Williams discussed the first meeting being held on November 1, 2017. November 15<sup>th</sup> is the Triumph Deadline to submit projects. Mr. Jones advised the Council on the timeline for submitting projects. The County is submitting according to their interpretation of the Statute. These projects will be vetted by the committee who are meeting on November 1, 2017.
- Council discussion ensued regarding the prescreening process and the process in which projects are submitted. The City of Freeport is not precluded from submitting projects outside of the project the County will be submitting.

**IX. Robert Jones**

1. Approval of Applicants eligible under City's CDBG Housing Assistance Program
  - Mr. Jones advised the Council that in accordance with the Housing Assistance plan, through the application process for housing assistance, the names of the applicants are required to be put before the Council to determine if there are any conflicts of interest between applicants and members of the Council. This would include first-cousin relationships and closer. The names have been provided to the Council. There is room for several more applicants and Barbara Moore has the paperwork if anyone would like to make referrals.

**X. Staff Reports**

A. City Clerk Matters

1. Resolution Recognizing Government Week

*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2017-12, for the City of Freeport to recognize Florida City Government Week October 23-29, 2017.*

*Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

B. Finance Office

1. The Carr Riggs & Ingram Audit Engagement Letter was updated to include the Single Audit that needs to be done on the City Grants.

*Council Action: Councilman McCormick made motion to approve the updated Audit Engagement Letter from Carr Riggs & Ingram to include the Single Audit for the City Grants. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. Four ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, McCormick); one nay,*

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*(Green); motion carried.*

2. Approve Heather Elis for Billing Clerk

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made motion to approve Heather Ellis as the new Billing Clerk/Customer Service Representative for the Billing & Customer Service Department. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

C. Planning & Zoning Dept.

1. Enclave Record Plat

- City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel requested that Council remember to sign the approved Enclave Record Plat immediately following the Council Meeting.

2. Discussion-Transfer Stations

- City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel advised the Council that Councilman McCormick requested that Transfer Stations be discussed by Council. The City does not address Transfer Stations in Article 3 of the Land Development Code.
- Councilman McCormick explained that we have nothing in our code to keep someone from coming in and making the City of Freeport their personal garbage dump. Councilwoman Brannon also agrees that Transfer Stations should be prohibited within city limits. Council discussion ensued and directed Staff to begin the process of preparing an Ordinance adding this language to the Land Development code.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to direct staff to draft an Ordinance for first reading and advertise to prohibit Transfer Stations within the Freeport city limits. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

3. Request for approval to attend Transportation Symposium

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve City Planner Hughes-Neel to attend the Transportation Symposium being held in Panama City November 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

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4. Request Workshop/Local Mitigation Strategy

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to approve a Council Workshop on November 7, 2017 at 6:30 pm regarding Local Mitigation Strategy. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

D. Legal Matters

1. Municipal Home Rule Draft Resolution

*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2017-13, Supporting Home Rule in the State of Florida, supporting all legislative efforts to protect and strengthen the rights of citizens of the state of Florida, to govern themselves under Municipal Home Rule powers conferred upon them by the Florida Constitution. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

2. Brandon Oaks

- City Attorney Adkinson updated the Council on the agreement with the County to install sewer in the Brandon Oaks Subdivision. An agreement will be presented at the next meeting regarding the time frame for the project.

E. Parks Dept.

1. Storage Facility Update

- Parks Director Simmons will present plans at the next Regular Council Meeting

2. ~~Recreational Trails Program Grant Agreement~~

3. Recreation Master Plan Approval

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to adopt the Recreation Master Plan as presented by the West Florida Regional Planning Council. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

4. Approval to Advertise for an Invitation to Bid for Tennis Court Resurfacing

*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve advertising for an Invitation to Bid to resurface the tennis courts at the Freeport Sports Complex. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

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F. Engineering

- 1 The Engineering Report was presented by City Engineer William Menadier on the following:
  - US 331 Watermain Extension and Wagon Wheel Water Well System
  - Business 331 Sidewalks
  - The Engineering Preliminary Review draft and Environmental Review Report have been submitted to USDA Rural Development. Action by Council is needed to authorize Mayor Barley as the representative to sign the application.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to authorize Mayor Barley to execute the USDA Rural Development application. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

- Welcome Signs
3. CIP Ranking
    - City Engineer William Menadier presented the CIP Rankings to the Council according to the ranking sheets turned in by the Council.
    - Council discussion ensued regarding the projects which would be submitted as priority Legislative Appropriations projects. The deadline to submit is November 10, 2017.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to apply for Legislative Appropriations and submit the top two (2) City Sanitary Sewer System Projects as follows:*

1. WWTF Expansion
2. US 331 Sewer Expansion

*And the top two (2) City Potable Water System projects as follows:*

1. US 331 Water Upgrades/Expansion
2. Watermain Post Office to Sparkleberry – 12” Min. West Side

*Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

G. Water Dept.: None

H. Sewer Dept.

- Sewer Lead Operator Bridgett Hilgenberg advised the Council that the new security electronic gate at the Sewer Plant has been installed.

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- Sewer Lead Operator Hilgenberg thanked Cliff Knauer and his team for helping to design the decks for the new Sewer Plant office at no charge.

**XI. Old Business**

A. Walton County Economic Development Alliance, Inc. Interlocal Agreement

*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve the Walton County Economic Development Alliance, Inc. Interlocal Agreement for fiscal year 2017-2018. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

**XII. New Business**

A. Mayor Russ Barley

1. Christmas Parade Approval

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting usually held on Friday to be changed to Saturday, December 2, 2017 from 4:40 to 9:00 pm. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

B. Councilwoman Brannon: None

C. Councilwoman Cuchens: None

D. Councilman Farris: None

E. Councilwoman Green

1. Forensic Audit

- Finance Officer Sara Bowers updated the Council on the audit. Priority has been working with the auditors and the budget up until this point. This will now be made a priority.

F. Councilman McCormick

1. Disaster Preparedness Plan Manual

*Council Action: Councilman McCormick made a motion to approve the Disaster Preparedness Plan Manual as presented. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

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2. Wagon Wheel Well on Rock Hill Road

*Council Action: Councilman McCormick made a motion to resume the Wagon Wheel Well project. Councilwoman Brannon seconded for discussion.*

City Engineer Cliff Knauer updated the Council on the well and advised that the sand issues have been identified and will be flushed. If needed a sand separator will be installed. Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle concurred with City Engineer Knauer.

*All ayes, (Brannon, Cuchens, Farris, Green, McCormick); motion carried.*

**XIII. Public Comment**

- Tim Ard updated the Council on the Veterans Day Memorial festivities, the Purple Heart Monument and water feature being installed.

**XIV. Adjournment**

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

FREEPORT CITY COUNCIL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

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