



City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
6:30 p.m./Council Chambers/Freeport City Hall
March 28, 2019 Minutes

I. Meeting Opened

The March 28, 2019 Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.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, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner and Councilman William “Boots” McCormick.

Staff present: City Clerk Rebecca Podraza, Assistant Clerk Lori Cox, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel, Parks Director Charlie Simmons, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Finance Assistant Joyce Sunday, Utility Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, City Engineer Cliff Knauer, and City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

III. Recognition of Guests

Lindy Wood, MSN with Westonwood Ranch

- Ms. Lindy Wood thanked the Council and the Parks Staff for all their assistance and the use of the City Sports Complex for their annual Fund Raiser Rodeo.

IV. Public Comment on Consent Agenda: None

V. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Revenue and Expenditures as of February 28, 2019
2. Bills Paid
3. Special Council Meeting 20190305
4. Council Workshop 20190307
5. Regular Council Meeting 20190312
6. Council Workshop 20190312
7. Council Special Meeting 20190314

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

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VI. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Additions

1. Legal – ADA Compliance
2. Legal – RFQ WWTP Negotiations
3. Planning – Facility Planning
4. Billing – Bad Check Policy
5. Billing – Utility Bill Adjustment/Bill Dispute Policy
6. Billing – Customer Account Policy

Deletions

1. Public Request for Placement on Agenda
2. Clerk – Council Room Projector Screen

VII. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletion

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

~~VIII. Public Request for Placement on Agenda~~

IX. Staff Reports

A. Engineering

1. 331 North Sewer/Water Discussion
 - City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau presented the proposed US 331 North Wastewater Upgrades - Preliminary Cost Opinion and map.
 - Staff is requesting Council approval to move forward on working with the following developments: Owls Head, Owls Head Farms, and the Preserve

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve staff to move forward on working with the developments water and sewer projects. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion.

- Councilwoman Green would like more time to look at the projects and speak to the City Planner.

Councilman Farris withdrew his motion. Councilwoman Brannon withdrew her second.

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2. Commercial Rate Study Proposal
 - City Engineer Rouchaleau presented the Commercial Rate Study proposal for Council approval.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the Engineering Services Proposal for a Commercial Rate Study for a lump sum amount of \$2,000.00. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

3. West Bay Loop Sewer Capacity Improvements
 - City Engineer Rouchaleau presented the wastewater upgrades preliminary cost opinion and discussed the map he presented of the Hammock Bay Phase 3, Bay Club and existing lift station locations. The improvement cost estimation is \$334,500.00.
4. Blue Ridge Parkway SCOP Municipal Submittal
 - City Engineer Rouchaleau presented the Blue Ridge Parkway Resurfacing and Turn Lane Improvements cost estimate which has a total projected project cost of \$322,926.51. The SCOP Grant application, if approved, will cover the total cost of the project.
5. SRF US 331 Phase I Wastewater Improvements – Construction Bid Results

Council Action: Councilman McCormick made a motion to award the SRF US 331 Phase I Wastewater Improvements Construction Bid to J&P Construction Co., Inc. for a total amount of \$2,703,260.00, contingent on a clear site easement and SRF Approval. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

B. Billing

1. Request Approval of the 30/60/90 Day Policy
 - Utility Billing Manager Roberts presented an addendum to the bad debt policy adding more detail regarding a 30/60/90-day policy and form letters. Council discussion ensued and staff was directed to make the following changes and additions to the letters:
 - Add a 45 day follow up phone call to the policy
 - Change the contact information from the Mayor to the Billing Manager and add contact information.
 - Prepare a script for the Billing Clerks to follow when calling the customers for collections at 45 days.
 - Staff was directed to bring the policy and letters back to the next Council Meeting on April 9th for final review and approval.

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2. Request to Bid for New Collection Agency
 - Billing Manager Roberts requested approval to solicit bids for a new Collections Agency for the City of Freeport for utility bill collections.

Council Action: Councilwoman Green made a motion to approve the solicitation of bids for a new collection agency, for utility billing account collections, for the City of Freeport. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

3. Disconnection Policy
 - a. Notification Update

Billing Manager Roberts updated the Council on the current status of the notifications informing the customers of the updated Disconnection Policy and request for updated information flyers that were mailed with the last billing cycle.
 - b. Approval of Updated Resolution

Council Action: Councilwoman Haffner made a motion to approve revisions to Resolution 2019-03, regarding the Disconnection Policy related to Water and Wastewater services and establishing fees and procedures related thereto and providing an effective date to Resolution No. 2019-06. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

4. Bad Debt Policy

This item was presented for Council discussion and will be presented at the April 9, 2019 Meeting for approval.
5. Utility Bill Adjustment/Bill Dispute Policy

This item was presented for Council discussion and will be presented at the April 9, 2019 Meeting for approval.
6. Customer Account Policy

This item was presented for Council discussion and will be presented at the April 9, 2019 Meeting for approval.
7. Clarification on Partial Payments on-line Point & Pay System

Council concurs that partial payments may be accepted on-line.

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C. City Clerk Matters

1. Agenda Software
 - Clerk Podraza presented three bids for a new Agenda Building Software Application. This item will be brought back for Council review after the website ADA issues and Council Room technology have been addressed.
2. ~~Council Room Projector Screen~~
3. Human Resources
 - a. Personnel Policy - Classifications & Pay Plan

Council Action: Councilwoman Green made a motion to remove the Classification & Pay Plan section VI from the Personnel Policies and Procedures manual and add this item to the pending list for further development during the budget process of the 2019/2020 budget cycle. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

- b. FLSA Exempt/Non-Exempt Standards
Attorney Clay Adkinson recommended the Council rescind their previous vote at the March 12, 2019 Meeting, changing the Clerk Assistant and Finance Assistant positions to Exempt Status with the continued tracking of hourly time. FLSA Exempt/Non-Exempt Standards will be addressed by the Human Resources Attorney at the April 9, 2019 Meeting.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to abate the action taken at the March 12, 2019 meeting to change both the Assistant Clerk, Lori Cox and the Finance Assistant, Joyce Sunday to exempt status and requirement to track hours on a timecard. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

- c. HR Attorney – Request for Council Direction
Attorney Clay Adkinson advised the Council that Mr. Scott Seagal with Coppins Monroe has agreed to attend the April 9, 2019 Council meeting to address HR topics of concern and advise on moving forward with streamlining the Personnel Policies and Procedures and HR functions. Council discussion ensued and concurred that HR opinion letters should only come from the direct of the Mayor or Council and the City Attorney should be contacted prior to the HR Attorney being consulted by staff.

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D. Finance Department

1. Budget Amendment

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the budget amendment for the salary increases that were approved at the March 12, 2019 Council meeting for a total of \$32,180.00. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. Four ayes, (Farris, Brannon, Haffner, McCormick); one nay, (Green); motion carried.

E. Planning & Zoning Dept

1. North Shore Mini-Warehouse

- Planner Hughes-Neel presented the North Shore Mini-Warehouse Phase I Revision and Phase II.
- Mr. Ed Stanford with CORE Engineering addressed the Council regarding the project. The Start time of this project is June of 2019.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the North Shore Mini-Warehouse Phase I Revision and Phase II. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

2. Ships Chandler Small Scale Amendment & Re-Zoning Designation

- Planner Hughes-Neel presented the Ships Chandler Small Scale Amendment requesting to change the current Future Land Use Designation and Zoning Designation.
- Mr. Peter Wright with Ships Chandler and Mr. Scott Jenkins with Jenkins Engineering addressed the Council about the project.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to hold first reading and approve advertisement for second reading of the proposed Ordinance Amending the future land use designation of the Ships Chandler Property from MU (Mixed Use) to C (Commercial) Future Land Use Designation. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to hold first reading and approve advertisement for second reading of the proposed Ordinance Amending the Zoning Assignment of the Ships Chandler Property from R-3 (High Density Residential) and C-1 (General Commercial) to C-2 (Heavy Commercial). Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

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3. Facility Planning

- Planner Hughes-Neel requested approval to form a Facility Planning Committee to include the City Planning Director, the City Parks Director and the City Engineer Cliff Knauer.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the formation of the Facility Planning Advisory Committee to include the Mayor, the Planning Director, Parks Director and City Engineer Cliff Knauer. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

F. Legal Matters

1. ADA Compliance

- Attorney Adkinson requested that the Council grant authority to the Mayor to work with Staff to obtain quotes to bring the Website Content into ADA Compliance.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to grant authority to the Mayor to work with Staff to obtain quotes to bring the City Website Content into ADA Compliance. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

- Attorney Adkinson advised that the Council may make the decision to put the document portal back up for public accessibility.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to put the document center back on the City website for public accessibility. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

- Assistant Clerk Cox requested Council direction on how far back the quote for documents should be. Council discussion ensued and decided three years should be brought into compliance for web content.

Council Action: Councilman McCormick made a motion to approve a quote bringing three years of documents into ADA Compliance to be accessible on the City website. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

2. RFQ Waste Water Treatment Plant Negotiations

- Attorney Adkinson requested that the Council approve the Finance Officer and the

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Mayor to negotiate the agreement with the top ranked Engineering Firm awarded the RFQ for Engineering Services for the WWTP.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve Finance Officer Sara Bowers and Mayor Russ Barley to negotiate with the top ranked Engineering Firm, who were awarded the Professional Engineering Services for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

X. Old Business

A. Bad Debt Discussion

- Councilwoman Green requested discussion regarding bad debt and to let the record show that there was a policy in place regarding Bad Debt that was not being followed. Council discussion ensued regarding bad debt.
- Janice McClean approached the podium and addressed the Council regarding bad debt written off in 2014.
- Councilwoman Green requested staff to look further into the 2018 bad debt.

B. Sports Complex Wi-Fi Update

- Clerk Podraza presented an email from CRC Data Technician Jeffrey Wyles regarding the risk of opening the Wi-Fi to the public without any type of protection with the access.
- Council directed staff to research the cost of a public access for Wi-Fi with Century Link.

Council Action: Councilwoman Green made a motion to direct staff to request quotes from Century Link, for public access to the Wi-Fi at the Sports Complex. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

C. Pending List

1. Request Council approval to remove greyed-out items.
 - Clerk Podraza presented the Pending list and requested the greyed items be removed and placed on the completed project list.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve moving the greyed items on the Pending List to the Completed Project list, except for the Document Management item. Councilman McCormick seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

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XI. New Business

A. Mayor Russ Barley

1. Q & A Page for Website
 - Mayor Barley presented the compilation of the Questions & Answers that the public ask City Staff on a regular basis.
 - Mayor Barley requested that Council write any changes or additions to the list and return them to the City Clerk.

B. Councilwoman Green

1. Update on Legislative Action Days
 - Councilwoman Green was unable to attend Legislative Days, but she has sent letters to Representatives regarding the issues she had planned to discuss with them.
2. FLC Social Media Training
 - Councilwoman Green announced a free day of training in Ft. Walton Beach on May 8th.

C. City Engineer Cliff Knauer

1. Lagrange Park Update
 - Engineer Knauer updated the Council on the 6 Acre tract of land Acquisition (Lagrange Park Property) and advised that the property is not in City Limits and that the County would need to initiate the application to the Department of Interior.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve Mayor Barley and Engineer Cliff Knauer to contact Commissioner Trey Nick to initiate a joint project to procure the 6 Acre tract of land (Lagrange Park). Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

2. Pool Parking Lot Resurfacing
 - Request approval to advertise for bid for the Resurfacing of the pool parking. The estimated cost is \$25,000.00.
 - Councilwoman Green would like to ensure that the parking lot blends with the Barrier Free Park. Council discussion ensued and swales will be added along with an alternate bid option for open grade asphalt.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve advertising for the Pool Parking Lot Resurfacing project adding a swale for drainage and a bid item option for open grade asphalt. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

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3. Business 331 to Hwy 20 Utilities
- Engineer Knauer requests Council approval to pursue a 15-foot easement which has been discussed with three large land holders along Business Hwy 331. This easement will be outside the DOT right-of-way. This will give the City space when placing sewer lines.

Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon made a motion to approve Engineering Staff to pursue acquiring easements along Business 331 to Highway 20 with land owners. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

4. Verandas Apartments Utilities
- City Engineer Knauer requests approval to meet with Attorney Clay Adkinson, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle and Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett regarding the utility issues at the Verandas.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to authorize Engineering, Water, Sewer and Legal staff to address utility issues at the Verandas to bring back recommendations to Council. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

5. Welcome Signs
- The new Welcome Signs have been steaked out for installation. The sign on the East Side of the City needs to be moved a bit further to the East for better visibility.
 - Engineering staff would also like to request from DOT that the sign on South 331 be reduced to 35 feet instead of 50 for better visibility.

XII. Public Comment: None

XIII. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

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FREEPORT CITY COUNCIL

Mayor

ATTEST

City Clerk

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