



City of Freeport
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
7:00 p.m./Council Chambers/Freeport City Hall
May 6, 2019 Minutes

I. Meeting Opened

The May 6, 2019 Special Council Meeting was called to order at 7:00 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, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Utility Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, and Planning Technician Brook Jackson

II. Utility Billing Department

Mayor Barley turned the meeting over to Attorney Clay Adkinson. Attorney Adkinson explained the situation regarding the Billing Staff and their continued violation of a direct policy established by the Mayor regarding adjustments being entered. All adjustments must be approved by the Mayor prior to being made on the customer account.

The following documents were presented for Council review.

- o Adjustment Report November 2018 – December 2018
- o Adjustment Report January 2019 – Present
- o Pilcher Account Information
- o Wainwright Adjustments
- o Saunders Account Information
- o Email from Billing Manager to Attorney Clay Adkinson

Staff have continued to enter adjustments to customer accounts without prior approval and have been told on many occasions that this is against policy.

Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to terminate Billing Clerk Heather Ellis, Lead Billing Clerk Jennifer Douglas, and Billing Clerk Naomi Driggers. Councilwoman Haffner seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

Council discussion ensued regarding the process for entering adjustments and the approval process. The documents presented were reviewed and explained.

The City of Freeport may take action on any matter during this meeting, including items that are not set forth within this agenda.

In accordance with Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this meeting should contact the City Clerk’s office at 850-835-2822 by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting.

No verbatim record by a certified court reporter is made of these proceedings. Accordingly, any person who may seek to appeal any decision involving the matters noticed herein will be responsible for making a verbatim record of the testimony and evidence at these proceedings upon which any appeal is to be based (see Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes).



City of Freeport
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
7:00 p.m./Council Chambers/Freeport City Hall
May 6, 2019 Minutes

Billing Clerk Heather Ellis approached the podium and addressed the Council.

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

Staff was directed to advertise for the Billing Clerk positions.

Council Action: Councilwoman Haffner made a motion to approve advertisement for the Billing Clerk positions. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, (Brannon, Farris, Green, Haffner, McCormick); motion carried.

Council directed the Mayor to change the security door codes of the terminated staff immediately. Council requested the Sherriff's Department provide a Deputy to be on site when staff arrive in the morning at 7:45 am.

IV. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

FREEPORT CITY COUNCIL


Mayor

ATTEST


Clerk Assistant

* Minutes taken by City Clerk, Becky Podraza, were approved by City Council 5/23/2019

The City of Freeport may take action on any matter during this meeting, including items that are not set forth within this agenda.

In accordance with Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's office at 850-835-2822 by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting.

No verbatim record by a certified court reporter is made of these proceedings. Accordingly, any person who may seek to appeal any decision involving the matters noticed herein will be responsible for making a verbatim record of the testimony and evidence at these proceedings upon which any appeal is to be based (see Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes).