



City of Freeport

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2020, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers, Freeport City Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Amanda Green, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilman William "Boots" McCormick, Councilwoman Elizabeth Haffner

Staff Members Present: City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Parks Director Charlie Simmons, Planning Director Latilda Neel, Planning Technician Brooke Jackson, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett, Finance Officer Sara Bowers, Finance Assistant Joyce Sunday, Billing Manager Debbie Roberts, City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau, Interim City Clerk Lori Cox

Others Present City Engineer Cliff Knauer

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Mayor Barley in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. Recognition of Guests

Mayor Barley welcomed Lee Garner, former City Manager of Chattahoochee and thanked him for his attendance.

4. Public Comment on Consent Agenda

none.

5. Approval of Consent Agenda

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon
Seconded by: Councilman Farris

Motion: To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick,
and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

- a. Bills Paid
- b. Revenue & Expenditure Report
- c. Regular Council Meeting Minutes December 10, 2019

6. Consideration of Additions/Deletions to Agenda

- a. Deletions
Councilman Farris - Water and Sewer Franchise Agreement
- b. Additions
Parks Director Simmons - FDOT right-of way letter for parks

7. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions

Moved by: Councilman McCormick
Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Motion: To approve the Agenda with the specified additions and deletions as presented.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick,
and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

8. Staff Reports

- a. Water - none.
- b. Sewer - none.
- c. Parks
 - 1. ADDITION: FDOT Right-of-Way for Parks

Simmons discussed a letter received from FDOT with Council. The letter stated that widening of SR 20 would not affect Laird or Casey Parks. He requested permission to sign and return the letter.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilman McCormick

Motion: To allow Parks Director Simmons to execute the concurrency statement of the FDOT letter. All ayes.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

2. Updates

Parks Director Simmons gave updates on the following items:

- H&T Construction - Completed asphalt on the Recreation Trail Project
- Walking trails past the asphalt were cut in.
- Fencing, landscaping and curbing for the Recreation Trail is in progress.
- Concession stand - nearing completion; projected to be complete by the end of February
- Field 3 grass - stripped and four loads of clay has been brought in.
- Fencing; west side of park - begins next Tuesday
- Break in a pole barn; during Christmas, cameras have since been installed
- New hire; Recreation Assistant - Charles Bartlett
- Christmas lights- taken down by the Water department
- Security glass for Billing department and Receptionist area; to be installed next Monday
- Planning department front door needs repair. Quote and options in progress

Council Action: None.

1. Fencing options for new and old master lift stations

Simmons requested permission to talk with the City Engineer Rouchaleau and Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett about more appealing fencing options around the new and old master lift stations.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilman Farris

Motion: To approve Parks Director Simmons to discuss fencing options around the new and old master lift stations with City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau and Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

d. City Clerk

1. City Manager Position - Set Special Meeting Date to Review Applicants

Clerk Assistant Lori Cox requested setting a special meeting date for Council to review applicants for the City Manager position with Mr. Eddy from the Florida League of Cities.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Motion: To approve a Special Meeting to review City Manager applicants on February 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

2. Facebook Page Update

Clerk Assistant Cox informed Council of the inability to turn off comments on the prospective Facebook page directed by Council. Cox requested that the City website be used to present community information in lieu of Facebook.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

Motion: To approve using the city website for information purposes as opposed to a Facebook page.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

e. Finance

1. Florida Municipal Investment Trust Resolution

Finance Officer Sara Bowers presented a resolution from Florida Municipal Investment Trust. Bowers requested approval and adoption of the Resolution that would allow her to move a portion of the City's excess funds into bonds where the interest rate could possibly be 3-4% as opposed to less than 1% in a savings or money market account. She explained that bonds are considered to be long term investments, interest rates flow with the market, they are AAA rated and are not FDIC insured.

Councilwoman Green stated that she contacted a representative from the Florida League to inquire more about the investment. She noted that all of her questions were

answered, and she felt comfortable that the bonds would be secure. She also noted, if necessary, the funds could be available to the City in as little as 3-4 days.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

Motion: To approve Resolution 2020-01; the Council has entered into this investment with the understanding of the risks and benefits of the transaction versus the current investment and is in the best interest of the City of Freeport and its citizens to take this action.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

f. Billing - none.

g. Planning

1. LDC Ordinance - 1st Reading

Planning Director Latilda Neel presented 1st Reading of LDC Ordinance; covering Appendix B - Definitions and Appendix I - 331 South Corridor Standards. Appendix B defined special event, special event application, and special event permit. Neel discussed special event exceptions to funeral homes, public school, city park events and private parties by private property owners and the special event requirements and process. The City Council will continue to review all special event permits at regular Council meetings. Appendix I would be a standalone section in the Land Development Code.

Council discussion ensued regarding event fees, HOA and business event guidelines.

Councilwoman Brannon requested more time to review the Ordinance.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Motion: To continue first Reading of the LDC Ordinance at the February 27, 2020 meeting.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

2. Mill Cottages at Hammock Bay - Final Plat

Neel presented Mill Cottages at Hammock Bay plat; a 98 single family subdivision located off Earl Godwin Road for final plat approval.

Moved by: Councilman McCormick
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Motion: To approve Mill Cottages final plat at Hammock Bay for signature.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

3. Verandas at Freeport Phase 1C-1 - Final Plat

Neel presented Verandas at Freeport; phase 1C-1 consisting of 29 town home units for final plat approval.

Moved by: Councilman Farris
Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Motion: To approve Verandas at Freeport phase 1C-1 final plat for signature.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

4. Update

Neel updated the Council on the technical standards for roadway speed limits. She confirmed with DOT that the specifications are within the Green Book - Institute for Traffic Engineers Handbook for Transportation Planning which the City currently uses the most current version of.

Council Action: None.

h. Legal - none.

i. Engineering

1. FDOT Application for SCOP Municipality

City Engineer Alex Rouchaleau informed the Council that the SCOP grant applications are due in March and was looking for direction on what the Council wanted to submit. The grant should be used for a city road that is in need of resurfacing and would cover minor storm water improvements.

Discussion ensued on roads widely used within the city; consensus was South Jackson would be the best road to submit on the application.

Topic then moved to city bridge within Hammock Bay; Councilwoman Haffner remarked that the bridge is loud and in need of repair.

City Engineer Cliff Knauer approached the podium and informed Council that he met with the County bridge crew that indicated that they would be willing to help fix the anchor plates that continue to come loose. Knauer will bring back a cost estimate for materials to fix the bridge.

Council Action: None.

2. Updated Reclaim Water Agreement for WWTF Expansion

Rouchaleau presented an updated reclaim water agreement that he explained gets submitted to DEP permitting for the new wastewater treatment plant.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson stated that he had not had the opportunity to review prior to item being put on the agenda.

Moved by: Councilwoman Haffner

Seconded by: Councilman McCormick

Motion: To continue the reclaim water agreement to the following meeting for City Attorney's review.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

3. SRF Phase I Wastewater Improvements - Chelco Electric Change Order

Rouchaleau presented a change order for Chelco to provide electric service to the lift station into Riverwalk subdivision on US 331 in the amount of \$24, 426.66. The city will be reimbursed for costs under the SRF agreement.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Green

Motion: To approve the Chelco change order as presented.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

4. Operator Proposal

Rouchaleau presented a proposal for operator on call services to assist city staff if needed at the Sewer Department; proposal not to exceed \$5,000.00.

Mayor Barley informed Council and the Engineer, just recently, a previous applicant had been hired for the Class B Operator position and Stacy Ward from the Water Department had been sent to help out in the office.

Sewer Supervisor Robert Fawcett informed Council that Dewberry assistance would not be needed due to the recent hire.

Council consensus was to have operator on call services as an available option if necessary.

Moved by: Councilwoman Brannon

Seconded by: Councilwoman Haffner

Motion: To approve the Dewberry operator on call services proposal as presented.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

5. US 331 Lift Station Easement/Developers Agreement

Rouchaleau updated the Council that he will be delivering an easement to the Preserves Development Engineer after City Attorney review. Rouchaleau was hopeful to bring the executed easement, developers' agreement and engineering proposal for design and construction to the next Council meeting.

Council Action: none.

6. Update

Rouchaleau informed Council that he just learned that a project the City submitted as a legislative appropriation had been sponsored.

Knauer approached the podium and informed Council that the project sponsored was the utility upgrades on 331 South.

Knauer then spoke on how streets are categorized within the city to refer back to what Planning Director Neel spoke on earlier. Knauer posed the option of the City to do a speed study and the engineering evaluation be a requirement before a speed limit sign is posted. He mentioned other requirements involved in a speed study and would make recommendations when the City needed assistance.

Councilwoman Green inquired about the steps involved in putting up a speed limit sign.

Knauer stated that a sign cannot be "just put up" and most cities and counties have an Ordinance stating speed limit signs cannot be erected until it is reviewed and approved by engineering. Speed limit changes are normally approved by the Council or County Commissioners.

Moved by: Councilwoman Green

Seconded by: Councilwoman Brannon

Motion: Direct staff to bring back draft language for a speed limit change Ordinance for Council approval.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

9. Old Business

- a. Pending List for City of Freeport & Dewberry

Council Action: none.

10. New Business

- a. Mayor Russ Barley

1. Sewer Hiring Plans

Mayor Barley reiterated that Stacy Ward from the Water Department was helping at the Sewer Department office and a new operator will be starting on January 27th, 2020.

Council Action: none.

2. Interim Project Manager

Mayor Barley informed Council that he had approached staff about the position. One staff member does not have time to fulfill the position, another staff member had questions on authoritative boundaries, frequency of reports and compensation.

Council discussion ensued over job description, and the urgency of the position. Consensus was for staff bring back a job description for the Council to review.

Council Action: none.

- b. Councilwoman Brannon

- c. Councilman Farris

1. DELETION: Water/Sewer Franchise Agreement

2. "ALICE" Training

Councilman Farris stated that he felt the City should be proactive and set up "ALICE" training for employees.

Consensus was the training would be a good idea.

Moved by: Councilman Farris

Seconded by: Councilman McCormick

Motion: To have Charlie Morris and Deputy Fisher set up ALICE training with Mayor Barley.

Ayes (5): Councilwoman Green, Councilwoman Brannon, Councilman Farris, Councilman McCormick, and Councilwoman Haffner

Carried (5 to 0)

- d. Councilwoman Green
- e. Councilwoman Haffner
- f. Councilman McCormick

1. Food Vendors

Councilman McCormick stated that he had been approached by a couple of the local restaurants wanting to discuss food vendor requirements. McCormick stated they felt there was not a "fair playing field" when it comes to requirements. He expressed that he is not against food vendors but concurs; food vendors can stay as long as they like in one place as long as they renew their permit every 6 months. He mentioned food vendors do not have near the expenses that the restaurants do. McCormick wanted to open the subject for Council discussion.

Councilwoman Haffner stated she does not consider restaurants and food vendors equal parties; they both have to have health inspections and food vendors don't have the opportunity to make as much money as restaurants.

Councilwoman Green believed the conversation developed when a food vendor pulled permanent power and put a porta potty outside. She stated in most instances a permanent public restroom needed to be close by the vendor area, power could be pulled from an existing building but are not able to pull their own light pole.

Planning Director Neel informed Council that Chelco relocated the power pole and the City did not authorize the use of the porta potty and did not think that was sanitary and that she would let them know it has to be removed.

Discussion ensued about the fairness of the process and if new standards should be explored. Neel gave examples of the processes within Walton County. Neel explained that currently, the city's code does not have a limit on how many times a vendor can renew their permit.

Consensus was to have Neel bring back some vending ordinance language for Council to review.

Council Action: None.

11. Public Comment

Janice McLean, Freeport resident, approached the podium and wanted to thank Lee Garner in the audience. Ms. McLean stated she met him at a Riverwalk South meeting in the past and asked where he got his health insurance, and he gave her the name Brown & Brown. McLean stated that the City saved \$109,000 on health insurance because of his referral. She encouraged Council to go to Riverwalk South, Utility and FDOT meetings in the area. McLean also noted that Special Events bring people in and they spend their money locally.

Josh Spears, owner of Sports to Geaux, approached the podium and informed Council that food vendors are under the same scrutiny as restaurants, if not more. Spears stated that every festival he goes to he is inspected by the fire marshal and the health inspector. Spears apologized for the porta potty and said he was asked by Skippers to bring one in but would have it removed. He said

the temporary power pole was brought in as a courtesy to cut down on the noise his generator makes. Spears stated he plans on building a brick and mortar restaurant but prefers to make sure that people like his food before investing in a building.

12. Adjournment

Mayor Barley motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Barley", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "April Cox", written over a horizontal line.

Interim City Clerk