



**City of Freeport**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
9:00 a.m./Council Chambers/Freeport City Hall  
April 12, 2016 Minutes

**I. Meeting Opened**

The April 12, 2016 Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Mayor Russ Barley. The meeting was held in City Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

Council members present: Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilwoman Kasey Cuchens, Councilwoman Janice McLean, Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, and Councilwoman Jennifer Laird.

Staff present: City Clerk Rebecca Podraza, City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel, City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, Parks Director Dana Weiler, City Accountant Deborah Wimer-Zills, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, and City Engineer Anna Hudson.

**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: None**

**IV. Approval of Past Minutes**

- March 24, 2016 Utilities Workshop
- March 24, 2016 Regular Council Meeting

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens motioned to approve the March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Utilities Workshop Meeting and the March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Regular Council Meeting minutes as presented. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

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

1. Delete item #1 under Councilman Farris - Sherriff's Substation at City Hall
2. Add under Councilman Farris – Schedule Utilities Workshop for 331
3. Add under Councilman Farris – Road Connecting Industrial Park
4. Add under Councilwoman Cuchens – River Way South

**VI. 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 Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

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**VII. Staff Reports**

**A. City Clerk Matters**

1. Rate Study Discussion

*Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to authorize the City Attorney to begin preparing the administrative documents for the rate increase for water and sewer. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried*

2. Clarification of Records Request Fees

- City Clerk Podraza clarified to the Council and those in attendance that the fee per page for Records Requests is .15 cents a copy. Although .15 cents was quoted at the previous meeting, it was misunderstood as .50 cents by those in attendance.

3. Approval City Clerk to Attend FACC 2016 Summer Academy June 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>

- Clerk Certification 300.00 Hotel 153.00 per night & Air fare between \$400. & \$500.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve that the City Clerk attend the FACC 2016 Summer Academy June 5<sup>th</sup> through June 8<sup>th</sup>. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried*

4. Billing Department Recommendations

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve City Clerk Podraza's recommendations for the Billing Department. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion.*

**Council Discussion:** Councilwoman Brannon inquired if the salary increase for the Lead Billing clerk is available in the budget. City Clerk Podraza verified that the funds are available. Councilwoman Brannon inquired why the Lead Billing Clerk title is changing from Lead Billing Clerk to Operations Administrative Supervisor. City Clerk Podraza explained that the Lead Billing Clerk has many facets to her position along with billing. This position is responsible for supervising staff, as well as the administrative responsibilities for billing, customer service and meter reading.

Councilwoman Cuchens inquired if these changes would put Billing as a direct report under the City Clerk. City Clerk Podraza explained that it was not included because it was not something she thought the Council may want to consider at this time. Councilwoman McLean informed the Council that she had listed this topic as an item under her name and inquired from the City

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Attorney if it could be moved up under the Billing Recommendations and addressed. The City Attorney agreed it would be appropriate to address the recommendation at this time. Councilwoman McLean explained that she believes the Billing department should be under the City Clerk direct.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris amended his original motion to approve City Clerk Podraza's recommendations for the Billing Department and to appoint City Clerk Podraza as Department Head over the Billing Department and Meter Readers. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

5. Schedule Workshop for Contract/Agreement review
  - After Council discussion it was agreed that the City Clerk would email a list of the City Contracts/Agreements in categorized groups in order for the Council to decide at the April 28<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting which to workshop first. The City Clerk will then scan and send the documents to Council and the City Attorney for review before the first workshop.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens made a motion to schedule a workshop to review the Contracts/Agreements on May 10, 2016 at 8:00 am. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

**B. Staff Accountant**

1. Current Expenditures
2. Pay all bills in order

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to pay all bills in order. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

**C. Planning & Zoning Dept.**

1. 331 Freeport Partners LSA/2nd Reading-Adoption Ordinance

*Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion to proceed with the second reading and adoption of the 331 Freeport Partners Large Scale Amendment Ordinance 2016-03. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes motion carried.*

- City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel proceeded with the second reading of the 331 Freeport Partners LSA Ordinance.

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2. Floodplain Management Regulations/1<sup>st</sup> Reading-Adoption Ordinance

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the revised Floodplain Management Ordinance 2016-04 and advertise for second reading. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

- City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel proceeded with the first reading of the Floodplain Management Ordinance Revision.

3. Planning Updates

- City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel reviewed the Planning Updates Report.

D. Legal Matters

1. Black Creek Development

- City Attorney Adkinson reviewed a letter that was received from Larry H. Hipsh, III, P.A., Attorney & Counselor at Law, regarding a records request made on March 29, 2016. Attorney Hipsh is threatening litigation in regards to the Black Creek Development for 216 taps that were purchased in 2009.

City Attorney Adkinson will contact the bank that currently owns the property and research questions the Council had regarding the statute of limitations. He will report back to Council with this information.

2. Outdoor Advertising Sign Relocation

- A property owner has requested permission to move an existing advertisement sign that has been grandfathered into the City before these signs were not permissible. The City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel and the City Attorney gave the Council the history and details on the owners request. After Council discussion it was decided to allow the sign to be moved with the condition that the sign must be the exact same size. No action by council is required.

3. First Reading of Annexation Ordinance

- Request approval and first reading of proposed Annexation Ordinance for 18 parcels of property

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens announced at this time of her recuse from the vote for*

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*the proposed Annexation Ordinance and verified that the proper CE Form 8B – EFF has been submitted.*

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to proceed with the first reading and advertise for adoption of the proposed Annexation Ordinance. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All aye; motion carried.*

- City Attorney Adkinson proceeded with the first reading of the Annexation Ordinance.

E. Engineering

1. Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) Grant Update

- City engineer Anna Hudson gave a brief overview of this grant opportunity currently open and the criteria that must be met by the proposed projects. Engineering would like to submit two applications from the project suggestions submitted by Council. Six projects were presented and Council was requested to pick the top two they would like to apply for. After Council discussion the top two projects selected were:
  - a. Four Mile Road (#1 priority)
  - b. Blueberry Road (#2 priority)

*Council Action: Councilwoman Laird made a motion to submit two project applications for the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) Grant Opportunity. Four Mile Road Project as priority number one and Blueberry Road Project as priority number two. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

F. Water Dept.: None

G. Sewer Dept.

1. Recommendation to change Tony Wilson, Sewer Maintenance Worker from part-time status to full-time status.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to change Tony Wilson, Sewer Maintenance Worker from Part-Time status to Full-Time status. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

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2. Recommendation to hire Christopher Shorey as Part-Time Sewer Maintenance Technician

*Council Action: Councilwoman Laird made a motion to hire Christopher Shorey for the Part-Time Sewer Maintenance Worker position. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

H. Parks Dept.

1. Life Guard Certifications

- The City will pay \$150.00 for a two year certification for two life guards as has been done in the past.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Laird made a motion for the City of Freeport to pay the fees for two Lifeguard Certifications. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

2. Karen Mueller-Fitness Classes

- Request City approval to contract with Karen Mueller to provide life-saving swim lessons to our community as well as therapeutic and fitness water programming twice a week.
- Recommendation is to bring Ms. Mueller on as a contractor during pool operation at 20.00 per hour.

After Council discussion it was requested that Parks Director Weiler gather more information to bring back at the next meeting. Item was tabled, no action was taken.

3. Pool Pump Quotes

- Recommend Cox Pools Sales, Service and Supplies, Inc. for a quote of \$5,172.83

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to accept the quote from Cox Pools and Sales, Inc. for the installation of a 7.5hp single phase pool pump at the cost of \$5,172.83. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

4. Approve Standard Operating Procedures

- Council discussed the proposed operating procedures and requested the following:
  - a. Remove *Termination of staff* referred to in item #1 under *Duties*.
  - b. Add to #17 under *Duties*: *b. Mayor, Council & City Clerk*
  - c. Change under hours of operation: *Pool Lanes may be closed during operating hours IF there is a Freeport Swim Team meet.*

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*Council Action: Councilmen Farris made a motion to approve the Standard Operating Procedures with the corrections requested by Council. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

5. Seasonal Employee Hires

- Parks Director is making a recommendation to hire Susan McMinamin as Lifeguard at \$13.00.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Laird made a motion to hire Susan McMinamin for the Lifeguard position at \$13.00 per hour. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

- Parks Director is making a recommendation to hire Megan Dunaway for Pool Attendant. Ms. Megan was an Attendant last year and would like to return this year. Hourly rate will be 11.00 per hour.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Laird made a motion to hire Megan Dunaway for the Pool Attendant position at \$11.00 per hour. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

- Recommend hire date one week prior to filling the pool in order to prep for opening day. Approximately 10 to 15 hours per week for each employee.

*Councilwoman Laird made a motion to hire pool staff one week prior to filling the pool in order to prep for opening day. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

**VIII. Old Business: None**

**IX. New Business**

A. Mayor Russ Barley: None

B. Councilwoman Brannon

1. Legislative Matters

- Councilwoman Brannon announced that the League of Cities Summer Dinner is coming

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up. Email invitations should be going out and a count will need to be given to the City Clerk of how many will be attending.

- Councilwoman Brannon will be attending a webinar Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> and will update the Council on that at the next meeting.

C. Councilwoman Cuchens

1. Grant Updates

- Competitive Florida Grant through the DEO which is an Economic Development Grant for \$40,000.00 per year for two years for a total of \$80,000.00.
- Technical Assistance Grant through the West Florida Regional Planning Council for a Master Recreation Plan.

Councilwoman Cuchens explained to the council that after meeting with the West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC), they are willing to write both of these grants for the City of Freeport for free. Staff from the WFRPC will be at City Hall Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup> all day gathering information needed to write the grants. City Planner Hughes-Neel and Clerk Podraza will be on standby to assist in any way they can. The closing date for these grants is May 2<sup>nd</sup> and there is a tremendous amount of work involved to apply for the grants in such a short amount of time. Council members are encouraged to stop by on Friday and thank the WFRPC Staff for all the work they are doing for the City.

- A Florida Greenways & Trails Representative did a boat tour of Freeport Water Ways with Parks Director Weiler & Councilwoman Cuchens. Parks Director Weiler and Councilwoman Cuchens were given information by the representative to look into joining an organization called River Way South Apalachicola Choctawhatchee Organization (RWSAC). This organization has been together since 2010. Councilwoman Cuchens recommends the City of Freeport join this organization. After Council discussion it was decided that Councilwoman McLean would look into having the City of Freeport become a member of this organization and report back to Council.

D. Councilman Farris

1. ~~Discuss adding Sheriff's Substation to City Hall~~

2. Reschedule Employee Picnic

- Councilman Farris requested to hold an employee picnic June 30<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center. He requested that City Hall be closed from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm that day so that

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all staff may attend. He requested that Council supply the food for the employees so that staff may be treated to an employee lunch without having to provide a dish. Councilman Farris and the City Clerk will organize the event and request from Council what they will provide for the picnic.

3. Senior Center-Modular Building
  - Councilman Farris discussed the need for a place for Freeport Senior's to have as their own. They meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday and have a meal together. Councilman Farris has spoken to Ms. Anderson with the School District to see if the City could be put on a waiting list to obtain one of the modular buildings that they would not have a need for any longer. The City could move it behind City Hall and remodel it for the seniors. It would be a great location and they would have a place of their own.

4. U-Hall for Records Disposition
  - Councilman Farris and Clerk Podraza explained to the Council that there are files that are past the retention period and in need of a records disposition. They are requesting to rent a U-Hall so that the boxes can be taken to the Bay County incinerator for destruction. They are old billing files that are obsolete and have no further administrative value.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to allow City Clerk Podraza to rent a U-Hall to move files past their retention period to be destroyed. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

5. Workshop for 331 Utilities Project
  - Engineering is requesting that the Council workshop this project so that they can review the segments that have been set by the City Engineers and determine what their priorities are.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris made a motion to hold a workshop on May 26, 2016 at 5:00 pm for the review of the 331 Utilities Project. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

6. Connecting Road Industrial Park
  - City Planner Hughes-Neel is looking into this and will report information at the next meeting.

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E. Councilwoman Laird: None

F. Councilwoman McLean

1. ~~Clerk to have complete authority over Billing Employees~~
2. Fluffy Landing/New Equip  
Councilwoman McLean discussed the Sewer Department taking care of the Fluffy Landing project in-house. Doing this project in-house will save the city approximately \$65,000.00.

*Council Action: Councilwoman McLean made a motion for the construction and repairs of Fluffy Landing to be done as an in-house project by the City of Freeport Sewer Department. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

- The bids for the excavator needed for the Sewer Department will be presented at the next meeting.

**X. Public Comment:** None

**XI. Adjournment**

Mayor Russ Barley called for a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman McLean motioned to adjourn. The Mayor gavelled and the meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

FREEPORT CITY COUNCIL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council President

ATTEST:

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

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