

City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
July 24, 2014

I. Meeting Called to Order

The July 24, 2014 Freeport City Council Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Russ Barley.

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

Staff present: City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel, City Engineer Anna Hudson, City Engineer Cliff Knauer, City Fire Dept. Captain Tom Palmer, City Recreation Director Shane Supple.

II. Swearing-In of New Council Members Eddie Farris and Kasey Cuchens

Councilman-Elect Eddie Farris was sworn in by Mayor Russ Barley, with assistance from Councilman- Elect Farris' daughter Missy Oakley, who held his personal Bible for the swearing-in.

Councilwoman Kasey Cuchens was sworn in by Mayor Russ Barley, with assistance from Councilwoman-Elect Cuchens' husband Rosier, who held Kasey's childhood Bible for the swearing-in.

Numerous family members, friends and well-wishers gave applause and offered congratulations after each council-member was sworn.

III. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

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

IV. Approval of Past Minutes – 6/26/14 RCM and 7/8/14 RCM

Councilwoman made one correction to the June 26, 2014 Draft Minutes; Item IV.C. The corrected phrase would be "Councilwoman McLean reminded the Mayor and Council that the new ISO rating was ~~good~~ not available for 4 more months."

Board Action: Motion to accept the June 26, 2014 Meeting Minutes as corrected and the July 8, 2014 Meeting Minutes by Councilwoman Brannon. Second to motion by Councilman Farris. Vote: 5:0; motion carried.

V. Staff Reports

A. Planning Department

Planner Hughes-Neel asked that Item V.E.1 be removed from the agenda; it will be brought back

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at a later date.

1. Economic Development Projects- Schedule for Tap/Impact Fee Payment

Hughes-Neel asked the Council to consider a 1-year trial period to allow economic development projects (defined as projects which create jobs past construction, i.e. commercial and industrial projects which create long-term jobs) to pay tap and impact fees at building permit review instead of issuance of the project development order. Hughes-Neel spoke to the difference in conceptual project loans and construction loans. Councilwoman McLean remarked that bank funding was much easier after the project had received governmental approval.

Board Action: Motion to approve a 1-year trial for economic development projects; to schedule the collection of tap/impact fees at the building permit approval process by Councilwoman McLean. Second to motion by Councilwoman Cuchens. Vote 5:0; motion carried.

B. Legal Matters

Attorney Adkinson notified the Board that Form DR-420 had been received from the Property Appraiser. The Council has 35 days to send back and tentatively establish millage. Adkinson recommended that the Council set a special meeting for the following to discuss the Tentative Budget and TRIM.

Action by Mayor: Mayor Barley set a special meeting to address the tentative budget and TRIM for Tuesday, July 29, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

C. Fire Department Report

No report was given.

D. Parks Department Report

No report was given.

E. Engineers Report

No report was given

VI. Old Business

No Old Business was presented.

VII. New Business

- A. Larry Tuggle – Request to attend training to maintain MOT license
(It was determined that this matter was approved at the previous council meeting.)

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B. Mayor Barley/Larry Tuggle – Certification / Salary Adjustment

Mayor Barley presented and range of percentage options; from 10% to 20% and the current salaries of employees.

Board Action: *Motion to approve the 20% salary increase for Larry Tuggle by Councilwoman Cuchens. Second to motion by Councilwoman Laird. Vote 5:0; motion carried.*

C. Fee Waiver request for use of the Freeport Community Center/ Safety First for All-Community Safety Event on September 15, 2014 from 1:30-6:00 pm (Extension Office)

Deputy Harold Shover presented this item. Planner Hughes-Neel stated that it was a free community event.

Board Action: *Motion to grant the fee waiver for the Extension Office by Councilman Farris. Second to motion by Councilwoman Laird. Vote: 5:0; motion carried.*

D. Jamie Ragan/Use of Freeport Community Center/Anchor Room for Church

Ragan appeared before the Board. He explained his wish to establish a community church and wants to reserve the Anchor Room of the Community Center for one year from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; have the damage deposit roll over for each use and pay the required usage fees the 1st of each month.

Board Action: *Motion to allow Ragan to reserve the Anchor Room for one year, to roll over the damage deposit for each use and to allow Ragan to pay the required rental fees the 1st of each month by Councilwoman Cuchens. Second to motion by Councilwoman Laird. Vote 5:0; motion carried.*

E. Elizabeth Chance/ Excessive Water Bill (Acct#3890)

Ms. Chance appeared before the Council with assistance by her daughter. The Council discussed various options for Ms. Chance, who is on a fixed income.

Board Action: *Motion to cut an additional \$200 from Ms. Chance's balance and to finance the remainder by Councilwoman Laird. Second to motion by Councilwoman Brannon. Vote: 5:0; motion carried.*

F. Sharon Watson/ Request for Water Bill Reduction (Acct#3349)

Ms. Watson did not appear.

The Council ensued into a discussion regarding how to better deal with water and sewer bill adjustments.

Motion to give the Mayor the authority to settle water and sewer bill issues and negotiate payments by Councilwoman Brannon. Second to motion by Councilwoman Laird. Vote

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5:0; motion carried.

G. Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon/legislative updates

- Safety Issue at Hwy 20/East Bay Loop

Councilwoman Brannon met with the city engineer and the FDOT governmental affairs liaison on the Hwy20/East Bay Loop intersection regarding safety issues to be remedied with crosswalks, sidewalks, sidewalk guardrails; the D3 Traffic Safety Operations group will be able to give some help to address these issues.

- Hwy 20/US 331 Signalization

Councilwoman Brannon approached FDOT with the concerns expressed by Councilwoman McLean; per the FDOT, the existing signal arm is too short; it will be replaced and city signage damaged by construction will be replaced.

- FLC Dinner

Councilwoman Brannon gave thanks to the following people who helped make the event a huge success:

- Band: Latilda Hughes-Neel, Roy Brown, Scrammy Lane, Ashton Evans
- Decorating/Staffing/Clean-up: Mayor Russ Barley, Tim Ard, Councilwoman Cuchens, Councilwoman McLean, Sandra Pugh, Trudy Boudreaux, Lora Renfroe, Wanda Bird and James Bird.

VIII. Council Business Not on Agenda

- Council Appointments/Mayor Barley

Mayor Barley announced that with the addition of two new council members, he was making new appointments:

- Legislative: Councilwoman Brannon
- Parks: Councilwoman Laird
- Water Dept.: Councilwoman Cuchens
- Sewer Dept.: Councilwoman McLean
- Fire Dept.: Councilman Farris

Mayor Barley stated that Councilwoman McLean would remain as Council President.

- Water Dept./Meter Replacement & Excavator Purchase/Mayor Barley

Per Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, there is a serious meter issue; of the meters not working in the North Bay area. He needs to purchase 150 meters at \$45/50 apiece,

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approximately \$45,150. And he needs to purchase an excavator which is already in the budget.

Councilwoman McLean stated that there was at least \$200,000 in capital outlay.

Board Action: Motion by Councilwoman McLean to purchase 150 meters at \$45,150. Second to motion by Councilwoman Brannon. Vote 5:0; motion carried.

- Water Dept./Service Water Meters Inventory/Mayor Barley

Per Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, the inventory of service water meters is very low. The cost is approximately \$258.

Board Action: Motion by Councilwoman McLean to authorize Councilwoman Cuchens to process service water meter purchase up to 100 meters. Second to motion by Councilwoman Brannon. Vote 5:0; motion carried.

- Water Dept./SCADA-related modifications on seven (7) well sites/Mayor Barley

Per Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, SCADA-related modifications are necessary on seven (7) City well sites. Total costs: \$25,325. The paperwork has to be completed by August 11. Griner Drilling Services, who installed the wells, will be performing the modifications.

Board Action: Motion by Councilwoman McLean to authorize the SCADA-related modifications by Griner Drilling Services @ \$25,325. Second to motion by Councilman Farris. Vote 5:0; motion carried.

- Water Dept. Update-Hwy 83-A West/Mayor Barley

The water lines on West County Road 83-A are scheduled to be camera' d. Cliff Knauer will be setting up times and dates. Water in the area will be shut down for a lengthy amount of time; it is a time-consuming process. We are making the Council aware and give notice to the customers in the area.

- City/County Communications/Councilman Farris

Councilman Farris noted that the City is preparing to work on its 2014-2015 Budget. He stated that he would like to try re-open discussions with the County, to see if they can offer any assistance.

Board Action: Motion by Councilman Farris to authorize the Mayor and the City Attorney to contact the County to see if the County can help us or offer assistance. Second to motion by Councilwoman Brannon. Vote 4:1 (Councilwoman Laird dissenting); motion carried.

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- Past Due Accounts Project Complete/Councilwoman McLean

Councilwoman McLean presented a memo to the Council that all 942 past due accounts have either been turned over to the collection agency or had a letter sent to them requesting payment. As of the meeting date, \$1,227.24 has been collected. All the accounts sent to the collection agency have been written off, in order to give the City a true total for accounts receivable. Ms McLean thanked Jennifer Douglas, Donna Hinson and Stacy Ward of the Water & Sewer Billing Dept. for their help in completing the project.

Councilwoman Brannon thanked Councilwoman McLean for spear-heading the project and seeing it through to completion.

- Completion of Audit/Councilwoman McLean

Councilwoman McLean presented the Council with the completed water & sewer audit, financial statements and a tentative budget for 2014-2015. She also presented the end-of-audit correspondence from Carr, Riggs & Ingram.

- Items for Next Agenda/Councilwoman McLean

Councilwoman McLean handed out materials to the Council pertaining to the following items she would like to address at the August 12, 2014 council meeting or at a special meeting:

- Four Day Work Week
- New Accrual Calculation for Employee Leave
- Purchase Limit for Mayor
- Computer IT Proposals

Attorney Adkinson advised the Council that the Mayor or the Council President can set a special meeting to review specific items. The Mayor polled the Council and there was general agreement that Thursday August the 7th would work for everyone's schedule.

- Form to Request Placement on Council Agenda/Councilwoman Cuchens

Councilwoman Cuchens stated that she would like to work with Latilda to create a Council Agenda Request Form, which gives specific submittal requirements and an agenda deadline.

Council comments:

Everyone speaking at a council meeting needs to come to the podium and state their name for the record.

The Fire Department and Engineering need to submit short outlines for the Agenda by the deadline.

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- City Clerk Position/Mayor Barley

Mayor Barley announced that the clerk applications had been narrowed down to the top 3.

IX. Public Comment

No public comment was offered.

X. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

APPROVED

Mayor

Council President

ATTEST:

City Clerk