

**CITY OF FREEPORT**  
OCTOBER 22, 2015 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**I. Meeting Called to Order**

The October 22, 2015 Regular Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Russ Barley at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in 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.

City Staff present: City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel, Parks Director Dana Weiler, City Engineer Anna Hudson, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle and City Engineer Cliff Knauer.

**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**

Mayor Barley recognized District 4 County Commissioner Sara Comander. Commissioner Comander gave an overview of the background leading up to Walton County partnering with the School District to bring broadband fiber optic cable to all schools and governmental buildings.

Henry Martin of the Walton County School District and Rick Wilson of Walton County discussed the process and encouraged the City to support and participate in the initiative.

**IV. Approval of Past Minutes – None presented**

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

Mayor Barley's additions: 1) City Clerk position, 2) Billing Clerk position 3) CHELCO contract due for renewal and 4) TPO appointment

Councilwoman McLean's addition: Sewer Re-Use Water Tank grant information

**VI. Approval of Agenda with Additions/Deletions**

*Council Action: Councilwoman Mclean motioned to approve the additions to the agenda. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

**VII. Staff Reports**

A. City Clerk Matters

1. Expenditures (attached)

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented the current expenditures to the Council for review.

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2. Pay All Bills in Order

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

3. Request to Cancel 2nd Council Meeting in November due to Holiday

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented this request.

4. Request to Cancel 2<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting in December due to Holiday

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented this request.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens motioned to cancel the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday meetings in November and December 2015 due to the holidays. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

B. Planning & Zoning Dept. –none

C. Legal Matters

City Attorney Adkinson stated that he had met with Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle regarding a meter location disagreement. The meter belongs to Big League Farms on Suggs Road. The meter is located on property owned by their neighbor, Mr. Fernandez. Big League Farms wishes to relocate the meter to Big League Farms property. Larry needs approval to see if the move is feasible and to move the meter if feasible.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens motioned to allow Supervisor Tuggle to move the meter from the Fernandez property to the Big League Farms property. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

D. Parks Dept.

Parks Director Weiler announced that 3 of the youth which won at the local Punt Pass & Kick competition also won 1<sup>st</sup> place at the district competition in Panama City. 1 youth won second place.

1. Repairs at the Freeport Regional Sports Complex

Parks Director Weiler reported that the irrigation repairs were halfway done; the work will continue most of next week. They are having trouble with the valves. Weiler stated that she will know next week about the perennial rye over-seeding, potash application and aeration.

2. Process to Close the Freeport Regional Sports Complex

Parks Director Weiler requested the Council give direction on procedure to close the fields during the aeration, potash application and rye over-seeding.

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Council Discussion: Provide notice to regular users. Latilda can do community notification by e-mail. Post a notice at City Hall and on the website. Get signs and post around all fields.

3. Freeport Regional Sports Complex Erosion Issue

Parks Director Weiler notified the Council that there was an erosion problem on the back side of the Park between two transformers. The Council was shown photographs of the damage (attached). Weiler stated that Anna Hudson of Preble-Rish has reviewed the damage and generated a cost estimate for repair, which will be approximately \$3,345.00, which is over her approved spending limit of \$2,500. Weiler requested permission to get quotes for the repairs and use the lowest quote to repair the damage.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens motioned to allow Parks Director Weiler to request quotes and use the lowest quote to repair the erosion as stated, with oversight and inspections by Preble-Rish. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

E. Engineering -none

F. Water Dept.

1. Well #2 Repairs (Action)

Water Supervisor Tuggle informed the Council that Well #2 was out, as previously presented as information at the last Special Council Meeting. Tuggle stated that the cost to pull the shaft to inspect the pump was around \$7,200, before repairs of the pump or shaft. Griner Well Drilling is who they normally use because they were the original installers. The worst case scenario for inspection and repairs is in the neighborhood of \$16,000.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens motioned to authorize Water Supervisor Tuggle in this emergency situation to have Well #2 pulled, inspected and repaired. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

2. NFWFMD Request for Drilling Monitoring Well

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented this request from Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) to drill a monitoring well at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (attached). They (NFWFMD) would take full responsibility for the well.

Council Discussion: Councilwoman Brannon remarked that she would like to see the monitoring reports that NFWFMD collects.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens motioned to approve the NFWFMD's request to place a monitoring well at the Freeport Wastewater Treatment Plant. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

G. Sewer Dept.

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1. Request for Sewer Repairs

Councilwoman McLean presented information on the lift station repairs and improvements and a list of the developments impacted by the repairs for the cost of \$328,203.01 (attached). McLean requested that sewer impact fee funds collected from the impacted developments be transferred to the Sewer Dept. budget as reimbursement for the lift station repairs and improvements for the amount of \$328,203.01.

Council Discussion:

City Attorney Adkinson advised the Council that Preble-Rish, the city engineer, needs to certify that the development listed are impacted by the lift station repairs and improvements.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Mclean motioned to transfer \$328,203.01 of the sewer impact fee fund to the Sewer Dept. account as reimbursement for lift station repairs and improvements, contingent on Preble-Rish certifying that the repairs/improvements impacted the listed developments.*

**VIII. Old Business – none**

**IX. New Business**

A. Mayor Russ Barley

Mayor Barley reminded everyone that the Mayor's Ball would be Saturday night.

1) City Clerk Position

Mayor Barley stated that City Clerk Mattison was very ill and had indicated that his last day would be December 1<sup>st</sup> and that he had indicated that he would work part-time until then.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris motioned to advertise for the City Clerk position. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

2) Billing Clerk Position

Mayor Barley indicated that in discussion with Gary (Mattison) there were no outstanding applications for the Billing Clerk position. Gary Thomas, a part-time Meter Reader was assisting in the Billing Dept. and doing a very good job; he is very good with customer service. Mayor Barley requested that the Billing Clerk position be filled in-house by moving Gary Thomas from Part-Time Meter Reader to Full-Time Billing Clerk.

*Council Action: Councilwoman McLean motioned to transfer Gary Thomas from Part-Time Meter Reader to Full-Time Billing Clerk. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

Councilman Farris stated that he wanted to recognize Stacey Ward; that she has worked very hard very hard to keep the Billing Department going while being very short-staffed.

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James Bird (from the audience) stated that in his opinion it was taking too long to get the Billing Department fully staffed.

Supervisor Tuggle stated that he would need to hire a Part-Time Meter Reader to replace Gary Thomas and had planned to eventually hire a Full-Time Meter Reader to replace Linda Watson.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Cuchens motion to advertise for a Full-Time Meter Reader. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

Council Discussion: Council directed Hughes-Neel to place ads in the Daily News and DeFuniak Herald and on the website; that the cut-off for the Meter-Reader and City Clerk positions and Staff Accountant should be the Friday before the meeting in November.

3) CHELCO contract due for renewal

Mayor Barley stated that he had received an e-mail that the CHELCO office lease was up December 1. A 3-year contract with a monthly lease fee of \$1800 has been submitted for renewal.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris motioned to authorize the Mayor to sign the 3-year lease agreement with CHELCO. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion.*

4) TPO Appointment

Mayor Barley stated that Councilwoman Brannon has requested that she be replaced as TPO representation for the City. She had requested that Councilman Farris take her place, but Councilman Farris is unable to do so. Mayor Barley suggested that the Council appoint Councilwoman Cuchens as TPO representative and that Mayor Barley serve as alternate.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon motioned to approve Councilwoman Cuchens as TPO representative and Mayor Marley as her alternate. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

B. Councilwoman Brannon

1. Legislative Matters

Councilwoman Brannon presented a proposal from Representative Caldwell (attached) which is not yet in bill form where he desires to move all city elections to November; the same as state and national elections. Brannon stated that his proposal was not well received. Brannon also referred to the Advocacy package which will be made available when ready; Brannon will let the Council know when they can go to Tallahassee to advocate; the state is looking at water projects as their #1 priority. Brannon also commented that the RESTORE application committee was looking at some interesting projects; one in particular, a 30A intermodal transportation proposal is a 2-million-dollar project which proposes a test track in Freeport as an incubator (attached).

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~~2. Request to appoint Eddie Farris to the Okaloosa Walton TPO~~

- C. Councilwoman Cuchens- none
- D. Councilman Farris – none
- E. Councilwoman Laird

Councilwoman Laird brought up that Parks Director Weiler had lost her part-time person and she needs that person year-round. Weiler indicated that the funding for the part-time position was in budgeted and she requested procedural clarification. The Council suggested that she post a notice on the website that she was looking for a part-time person then bring the name to the Council when she found one.

F. Councilwoman McLean

- 1. Update Bookkeeper training correspondence /no discussion

G. Earnest Nettles/Woodturners Guild: Request for clarification on use of Community Center

Earnest Nettles thanked the Council for being allowed to speak. Since the Freeport Community Center has been remodeled, Nettles wanted to make sure there was no problem with the Woodturners Guild continuing to use the facility on a monthly basis. When he came in to make arrangements for a meeting, Front Desk Clerk Barbara Moore had stated to him that his group should not be using the Community Center because they make a mess. Nettles stated to the Council that their group always cleans up after themselves by sweeping and mopping.

City Janitor James Bird commented that they clean up most of the time; not always. Sometimes they neglected to mop.

The City Council indicated to Mr. Nettles that they had no problem with his group using the facility.

H. Bob Jones (Information/Action)

- 1. CDBG Contract with Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented this item (attached) and the legal review by the City Attorney stating no objections.

*Council Action: Councilman Farris motioned to approve the CDBG Contract with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity as presented. Councilwoman Mclean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

- 2. CDBG Administrative Contract Negotiation TAB 8

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented this item (attached) and the legal review by the City Attorney stating no objections.

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*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon motioned to approve the CDBG Administrative Contract Negotiation as presented. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

**I. Jim Massey/Special Event Permit- Emerald Coast Autism Center Charity Bass Tournament**

City Planner Hughes-Neel presented this item to the Council (attached). Hughes-Neel indicated that she would recommend approval of the Special Event Permit, subject to the submittal of the required paperwork.

*Council Action: Councilwoman Brannon motion to approve the event, subject to submittal of the a completed Special Event Permit Application being submitted to the City. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.*

**X. Public Comment - none**

**XI. Adjournment**

Mayor Barley called for a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Mclean motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

**FREEPORT CITY COUNCIL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mayor**

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

**ATTEST:**

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**City Clerk**