

CITY OF FREEPORT
BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
August 6, 2020

1. Meeting Called to Order

The Budget Workshop was called to order at 5:30 pm in City Hall Council Chambers by Mayor Barley.

Council members present: Amanda Green, Elizabeth Brannon, Mayor Russ Barley, Eddie Farris, Mark Martin, and Elizabeth Haffner.

Staff present: Finance Officer Sara Bowers, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Planning Director Latilda Neel, City Clerk Malani Robinson and Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Simmons, Billing Director Debbie Roberts, Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle.

2. 2020-2021 Budget

-Finance Officer Sara Bowers opened the meeting by distributing materials to insert into the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Binder and began the financial overview. While discussing the budget the Council began to examine the practicality of the lobbying expense, the cost versus the value of the service due to COVID-19 impacts. Councilman Martin expressed the importance of maintaining advocacy at the Capital, to which the Council agreed to maintain the lobbying service.

Director Hughes-Neel petitioned to the Council for an employment raise for the Planning and Development receptionist and to promote her status to an office manager. Councilwoman Haffner asked for clarification for the job description and expressed a concern about the high percentage pay increase. Councilwoman Green also voiced her concerns about the pay grade increase and salary gaps amongst city staff and called for a salary study to evaluate the numbers. Director Hughes-Neel expressed her intentions to grow the Planning & Development Department and the need to establish long term solutions which would involve pay increases and reinitiating the intern program with the city.

Councilwoman Brannon noted that there were limited funds in the budget and Billing Manager Roberts informed the Council of omitting a vacant position in the Billing Department to distribute more funds.

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Parks and Recreation Director Simmons informed the Council of a future vacancy within his department, with a potential candidate in mind. The Council voiced their concerns about appointing someone to a position and sought City Attorney Adkinson's counsel on the matter. City Attorney Adkinson informed the Council that they must legally at a minimum post the job as an internal position, with a job description, before giving the position to someone.

3. Public Comment- none.
4. Adjournment

Mayor Barley adjourned the workshop at 6:13 pm.



Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk