



CITY OF FREEPORT

125 Main Street E – PO Box 301 – Freeport, MN 56331 – 320-836-2112 – FAX 320-836-2116
For TTY/TDD Users 1-800-627-3529 or 711 Minnesota Relay Service www.freeportmn.org

January 27, 2015 - Regular Meeting Agenda
Freeport City Hall - 7:00 pm

Call to Order

Presentation to Carrie Goebel and Ron Ritter for Having Served on City Council

Swearing-In of Council Member Mike Eveslage

- I. Approve Agenda – *Motion to approve*
- II. Consent Agenda – *Motion to approve*
 - a. December 16, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes (pgs.1-3)
 - b. December 29, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes (pgs.4-8)
 - c. January 7, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes (pg.9)
 - d. January 13, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes (pgs.10-13)
 - e. January 13, 2015 Emergency Meeting Minutes (pg.14)
 - f. January 14, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes (pg.15-19)
 - g. Resolution 2015-01 Appointment of City Council Member (pg.20)
 - h. Resolution 2015-02 Freeport State Bank as Official Depository (pg.21)
 - i. Resolution 2015-03 Central MN Credit Union as Official Depository (pgs.22-23)
 - j. Resolution 2015-04 Approval of 2014 Zoning Permits (pg.24)
 - k. Resolution 2015-05 Approval of 2014 Donations Received (pg.25)
 - l. Schedule Annual Area Fire Service Association Meeting for February 24th at 8pm
 - m. Clerk-Treasurer Report (pgs.26-36)
 - n. Claim 1708 – 1754 (pgs.37-43)
- III. Old Business
 - a. Waving of Meeting Fees (pg.44)
- IV. New Business
 - a. 2015 Appointments (pg.45)
 - b. Ehlers & Associates Continuing Disclosure Engagement(pgs.46-52)
 - c. City Council Photographs (pg.53)
 - d. Public Finance Seminar (pgs.54-58)
 - e. Deobligation of USDA Grant Funds (pg.59)
 - f. Request by Resident Al Williams (pg.60)
- V. Adjourn – *Motion to adjourn...*

Next Meetings: February 24th



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December 16, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

A special meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:00pm by Mayor Matt Worms with Councilmembers Ken Goebel, Ron Ritter, Carrie Goebel and Rodney Atkinson present.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Mason Schirmer.

Residents in attendance: Ben Eittle (312 1st Ave N), Tim Hennen (303 3rd St SE), Vernon Fuchs & Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Av N), Mark Middendorf (711 Main St E), Craig Timp (213 2nd Ave NW), Elise Ristau (Initiative Foundation).

Approve Agenda

Schirmer recommended 1) adding 'e. Budget Amendment 28' to Consent Agenda; and 2) adding 'claim 1705-1707' to Consent Agenda; 3) adding 'e. Enterprise Funds Budgets' to New Business; and 4) adding 'f. Mayors Remarks' to New Business. C. Goebel moved and Ritter seconded a motion to approve the agenda with the changes. Motion carried 3-0 (Atkinson and Worms abstained).

Public Hearing to consider Ordinance 2014-006 Regarding EDA Bylaws

Worms moved and C. Goebel seconded a motion to open the public hearing. Motion carried 5-0. Public hearing opened at 7:02pm. No comments. Worms moved and K. Goebel seconded a motion to close the public hearing. Motion carried 5-0. Public hearing closed at 7:04pm.

Presentation by Initiative Foundation and Request for Donation

Elise Ristau, Development Specialist for the Initiative Foundation, presented a brief history of the organization, explained programs the organization provides for businesses and communities, and provided examples of how the organization has helped businesses throughout the area, including Freeport. Ristau thanked the city for allowing her to present.

K. Goebel moved and Ritter seconded a motion to provide a \$500 donation to the Initiative Foundation. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Hearing to Discuss 2015 Budget & Levy

Worms moved and C. Goebel seconded a motion to open the public hearing. Motion carried 5-0. Public hearing opened at 7:12pm.

Schirmer recommended increasing the city council training budget, \$425 to accommodate training for whoever will be appointed to the city council. Schirmer recommended increasing Heating Gas for the Maintenance Shop by \$500, to account for the increased heated space in the building; Schirmer said Eittle suggested that increase originally. Council members agreed to increase the proposed general fund levy by \$1,000 to \$193,000 to accommodate for the increases.

Hennen asked how the budget for Fire & Rescue aid increased. Worms said some of the increase was due to changes in valuations of service area, which is how the cost of the department is divided. Schirmer said there also had been an increase in the amount contributed to the truck sinking fund.

Atkinson asked why the city was paying for road salt. Schirmer said the city predominately uses free sand provided by the county; however, last year was the first year the city purchased salt to help melt excessive ice build-ups. Schirmer said the new plow truck with the belly scrapper should help combat ice build-ups; however, there are still dollars budgeted for salt if it is needed.

Atkinson asked about employee health insurance. Schirmer said the insurance agent used by the employees is predicting the market to change significantly in 2015 possibly making it a better alternative to go-back to having a city-sponsored plan.

Councilors discussed seal coating of 7th Ave SE and SW and anticipated the Outside Maintenance budget would be sufficient.

Worms moved and K. Goebel seconded a motion to close the public hearing. Motion carried 5-0. Public hearing closed at 7:54pm.

Consent Agenda

C. Goebel moved and Ritter seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda: a) Claim 1678-1707; b) Clerk-Treasurer Report; c) Public Works Director Report; d) November 25, 2014 meeting minutes; and e) Budget Amendment 28. Motion carried 5-0.

Old Business

KDV Engagement

Schirmer presented an email from Joe Rigdon of KDV providing an estimate of \$7,000. C. Goebel moved and K. Goebel seconded a motion to accept the engagement letter from KDV for 2014 audit preparation. Motion carried 5-0.

204 1st Ave North

Schirmer said the last contact the property had was asking for an extension until November 27th. C. Goebel moved and Ritter seconded a motion to issue a citation to the owner of 204 1st Ave North for failing to comply with city code by maintaining a nuisance. Motion carried 3-0 (Atkinson and Worms abstained).

New Business

Resolution 2014-037 (re: 2015 Budget & Levy)

K. Goebel moved and C. Goebel seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2014-037 A Resolution Adopting the Final 2015 Budget and Tax Levy. Motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2014-038 (re: EDA Bylaws)

K. Goebel moved and C. Goebel seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2014-038 A Resolution Approving Ordinance 2014-006 Entitled "An Ordinance Repealing And Replacing Section 1405 Of The Freeport City Code Relating To Bylaws Of Freeport Economic Development Authority" And Providing For Authorizing Summary Publication Thereof. Motion carried 5-0.

City Council Vacancy

Schirmer provided an updated memo regarding the upcoming city council seat vacancy. Schirmer asked if the vacancy should be publically posted.

Atkinson said eleven people have expressed interest in being appointed and that is concerned that some of the people may lose interest if the appointment is not made soon. Atkinson said a special meeting should be

held in early January to interview interested people. Atkinson asked Worms to call a special meeting for January 6. Atkinson said putting a notice on the bottom of water and sewer bill cards would be sufficient. Atkinson said he needs to be sworn into office before he can call a special meeting.

Schirmer said Atkinson can call special meetings effective January 5. Atkinson disagreed.

Ritter said he received seventy-nine votes during the past election and that he should be appointed.

Worms said he would call a special meeting to be held January 6, 2015 beginning at 7pm during which officers would be sworn-in. Councilmembers agreed that the agenda would also include interviewing people interested in being appointed to the vacant city council seat.

Tri-County Human Society Agreement

C. Goebel moved and Ritter seconded a motion to approve the Tri-County Human Society Agreement. Motion carried 5-0.

Enterprise Funds Budgets

Schirmer presented wastewater budgeted revenues and expenditures. Schirmer said expenditures are budgeted to exceed revenue by approximately \$10,000. Schirmer asked council for direction on how to address the shortfall.

Atkinson suggested the fees should have an annual increase, so revenues don't fall behind expenditures. Atkinson said expenditures have increased approximately 4% annually over the past 3 years. Atkinson said rates should be increased.

K. Goebel moved and C. Goebel seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2014-039 A Resolution Calling For A Public Hearing On Ordinance 2015-001, Entitled "An Ordinance Repealing And Replacing License, Consumption And Permit Fees Under Freeport City Code Of 1995 (Appendix I)." Motion carried 4-0 (Atkinson abstained).

Mayor's Comments

Worms said he learned a lot while serving on city council and as mayor. Worms said he was appreciative of the opportunity and thankful to have served with past city council members and present. Worms said he was thankful to the residents for the past twelve years on city council.

Adjourn

Worms moved and C. Goebel seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Rodney Atkinson, Mayor

Mason Schirmer, Clerk-Treasurer



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December 29, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

A special meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 6:30pm by Acting Mayor Carrie Goebel with Councilmembers Ken Goebel, Ron Ritter and Rodney Atkinson present.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Mason Schirmer, Administrative Assistant Adrianna Hennen.

Residents in attendance:

Al Williams (308 2 nd Ave NW)	Gerald Wiechmann (505 1 st Ave N)
Ben Eittle (312 1 st Ave N)	Jerome Hartung (40345 Co Rd 153)
Bud Heidgerken (316 2 nd Ave NE)	Jerome Timp (310 2 nd Ave NE)
Dan Roering (602 1 st Ave N)	Jesse Job (304 2 nd Ave SW)
Dave Humbert (314 2 nd Ave NW)	Joe Hennen (118 3 rd St NE)
Dennis Heidgerken (116 2 nd St NE)	Rose Austing (716 1 st Ave N)
Ed Atkinson (28486 385 th St)	Sam Kramer (417 1 st Ave N)
Fritz Laing (110 4 th St NW)	Tim & Stephanie Hennen (303 3 rd St SE)
Gary & Linda Pierskalla (324 8 th St SE)	Vernon Fuchs & Andrea Ramacher (720 1 st Av N)
Wendy Atkinson (310 8 th St SE)	

Other in attendance:

Chelsea Atkinson (Hutchinson, MN)
Ben Atkinson (Melrose, MN)
Jeremy Freudenrich (Holdingford, MN)

Resolution 2014-040 re: Employment Agreement with Clerk/Treasurer

K. Goebel said nobody is perfect and that he is tired of junk mail going between parties. K. Goebel said such actions have cost the city money. K. Goebel said he has experience working with supervisors and setting aside differences when doing business. K. Goebel said people need to stop talking about city business at Ackie's, Charlie's, First Stop and other places. K. Goebel said he was told that there is a witch-hunt by some people to do something with the city clerk. K. Goebel said people should talk face-to-face with Schirmer, and that he thinks Schirmer is doing a good job. K. Goebel said he is confident R. Atkinson will do a good job as Mayor.

Ritter said Schirmer is doing a great job. Ritter said employees should be respected. Ritter said there are no major gripes and that Schirmer is just asking for things to get clarified.

K. Goebel said citizens told him about the witch-hunt. K. Goebel said he don't think an employment agreement is needed. K. Goebel said he lost sleep over the god-damn thing. K. Goebel said there really is no reason to even have this meeting.

Ritter said he agrees with K. Goebel.

K. Goebel said people need to talk face-to-face and said he was upset with emailing.

C. Goebel said everybody has to find a way to get along with different personalities.

Ritter said if you have good employees, you better to strive to keep them, because it's not going to get any better.

R. Atkinson asked who called the meeting.

Schirmer said Ken Goebel and Ron Ritter called the meeting.

C. Goebel asked if there was a motion to approve the proposed employment agreement.

K. Goebel said he wanted to make a motion to not approve the document.

Schirmer reminded council that they should not use motions in the negative.

C. Goebel asked a second time if there was a motion to approve the proposed employment agreement.

R. Atkinson asked if the council can make a motion to discuss the issue.

Ripple said council can vary from parliamentary procedure and have a discussion.

R. Atkinson moved and K. Goebel seconded a motion to discuss the issue. Motion carried 4-0.

K. Goebel said he just wants the bickering to stop. K. Goebel said Schirmer does a good job.

Humbert said he does not think Schirmer has good people skills. Humbert said the trash cans along Main Street are not getting emptied and that Schirmer does not treat him respectfully. Humbert said he was told to write his comments down so they could be provided to city council. Humbert said he refused to write down his comments and said talking with Schirmer face-to-face should have been adequate. Humbert said Schirmer is not managing the employees well and that Schirmer doesn't know how to take care of people.

K. Goebel said there are things council can address Schirmer about; but overall Schirmer is still doing a decent job.

Humbert said he felt like he was treated like a second-hand citizen by Schirmer.

Williams said you have to earn respect to be respected. Williams said since no such agreement exists now or in the past, and questioned the need for it now. Williams said the new city council should be considering the agreement.

E. Atkinson said he's seen a lot of clerks come and go for 33 years and thinks Schirmer does a good job but his people skills might be questionable. E. Atkinson said he too has concerns regarding trash cans along Main Street not being emptied.

Pierskalla asked if council, at the previous meeting, directed Schirmer to draft the proposed agreement, and if they didn't, isn't that a conflict of interest if Schirmer directs the city attorney to draw up a resolution.

C. Goebel said council did not give Schirmer direction at the last meeting.

Schirmer said the city attorney did not draft the document. Schirmer said he presented a draft to individual council members and each agreed that such an agreement should be used in Freeport. Schirmer said the draft was then sent on to the attorney so that he was aware of the document.

K. Goebel said the meetings were held individually.

R. Atkinson said he was not consulted at all and that he washes his hands of it.

Gruber asked Schirmer if he drafted the document in the interest of the City or himself.

Schirmer said it's in the interest of both. Schirmer said as City Treasurer the document would help reduce employee turnover which costs money and reduces efficiency. Schirmer said he was also reacting to the "witch-hunt," as K. Goebel had described. Schirmer said the document would be professional and that his employment is not a game.

Gruber said the severance pay seems excessive.

Schirmer said the city attorney said six months is excessive; however, his own attorney said six months is standard. Schirmer said severance is not guaranteed. Schirmer said severance would only be paid if the city violated the agreement.

Gruber said going back to the Wellhead Protection Plan, Schirmer stuck something in that document then took it out. Gruber said he didn't know if that could be called falsifying documents.

K. Goebel said that was not part of the meeting. Gruber said Schirmer is part of the meeting. C. Goebel called for order.

B. Heidgerken said he objects to the term "witch-hunt." B. Heidgerken said he didn't get severance when he stopped teaching or when he left the legislature. B. Heidgerken said the decision to agree to such an agreement should be left-up to the incoming city council members.

W. Atkinson asked how many hours Schirmer spent on preparing the document.

Schirmer said the document was drafted on his watch and reviewed by his attorney before it went anywhere.

W. Atkinson asked when city email was used.

Schirmer said he used city email to send the document on to the city attorney after council members reviewed it.

Williams asked which council members talked with Schirmer.

C. Goebel, K. Goebel, and Ritter each said they did. Schirmer said Mayor Worms was also involved.

Williams asked if R. Atkinson was left out of the discussion.

Schirmer said yes, since three council members had given direction.

E. Atkinson asked Ripple, "do you smell a rat here or is it just me?" E. Atkinson said everybody objects to severance. E. Atkinson asked Ripple again if he smells a rat.

C. Goebel said the agreement also surrenders the city's at-will employer status so that the city would need a reason to terminate Schirmer's employment.

K. Goebel said the city should have an employee handbook.

C. Goebel asked if the city has an employee manual.

Schirmer said the city has a Personnel Policy.

K. Goebel said he has never seen it.

T. Hennen said it saddened him was an individual called the vulnerable ones, saying a special meeting is needed to discuss employee policy. T. Hennen said the discussion could easily been done at any council meeting, but a special meeting was called in 2014 yet.

Schirmer provided a copy of the Personnel Policy to the city council.

Job said he came because a special meeting was being held at the end of the year, just to try to get something in under the radar.

Schirmer said council members may leave difficult decisions until the end of their terms, and that they are still council members, even if they are at the end of their term.

W. Atkinson asked how much legal fees are, since Schirmer wasn't directed by the city council.

Schirmer said he was directed by three individual city council members.

Roering asked why the city is still paying the attorney to be at the meeting when no motion is even being discussed.

R. Atkinson said if an issue were to come up where you need advice, it's good to have somebody here.

Roering said there is no motion to approve anything, so we're not talking about anything yet.

C. Goebel asked for a motion to approve the proposed employment agreement. C. Goebel asked a second time. C. Goebel asked a third time.

R. Atkinson made a motion to approve the proposed employment agreement.

C. Goebel asked for a second to the motion. C. Goebel asked again for a second to the motion. R. Atkinson asked C. Goebel to please second the motion to give them the privilege of voting no. C. Goebel asked a third time for a second to the motion. C. Goebel said the motion fails for lack of a second.

K. Goebel said he wanted to make a motion to have a closed meeting when the new council is in place to discuss issues with Schirmer.

Ripple said such a motion can't be made and that the city must stick to the agenda.

Adjourn

C. Goebel asked for a motion to adjourn.

E. Atkinson said it sounds like at the end of the year all of the clerks are on a chopping block, and everyone is worried about their jobs. E. Atkinson said hopefully somebody buys Ackie's and my jobs over, but everybody has that day and I think the end of the year is that for clerks. E. Atkinson said he thinks everyone is doing a pretty good job tonight. E. Atkinson asked Ripple if he had answered his previous question.

Ripple said he answers questions from the council.

C. Goebel asked again for a motion to adjourn.

Ritter made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

C. Goebel asked for a second to the motion.

R. Atkinson asked if anybody else had anything they wanted to say.

Job said everyone should get along and make out town better.

R. Atkinson said tentatively on the 7th we're gonna have that swearing-in deal that would be nice if ya'll come down. That's the only thing on the agenda. We're trying to get Girl scouts to come in and wave their flags around and make them feel all good, and try to get Timmy's little sister in her big robe. And have the presence of a judge. Maybe have some coffee and cookies and juice. I volunteered for coffee and Tim volunteered for all the rest. Come on down when it's a later time and we can all sit around and bullshit and chit chat with the Girl Scouts and Judge Mary.

C. Goebel seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:46pm.

Rodney Atkinson, Mayor

Mason Schirmer, Clerk-Treasurer



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January 7, 2015 - Meeting Minutes

A special meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:00pm by Mayor Matt Worms with Councilmembers Ken Goebel, Carrie Goebel and Rodney Atkinson present.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Mason Schirmer, Administrative Assistant Adrianna Hennen.

Residents in attendance:

Ben Eittle (312 1st Ave N)

Tim & Stephanie Hennen (303 3rd St SE)

Vernon Fuchs & Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Av N)

Gerald Wiechmann (505 1st Ave N)

Al Beste (208 2nd Ave SE)

Art & Dorothy VanHeel (318 8th St SE)

Betty Hennen (214 2nd Ave NE)

Mark Middendorf (711 Main St E)

Jake Renneker (107 9th St SE)

Margret Atkinson (812 1st Ave N)

Al Williams (308 2nd Ave NW)

Wendy Atkinson (310 8th St SE)

Genevieve Hiltner (328 Main St W)

Others in attendance:

Ben & Melissa Atkinson (Melrose)

Chelsea Atkinson (Hutchinson)

Meredith Atkinson (Minneapolis)

Nancy Atkinson (Burtrum)

Scot Clapper (Hutchinson)

Scot Dymoke (Melrose)

John Harren (Willmar)

Mark Harren

Anna Hoeschen

7th Judicial District Judge Mary B. Mahler

Swearing-In of Elected Officials

Melrose Chapter of the American Legion served as color guard. Anna Hoeschen sang the National Anthem. Judge Mahler sworn-in Ben Eittle and Tim Hennen as Council Members and Rodney Atkinson as Mayor.

Adjourn

R. Atkinson adjourned the meeting at 7:20pm. Socializing commenced and concluded at 8:30pm.

Rodney Atkinson, Mayor

Mason Schirmer, Clerk-Treasurer



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January 13, 2015 - Meeting Minutes

A special meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:00pm by Mayor Rodney Atkinson with Councilmembers Ken Goebel, Tim Hennen and Ben Etle present.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Mason Schirmer, Administrative Assistant Adrianna Hennen.

Public in attendance:

Carrie Goebel (207 3rd Ave SE)

Craig Timp (213 2nd Ave NW)

Gary Pierskalla (324 8th St SE)

Gerald Wiechmann (505 1st Ave N)

Mark Middendorf (711 Main St E)

Matt Worms (124 9th Se SE)

Mike Eveslage (106 7th St SW)

Ron Ritter (205 2nd Ave SW)

Vernon Fuchs & Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Av N)

Interviewing Residents Seeking Appointment to City Council

Atkinson asked residents to propose questions that the city councils should consider asking during the interviews. Council reviewed suggested questions then began interviews, setting a maximum time limit of five minutes per interview.

Ron Ritter

K. Goebel asked Ritter what his personal strengths are. Ritter said he served on council for the past five years; he knows the routine and only missed one meeting during that time. Ritter said council must exercise self-control when setting ordinances as well as be fair and honest. Ritter said he received seventy-nine votes for city council during the last election and that he is here for the people that voted for him.

T. Hennen asked Ritter what changes he would like to see. Ritter said the city could use a grocery store.

Carrie Goebel

K. Goebel asked C. Goebel why she is better than any other applicant and what her strengths are. C. Goebel said she just completed four years on council, two years as acting mayor in which she ran meetings, and she served on the EDA. C. Goebel said she is very approachable and always has a willingness to find an answer for residents in a timely manner.

T. Hennen asked C. Goebel what her goals would be. C. Goebel said she wants to further learn how government works.

Atkinson asked C. Goebel what changes she would like to see. C. Goebel said she would like to see more community involvement, especially at city council meetings.

Atkinson asked C. Goebel how her time on the EDA changed her perspective. C. Goebel said her perspective changed very much. C. Goebel said he has a better understanding of how difficult it is to start a business and negotiate land sales, especially when considering expenses such as extending electricity to Industrial Park lots.

Mark Middendorf

K. Goebel asked Middendorf what his personal strengths area. Middendorf said he worked for the city for twelve years doing maintenance, attending city council meetings and was a business man.

Ettle asked Middendorf what his goals are. Middendorf said Freeport is one of the highest taxed towns in Stearns County and that there are places than can be cut.

T. Hennen asked Middendorf what changes he would like to see made. Middendorf said he is ashamed of the in-house fighting and bellinging.

Atkinson asked Middendorf what he would bring to city council. Middendorf said maintenance knowledge. K. Goebel asked Middendorf for detail. Middendorf said he can provide suggestions.

Gerald Wiechmann

K. Goebel asked Wiechmann what his strengths are. Wiechmann said he can get along with everybody. Wiechmann said he'd like to see this bickering quit and everybody get along.

T. Hennen asked Wiechmann what his goals are. Wiechmann said a new fire hall.

Ettle asked Wiechmann what changes he would like to see. Wiechmann said he would like to see more development in the Industrial Park.

Craig Timp

K. Goebel asked Timp why he is better than any other applicant. Timp said he is visible, approachable, ambitions, is new blood, and energetic.

K. Goebel asked Timp what his strengths are. Timp said he is very personable and able to keep his temper in check.

T. Hennen asked Timp if he would be able to attend evening city council meetings. Timp said he should be available.

T. Hennen asked Timp what his goals are. Timp said he's like to see more development in the Industrial Park, trim money, cutback on labor and possible eliminate a full-time position to save money.

Ettle asked Timp what changes he would like to see. Timp said to get bickering and yelling straightened out and keep everyone happy.

Gary Pierskalla

K. Goebel asked Pierskalla what his personal strengths are and why his is a better applicant than anyone else. Pierskalla said he served on city council eighteen years ago and that he is semi-retired now. Pierskalla said he is approachable and easy to get along with. Pierskalla said he is not any better than anyone else; he just has a desire to make the city better.

T. Hennen asked Pierskalla what his goals would be. Pierskalla said he would like to see harmony among city council and in city hall. Pierskalla said he would like to see the bad press stop. Pierskalla said he is willing to work with everyone.

Atkinson asked Pierskalla if he thought there were any areas of needed major improvement. Pierskalla said efficiency in the maintenance department can be improved. Pierskalla said just by looking down Main Street, some things don't look right. Pierskalla said Freeport needs more business and housing. Pierskalla said the city is in great shape and we can be proud.

Mike Eveslage

K. Goebel asked Eveslage what his strengths area and why he is a better applicant than others. Eveslage said he is not better than any other citizen. Eveslage said he and his family moved back to town and since he is here, he feels he should learn more about the city and what is going on here. Eveslage said he made a living listening, as a teacher, and listening is important. Eveslage said Freeport is incredibly taxed. Eveslage said he currently works for his family's business doing office work.

T. Hennen asked if work would be an issue. Eveslage said no. Eveslage said it's important the city work with existing business and that getting new business help.

Atkinson asked Eveslage what changes he would like to see. Eveslage said he would like to see reduced taxes, if possible. Eveslage said he would like to know why taxes are high.

Andrea Ramacher

K. Goebel asked Ramacher why she thinks she is better than any other applicant. Ramacher said she is not better. Ramacher said she grew-up around the area and now that she is back she wants to get involved in government. Ramacher said she didn't file for office in November, because she felt everyone was qualified. Ramacher said she has excellent listening and negotiating skills. Ramacher said she would like to see council meetings running more smoothly and getting community more involved. Ramacher said taxes are high and that Freeport is three times more expensive to live-in than Albany. Ramacher said taxes are turning people away. Ramacher said she feels there's a strong city council now. Ramacher said citizens need to be present to know fully what is going on.

Ettle asked what Ramacher what her goals are. Ramacher said less government and less spending. Ramacher said the city has spent money redoing things that were unnecessary.

Recess

Atkinson recessed the meeting a 7:42pm. Atkinson reconvened the meeting at 7:47pm,

Determining Frontrunners to Invite Back For Second Interview on January 14th

City council members discussed among themselves whom they would want to invite back for a second interview.

Ettle moved and T. Hennen seconded a motion to ask Gary Pierskalla, Carrie Goebel, Mike Eveslage, and Andrea Ramacher back for a second interview on January 14th at 7pm. Motion carried 4-0.

Atkinson said he wanted to call an Emergency Meeting to consider appointment of Tim Hennen to Acting Mayor. Schirmer asked Atkinson if he was calling an Emergency Meeting while in the middle of the special meeting. Atkinson said that's right, since we don't have to pay for no extra meeting. Schirmer recommended adjourning the current meeting before opening another. K. Goebel said the special meeting should be adjourned. Atkinson said it can be adjourned

Adjourn

Ettle moved and K. Goebel seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

Rodney Atkinson, Mayor

Mason Schirmer, Clerk-Treasurer



CITY OF FREEPORT

125 Main Street E – PO Box 301 – Freeport, MN 56331 – 320-836-2112 – FAX 320-836-2116
For TTY/TDD Users 1-800-627-3529 or 711 Minnesota Relay Service www.freeportmn.org

January 13, 2015 - Meeting Minutes

An emergency meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:55pm by Mayor Rodney Atkinson with Councilmembers Ken Goebel, Tim Hennen and Ben Ettle present.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Mason Schirmer, Administrative Assistant Adrianna Hennen.

Public in attendance:

Carrie Goebel (207 3rd Ave SE)

Gary Pierskalla (324 8th St SE)

Gerald Wiechmann (505 1st Ave N)

Mark Middendorf (711 Main St E)

Matt Worms (124 9th Se SE)

Ron Ritter (205 2nd Ave SW)

Vernon Fuchs & Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Av N)

Appointing Acting Mayor

Atkinson said he is calling an emergency meeting. Atkinson said he would feel much more comfortable if Tim Hennen was appointed Acting Mayor. Schirmer said an emergency meeting is a special meeting called by the council due to circumstances that, in its judgment, require immediate council consideration. Schirmer said it's up to the city council to determine if the matter requires immediate consideration.

Atkinson said to T. Hennen to make a motion so we can get on with this. T. Hennen moved and Ettle seconded a motion to appoint Tim Hennen Acting Mayor. Motion carried 4-0.

Atkinson moved that the meeting fee be waived and the meeting be adjourned. Schirmer said motions should be made separately. Atkinson moved that the meeting fee be waived. Schirmer said the fee is set by ordinance.

Adjourn

Ettle moved and K. Goebel seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 8pm.

Rodney Atkinson, Mayor

Mason Schirmer, Clerk-Treasurer



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January 14, 2015 - Meeting Minutes

A special meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:10pm by Mayor Rodney Atkinson with Councilmembers Ken Goebel, Tim Hennen and Ben Etle present.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Mason Schirmer.

Residents in attendance:

Carrie Goebel (207 3rd Ave SE)

Gary Pierskalla (324 8th St SE)

Mike Eveslage (106 7th St SW)

Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Av N)

Al Williams (308 2nd Ave NW)

Mayor Atkinson's Opening Statement

Atkinson said, "Gary, you've been here before, a long time ago. You've been here. You've been to meetings. You ain't. That's all good. That's got nothing to do with what we have here today. This isn't easy, but if for some reason I feel compelled to let all of you know a little bit about this job. I don't believe anyone has ever had as difficult of a time as me. If you actually care about your life, this job could very easily destroy it and I am sincere. I feel as though I have been stabbed in the back, kicked in the ribs, punched in the kidneys, drug down Main Street, and with all good intent I'm sure. But it's difficult when you truly believe that what your doing is as fair as you can and what you feel you are doing is truly in the best interest of your community and no matter who you are not everyone will agree with you. If you end up in that situation all I can say is you have to have very, very strong beliefs. I don't know what it is and I still don't understand how I made it but you have to be strong and unrelenting. Some examples, the EDA they spend their time critiquing my campaign literature and maybe I was wrong but I did believe that Buddy Heidgerken was seated without the proper credentials. When I was first elected, Joe Hennen asked me to come here and I would never say no to Joe. And the biggest thing at that time, I was warned about that the policy was bills got paid and then motions were made to approve them. I knew that was wrong, yet I was in the minority. And I had to take a roundabout way to try and show that. Let's use an example from 2011, and all of this took many months to come around, so I do believe I spent nine months working on getting that changed and in September it was changed. It may not have been perfect, but at least we had something. I look out my window and I see construction being done and to find out that the permits had expired, that was not good. So sometimes it's going to be very had for you four to know what the right thing really is, because it doesn't seem the right is always the same from one month to the next, one year to the next, even now. We had turnover on the council. New things will be right and new things will be wrong and what was right and wrong in December. And some of those things can be hard to rationalize and hard to come to terms with and yet that's what we do here. When I say that, none of you could imagine. I guess this is how it is, after the election, I was very happy to have won and I was curious at how many votes did I get and how many did Carrie get, and I was sitting in the bar as usual so I didn't get my email until 1:00 or midnight so I googled my name, something I apparently hadn't done. Rodney Atkinson and a whole bunch of shit came up and I put Rodney Atkinson Freeport. It's a little astounding when you do the google search and what you see

staring at you is unforgiveable, unexplainable; unimaginable it's as if you'd just gotten into some fucking horror movie you can't...

Schirmer said to Atkinson, "please watch your language; this is a city council meeting; maintain decorum and order."

Atkinson said, "I am watching it very closely and I choose my... I did not recognize you. I never imagined that would happen. I never imagined someone would be prosecuted to that degree, never imagined and yet it will be there forever. And I think that you four that are coming here ought to know that my story could be yours. If you truly have convictions, if you truly have beliefs, if you will uncompromisingly work to achieve those goals then I want you to know what the consequences could very easily be. Along with all of that my business gets profiled as a nuisance and I told Tim many times, Tim your violations is just as bad and just as many as mine. I get along with Brian and Fastlane, let's throw Brian under the bus too. Selective prosecution is just as discriminatory as saying black people can't come in my building and I never played the victim card. I'm only telling you if you believe, if you are with convictions, and you are relentless in the pursuit of what you believe is right this will not be pleasant. But your options aren't many the only other option is ignorance which I witnessed a lot of. Simple pure ignorance. Ignorance is the lack of knowledge. We're all born ignorant. We must make an effort to become knowledgeable and whichever one of your four sits here I will demand that you will be knowledgeable. I think that, and Tim has seen it already when I print stuff off the League of MN website, I do the research and share it with them. Because when you sit here, it's like I have a little grandbaby, he's starting to eat real food, but before that that kid didn't get no choice, what I put on that spoon that's what that little guy ate. He did get no choice. Either you can get good and hungry or you can eat it right now it's your choice. It's like Ronald Reagan said when he was dealing with the cold war and the wall yeah we trust the Russians, but we will verify everything they say and I don't want you to be mistrusting because it can make it very miserable but you must verify things, you must have something in your mind when something isn't adding up, when something isn't quite right. I sat at your December meeting, I'm watching resolutions get passed and am I really the only one here that really knows what is going on? Am I the only one who knows how many MN statutes we have just violated? I think a statute is a law, I don't know what it's called, apparently there are laws that have no penalties for violating. Other rules that aren't laws but are just simple rules and policies the penalty can be so severe that your life will never be the same. I'm not trying to scare any of you; I think all four of you are great. I'd love to work with any of you, but I don't want you coming in here thinking were going to sit around the campfire singing kumbaya. We've got real business, real stuff. We got a lot of stuff that happened the last two years that we gotta get straightened out and you four can do it without me or you can do it with me. You four including one of you. You're going to see road blocks, people put up detours, you're going to have barricades in front of yourself, but when you see that happening you might just be the one with the good idea, that's the time to dig in. if it don't smell right, and it don't look right get on your internet, do your research, get your facts. The League of Minnesota Cities has a tremendous amount of information and even better than that is the Office of Administration. Other people who have done this job in other towns other clerks, other city administrators, people you've known in your life. Every tool that you have, you need to bring to every meeting not just some. Anyway I'm done, thank you."

Interviewing Frontrunners A Second Time (7:25pm)

City council members invited candidates C. Goebel, Pierskalla, Eveslage and Ramacher to take turns answering a question before the next question would be asked.

K. Goebel said during the initial interviews candidates said the city needs to reduce the tax levy and that the city recently reduced its tax levy 8%. K. Goebel asked how they would reduce taxes further.

Eveslage said the Maintenance department needs to be evaluated and that the city's not getting the return on its investment. Eveslage said streets were in terrible condition after the first snow. Eveslage said everything would be on the butcher block.

Pierskalla said he agrees with Eveslage. Pierskalla said the city has two full-time maintenance employees, is selling-off equipment, preventative maintenance is being done, and is hiring-out work they could otherwise do, such as rodding. Pierskalla said hydrants are not being flushed. Pierskalla said these employees should interact with the people; however, they seem to drive through town and disappear. Pierskalla said he would also like to look at how the city incurs legal fees.

Ramacher said he agrees with Eveslage and Pierskalla regarding maintenance and legal. Ramacher said she would like to look more closely at cell phones and insurance. Ramacher said the city needs to look at small things too, that they add-up.

C. Goebel said monthly expenses should be more closely reviewed to identify unnecessary spending. C. Goebel said EDA lunches are an unnecessary thirty dollar per month expense that should be eliminated. C. Goebel said the city should do more price shopping, even on things such as cell phones, softener salt and chemicals for the water and sewer systems.

Hennen asked if they had a chance to meet anybody, from any point in time, who would it be?

Pierskalla said he would like to meet the Pope, because he seems like he's doing a good job making changes and reaching-out to the younger generations.

Ramacher said she would like to meet Oprah, because she is a woman, a minority, came from nothing, and pushes everyone to be their best.

C. Goebel said music is big part of her family and she would like to meet Luke Bryan, especially because of his willingness to give to good causes.

Eveslage said he would like to meet Ronald Regan, because he had to make difficult decisions and do so with dignity while remaining comfortable in his own skin.

Ettle asked why they did not file for office to get elected.

Ramacher said she was already attending meetings to see how it was going. Ramacher said she did not want to take any votes away from another candidate. Ramacher said she heard a lot of people get appointed.

C. Goebel said she did not win; however, she enjoyed learning while serving on council over the past four years and that she wants to keep learning.

Eveslage said he had just moved back to town and at that point his family was still undergoing a lot of change. Eveslage said he previously worked as a Social Studies teacher and that government has always been an important part of his life.

Pierskalla said he had been there and done that before; he said he served four years previously and felt that he had done his duty. Pierskalla said he did not file because it's time to let the younger generation step-in.

Atkinson asked what kind of development challenge they see for the Industrial Park. K. Goebel added to Atkinson's question by asking for their opinion on potentially redeveloping the creamery property.

C. Goebel said she'd like to see new development but that would require the creamery board willing to negotiate, and in regards to the Industrial Park, it's important to ensure a potential lot purchaser's first contact with the city is a good one.

Eveslage questioned the structural integrity of the creamery building and doubted it would be suitable for a business venture. Eveslage said maybe converting the property into multi-family living. Eveslage said the

building is not worth putting money into. Eveslage said he would like to know what brought Whirlwind to Freeport.

Pierskalla said he'd like to see the Creamery Board make the lot buildable without city money. Pierskalla said people in Melrose have complimented on Freeport's Industrial Park. Pierskalla said the city needs to be business-friendly. Pierskalla said he would like to see something happen with the Gerald Meyer corner lot as well as with Rodney Atkinson's lot. Pierskalla said there is plenty of housing potential. Pierskalla said Freeport just needs to be accommodating.

Ramacher said Melrose people have complimented on Freeport's Industrial Park and that Freeport is very accommodating. Ramacher said she would like to see local businesses hire local people. Ramacher said the city needs to find a way to get rid of the creamery building; however, she is unsure what the answer is.

K. Goebel asked if they thought utility fees are high, and if the water tower fee is fair.

Eveslage said people should pay their fair share.

Pierskalla was unsure; however, he said he was concerned over how Industrial Park lots were sold and how assessments were handled, especially in the past.

Ramacher said if residents are not using a service they should not get billed for it and that twenty dollars each month adds-up for low and fixed income residents.

C. Goebel said most people seem upset about the twenty dollar per month water tower fee because they were under the impression the USDA grant was paying for the entire cost of the tower; however, the grant paid for a portion and the monthly fee pays for the other portion.

Atkinson asked if they had suggestions for providing youth activities.

Pierskalla said he was not certain if the community center is being fully utilized. Pierskalla said the city could benefit from having a dedicated activity director to focus on addressing the issue.

Ramacher said kids are already so involved with their schools and other organizations and was not sure what can be done to attract kids to do a city activity. Ramacher said even Albany has difficulty attracting youth to city activities.

C. Goebel said Freeport has summer girls softball and boys baseball; however, if you don't attend Sacred Heart School you likely don't hear about it. C. Goebel said having someone focus on the issue would be beneficial.

Eveslage said he agrees with C. Goebel. Eveslage said there are a lot of young families in the new development and that the city needs a motivated person to help find a solution.

Recess

Atkinson recessed the meeting at 8:25pm. Atkinson reconvened the meeting at 8:35pm,

Determine Finalist and Consider Appointment to City Council

Council members each wrote down the name of their preferred candidate and Schirmer collected. Schirmer said C. Goebel received two votes, Eveslage received one vote, Ramacher received one vote and Pierskalla received zero votes.

Atkinson asked Pierskalla if he wants to withdraw his name from consideration. Pierskalla thanked the city council for the opportunity and withdrew his name from consideration. Pierskalla said he is not offended

and that the remaining candidates are quality candidates from a younger generation. Pierskalla said he knows everyone serving on council does so for the city and appreciates their service.

Council provided the remaining three candidates with a maximum of two minutes each to make any additional remarks.

Eveslage said council could pick either of the remaining three and they would still be ending-up with a person that cares. Eveslage said his expectations would be some things have to change and the issues in city hall are first.

Ramacher said C. Goebel may have the experience of serving on city council; however, new blood is helpful and said she understand the difficulty of council's decision.

C. Goebel said either of the remaining candidates would make good decisions and willing to hear-out requests. C. Goebel said a city council member's opinion can change and said it's important to go with your gut and to keep an open mind.

Council members each wrote down the name of their preferred candidate again and Schirmer collected. Schirmer said C. Goebel received one vote, Eveslage received two votes, and Ramacher received one vote.

Council members each wrote down the name of their preferred candidate a third time and Schirmer collected. Schirmer said the totals had not changed; C. Goebel received one vote, Eveslage received two votes, and Ramacher received one vote.

Hennen moved and Etle seconded a motion to appoint Eveslage to the vacant city council member seat. Hennen said everyone is super good; however, he likes Eveslage's teaching background and that he must have experience holding his ground against students. K. Goebel said he has no problems with Eveslage and that he thinks Eveslage has a decent head on his shoulders. Etle said he thinks they are all good and it's hard to make the decision to pick someone. Atkinson said in his heart he's a demographic guy and thinks the city council should have a female. Atkinson said Ramacher is his preferred candidate since he has known her a long time and can trust here. Atkinson said what he is looking for, is someone he can trust. Motion carried 4-0. Atkinson said motion by unanimous consent.

Adjourn

Atkinson adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm.

Rodney Atkinson, Mayor

Mason Schirmer, Clerk-Treasurer