



## **CITY OF FREEPORT**

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### **September 15, 2015 – Meeting Minutes**

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

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Adrianna Hennen, Maintenance Assistant Vernon Fuchs

Residents in attendance:

Andrea Ramacher (720 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N)  
Mark Middendorf (711 Main St. E)  
Bryan Backes (Becker, MN)

Gerald Meyer (330 8<sup>th</sup> St. SE)  
Gary Pierskalla (324 8<sup>th</sup> St. SE)

### **Public Works Director Interviews**

Two individuals were interviewed for the Public Works Director position.

The first to be interviewed was Bryan Backes of Becker, MN. He explained that he has a Class C water and wastewater license. Backes started out doing water and wastewater early in his career and has helped out City's ever since. He currently is helping his father farm, but is looking to move this direction and remove himself away from farming. He has a high level experience and seemed very knowledgeable about equipment and other maintenance tasks. He said he would like to only be on call every other weekend and be able to rely on others in need of emergency. Backes's pay expectations were around the \$22.00 per hour.

The second candidate to be interviewed was Loren Goebel of Freeport, MN. Goebel stated he does not have a water and wastewater license, but would be able to get them if hired for the position, along with his CDL driver's license. He had no problem with being on call, since he is used to being on call for the Freeport Fire Department. Goebel didn't think that working in a town he lived in posed as a problem. Goebel stated he has a very strong work ethic, likes to keep busy with work and that is why he is interested in this position.

Council decided that they would take one week, until the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, to think about the two candidates and make a decision then.

### **2016 Preliminary Budget Review**

Council was presented with a preliminary budget levy for the 2016 year prepared by Deputy Treasure Joan Wall. Council expressed that instead of having specific street improvement funds that they would rather have a general streets fund, along with equipment funds to set money aside for future purchases. Council had many questions regarding the outstanding bonds the City has. Wall and A. Hennen were unable to answer a lot of the questions regarding the bonds, but it was determined that more indepth analysis on the bonds need to be done to understand the total outstanding debt, how much is coming in to pay the bonds from special assessments, how much is being paid by the water and sewer fund, and how much the City has to levy for each year. Wall and A. Hennen stated that they would try to have something like this for the October regular meeting. K. Goebel stated that a fourteen percent increase in levy's from last year seemed

high. A. Hennen stated that it did seem high, but considering that the levy had either stayed the same or gone down the last two years was the reason for this drastic increase for 2016. A. Hennen stated that a City should never really decrease their levy, but it's more economical to increase slightly every year to avoid drastic swings from year to year. Atkinson backed this up by saying that just because it looks like a fourteen percent increase from last year doesn't mean that it shows up that way on resident's taxes, that is determined by market values. Atkinson asked how this levy would affect taxes to the residents. A. Hennen wasn't able to give an exact number to that question but stated she would find out. Atkinson recommended raising the preliminary levy amount to \$431,000 from the proposed \$417,500 to make up for the six percent it should have gone up the last two years (three percent each year). This will allow the council to start setting money aside for future improvements and other costs that will come up. K. Goebel moved to approved a proposed levy amount of \$431,000, seconded by T. Hennen. Atkinson called for a roll-call vote: Ertle-yes, T. Hennen-yes, Atkinson-yes, K. Goebel-yes, Eveslage-yes. Motion carried 5-0.

### **Adjourn**

T. Hennen moved to adjourn, seconded by Ertle. Motion carried 5-0.

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Mayor, Rodney Atkinson

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City Clerk-Treasurer, Adrianna Hennen