



CITY OF FREEPORT

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December 29, 2015 – Meeting Minutes

A regular 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, Deputy Treasurer Joan Wall, Public Works Director Loren Goebel, City Attorney Scott Dymoke, City Engineer Dave Blommel, and Maintenance Assistant Vernon Fuchs.

Residents in attendance:

Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Ave N)
Carrie Goebel (207 3rd Ave SE)
Allen Herdering (218 3rd St NE)
Ashley Feldewerd (New Munich)
Sister Janine Braun
Andy Welle (Freeport)
Kathy Welle (Freeport)
Bob Harren (Freeport)
Sarah Herdering (Melrose)
Gerry Mayers (413 1st Ave N)
Phil Osendorf (124 2nd St NE)

Craig Timp (213 2nd Ave NW)
Gene & Rita Blommel (215 2nd St NE)
Paster Mitch Wall-Harvest Church (338 Main St W)
Fr. Daniel Walz (106 3rd Ave NE)
Judy Caveny (New Munich)
Jeremy & Emily Smith (Melrose)
Matt & Christie Zink (Freeport)
Sue Frieler (313 2nd St NW)
John Gilk (108 9th St SE)
Amy Wilwerding (Freeport)

Approve Agenda

A. Hennen stated that she took SunShare off of the agenda since the weather was bad in the Cities and the representative would not be able to make it. T. Hennen moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Eveslage. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Hearing - Public comment on Conditional Use Permit application for the Sacred Heart School Gymnasium and After Care Facility

Allen Herdering expressed his dissatisfaction with the proposed building being directly east to his home. Herdering stated that his may decrease the value of his home with having a building so close to him. Herdering stated that he will contact an attorney if this conditional use permit is granted.

Jim Hemker, representing Sacred Heart School/Parish, explained that this is the only location that they can find that would allow them to build the gymnasium. Hemker explained that between 1988 and 1993 the Parish grounds became inundated with sewer lines, one main sewer especially that cannot be moved according the City Engineer Dave Blommel. Hemker explained that even in the proposed location one sewer line will have to be moved.

Herdering stated there are other options instead of a gymnasium. Herdering stated there is an auditorium in school that isn't being utilized and a community center that sits vacant during the week.

Hemker explained that the auditorium cannot be used because it does not have elevator access which was denied by the building inspector. Also, busing to the community center would be expensive. Hemker stated that they looked down all of these avenues, but having its own facility was the best option for the school.]

Hemker also went on to explain that Sacred Heart is one of the only parochial schools in the area that is growing.

Sister Janine Braun (Sacred Heart School Principal) expressed the students' need for a recreational space to enhance the children's physical education.

Amy Wilwerding expressed her favoritism for the gymnasium and stated that it would not only benefit the school, but the whole community.

Mayor Atkinson stated that this has to be determined by facts and rules and that we can't let emotion make the decision.

Mayor Atkinson closed the public hearing at 7:45pm.

Open Public Forum

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

T. Hennen moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Ertle. Motion carried 5-0.

Reports

Deputy Treasurer Report

Council expressed their satisfaction with knowing how the water tower advance payment works, that Freeport cannot make additional or extra payments until 2020. Council thanked her for the rest of her report.

Public Works Reports

Council thanked L. Goebel for documenting his activities and expressed how happy they were to be receiving reports like this.

Engineer Report

Blommel didn't have anything to report.

Attorney Report

Council thanked Dymoke for his report.

Old Business

Mail Ballot Voting

Ertle moved to rescind the action on mail ballot voting, seconded by Eveslage. Eveslage stated that there is time to really think about this option and to get more public opinion on the matter. Atkinson asked for a roll call vote: Atkinson-yes, Ertle-yes, Eveslage-yes, K. Goebel-no, T. Hennen-yes. Motion carried 4-1. K.

Goebel moved to schedule a public hearing on January 26th to receive public comment on mail ballot voting with Dave Walz in attendance to answer questions, seconded by Eveslage. Motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2015-23 – A Resolution Appointing the Freeport Fire Department Officers for Year 2016

K. Goebel moved to approve Resolution 2015-23, seconded by T. Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Fire Department Grant Opportunity

Fire Chief John Gilk asked for council's approval to apply for a FEMA grant. Gilk explained that if they receive the grant they will have to pay 5% of whatever is received. Gilk stated that they have been using the same grant writer for a number of years and this writer has helped them receive grants in the past. T.

Hennen asked how much the grant writer charged, Gilk said he charges \$300. Eittle moved to allow the fire department to apply for the FEMA grant, seconded by K. Goebel. Motion carried 5-0.

Gilk stated that he hasn't been Fire Chief for a quite a while and that back then any purchases over \$1,000 had to be approved by council first. Gilk asked council if they would agree to go back to that method.

Council unanimously agreed.

Dog Boarding

Eveslage asked why the EDA had recommended to not allowing dog boarding in the industrial park. A. Hennen explained that this topic came up casually at the EDA meeting and the EDA thought it may have a negative impact on selling the remaining lots if there was a dog boarding facility.

Mayor Atkinson explained that the EDA tries to act more conservative. The EDA put a lot of work and money into the industrial park and they are very protective over it, so if they see anything that might negatively impact the business and the remaining lots they will not suggest it.

Hemker stated the EDA was not provided with a lot of information on this topic so they were going off of what they thought.

T. Hennen said that he thought the council and the EDA probably had a picture in their mind of what this might look like based on boarding facility near Upsala. T. Hennen said that boarding facilities usually look like vet clinics with a few fences and kennels in the back to allow for running and outside time. T. Hennen said that you can hardly tell that these are boarding sites.

Mayor Atkinson said that discussion would end unless there was a reason to bring it up next month.

Cellphone

A. Hennen explained that after the last council meeting, when council agreed to buy a city phone, L. Goebel and A. Hennen learned how to use the security/alarm system that control the tower, wells, and lift stations.

A. Hennen explained that it is a very easy process to change the phone numbers to get notified so L. Goebel and A. Hennen didn't know if it was necessary to buy a whole new phone. Mayor Atkinson said the city should still have their own phone because who is responsible if L. Goebel's phone were to "fall down a man hole"? This was if anything happens to the city phone, the city replaces it. Council agreed to keep the motion they had made at the last meeting to purchase a phone.

New Business

Pay Equity Report

Eveslage moved to approve the proposed pay equity plan, seconded by Eittle. Motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2015-24 - Approving the Conditional Use Permit for the Sacred Heart School Gymnasium and After Care Facility

Atkinson asked that it might be helpful knowing the height restrictions in Residential (R-1) zone. Atkinson said that if the gym builds no higher than the restricted height, Allen Herdering might be more comfortable with that, since a house could build next door at the same height. A. Hennen and Attorney Dymoke stepped out of the council room to review the height restrictions. A. Hennen and Dymoke returned to the council room with two pieces of information. One, the height restriction is 30feet. Hemker said that they would make the building no higher than 30 feet. Also, it was discovered while reading through the code that with a conditional use in R-1, the setback is 30 feet. Hemker stated that the board did not have this information and that the building was about 24 feet away from the property line. Dymoke explained that if the School wanted to keep the 24 foot setback they currently had, the School would have to apply for a variance. Atkinson asked Dymoke if they could still approve the Conditional Use permit, to at least say the City is going to allow them to build the gymnasium, but then have a later meeting to discuss the variance. Dymoke said yes, the council can approve the Conditional Use Permit and then the council could later review the variance request. Eveslage made a motion to approve Resolution 2015-24 with the condition that a variance be accepted, seconded by K. Goebel. Atkinson asked for a roll call vote: Atkinson-yes, Etle-yes, Eveslage-yes, K. Goebel-yes, T. Hennen-yes. Motion carried 5-0.

Audit Prep – BerganKDV versus Schlenner Wenner

A. Hennen stated that Joe Rigdon of BerganKDV is very confident that Deputy Wall would be able to do a lot of the year end entries with direction from Rigdon and that Rigdon would not have to travel to Freeport this year. Eveslage moved to keep Joe Rigdon as our audit prep advisor, seconded by Eveslage. Motion carried 5-0.

Adjourn

Atkinson moved to adjourn at 9:30pm, seconded by Eveslage. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor, Rodney Atkinson

City Clerk-Treasurer, Adrianna Hennen