



CITY OF FREEPORT

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June 25, 2019 – Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:00pm by Mayor Mike Eveslage, and councilmembers Sarah Blake, Ben Ettle, Tim Hennen, and Jake Renneker.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Joan Wall, City Engineer Dave Blommel, City Attorney Scott Dymoke

Others in attendance:

Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Ave N)

Carol Moorman (Melrose Beacon)

Philip Linn (1000 2nd Ave SE)

Molly Thompson (Schlenner Wenner & Co)

Ryan Meyer (Schlenner Wenner & Co)

Approve Agenda

Ettle moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

2018 Audit Presentation

Molly Thompson and Ryan Meyer from Schlenner Wenner & Co. explained the audit process and went through highlights from the 2018 audit report. The City received an unmodified clean opinion. Renneker moved to accept the audit report, seconded by Ettle. Motion carried 5-0.

Open Public Forum

Philip Linn explained his concerns about the ball park near his house. His son was asked not to ride his 4-wheeler at the ball park. Linn was upset because of the following issues: he picks up trash related to the ball park, people park on their street because there isn't enough parking, vehicles block hydrants because there's no yellow paint on the curb, and recently, lights were left on until midnight after a game. Eveslage explained there isn't much the City can do because it isn't a city-owned park. Craig Meyer heard about the lights staying on and said it wouldn't happen again. Eveslage will touch base again with Craig Meyer.

Consent Agenda

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

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

No report was given.

Fire Department Report

No report was given.

Public Works Report

No report was given.

Engineer Report

Blommel stated that we would look at the coming street project at the next meeting. USDA grant funding will not be available because Freeport's median household income is too high. He will look at our other options.

Stearns County is on board if the City purchases, installs, and maintains radar speed signs. Their sign technician will help with installation and we can use their sign posts. The County prefers placement at the point where the speed limit changes. Blake asked if the signs are effective, since we didn't budget for this. Blommel believes they are effective. Blommel, Eveslage, and Hennen said this is the third time we've talked about this since Blommel has been around, so this isn't a new topic. Eveslage stated that a donor has pledged to give up to \$10,000 toward the purchase of these signs. Hennen moved to approve purchasing 4 radar speed signs for up to \$18,100, seconded by Eittle. Roll call vote: Blake – yes, Eittle – yes, Eveslage – yes, Hennen – yes, Renneker – yes.

Eveslage proposed submitting a letter to the editor from the Council to local papers making a plea for drivers to watch their speed while driving through Freeport. Council agreed and Eittle suggested also putting it on the City's Facebook page.

Blommel talked to County Engineer Jodi Teich about putting a crosswalk on CSAH 11 by the ice cream shop. She looked at it very unfavorably and gave several compelling reasons. We don't want to give people a false sense of security. We would need to find other/additional ways to draw attention to pedestrians, like pedestrian push-button devices to alert traffic with a flashing light. That could cost \$40,000. Blommel explained that here in small-town USA, people park their car on the road and cross where they park instead of using crosswalks.

Further discussion was had regarding ways to slow traffic down and increase safety on the street near the ice cream shop. Rumble strips were mentioned, but neighbors wouldn't like that. Blommel stated there is a way to paint or place a sticker on the roadway that appears to be a median. It would slow drivers down, but is expensive. We could paint the curb yellow so people wouldn't park so close to the corners and increase visibility. The intersection by the ball park was also mentioned. Blommel suggested putting up a sign that says "no parking within 10 feet of intersection".

Renneker suggested starting with painting the two curbs by the ice cream shop. The Council agreed. Blommel will check with Teich, and if she is ok with it, we can go ahead.

Attorney Report

See discussion under Old Business for Elite Transport Group.

Old Business

Elite Transport Group

Dymoke explained that rezoning from industrial to residential would allow a business to continue operating, but would prevent them from expanding. The City could also revise our parking ordinance to add more restrictions on semis. The City would need to hold a public hearing in order to rezone.

Hennen asked if changing the creamery property to residential would allow someone to live in a camper inside the building. Dymoke said no, it would not. Rezoning would also give the City another reason to say no to the “garage sales” being held at the creamery property.

Dymoke explained if an industrial or commercial building burned down in a residential zone, they could rebuild by obtaining a permit within six months. If they missed the six-month timeline, they could not rebuild unless it was a residential building. Dymoke explained the City should set the zones the way we want to see the property used in the future. Several of the council members expressed they were in favor of the proposed zoning changes. Dymoke will research rezoning, scheduling a hearing, and updating the parking ordinance.

Corner Pub

Eveslage stated Pooch got quotes on remodeling the Corner Pub. One quote has a retractable step so it wouldn't be in the alley after business hours. He still wants to pursue using the property across the alley. Dymoke advised Community Festival licenses can be offered to an on-sale license holder for all types of alcohol, not just 3.2. They must identify where they are selling and must be for a short period of time. Eveslage asked if the alcohol could be carried across the alley or does it need to be delivered to the temporary spot? How many Community Festival licenses can be issued in a year? Dymoke replied that we would need to check with the alcohol control board. He believes they may be lenient about those things. Eveslage will ask Lori Austing to research.

New Business

Stearns County Comprehensive Plan Update

Hennen moved to approve the EDA's suggested expansion of the Urban Expansion area, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Adjourn

Ettle moved to adjourn, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor, Mike Eveslage

City Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall