



CITY OF FREEPORT

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September 24, 2019 – Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:02pm by Mayor Mike Eveslage, and councilmembers Sarah Blake, Ben Ettle, Tim Hennen, and Jake Renneker.

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Joan Wall, Public Works Director Loren Goebel, Administrative Assistant Lori Austing, City Engineer Dave Blommel, City Attorney Scott Dymoke

Others in attendance:

Jason Hartman (Waste Management)

Carol Moorman (Melrose Beacon)

Rodney Atkinson (310 8th St SE)

Jason & Heather Hoeschen (1020 2nd Ave SE)

Andrea Ramacher & Vern Fuchs (720 1st Ave N)

Approve Agenda

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

Open Public Forum

No comment was given.

Consent Agenda

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

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

Eveslage stated that for \$125, it was a good move to register for the MRWA training on financing community projects.

Fire Department Report

No report was given.

Public Works Report

Blommel gave updates, as Goebel was going to arrive late to the meeting. Blommel reported that three of the four radar speed signs were installed and working. The sign installed on the east side of town wasn't working so the company will be replacing it. The City is very thankful to Stearns County for helping with the installation of the signs.

Blommel reported that the I & I improvements at the Industrial Park lift station were completed. There was not a big hole down there like Blommel thought there may be.

Goebel arrived.

Engineer Report

Blommel reported that because Freeport's Median Household Income is too high, we are not eligible for grant dollars. Both USDA and DEED recommend that we do not spend money on doing an income survey to see if we qualify because we are too far away from meeting the threshold. PFA is our best option because we score high on their priority list. They offer good low interest loans and have a history of forgiving a portion of loan principal.

Freeport may be able to get some grant funds to help with storm water within the next couple of years.

Blommel stated no one will give him firm quotes for painting the old water tower because they are all too busy to come out right now. The estimate Blommel is hearing is \$40,000-\$60,000 for an overcoat.

Eveslage asked about funds coming through the State Legislature. Blommel stated lobbyists have begun talking to the legislature about being included in a funding (bonding) bill, but we may need to wait for another session before we see any results. We may need to work on our story to convince our representatives we need funds because we don't qualify for grants.

Attorney Report

Dymoke explained it is time to renew our insurance with the League of Minnesota Cities. We need a motion from Council on whether or not to waive the statutory liability limits. The statutory liability limits are limited to \$500,000 per person with a maximum of \$1,500,000 if someone sues the City and we're at fault. In the past the City has waived the limits. The standard insurance package is \$2,000,000.

Hennen moved to waive the statutory liability limits, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Old Business

Ordinance 2019-04 Rezoning Properties

Ettle moved to approve Ordinance 2019-04, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Waste Management

Jason Hartman from Waste Management (WM) explained that when they imported the customer data the prices should have been what Danny's Disposal was charging. The administrative charge and price increases shouldn't have been applied and are being fixed. To explain the difference in price for a 4-yard dumpster, Hartman stated that Danny's charged everything based on weight, but WM does not. WM took a 6-month average from Danny's and began billing that amount. Each customer with a dumpster is receiving a different rate because of this and pricing should not fluctuate from month to month. Hartman stated he doesn't have a good answer on how it all happened. Pooch's Corner Pub has reached out and has received a credit from WM.

Rodney Atkinson stated their bill hasn't been fixed yet and he has not received a reply to a phone message. Atkinson stated when the WM contract was signed the City was told commercial accounts would be charged \$0.10 per pound. Eveslage asked Hartman and Atkinson to work it out.

Vern Fuchs stated if WM is not charging based on the contract, they are in breach and we can get another hauler. Dymoke responded the contract states WM and the City would need to negotiate in good faith and using mediation. Per the contract, rates are subject to change with a 30-day notice. Perhaps the contract

could be amended to come up with something that works. Hartman added even if we renegotiate, we will end up with an average, not based on weight. WM would pick up all the commercial garbage, take it to the dump, and weigh it there. An average would be calculated and commercial customers would be charged that way. Ertle stated a whole town average doesn't seem fair because we have so many different types of businesses.

Hennen stated the City isn't in the garbage business and we don't do billing. Can Hartman reach out to the individual customers and work it out? Hartman said yes customers can contact him and email works best. Ertle asked if Hartman could call each commercial customer instead of waiting for them to contact him. Hartman replied that Brenda from the Sauk Centre office may be able to call all the businesses. Hartman will contact her.

2020 Preliminary Budget

Discussion was had about various budget items. Hennen asked if we could look at how the City's budget is doing in November. If we have surplus, we could look at moving it to a sinking fund. Council directed Wall to increase account 101.43100.311 Outside Maintenance by \$10,000 to account for cleaning out the Welle pond.

Renneker moved to approve Resolution 2019-09 with an increase to the General Levy from \$275,000 to \$300,000, seconded by Ertle. Motion carried 5-0.

New Business

Ameripride Contract Renewal

After discussion, Council directed Wall to buy rugs and end service with Ameripride.

EDA Appointment

Eveslage appointed Joe Hennen to fill the EDA seat opening up on 9/30/19. Ertle moved to accept the appointment, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Adjourn

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

Mayor, Mike Eveslage

City Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall