



## **CITY OF FREEPORT**

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### **December 17, 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, Public Works Director Loren Goebel, Administrative Assistant Lori Austing, City Engineer Dave Blommel, City Attorney Scott Dymoke, Fire Chief John Gilk.

#### **Others in attendance:**

Carol Moorman (Melrose Beacon)	Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Ave N)
Jason & Heather Hoeschen (1020 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave SE)	Chad Stevens (Albany)
Don Meyer (Freeport)	Andy Grieve (Freeport Fire Dept)
Phil Osendorf (124 2nd St SE)	Jamie Engelmeyer (Freeport Fire Dept)
Branden Roering (Freeport Fire Dept)	Al Williams (308 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave NW)
Rodney Atkinson (310 8 <sup>th</sup> St SE)	

#### **Approve Agenda**

Wall asked to add claims 3919 through 3923 to item 3b under Consent Agenda. Blommel brought a quote from Kotzer Excavating. Wall asked to move Resolution 2019-15 from new business to just after item 4e Reports. Renneker moved to approve the agenda with the changes, seconded by Ettle. Motion carried 5-0.

#### **Public Forum**

Eveslage asked all present to please sign in. Per City code, if you want to address the council, raise your hand to be recognized, go to the podium, state your name and address, and you will have 2 minutes to speak.

#### **Consent Agenda**

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

#### **Reports**

##### Clerk-Treasurer Report

Hennen moved to approve Schlenner Wenner's flat-rate quote of \$14,400 per year for 2019-2021, seconded by Ettle. Motion carried 5-0.

Wall stated she would be attending new clerk and election judge training on January 6 and 29 in St. Cloud. The following days are upcoming holidays and City Hall will be closed: Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

### Fire Department Report

Gilk stated he is stepping down as fire chief. As of Jan 5, Andy Grieve is the new fire chief. Jamie Engelmeyer and Brandon Roering will be new assistant chiefs. Gilk reported that they received new turnout gear and he showed us the difference between the old and the new. Grieve reported he has been working with Phil Drown Consulting on the new FEMA grant application, which will be submitted in January.

### Public Works Report

Goebel reported Kotzer got the manholes behind Botz done. The shifter broke on the ton truck and wiring took out the gauges. It is now fixed.

### Engineer Report

Blommel stated Kotzer's quote for cleaning out the pond behind Jason Hoeschen's place came in at \$7,250.00, which is less than he expected. Etle moved to approve Kotzer's quote, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Blommel explained that the Facility Plan will cover both the MPCA and PFA applications. Eveslage asked what the detailed sanitary sewer evaluation was. Blommel will use the televising the City had done previously and put it in words the MPCA will find acceptable. Hennen moved to approve the Facility Plan, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

### Attorney Report

Dymoke stated there is nothing new to report.

### **New Business**

#### Resolution 2019-15 Don Meyer Minor Subdivision

Dymoke explained before the county will allow Meyer to divide the parcel, they want a statement from Freeport saying he complies with the city's zoning requirements. Meyer can take a copy of the resolution and go forward with the project. Dymoke and Wall determined the survey complies with zoning and minor subdivision ordinances. Each property will get its own tax ID number and will be treated as 2 separate parcels. Etle moved to approve Resolution 2019-15, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

### **Old Business**

#### Old Water Tower

Eveslage asked Austing & Blommel to speak. Blommel stated a 2003 report showed lead and chromium levels, which were taken care of at the time, but not completely. Now we need to make sure rust hasn't hurt the tower structurally. If we can paint over it, we can use water-based paint. If lead & chromium levels are too high, the project will be much larger. Because the tower is not in use, we shouldn't have to do anything to the inside. We will need lab results before we know what we can do. This approach would cost about \$45,000 and would last about 15 years. After 15-20 years, then we go to option 3A. Testing & inspection would be about \$2500 and would probably happen in May.

H Hoeschen stated she thinks we should do a longer-term solution instead of a 15-year band-aid. Fundraising could occur over a 3 to 5-year period. Her hometown did a pool and waterpark for a million dollars through fundraising. Blommel stated if the inspection says we can do the bigger restoration for \$75,000, then we can look at it again.

Etle moved to approve testing and inspection for up to \$2500, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

### Rental Licensing

Eveslage explained that he thought more after the last meeting and his opinion hasn't changed. Freeport is a different market and he has sat through meetings addressing issues. A landlord can sell a property if they want. He has no problem with annual inspections because it is a safety issue. Perhaps it could have saved the person who died in the house fire. Since inspections occurred so late in 2019, maybe we could waive 2020 inspections and/or inspection fees.

Hennen agrees. In 2018, rental issues were discussed 8 times that year. Maybe we could prorate 2019 – give some kind of credit on 2020 fee to make up for it. Blake asked if we have them inspected again in 2020 since they just got done. Eveslage & Hennen say yes.

Ettle agrees it is a safety issue and agrees with having annual inspections. We could prorate the 2020 fee based on when the 2019 inspections were done.

Blake stated she doesn't think it's necessary to inspect again in 2020. Should we do it every other year? What do other communities do? Eveslage stated we had a house fire where someone died and he doesn't know if other towns have dealt with that situation. Renneker stated a lot can change in a year at a rental property. He agrees with having yearly inspections.

Al Williams asked is this just residential rentals or commercial too? Dymoke stated residential only, which includes apartment buildings. It does not cover rental of a commercial space for commercial purpose. Hennen stated all the issues last year were residential. Dymoke will look at commercial rentals.

Eveslage summarized, we have annual inspections, and we will prorate the fee in 2020 based on when 2019 inspection happened. Dymoke suggested the council have a motion and vote to prorate the fee. Ettle moved to decrease the 2020 inspection fee by \$60, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Osendorf asked if a landlord doesn't pay the fee, is there a fine for not paying? Dymoke said yes. Osendorf stated there are homes in town where the owner lives there but they have a renter in the house with them. Dymoke would have to look at ordinance again, but he believes family members are exempt. Dymoke would also need to check the zoning ordinance to see if it is prohibited to rent rooms.

### Resolution 2019-14 2020 Budget

Eveslage stated he wants to keep looking forward for projects and doesn't want to cut the budget. Auditors advise using reserves continually isn't a good idea. Blommel listed other project expenses coming down the road and streets aren't getting any better. Council decided to adjust several budget lines. Ettle moved to lower the General Fund Levy to \$261,100 and the Total Tax Levy to \$478,100 on Resolution 2019-14, seconded by Hennen. Blake-yes, Renneker-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Ettle-yes. Motion carried 5-0.

### Adjourn

At 9:25pm, Ettle moved to adjourn, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

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Mayor, Mike Eveslage

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City Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall