



CITY OF FREEPORT

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March 31, 2020 – Meeting Minutes

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

Staff in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Joan Wall, Public Works Director Loren Goebel, City Engineer Dave Blommel, City Attorney Scott Dymoke, Fire Chief Andy Grieve.

Others in attendance:

Carol Moorman (Melrose Beacon)

Rodney Atkinson (310 8th St SE)

Branden Roering (Freeport Fire Dept)

Note: most attended the meeting remotely.

Approve Agenda

Wall asked to move item c under New Business to item d under New Business, and add Resolution 2020-08 Proclaiming and Declaring a Local Emergency as item c under New Business. Hennen moved to approve the agenda with the changes, seconded by Blake. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Public Hearing – PFA Project Funding

Blommel explained the City is applying for a grant to fix the sanitary sewer system for \$1.5 million. Resolution 2020-07 is the first step in the process, but does not commit the City to the project. After no further comment, Hennen moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Eittle. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Public Forum

No comments.

Consent Agenda

Renneker moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Eittle. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

By consensus, Council agreed to move the June meeting to June 23. Wall reported the audit fieldwork has gone well and so far, there are no entries to do to make corrections. The annual MCFOA meeting to be held March 16-19 was cancelled and we expect to receive a refund after their May board meeting.

Fire Department Report

Grieve reported that earlier this month they sent three crews to the Becker fire and did six-hour shifts. The fire department received several thank you letters from the Becker middle school. There were four medical calls this month and no fire calls. The farm safety event with Albany got postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic. Drills have also been cancelled as a result of the pandemic. They have been working on a plan for if one of the members gets sick with the virus.

Public Works Report

Goebel reported on the storm drain on the north side of 7th Street between the ball park and the community center that runs out to the Interstate ditch. We have been planning on fixing the manhole there because the multiple lines of water drainage have been going under the culvert and wrecking the area. We were going to have Kotzer lower the pipe and fix it. When Kotzer looked at it, he determined the whole manhole should be fixed because it's going to fall apart and it's full of sand. Kotzer will prepare a quote for that work and lifting the manhole on 5th Avenue by Beutz's house.

Engineer Report

Blommel reported that he had just received Kotzer's quote this afternoon and it is about \$2,000 for the work on both the manholes Goebel just talked about. Eittle moved to approve the manhole work, seconded by Renneker. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Blommel reminded the Council that Resolution 2020-07 is the first step in the process for when we do assessments. Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2020-07, seconded by Blake. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Blommel reported that Sherwin Williams will also be inspecting the paint on the old water tower and they do it for free. Eveslage stated that Maguire Iron had offered to do a free inspection as well.

Attorney Report

Dymoke reported that he has been working on items surrounding the impact of the pandemic, including this meeting.

Old Business

Rental Licensing

Dymoke explained with Ordinance 2020-03 registration is changed from annually to bi-annually. Eittle moved to approve Ordinance 2020-03, seconded by Blake. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

New Business

Resolution 2020-06 Assign Addresses to Don Meyer & Stevens Properties Parcels

Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2020-06, seconded by Eittle. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

COVID-19

Council had no objections to the actions that have been taken so far. By consensus, Council agrees that we should continue to limit access to city hall. After discussion, the consensus of the Council is to stop water shut-offs temporarily, be in contact with residents who are late to set up payment plans, and continue charging late fees.

Eveslage and Grieve have worked on a proposed plan for what will happen if one of the Fire Department members is potentially exposed to the coronavirus without protective gear during a call. If a patient coughs, sneezes, or spits on them, some firefighters won't want to go home in case they infect their family. Eveslage and Grieve propose to allow a firefighter to quarantine for 14 days at the senior citizen center. They would like to pay quarantined firefighters their current hourly pay rate 24 hours per day for weekdays (10 out of the 14 days). The pay could be used for food and supplies and this arrangement is only available for COVID-19. Grieve doesn't want the firefighter to wait until the end of the year to be paid and Wall confirmed that would not be a problem. Eveslage moved to approve the use of the senior citizen center for firefighter COVID-19 quarantine and to pay them 24 hours per day up to 10 days, seconded by Hennen. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Ertle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Resolution 2020-08

Dymoke explained this resolution references state laws for governing emergencies and allows local units of government to declare a local emergency. We have already been acting under the mayor's declaration, but that is only good for three days. By approving this, Council is saying keep doing what you are doing. It loosens some of the regular requirements for open meetings and some decisions for things related to the pandemic. It allows Eveslage and Wall to make decisions and they would follow up with Council afterward. Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2020-08, seconded by Blake. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Ertle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Website Update and Contract Renewal

Hennen moved to approve renewing with Barry Weber, seconded by Renneker. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Ertle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Adjourn

Hennen moved to adjourn, seconded by Blake. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Ertle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Mayor, Mike Eveslage

City Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall