



CITY OF FREEPORT

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April 28, 2020 – Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:00 pm by Mayor Mike Eveslage, and councilmembers Sarah Blake, 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 Andy Grieve.

Others in attendance:

Carol Moorman (Star Post)

Kathy Korte (Stearns County Assessor)

Michelle Hinnenkamp (Stearns County Assessor)

Jake Pidde (Stearns County Assessor)

Note: Most attended the meeting remotely.

Approve Agenda

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

Councilmember Ben Ertle arrived as the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization discussion was beginning.

Local Board of Appeal and Equalization (LBAE)

Michelle Hinnenkamp and Kathy Korte stated they didn't have any appeals to report. Hinnenkamp reviewed the sales ratio information. Ertle moved to close the LBAE hearing, seconded by Renneker. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Ertle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Public Forum

Hennen noted there is a portion of the sidewalk on the northwest corner of Freeport Square Apartments that has sunk down a couple of inches. Goebel reported that the apartment manager is getting quotes to fix it.

Eveslage asked if Goebel fix a missing electrical panel on the street light pole kitty-corner from the Hennen Lumber office. Goebel said yes.

Consent Agenda

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

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

A brief discussion was had to clarify how property tax revenue will differ this year. Wall explained, in a normal year, property taxes paid by residents to Stearns County by May 15 would get paid to the City in June. Payments received by the County after May 15 wouldn't be paid to the City until December. Because Stearns County has decided to forgive penalties for residents who pay prior to July 15, the County expects some residents to pay later this year. Instead of waiting until December to release those later payments, the County has added two additional dates (July 2 & July 30) for payments to cities.

Wall stated that the City has not yet seen much financial impact from COVID-19.

Fire Department Report

Grieve reported that over 200 masks were donated during the April 25 mask drive at the fire hall. Last month they had 6 medical calls with no COVID-19 issues. Grieve wants to begin the process to hire 3 new firefighters to fill vacancies. When he has candidates, he will bring that information back to Council. Grieve would like to have ID cards made for each of the firefighters. Brittney Bueckers with Integrity Photography & Design is donating her photo services and there will be a flat fee for printing the ID cards. Grieve is looking into purchasing a side-by-side that comes with a trailer and sprayer for grass fires, etc. On Monday night, he will present it to the fire department for approval.

Public Works Report

Goebel reported that Johnson Jet-Line has been in town this week jetting sewer lines.

Engineer Report

Blommel reported that we will work on the facility plan and feasibility study associated with it in May or June when we can meet in person. Hennen asked about the old water paint inspection results. Blommel's inspector was out there but he doesn't have numbers to share yet.

Attorney Report

Dymoke had nothing to report.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Resolution 2020-09 Annual Liquor License Renewals

Discussion was had regarding choosing the prorating option since we don't yet know how long it will be before businesses will be fully open. Eittle moved to approve Resolution 2020-09 and waiting until we know when businesses can open to calculate a prorated refund, seconded by Blake. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Insurance on Old Water Tower

Eittle moved to approve option 2 for now in order to get insurance in place, with the option to increase the amount later, seconded by Hennen. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Joan Wall Performance Review

Eveslage explained that we are looking into finding different forms for the evaluation process and are looking to review the personnel policy as well. Renneker asked if we were participating in the salary survey done by the League of the Minnesota Cities. Wall said yes we are.

Several of the council members expressed that they thought Wall is doing a great job, but a raise is not feasible due to the pandemic environment we are in right now. Eveslage stated “Joan’s raise is a victim of the circumstance of COVID-19.”

Adjourn

At 7:49 Eittle moved to adjourn, seconded by Hennen. Roll call vote: Blake-yes, Eittle-yes, Eveslage-yes, Hennen-yes, Renneker-yes.

Mayor, Mike Eveslage

City Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall