



CITY OF FREEPORT

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September 29, 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, 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 Andy Grieve.

Others in attendance:

Carol Moorman (Star Post)

Evan Grieve (210 2nd Ave NE)

Nick Arnzen (212 2nd Ave NW)

Rodney Atkinson (310 8th St SE)

Branden Roering (Freeport Fire Dept)

Approve Agenda

Wall asked to add claims #4258-4263 to the consent agenda. Four of them are for CARES Act Small Business Relief Grants approved by the EDA yesterday. One is to Black Mountain to add online payment and one is to Stearns County Auditor for the criminal prosecution contract. Renneker moved to approve with the additions, seconded by Ettle. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Forum

No comments

Consent Agenda

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

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

None

Fire Department Report

Grieve reported that in the last month they had 3 fires and 5 medical calls. All fire department members reviewed each quote for air packs and they should make a decision at the Monday night meeting.

Public Works Report

Goebel reported he is working with Preferred Controls on SCADA. The new water tower painting has been completed. The old water tower is in the process of being painted.

Engineer Report

Blommel explained he put a summary of the feasibility report in the agenda packet. He brought copies of the full report to the meeting and it will be at City Hall for the public to view.

Highlights from the report are:

- Page 29 shows the total cost of project. The sanitary sewer portion is about half of the total project and the only thing that qualifies for PFA funding.
- Page 29 Special assessments – used 66% assessed to property owners because that is currently the City's policy.
- Page 30, Table 3 shows the implications of capping assessments. Blommel discussed raising the amount allowable for lining with the assessor and he was ok with increasing it some. Blommel reflected this in the report.
- Page 27 shows that the project is feasible.

Blommel explained the next step is that Council receive the report and schedule a public hearing. He brought Resolution 2020-14 to the meeting for that purpose. He recommends meeting in a larger space than the council chambers. Eveslage stated the community center is available every Tuesday in October except the 6th. Blommel explained that October 20 is the first possibility for meeting due to the required timeline for the mailed and published notices.

Blommel stated we can always strike things from the project, but not add anything. Eveslage asked if there are any other grants available. Blommel stated USDA is the most popular, but Freeport's household income is too high to qualify. Currently, their loan rate is higher than the market rate. PFA is a loan which is possibly forgivable. We should hear about the PFA loan soon. EPA grants tend to be for treatment facilities if you are given a rigorous standard to meet. If our ponds were in the FEMA flood plain there would be money for that. The DNR may help with storm water and applications have been put in. We haven't tried the State bonding money because it would be a long shot, it would be two years out, and it would cost a lot of money to apply for it. A full application would cost at least \$5,000-\$10,000. Blommel thinks we're not likely to qualify – it's a political thing.

Blommel explained if we move forward with the project in October, and it is locally funded (currently it is), we could break ground in spring 2021. If we complete the project in 2021, assessments would be certified in November 2021, and residents won't see the assessments on their property tax bill until May 2022.

Ettle moved to approve Resolution 2020-14 Receiving Feasibility Report and Calling Hearing on Improvement, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Attorney Report

Dymoke explained that zoning questions come up often. The question of who owns the alley behind Pooch's and the credit union came up. Lori Austing did most of the research and it was determined that the City acquired the alley at some point and now owns it. It is not an easement.

Old Business

Resolution 2020-12 Election Judges

Ettle moved to approve Resolution 2020-12, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

New Business

Resolution 2020-13 2021 Preliminary Levy

Eveslage stated he would like to plan a special meeting in early December to go over all the budget line items. We can figure out a date at next meeting.

Ettle moved to approve Resolution 2020-13, changing the General Levy to \$312,000, the Total Tax Levy to \$525,000 and moving the December regular council meeting to December 22, 2020, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0

Adjourn

At 7:59 pm Ettle moved to adjourn, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor, Mike Eveslage

City Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall