



CITY OF FREEPORT

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January 26, 2021 – Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:00 pm by Mayor Mike Eveslage, and council members Sarah Blake, Ben Ertle, 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)

Mark Harren (Mid MN Code Enforcement)

Mike & Beth Arnzen (St. Rosa, MN)

Brittney Pierce (212 2nd Ave NW)

Rodney Atkinson (310 8th St SE)

Zack Zink (316 Main St S)

Nick Arnzen (212 2nd Ave NW)

Nate Arnzen (Freeport, MN)

Oath of Office and Plaque Presentations

Wall administered the oath of office to Eveslage for a two-year mayoral term and to Renneker and Nick Arnzen for four-year council member terms. Scott Hoeschen wasn't present to receive his EDA plaque for six years of service. Eveslage presented a plaque to Ertle and thanked him for his six years of service as a council member.

Approve Agenda

Wall asked to add claims #4416-#4418 for Freeport Electric, Mid MN Code Enforcement, and Stearns County Auditor-Treasurer to the consent agenda. Renneker moved to approve the agenda with the changes, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Forum

No comments

Consent Agenda

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

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

Nothing further to add.

Fire Department Report

Grieve reported they had six medical calls and two false alarm fire calls during the last month. The three new members finished their first responder training and will be starting firefighter I training, which consists of four months of training twice a week. Grieve did three rental inspections last month. The new air packs

will be here Monday night and Alex Air will do training. Lights and a winch were donated for the side-by-side. Lights were ordered for pumper #406 because the old ones quit working. Fire department members Loren Goebel, Branden Roering, Matthew Beste, and Kurt Ritter spent five hours installing the lights and saved the department about \$700 dollars.

Public Works Report

Goebel reported that the City may have an insurance claim for a small amount of damage to Tom Hiltner's garage. The snow plow hit a curb stop in the street and threw one of the chunks of metal into his garage trim and scratched one panel on the garage door. We are waiting to hear back from insurance and for an estimate to fix it.

Engineer Report and Resolution 2021-06

Blommel's memo listed a few minor hurdles the surveying crew found. Blommel stated the City has never been sure where the storm sewer near public works garage goes, but it probably goes to the MnDOT ditch and will keep going there. MnDOT, Sauk River Watershed District (SRWD), and Stearns County are being kept in the loop with regard to storm water. SRWD may contribute funds toward the project. By next month Blommel will know where all the storm water ponds need to be. Blommel believes the City owns enough land by the public works garage to take care of the storm water pond there. We may have more trouble near the fire station because it's fully built out, but it's not insurmountable. In the mill neighborhood, there is a garage right on an alley and is right next to a pipe. The landowner may be interested in taking it down. Since Goebel is a neighbor, he has been helpful in discussing things with the landowner about the garage.

For the best chance to receive funding from the 2021 Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP), Blommel asked the council to gather letters of support from benefiting businesses, particularly Famo Feeds. We need to demonstrate support from ag related businesses and regional significance. Blommel would like to have the letters by the next council meeting so council can look at the application before it is submitted. Eveslage will contact Famo. Hennen will contact Hartung Sales. The Rec Club, Lions, Community Center, and Chamber of Commerce are other organizations to contact. The letters should give the radius they serve and the type of business they are serving: ag or that has regional significance. They can comment on how the condition of the roads affect their business. The letters should be addressed to the City of Freeport. Ideally have them turned in to city hall by February 17.

Blommel explained that Resolution 2021-06 is to approve the LRIP project and order plans and specs. Renneker moved to approve Resolution 2021-06, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

Attorney Report

Nothing further to add.

New Business

Resolution 2021-05 – Al & Mary Williams – Combine Lots

Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2021-05, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Ordinance 2021-01 – Fee Schedule

Mark Harren explained the updates to their fee schedule shown on pages 24-26. Other inspections and fees that aren't based on valuation will now be \$75 per hour. Harren agreed to go back to billing the City twice per year instead of once per year.

Discussion was had about whether Jason Murray's 4% increase recommendation was for all water fees or just the flat fees. Wall will investigate further and report back in February. Hennen moved to approve Ordinance 2021-01, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2021-01 - Official Depository FSB

Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2021-01, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2021-02 - Official Depository CMCU

Renneker moved to approve Resolution 2021-02, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2021-03 - 2020 Donations

Arnzen moved to approve Resolution 2021-03, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2021-04 - Disbursement and Payment of Claims Policy

Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2021-04, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

2021 Appointments

Blake agreed to be the EDA Council Representative for 2021, with all the other items remaining the same. Renneker moved to approve the 2021 appointments with the change, seconded by Eveslage. Motion carried 5-0.

Fire Chief Salary

Eveslage explained when John Gilk was chief, he lowered the chief's salary. Grieve hasn't said anything about the salary, but he is one of the lowest paid chiefs in the area, at \$1,500 per year. Eveslage stated Grieve has done more than he has been asked to do: grants, COVID, \$14,000 in Lucas machine donations, etc. Eveslage would like to bump his pay up by \$500 per year. It was asked what the salary used to be and Wall said it was \$2,880. Grieve expressed gratitude for the harmony that currently exists among the members of the fire department and is glad they don't need to be micromanaged when they go on a call. Grieve confirmed that he is the lowest paid fire chief in the area besides New Munich. Renneker moves to approve increase of \$500 per year, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

Clerk-Treasurer Position

Wall told the council that she no longer wishes to work full time as the Clerk-Treasurer. Eveslage thanked Wall for taking on the Clerk-Treasurer position and expressed gratitude for the great work she has done as Clerk-Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer. Wall stated she would be willing to go back to the Deputy Treasurer role and will stay in the Clerk-Treasurer role until a new Clerk-Treasurer is hired. Council discussed posting the Clerk-Treasurer position for 32-40 hours per week and not posting the pay range. Hennen moves to accept Wall's resignation as Clerk-Treasurer and post for a clerk-Treasurer at 32-40 hours per week, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

Blake and Eveslage will serve on the hiring committee.

Adjourn

At 8:21 pm Hennen moved to adjourn, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor, Mike Eveslage

City Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall