



CITY OF FREEPORT

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March 30th, 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, Nick Arnzen, Tim Hennen, and Jake Renneker.

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

Others in attendance:

Carol Moorman (Star Post)
Troy Frieler (313 2nd St. NW)

Janelle Kendall (Stearns County Attorney)
Branden Roering (Freeport Fire Dept)

Approve Agenda

Renneker moved to approve the agenda with the addition, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Forum

Troy Frieler spoke about the trucking company across the street from his home. The trucks are consistently parked over the sidewalk, sometimes into the road, creating a safety hazard. Eveslage said that the Council will look into it, and that he has not heard anything about the issue since the last time it was brought up. Hennen said that there was a plan to remedy the issue, but it has not been acted on since it was developed.

Consent Agenda

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

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

Wall reported that Kemper began on the 22nd of March, and that she has been working on the audit for the last few days. Kemper stated that he is excited to take on the position, and looks forward to working for the City.

Fire Department Report

Grieve reported that the Fire Department had 5 calls during the month of February. Two fires, one medical, one medical which was cancelled, and one car accident. He also stated that there are burning bans effective right now, due to the high winds. The Fire Department's grass rig was prepared as a precaution. Two positions have opened in the Fire Department. Grieve asked whether the vacancies can be included in the quarterly newsletter. Lastly, Grieve reported that the LUCAS tool that was recently purchased was used twice in one week on calls. Renneker moved to include the vacancies in the quarterly newsletter, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Works Report

Goebel reported that we are in need of two new fire extinguishers; one for the van, and another for the water tower. The water heater at the city shop has gone out, so Goebel is having that one serviced, as well as the one at the Lions' park. 10th Street signs are fading, so they will be replaced with the costs paid for by the Lions' Club. The new signs will feature their logo on them. Eveslage asked Goebel to take a look into cold patching for 7th Street. Goebel said that he will cover the bumps when the weather gets better.

Engineer Report

Blommel reported that the public hearing went very well. The plans and info presented were well-received with little negative feedback. Plans and specs are mostly done, with MNDOT waiting to give approval. The State Historic Preservation office gave a declaration of no impact, and reported that there are three properties currently registered in Freeport. The old mill chimney, Miller's house, and Sacred Heart Church are all nationally registered. Blommel expects the final funding package from USDA within the next week, at which point we may need to call a special meeting to finalize the plan. Hennen asked Blommel about combining lots in town. John Beste is wondering if the City is promoting the combining of lots. The County requires that the lots be adjacent, property taxes must be paid to-date, and they must receive a letter from the City stating that the combination is acceptable. Hennen's quarrel with the idea is that the combining of the parcel will bring a loss of income to the City. Blommel recommended checking the square footage and possibly charging \$18,000 for the combined parcel. Residential lots that were combined previously were not buildable lots, so it made sense that they would put them together. However, the commercial lots that Beste is referring to are good, buildable lots. Blommel said that if they are interested, Beste will need to bring in legal descriptions of the parcels to be combined, as well as a new legal description of the combined lot. Dymoke mentioned that once these lots are combined, they cannot be separated, since there is not enough space to divide the lots again. The same rules apply for residential and commercial. Hennen asked someone from the City to contact Beste. Blommel offered to contact him, which the council agreed to. Dymoke also mentioned that commercial and industrial lots cannot be combined without first rezoning one of the parcels.

Attorney Report

Nothing further to report

Old Business

Comp Time Policy

Dymoke highlighted his added portion of the comp time policy. Federal statutes cap comp time at 240 hours. Once that limit is reached, overtime needs to be paid instead. The accrual year can be run from November through October. Employees have their comp time paid out at their current rate, not the rate at which it was accrued. If it accrues for too long, it can become a graet liability. The accrual cap can be lowered if that is an agreeable path. A discussion was held with the consensus in agreement that the maximum comp time accrual will be 60 hours, with a maximum carryover to the next accrual year of 24 hours. Dymoke stated that he will tweak the current policy to reflect the council's decision and bring it back to next month's meeting.

New Business

Stearns County Attorney Janelle Kendall- 2020 City Prosecution Review and Update

Kendall reported that the law requires Counties to have a diversion program for first-time offenders, whether juvenile or adult. More adults took advantage of the program in 2020, but juvenile participation was nearly in half.

If the City is ever in need of help with projects, Kendall said, we should contact the County. Those who are active in the diversion program need opportunities to provide community service.

Adjourn

At 8:02pm Hennen moved to adjourn, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor, Mike Eveslage

City Clerk-Treasurer, Wyatt Kemper