



CITY OF FREEPORT

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May 25, 2021 – Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:04 pm by Mayor Mike Eveslage, and council members Sarah Blake, Nick Arnzen, Tim Hennen, and Jake Renneker.

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

Staff not in attendance: Clerk-Treasurer Wyatt Kemper

Others in attendance:

Carol Moorman (Star Post)

Branden Roering (Freeport Fire Dept)

Adrian Massmann & Hailey Ramacher

Al Williams (308 2nd Ave NW)

Andrea Ramacher (720 1st Avenue North)

Approve Agenda

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

Public Forum

Al Williams asked when the city is going to enforce the junk ordinance. Eveslage explained that the city recently sent letters to everyone who is in violation and we would be following up. It can take time to see results in this process. Arnzen wondered if the city should schedule a day where residents can drop junk off. Renneker thought those who are in violation of this ordinance aren't likely to bring their junk anyway.

Consent Agenda

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

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

Since Kemper was out sick, there was nothing to add to the memo.

Fire Department Report

Grieve reported they are still taking applications for firefighters and they have received one so far. They responded to seven calls in the last month, with four in one day due to the big accident on I-94. They did a search and rescue training drill with Melrose last night where students hid at St. Mary's Catholic School and the firefighters searched for them. The Ham BBQ will be held on June 20. It will be a drive-thru event with meals prepared in the Freeport Community Center.

With regard to the big accident on I-94, Hennen stated that the traffic detoured through Freeport made for an exhausting day. There was no one directing traffic and people were driving through town too fast. Hennen asked if the city could send a letter to the Stearns County Sheriff's Office, MN Department of Transportation, and the State Patrol to explain what happened that day and to ask for more help in the future since Freeport doesn't have a police department. The Council directed Wall to ask Kemper to draft a letter and send it to the council for review. Grieve added that it's usually the State Patrol that directs traffic.

Public Works Report

Goebel reported that Tri-State Pump was in town inspecting lift stations. Both lift stations had clogged pumps and one needed a new starter capacitor. The process of boring holes in several spots will begin for the street project. Xcel Energy is putting power poles up. Goebel put cold patch down yesterday and asked if council wants him get more to put on Industrial Drive toward Famo. Blommel stated it will be about a month before we know whether we get the LRIP grant for that street. Arnzen moved to have Goebel purchase up to \$1,000 more cold patch, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Eveslage reported that the EDA approved spending \$1,000 for Carr's to clean up the brush in Welle 3. The city may need to go in after that to take down trees growing there. Council discussed the city using the side mower to keep it maintained, or possibly purchasing a brush hog for that purpose. Goebel will get quotes for a brush hog.

Goebel reported that a section of sewer is slowing down a lot – from the manhole in the road by the vet clinic north toward Nick Arnzen's house and then going toward County Road 11 down the line. It has been jetted to clean out tree roots, but it will continue to be a problem in the future.

Engineer Report

Blommel reported that bids will be opened on June 10th at 2 PM at City Hall. The opening can also be attended on GoToMeeting or by calling in. The project will automatically be awarded to the lowest bidder. USDA has approved all project plans to this point. Blommel asked the Council whether they would like to CIPP on the sewer lines that Goebel had mentioned earlier. Legal restrictions would require separate hearings to be held and several change orders would also be likely. Residents with services benefitted by the CIPP would be assessed roughly one thousand dollars per property. Discussion was held over whether CIPP would be more efficient than jetting lines each year. A formal easement is needed over storm sewer pipe in order to replace it. Before concluding, Blommel made the remark that the project is likely to automatically go to the lowest bidder.

Attorney Report

Dymoke said that he had been involved with the reconstruction project as well, finishing forms to send to USDA for funding. Regarding the Fire Department conducting home inspections for rental properties; Dymoke said that the City is not likely to be held liable in the incident of a previously approved home burning down. In short, approving inspections does not make the city a guarantor of safety. Only in a few cases has any city been responsible for the mistake.

Old Business

Health Insurance Policy

Wall stated that Kemper has decided to turn down health insurance offered by the City, and to stay on his wife's insurance.

New Business

Massmann Variance

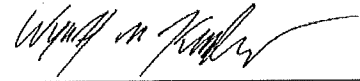
Eveslage reported to the Council that the EDA has recommended approving the Massmann variance since it complies with the LMC's 3-point checklist. The lot next to Dan Elfering (54.32237.0000) is where the approved variance will be applied. Arnzen moved to approve the variance for Massmanns, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Adjourn

At 7:52pm Arnzen moved to adjourn, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.



Mayor, Mike Eveslage



City Clerk-Treasurer, Wyatt Kemper