



## CITY OF FREEPORT

125 Main Street E – PO Box 301 – Freeport, MN 56331 – 320-836-2112  
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### August 31, 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: Clerk-Treasurer Wyatt Kemper, Deputy Treasurer Joan Wall, Public Works Director Loren Goebel, Fire Chief Andy Grieve, City Attorney Scott Dymoke, and City Engineer Dave Blommel.

Others in attendance:

Carol Moorman (Star Post)

Branden Roering (Freeport Fire Dept.)

#### **Approve Agenda**

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

#### **Public Forum**

#### **Consent Agenda**

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

#### **Reports**

##### Clerk-Treasurer Report

With Kemper absent, Wall read through the Clerk's Report. The EDA recommends approving the Carr's quote for finishing cleanup of the Welle 3 addition. With construction beginning, temporary bypass was set up on August 16<sup>th</sup>. A quote for the new Trimble handheld and software has been received, and City Hall will be closed on September 6<sup>th</sup> in observation of Labor Day.

##### Deputy Treasurer Report

##### Fire Department Report

Grieve reported that there were fourteen calls in August. Five medicals, one mutual aid fire with Albany, seven weather – related calls, and one that was cancelled. On a side note, Grieve said he had been receiving calls about burning permits. He spoke with the County who confirmed that, as of the meeting date, burning permits are still not being issued.

##### Public Works Report

Goebel reported that the hydraulic tank for the plow truck would take approximately \$1,000.00 to repair, and a brand-new tank would be \$2,000.00.

Hennen moved to approve the purchase of a new hydraulic tank, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

##### Engineer Report

Blommel reported that the feasibility study for 7<sup>th</sup> Street has been submitted. The infrastructure repair work has begun, but there have been setbacks due to rain. Residents have had several questions about the temporary

bypass, but aside from that and the rain delay, the construction is going as planned. Even with the setbacks from the rain, Blommel said that Kuechle still intends to finish by the proposed date.

#### Attorney Report

Dymoke reported that he had been assisting with paperwork required by the USDA for the current infrastructure repair project. As of the meeting, all required paperwork has been submitted. Also reported was that any overhang of trees obstructing the view of bus drivers was the responsibility of the owner to take care of. If the city needs to become involved, we are able to contract to have the work done, and then send the bill to the owner.

Hennen moved to have Carr's contracted to clean the bus route of overhanging foliage, as it constitutes a public safety issue. Seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

#### **Old Business**

##### Nuisance Properties

Dymoke said that Kemper has been reaching out to nuisance property owners, sending letters and following up with a phone call if they do not abide by the initial request. Eveslage said that there are two properties in particular that absolutely need to be pressed because of the amount of clutter in the yard. Dymoke said that the next step would be to hold a public hearing regarding the removal of any rubbish from a property, after which items can be removed and the cost of removal can be assessed to their property taxes. Discussion was held over other nuisance properties in the area, and which have substantial work to do yet.

#### **New Business**

##### Trimble Handheld Quote

Wall stated that the Trimble quote has been received, and Blommel said that the quote looks appropriate for the tech that is being purchased. The new handheld will be able to read all of the existing meters and any new ones that are installed. The old handheld could only read the existing meters, which would cause an issue for any new homes or secondary meters. Blommel said that the expense of the new handheld and software can be taken out of the USDA water reserve.

Hennen moved to approve the purchase of a new handheld and software with the USDA water reserve, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

##### Resolution 2021-11; bond Resolution for 2021 Sewer/Water Project

Blommel explained the resolution is to approve interim financing through MN Rural Water Association. MRWA loans the money to the city, and we pay back interest on the portion of available funding that is used. USDA then pays back the owed amount once the loans are closed.

Arnzen moved to approve Resolution 2021-11, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

##### Resolution 2021-12; Resolution Ordering Preparation of report on Improvement

Renneker moved to approve Resolution 2021-12, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

##### LMCIT Waiver

Hennen moved to approve to waive the monetary limits on municipal tort liability, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

Oak Station Alleyway Acknowledgement

Discussion was held over the use of the alleyway (public right-of-way) behind Oak Station. A resident would like the alleyway established for public use so they can make use of it in the future for easier access to their property. Conclusion was that the right-of-way is owned, but not maintained by, the city.

Landscaping – 309 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave NW

Wall reported that Kemper left a note on the subject stating that there was a discussion held with the owner of the property, with the conclusion being that the City was not responsible for restoring the land that was disturbed. A private contractor was hired to repair the water main, which was underneath the street. In the end, it is the contractor's responsibility to restore the property.

2022 Budget and Levy

Wall explained that the preliminary levy is due September 30<sup>th</sup>, and a hearing needs to be scheduled between November 25<sup>th</sup> and December 27<sup>th</sup>. \*Wall asked if the council would like to move up the December meeting date to December 21<sup>st</sup>. Wall led the council through the budget and levy, and asked the council what they would like to see done with the tax rate. Consensus was to keep it as close to last year as possible. Discussion was held over the percentage increase for wages between staff members. Consensus was to raise the rate to 10% since there was a pay freeze the previous year, as well as additional requirements that staff had to follow during the COVID pandemic. Further discussion was held over the availability of grants for community improvement projects. Blommel said that as far as grants go, Freeport will likely not score well because of the criteria.

\*Renneker moved to approve the alternate December meeting date, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

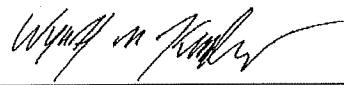
Dakota Steel and Trim Sign Permit

Eveslage stated that the EDA does not need to approve the sign, contrary to the memo that was provided. Hennen moved to approve the sign placement for Dakota Steel and Trim, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

Adjourn

At 8:46 pm Renneker moved to adjourn, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

  
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Mayor, Mike Eveslage

  
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City Clerk-Treasurer, Wyatt Kemper