



CITY OF FREEPORT

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October 19th, 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)
Mike Renneker (525 1st Ave N)
Jamie Engelmeyer (Freeport Fire)

Joe Hennen (Freeport Lions)
Jean Renneker (525 1st Ave N)

Approve Agenda

With the additions of Claims 4712-4715 and 7th Street Assessment Options, Renneker moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Forum

No comments.

Consent Agenda

Hennen asked about the RFP which is mentioned in the past meeting's minutes. Kemper explained that the RFP is a request letter for proposals from different service providers, since the City's contract with Waste Management is nearing expiration. Hennen then questioned a claim that for an ACH refund that was issued. Kemper explained that the refund was issued due to an error in the billing software. Moving forward, he said, he will have to ensure that all ACH information is removed when an account is deactivated to ensure this does not happen again. Renneker moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 4-0.

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

Kemper reported that the Badger meters and handheld have been ordered, and have an expected delivery date of November 1st, or the week of. The new computer system and monitors for the second office and front desk have been received and installed, and on top of that, the live stream is up and running. ARPA funds request has been submitted, and we should see the first distribution before the end of the week. Lastly, Kemper said he will be attending a teleconference with the MAOSC Board of Directors on Thursday, October 21st. Eveslage requested that Kemper bring a list of applicable uses for the ARPA funds to the next meeting for Council to discuss.

Deputy Treasurer Report

Wall explained the financial report to Council, stating that we are mostly in-line with previous years. The FEMA Grant and Small Cities Transportation Grant had been received by the city as well, which is cause for the difference seen in the report. The MDH Grant for well sealing is present as well, which Wall noted was not typically seen in the previous years' reports. Lastly, Wall explained that the city is over 85% of its annual budget after the year's water rate increase of 4%.

Fire Department Report

Grieve reported that there were eight calls in October, three of which were medicals, one fire, and four gas leaks. The Fire Department performed a fire prevention class for the Sacred Heart School. The Fire Chief's convention is coming up, which will be held in Duluth.

Public Works Report

Goebel reported that the plow truck has been repaired, and is going in for a DOT inspection on Thursday. In about the next month, the sweeper will be going in for general maintenance.

Engineer Report

Blommel reported that curb could be going in as soon as this week in the Fire Hall neighborhood, but it may have to be pushed back depending on the weather for the remainder of the week. Storm sewer will be going in by the mill, and that wraps up pipe work in town. Blommel said he has asked the contractor to bring a new schedule to the progress meeting tomorrow, so we have a clear idea of the timeline going forward. November third through the fifth are the expected dates for lining to be done. Lastly, Blommel told Council that the Safe Routes to School Grant has been extended to a state level, with different criteria that he believes we may score well on. Jodi Teich has agreed to support our request for funding. Hennen moved to approve pay request #2 for Kuechle Underground, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

Attorney Report

Dymoke reported that he had not given a substantial amount of time to any City projects in October.

Old Business

Nuisance Properties Hearing

Kemper proposed that the hearing be scheduled for November 30th, the same night as the council meeting. Council agreed.

New Business

Lions' Park Update

Joe Hennen explained that there is work being done to improve the city park, which is being covered by the softball club. In addition to the current work, the Freeport Lions plan to replace the playground in the Spring, if approved by the city. The expenses will be covered by the Lions and several individuals. Council agrees with the proposed updates to the park.

6th St NE Vacation

Hennen said he thought that the work to vacate 6th had already been done. Eveslage asked Blommel if there was any chance to use 6th Street as an access point to a potential development in that area. Blommel said that the scenario is not likely, since the area there is all wetland. Dymoke explained that, if the council wants to pursue vacation, a hearing will need to be held and a resolution will have to be adopted. Dymoke suggested

scheduling the hearing for November 30th as well. Council agrees to hold the vacation hearing on November 30th.

Hoeschen Auto Paving Request

Kemper said that he had originally wanted to discuss this at October's meeting, but after discussion thought it best to have Hoeschen Auto complete a variance request since part of the work is to be done on a public alley. Kemper said he will talk with the Hoeschens about completing the variance paperwork, if they so choose.

7th Street Repaving and Assessments

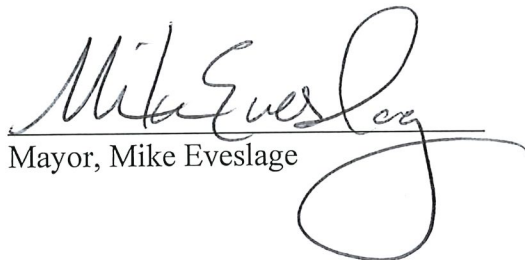
Kemper explained that the EDA expressed their concern over staying consistent in the way assessments are handled for community projects. In searching through older minutes, Kemper found that assessments for 7th and 8th Streets were lumped together, since residents of 8th benefit off of having the only access to their homes improved. One third of the cost of repaving is absorbed by the city, and the remaining two thirds is assessed to the benefitted land owners. Blommel said that since this assessment strategy differs from the one presented in the feasibility study, he would like the Council to approve this as an amendment to the study. Blommel said that the next step in moving forward is to hold a hearing for the affected property owners to voice their concerns. Council agrees to hold the hearing during the November 30th Council meeting. Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2021-14 with the caveat of presenting the alternate assessment policy, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

Several questions regarding the assessments were discussed by council and members of the public, along with Blommel. Acknowledged was the fact that the assessment policies will likely not be a popular option during the hearing, due to the circumstances of the situation.


Pavement was found underneath the alley behind Hennen and Goebel. A brief discussion was held over how to restore the alley, with the consensus being to repave it after construction is finished.

Adjourn

At 8:06 pm Arnzen moved to adjourn, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.



Mayor, Mike Eveslage



Acting Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall