



## CITY OF FREEPORT

125 Main Street E – PO Box 301 – Freeport, MN 56331 – 320-836-2112  
For TTY/TDD Users 1-800-627-3529 or 711 Minnesota Relay Service [www.freeportmn.org](http://www.freeportmn.org)

### December 21, 2021 – Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Freeport City Council was convened at 7:00 pm by Mayor Mike Eveslage, and council members Nick Arnzen, Sarah Blake, Tim Hennen, and Jake Renneker.

Staff in attendance: Interim Clerk-Treasurer Joan Wall, Public Works Director Loren Goebel, City Attorney Scott Dymoke, and City Engineer Dave Blommel.

Absent: Fire Chief Andy Grieve

Others in attendance:

Branden Roering (Freeport Fire Dept)

#### **Approve Agenda**

Wall asked to add claim #4783 for Engelmeyer Land Services. Arnzen moved to approve the agenda with the addition, seconded by Hennen. Motion carried 5-0.

#### **Public Forum**

Hennen explained that a resident talked to him about the difference in proposed property taxes between Freeport and Sauk Centre. For the same home value, the city tax is hundreds of dollars less in Sauk Centre.

#### **Consent Agenda**

There was a discussion on why the city pays for DOT physicals. Will an employee reimburse the city if they leave employment? Dymoke said he thinks the city might be obligated to pay for the physical. Renneker moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

#### **Reports**

##### Clerk-Treasurer Report

Council asked Wall to send list of candidates along with resumes after the first of the year.

Renneker asked if the city can bid out for building inspectors. Hennen said he has been working on some other options for council to look at.

##### Fire Department Report

No report.

##### Public Works Report

Goebel expressed his thanks to Branden Roering for helping to plow snow. Eveslage and Renneker asked Goebel to look for a new lawn mower that has a sidewalk broom attachment since we are thinking it needs

to be placed. It would be good to look for one now instead of waiting until next spring when we might get put on a waiting list. Goebel said we do have a blower for the tractor, but it's not very maneuverable because of its size. Goebel asked, if we got a smaller one, does council want to get rid of the bigger one? Renneker said maybe we keep the bigger one for now and replace it in a couple years when we need to.

#### Engineer Report

Blommel reported MnDOT contacted the city regarding replacing the bridge over I-94 in 2026. Stearns County is well aware of the city's feedback about keeping the sidewalk and pedestrian concerns. We do have some say about what happens with the bridge even though it's owned by the state. Right now, they are considering replacing the decking, but full replacement is not off the table. Re-decking would take about 2 months and replacement about 6 to 8 months. No council action is needed at this time and Blommel will continue the discussions with MnDOT.

The comments we received about our safe route to school plan weren't great and their recommendation is not to proceed at this point. We need a support letter from the school and need to get a plan written down. We're better off not proceeding with it, unless council really wants to proceed. Blommel recommends waiting a year so it can be in line with the bridge project. Even if we got the funding, we still wouldn't get the funds until 2026, so it makes sense to do it with the bridge.

Renneker moved to approve payment of application #4, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

#### Attorney Report

Dymoke reported that the sheriff has the abatement order for the Hansen's. He is waiting for the affidavit confirming that it has been served. They have 30 days after being served to clean up their property. If it's not done in 30 days, then Dymoke would file it and get on the court's calendar. Eveslage asked if attorney's fees could be applied to it too. Dymoke will look into that.

#### **Old Business**

##### Resolution 2021-17 2022 Budget and Tax Levy

Hennen moved to approve Resolution 2021-17, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

##### Hire Maintenance Assistant

Wall has given council and Goebel the four applications the city received. After a brief discussion, Hennen moves to hire Mike Renneker, seconded by Eveslage. Arnzen asked what happens when Goebel is out of town. Goebel said the part time person can fill in. Motion carried 4-0 with Jake Renneker abstaining.

##### Refuse Collection Request for Proposal (RFP)

Discussion was had while reviewing Eveslage's version of the RFP and consensus for changes was as follows:

- Include both residential and commercial so there is only one garbage hauler on city streets (Blommel suggested we try to keep trucks as small as possible to preserve streets).
- Include garbage, recycling, and yard waste. Strike organics recycling.
- Add a 95-gallon cart option for commercial.

Arnzen received feedback from some business owners that as long as it's not Waste Management, they are fine with having commercial included in the contract. Dymoke reviewed the RFP and said Eveslage's

version isn't missing anything. We just need to make sure we update it for the changes discussed. Blommel reported that he has heard one of these presentations already and one of the haulers wanted to base future years on whatever the consumer price index (CPI) will be. This might be beneficial for the city. Dymoke added that Melrose just went through this process and agreed to CPI adjustments, but wanted a cap also. Blake asked if rates normally go up every year and Blommel said yes. Blommel noted that the RFP prohibits fuel surcharges, which is very good. Dymoke said it would be a good idea to give notice to Waste Management that we won't be automatically renewing with them. Dymoke explained that the city doesn't have to choose the lowest price hauler, but if we don't choose the lowest price, we will want to be able to explain why to the residents. Renneker suggested we also send the RFP to Opatz.

Hennen moved to approve the RFP with the discussed changes, seconded by Blake. Motion carried 5-0.

#### Salt Shed Insurance Claim

Goebel reported that the shed is getting built back to the way it was. It should be fixed within the next two weeks.

#### **New Business**

##### Cleaning Services

Arnzen moved to increase Joann Timp's pay to \$20 per hour. Motion died for lack of second. Hennen moved to increase Joann Timp's pay to \$50 per cleaning, seconded by Arnzen. Motion carried 5-0.

##### Expert Billing Contract Renewal

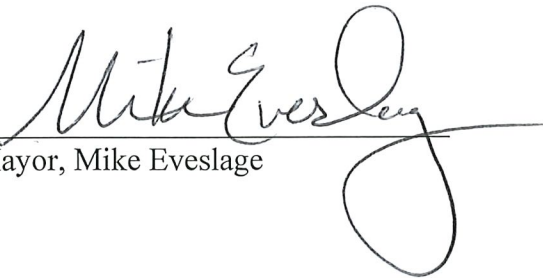
Hennen moved to approve the contract, seconded by Renneker. Motion carried 5-0.

##### Unauthorized Shed at 500 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N

Hennen said property owner Carl Botz came in and talked to him and Hennen told him to talk to the city. Goebel explained Botz talked to Wyatt Kemper who said he needed to remove the shed. Botz then said he would live in it, but he still didn't get a permit. Dymoke suggested the city send a letter telling Botz to remove the shed by March 1, 2022, and council agreed.

#### **Adjourn**

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



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, Mike Eveslage



\_\_\_\_\_  
Interim Clerk-Treasurer, Joan Wall