

Regular Council Meeting
October 26, 2006

Mayor Marse called to order the regular scheduled meeting of October 26, 2006 at 7:00 pm.

Members Present: Mayor J.M. Marse, Council members Jean Arrant, Mike Helton, Ray Jackson, Earl King and Charlie Simmons were present. Also present: City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, City Planner Latilda Henninger and City Clerk Robin Haynes.

Councilman Helton gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There were no minutes presented.

Ms. Henninger presented the following planning items:

Requested approval for Luc's Restaurant (Castle Grill) – 7,200 square foot restaurant on one acre located on parcel #09-1S-19-23000-008-0050. Freeport Planning Board recommended approval pending final City Engineer approval which was received on October 12, 2006. Councilman Jackson motioned to approve the proposed project subject to final DOT confirmation regarding the necessity of a turn lane, Councilman Simmons seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Requested approval for Thurman Industrial Plaza – 18,975 square foot commercial units on 1.5 acres for lease or sale located on parcel #'s 35-1N-19-17010-000-0040/0050/0060. Freeport Planning Board recommended approval pending final City Engineer approval which was received on October 11, 2006. Ms. Henninger made one condition necessary for approval – if the developer decided to sell the buildings, an industrial plat must be filed with the City. Councilwoman Arrant motioned to approve the proposed project, subject to filing an industrial plat before subdividing and selling, Councilman Jackson seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Requested approval of Ashton Heights Apartments, a portion of the Owl's Head PDP West – 255 apartment units on 34+ acres with recreational amenities, clubhouse, leasing office and maintenance facilities. Freeport Planning Board recommended approval subject to City Engineer approval which was received on October 18, 2006. The developer had requested a variance in the number of parking spaces provided. Documentation was provided to City Engineer to support the request and City Engineer Charles Peters gave final approval October 25, 2006. Councilman Jackson motioned to approve the proposed project subject to FDOT confirmation regarding a turn lane into the development, Councilman King seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Requested approval for first reading and to advertise for adoption the Proportionate Fair Share Ordinance. Ms. Henninger explained the ordinance to council and audience and explained that it is state mandated to be adopted by December 1. Councilman King motioned to hold first reading and advertise for adoption the proposed Proportionate Fair Share ordinance, Councilman Jackson seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0. Ms. Henninger read the ordinance title.

Mayor Marse informed the council that the City has had several developments start the review process, then change their names and that this is creating confusion. Ms. Henninger notified council that she had already sent out a letter notifying the developers that if they changed the name of the project, they will have to start the review process all over again with the new name.

Attorney Adkinson had no legal issues to present. He reminded Mayor Marse that interim financing closing for the new City Hall was set for October 31, 2006 at 11:30 am.

Mr. Tonny Peters updated the council on the following items:

- Attending the FDOT traffic workshop on November 6 – 8 at Sandestin
- Bids were opened for the Master Lift Station on October 17, 2006.
The bids received were:

	Base Bid amount	Less deductive alternate
Young's Contracting	\$531,659.65	\$492,407.85
Gulf Coast Utility Cont.	\$591,290.00	\$563,790.00
North Florida Construction	\$624,596.00	\$599,596.00
Tindle Enterprises	\$665,375.00	\$639,654.00
Southeastern Underground	\$820,604.00	\$784,604.00

Mr. Peters requested a motion to award the contract to the low bidder Young's Contracting, for the base bid less the deductive alternate which totaled \$492,407.85. Councilman Jackson motioned to award the contract to Young's Contracting for \$492,407.85, Councilwoman Arrant seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Old Business:

Ray Sullivan with the Freeport Volunteer Fire Department presented a proposal to the council to be considered instead of joining with Walton County Fire Rescue. Mr. Sullivan expressed concerns regarding the collection of fees as represented in the draft agreement with Walton County. Mayor Marse reminded the council that the agreements being discussed were drafts only. When an agreement was made that Mayor Marse and Councilman Simmons were comfortable with, it would go to the attorneys for review and then it would be brought back to the council for a decision to be made. Attorney Adkinson requested to be notified the next time the Mayor had a meeting with the Walton County so that he could attend and possibly help get some of the outstanding issues resolved. Mr. Sullivan continued with his presentation as an option for the council to consider. He would like to establish a Freeport Fire District at no cost to the City.

New Business:

Mr. Bob Smith with Walton County Economic Development Council addressed the council regarding the Cornerstone conceptual plan for a privately developed 160 acre business/technology park. Mr. Smith introduced Mr. Ken Worlett with Florida Great Northwest. Mr. Worlett discussed the need for such a project in Walton County. Councilman Simmons motioned to proceed with the process of annexation for the 160 acre parcel owned by Cornerstone for the purpose of developing a business/technology park, affordable housing for the workers of the park, and a retail strip bordering Highway 331, Councilman Jackson seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Henninger agreed to make a list for council to review of all annexation applications being held in office at this time.

Councilwoman Arrant motioned to approve allowing JobsPlus to use the community center for a job fair with no fees, Councilman King seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 4-0. Councilman Simmons had stepped out of the room.

Mayor Marse expressed concerns with developers using a PDP. His concerns are mainly with the variances that the developers are allowed to use. Ms. Henninger told council that she would help make very clear to council from the onset of all future variance requests where and what those variances would affect. Attorney Adkinson stressed the need to make a location map a requirement for such requests.

Councilman Helton motioned to pay all bills in order, Councilwoman Arrant seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Marse informed council that Walton County had agreed to provide \$400,000 to the City of Freeport for the purpose of bulkheading the barge port. Mayor Marse recommended that council consider raising the rates at the barge port to \$.75 per ton

and to reimburse Walton County \$.10 per ton until the \$400,000 has been repaid. He would like the money to be earmarked for Economic Development in Walton County. He also recommended allowing the County to use the port at no charge. Councilwoman Arrant motioned to change update the rates for unloading at the barge port to \$.75 per ton if unloaded directly onto trucks, and \$1.00 per ton if unloaded on the ground, to re-pay Walton County at the rate of \$.10 per ton until the \$400,000 has been repaid with the money being earmarked for Economic Development and to allow the County to use the port at no charge, Councilman King seconded. There was no additional public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Marse will generate a letter to Commissioner Cindy Meadows to explain the new port rates and to invite her to tour the port and the new city park area.

Councilman Helton requested to appoint Mr. Dewayne Davis as his new representative for the Freeport Planning Board. Councilman Jackson motioned to appoint Mr. Dewayne Davis to the Freeport Planning Board, Councilman King seconded. There was no public or council discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

With no other business, Councilman Helton motioned to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Robin Haynes, City Clerk

J.M. Marse, Mayor

Earl King, President of Council