

City of Freeport
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING, Corrected
August 12, 2014 Minutes
7:00 p.m.

I. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Russ Barley at 7:05 pm.

Council members present: Mayor Russ Barley, Councilman Eddie Farris, Councilwoman Kasey Cuchens, Councilwoman Janice McLean, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon,

Staff present: City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel, City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, Fire Chief Chad Harrell, Fire Captain Tom Palmer, City Engineer Anna Hudson, City Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle, City Engineer Cliff Knauer.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The Invocation was given by Councilman Farris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

III. Approval of Past Minutes – RCM 7/24/14 & SCM 7/29/14

Board Action: *Motion by Councilman Farris to accept the RCM 7/24/14 and SCM 7/29/14 as presented. Second to motion by Councilwoman McLean. All ayes; motion carried.*

IV. Staff Reports

A. Planning Department (attachment)

1. Freeport Public Buildings (Blount House, Heritage Center, City Hall, City Pool, Community Center) Wi-Fi Access for the Public

Hughes-Neel asked the Council to consider placing a guest Wi-Fi access at all city buildings with public access. Hughes-Neel will obtain cost estimates from Cox Communications and bring the matter back to the Council.

B. Legal Matters

1. Engagement letter/Lewis Longman & Walker- Labor Matters

This matter was continued by the Mayor to the Special Council Meeting set for August 21, 2014, following the August 21 Budget Workshop at 6:30 p.m.

C. Fire Department Report

Chief Harrell went over the monthly report for July.

1. Chief Harrell/Request for Exception to Section 3.07.07(D) (3) Time Constraint for Temporary Dwellings for Essential City Personnel

Chief Harrell asked to be allowed to continue living in a travel trailer due to extenuating personal reasons.

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Board Action: *Motion by Councilwoman McLean to deny Chief Harrell's request, but to allow him 60 days to find a permanent residence. Second to motion by Councilwoman Cuchens. All ayes; motion carried.*

D. Parks Department Report: none given

E. Engineers Report

City Engineer Anna Hudson briefly discussed various projects underway.

Councilwoman Mclean stated that she, Anna, Cliff and Robert (Fawcett, Sewer Supervisor) had met and discussed various issues and projects pertaining to sewer.

V. Old Business

A. Councilwoman McLean/ Request to hold Workshop or Special Meeting to review Audit with Auditor prior to Budget Hearings

Councilwoman McLean requested that the Council allow the auditor to brief the Council on the recent audit during the budget workshop on the 21st. Per the Mayor, the auditor will be added to the agenda for the August 21 Budget Workshop.

B. Attorney Adkinson/City Clerk interviews and selection procedures

Attorney Adkinson stated that he had gotten a number of calls with concerns pertaining to the selection process utilized in the second round of city clerk candidates. He suggested that the Council needs to adopt procedures for hiring.

Councilwoman Brannon expressed concerns about the rankings. Councilman Farris expressed concerns about the procedure.

Mayor Barley gave an overview of the procedures thus far and stated that he had suggested procedures for the Council to consider under New Business.

VI. New Business

A. Mayor Russ Barley

1. Hiring procedures for Employees except Dept. Heads
2. Hiring procedures for Dept. Heads

Mayor Barley presented suggestions for hiring procedures.

The Council made several revisions as follows and the procedures will come back to the Council at the next council meeting:

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HIRING PROCESS FOR CITY NON-DEPARTMENT HEAD EMPLOYEES
(Nominating Committee: Department Head/Councilmember Liaison/Mayor)

- Vacant position created
- Department Head request for hire
- Authority to Hire approved by City Council
- Internal Job Ad and Classified Job Ad developed by City Clerk
- Classified Ad Distributed to Media by City Clerk
- Applications received logged in and given to Department Head/Mayor
- Nominating Committee review applications and determine top 3-5 Candidates
- Nominating Committee complete reference checks/background checks on top 3-5 Candidates
- Department Head coordinates interviews between top 3-5 candidates and with Nominating Committee.
- Department Head presents candidate recommendation to the City Council with request to keep top 3-5 applications on file for 6 months
- City Council makes final decision; offer is made to selected candidate.

HIRING PROCESS FOR CITY DEPARTMENT HEAD EMPLOYEES

- Vacant position created
- Department/ request for hire
- Authority to hire approved by City Council
- Internal Job Ad and Classified Ad developed
- Classified Ad distributed to Media
- Received Applications logged in & given to Mayor
- First Round Telephone Interviews by Mayor
- References check/background checks by Mayor
- Top 3-5 candidates are selected based on applications
- Top candidate are interviewed by Mayor
- Recommendation on top candidates made to City Council by Mayor
- Top candidates are interviewed by go before each City Council member individually for final interviews (review/rating)
- City Council makes final decision/ratings are tallied in a regular city council meeting– offer made to selected candidate.
- Top 3-5 candidate applications kept on file for 6 months

B. Councilwoman Cuchens

1. Draft Form to Request Placement on City Council Agenda for the Public

Councilwoman Cuchens presented the Draft Request to be Placed on Council Agenda Form which was developed by Planner Hughes-Neel.

Board Action: *Motion by Councilwoman Cuchens to adopt the form as presented. Second to*

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motion by Councilwoman Laird. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Marketing Package to promote City of Freeport

Councilwoman Cuchens asked the Council to consider putting together a marketing package for the City that can be handed out to prospective businesses, developers and potential new residents. Mayor Barley appointed Cuchens to head up that initiative.

3. Compensation/Pay Increase for Interim Clerk

Board Action: *Motion by Councilwoman Cuchens to provide pay increase/compensation to Hughes-Neel while she acts as Interim Clerk, retroactive to April 21st when she began acting as Interim Clerk; that she be compensated \$3 /hr. in additional to her regular salary and that she continue to receive this compensation until 30 days after hire of the New Clerk. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Brannon. All ayes; motion carried.*

C. Councilwoman Brannon /Legislative Updates

- Councilwoman Brannon attended League of Cities function in Gulf Breeze for P.C. Wu as current President; Dr. Wu was being honored for his service to the League of Cities.
- Councilwoman Brannon reminded the Council of the League of Cities Conference the coming weekend. She reminded the Council that by state law, council members have to obtain 4 hours of ethics training; there are classes that are available for about \$35 per person.
- Councilwoman Brannon touched on Northwest Florida League of Cities priorities; she will bring those to the Council to share and proposed resolutions.

D. Diana Ferrell

1. Code of Ethics violation

Ferrell discussed her relationship with the neighboring property owner John Harrell, and the owner's son Chad Harrell, who is the current Freeport Fire Chief. She stated that she believed that the fire-fighters code of ethics had been violated.

Council Action: none

2. Safety issue at 191 Caswell

Ferrell stated that in her opinion, the fence erected by John Harrell behind her property is a safety hazard, due to the ends of nails sticking out on her property side where the horizontal and vertical boards were joined.

Council Action: none

Mayor Barley stated that the Council had her information to review.

John Harrell, owner of the property behind Ferrell appeared before the Council. He stated that he

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was not in violation of any city or county regulation with his fence.

VII. Council Business Not on Agenda: none

VIII. Public Comment: none

IX. Adjournment

Mayor Barley called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Councilwoman McLean.
The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

APPROVED:

Mayor

Council President

ATTEST:

City Clerk