

**City of Freeport**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 14, 2014 Agenda**

**I. Meeting Called to Order**

The October 14, 2014 Regular Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Russ Barley at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Freeport City Hall.

Council Members present: Councilwoman Jennifer Laird, Councilwoman Elizabeth Brannon, Mayor Russ Barley, Councilwoman Janice McLean, Councilwoman Kasey Cuchens and Councilman Eddie Farris.

Staff present: City Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel, City Attorney Clayton Adkinson, Fire Dept. Captain Tom Palmer, City Engineer Anna Hudson and 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 – 9/25/14 RCM and 10/02/14 SCM**

Board Discussion:

Councilwoman Brannon noted an error on Page 2/8; she had voted “Nay” on the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the Annexation Ordinance, for a 3:1 vote with Councilwoman Cuchens recused.

Board Action:

Councilwoman Brannon motioned to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2014 Regular Council Meeting with the revision as noted and the minutes of the October 2, 2014 Special Council Meeting as presented. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

**IV. Staff Reports**

**A. Planning Department**

**1. Entrance Landscaping Plan/Cross Creek**

Planner Hughes-Neel presented a site location map and revised landscape plan for the entrance to Cross Creek Estates Phase I. (site plan and landscape plan attached)

Board Discussion: none

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Board Action:

Councilwoman McLean motioned to approve the revised entrance landscaping plan for Cross Creek Estates Phase I as presented.  
Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

B. Legal Matters : none

C. Fire Department Report

Captain Palmer presented the monthly activity report for the Fire Dept. (attached)

Board Discussion: none

Board Action: none

D. Parks Department Report: none

E. Engineering Report

1. Request Workshop for Water & Sewer Model

City Engineer Hudson requested that the workshop request be continued to the October 23, 2014 meeting agenda.

Board Discussion: none

Board Action: none

V. **Old Business:** none

VI. **New Business**

A. Live Oak Landing/Request for Sewer/Water Rate Adjustment

Ryan Cleveland appeared before the Council to represent the interests of Live Oak Landing, located at Pitts Bay Shore Drive East. Mr. Cleveland provided the Council with a handout (attached). The request to the Council was to use historical occupancy rates to determine ERUs for Phase II of their project.

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Board/Staff Discussion:

Attorney Adkinson advised the Council that they could not negotiate their adopted ERU calculations. Mr. Cleveland described how they over-built their system to assist the City in providing sewer and water in the Black Creek area. City Engineer Knauer offered to review what they had done and see if Live Oak Landing could be given a credit.

Board Action: none

This matter will be reviewed by the City Engineer, who will bring back a recommendation to the Council at the November 13, 2014 meeting, under Old Business.

**B. Parks Director Job Description/Salary/Advertisement**

Board Discussion:

The Council discussed the minimum qualifications and minimum salary. They also discussed the need for certifications in field maintenance, fertilization and pesticides.

Board Action:

Councilwoman Laird and Planner Hughes-Neel will get with Shane Supple to determine what certifications Shane had while working as Parks & Recreation Director for the City. Staff was directed to place the Parks Director job description under New Business for the November 13, 2014 meeting.

**C. Mayor Barley**

**1. Resolution to Recognize the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WFRPC**

Mayor Barley presented the draft resolution to recognize and congratulate the West Florida Regional Planning Council on 50 years of service.

Board Discussion: none

Board Action:

Councilwoman Brannon motioned to approve Resolution 2014-06, recognizing the service of the West Florida Regional Planning Council. Councilwoman Cuchens seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

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2. Sewer Loan/Walton County (*this item was withdrawn by the city attorney prior to the meeting*)

Board Discussion: none

Board Action: none

D. Councilwoman McLean

1. Personnel Information

Councilwoman McLean shared a memo received from City Bookkeeper Floyd McKenzie regarding a needed change to the City's Personnel Policies, Section 404 – Medical Insurance. The personnel policy states that insurance is not available until the new employee's three-month probation is complete. Per Brad Hoard, the City's Employee Benefits Representative, medical insurance must be available for new employees after sixty (60) days of employment in order to comply with the Affordable Care Act. (memo attached)

Board Discussion: none

Board Action:

Councilwoman Brannon motioned to change Section 404 of the City's Personnel Policies to comply with the Affordable Care Act, to make new employees eligible for city insurance after sixty (60) days employment. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Finance Information (refinancing Rural Dev. loans)

Councilwoman McLean shared information from CoBank pertaining to the possible refinancing of the City's Rural Development loans (attached).

Board Discussion:

The Council discussed the information provided.

Board Action:

Councilwoman McLean will contact CoBank to make a presentation to the Council, possibly on the November 13, 2014 agenda.

Board Discussion:

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The Council entered into a discussion regarding the meeting schedule for December 2014. The second scheduled meeting falls on December 25, 2014 which is a city holiday.

Board Action:

Councilwoman McLean motioned to cancel the second meeting in December 2014. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

3. Quotes for Reviewing City Personnel Policy Manual

Councilwoman McLean shared quotes she had received from several Human Resources firms pertaining to review of the City of Freeport's Personnel Policies (attached).

Board Discussion:

The Board discussed the information provided. The Board discussed setting a workshop for Council to review the personnel policies themselves, but general discussion was to wait until after the holidays to workshop the matter.

Board Action:

Councilwoman Laird motioned to have PMI review and make recommendations pertaining to the City of Freeport Personnel Policies. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

E. Councilwoman Cuchens

1. Voting vs. Non-Voting Mayor

Councilwoman Cuchens asked counsel what the process would be to make the Mayor non-voting. City Attorney went over the referendum process, and how the process had gone in neighboring cities.

Board Discussion:

The Council discussed the need to provide information to the public as to why the Mayor position could be non-voting.

Board Action:

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Councilwoman Cuchens motioned to start the paperwork to create a referendum regarding Voting vs. Non-Voting Mayor. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

2. Additional Fees for Billing Department

Councilwoman Cuchens presented information obtained from other local utilities regarding fees for deposits, disconnections and restoration of service. Also presented were the suggested fees for same day business fee for turn-ons, tampering fee, and processing fee (attached).

Board Discussion:

The Council was generally in favor of the same day service fee and the tampering fee, but was not in favor of the processing fee as presented. Councilwoman Cuchens will send the matter back to Jennifer Douglas for revision.

Board Action: none

3. Personnel Issues

Councilwoman Cuchens stated that she would like to continue Personnel Issues to the next meeting.

Board Discussion: none

Board Action: none

Councilwoman Cuchens asked the Council to review several quotes for Water Dept. vehicles. Which were put together by Water Supervisor Larry Tuggle:

New Service Truck: 2015 Fleet Non-Retail Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD Reg.  
Cab 133.6" W \$29,859.00

Replacement Vehicle /Meter Reading Truck \$14,000-\$19,000

Board Discussion:

The Board discussed the options and prices then asked Councilwoman Cuchens to request that Water Supervisor Tuggle check with Triangle Chevrolet in DeFuniak Springs to see if they could match those prices

Board Action: none

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**VII. Council Business Not on Agenda**

Mayor Barley announced that he had three items:

1. Thompson Annexation.

Andre and Betti Ann Thompson applied for annexation in 2007 but were turned down because the property north of them was not in the city and would have created an enclave. Since that time, FDOT has acquired the property to the north for right-of-way and the Thompsons were included with the Annexation Initiative based on their original application. They have asked to be removed from the initiative and Ms. Thompson has asked if their original annexation fee can be refunded.

Board Action:

Councilman Farris motioned to deny the request for a refund. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

2. IT RFQs

Mayor Barley announced that the closing date had passed on the RFQ for a contract IT Technician position and that the City had received two (2) RFQs/applications. Mayor Barley announced that he had distributed the information to the Council for review and that the ranking would take place at the October 23, 2014 regular meeting under New Business.

3. City Clerk Applications

Mayor Barley announced that the closing date for city clerk application has passed and that the City had received 23 applications. He stated that only one applicant had government experience.

Board Discussion:

Mayor Barley will distribute all 23 applications to the Council to be ranked. The ranking will be scheduled under New Business for the October 23, 2014 meeting.

Board Action:

Councilwoman McLean motioned to hold a Special Meeting to

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interview the top four city clerk applicants on Thursday, November 6, 2014 at 6:00 pm. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes, motion carried.

Councilwoman McLean stated that until the City decides to advertise for a new fire chief, that they should take official action to empower Captain Tom Palmer to run the fire department.

Board Action:

Councilwoman McLean motioned to appoint Captain Tom Palmer as Interim Fire Chief until such time as a new fire chief is hired. Councilman Farris seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

Councilman Farris announced that November 11, 2014 was the Fire Department's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Board Action:

Councilman Farris motioned that the City keep the Fire Department and cease negotiations with the County. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion. The vote was 2 ayes (Farris, Laird) and 3 nays (Brannon, McLean, and Cuchens). Motion failed.

City Attorney Adkinson said that he would continue negotiations with the County.

Councilwoman McLean stated that she would like to see what it would take for the City to create its own MSBU for the purpose of funding the fire department. City Attorney Adkinson stated that it could be done by next September, but it would require studies, advertising, and meetings.

Board Action: none.

**VIII. Public Comment**

Tim Ard announced three upcoming events:

- October 15 – Mayor Barley's Birthday
- November 11 – Veteran's Day Ceremony
- November 15 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mayor's Charity Ball

**IX. Adjournment**

Mayor Barley called for a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman McLean motioned to adjourn. The

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meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

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Council President

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved