



City Council

City Council Chambers ♦ 230 West Stephenson Street ♦ Freeport, IL 61032

MINUTES SPECIAL MEETING Wednesday, May 13, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Freeport Illinois City Council was called to order on Wednesday, May 13, 2009, at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers with a quorum being present by Mayor George Gaulrapp.

ROLL CALL

Present on roll call were council members DeVine, Endress, Helms, O'Neill, Corbin, Klemm, and Bush (7). Alderman Boldt was absent with an excused absence. Also present were city department heads and Corporation Counsel Sarah Griffin.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At this time the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alderman DeVine.

RECORD

City Clerk Meg Zuravel read into the record information regarding notification of the special meeting. The agenda for the special meeting was posted two places in City Hall (one at the Walnut Street door and one in the City Clerk's Office) on May 8, 2009. The Freeport City Council members were notified of the meeting via email and phone calls. On May 8, 2009, the special meeting agenda was posted on the City of Freeport website along with a copy of the appropriation ordinance. A supplemental email with the agenda attached was forwarded to 95 members of the agenda notice listing which includes members of the media requesting such notice.

Mayor George Gaulrapp read that notice is hereby given of a Public Hearing to be held on Monday, June 1, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers, City Hall, 230 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, Illinois, to discuss Ordinance 2009-37, Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2009-2010, for the City of Freeport, Illinois. Copies of the ordinance are available on the website under quick links, City Council meeting calendars, meeting dates of May 4, 13, or 18, 2009 or in the clerk's office between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Anyone wishing to express comments or concerns should attend the public hearing or submit a written comment to the Mayor's Office, City of Freeport, 230 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, Illinois prior to the public hearing.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Alderman Endress, seconded by Alderman Corbin. Motion passed by voice vote without dissent.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS - AGENDA ITEMS

Scott Townsend, Firefighters Local Union 441 President, 524 Delmar Drive, was signed up for public comment on agenda items this evening. Firefighter Townsend read a statement of apology regarding remarks he had said to the Journal Standard on behalf of the Local Union 441 regarding the Police Department command staff in comparison to the Fire Department. He had misstated that there were ten command positions at the Police Department and there were really only four compared to the Fire Department's two command positions.

2ND READING OF ORDINANCE 2009-37:

Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2009-2010 for the City of Freeport

The first reading of this ordinance was held on May 4, 2009. A motion to adopt the ordinance was given by Alderman Klemm, seconded by Alderman Endress. Mayor George Gaulrapp stated that there is no intent to push this ordinance through on Monday and a public hearing will be on June 1, 2009. He will be out of town for the regular meeting scheduled on Monday, May 18 and he wanted to be an active part of the discussion with the unions. Union representatives from the Fire, Police and AFSCME were present in the audience and Mayor Gaulrapp introduced Scott Townsend of Firefighters Local 441, Terry Cowan of PBLC Unit 9, and Todd Marsh of AFSCME Local 3367 and referred to a packet distributed by the three unions at the last council meeting on May 4, 2009. The packet included suggestions for cost savings by the unions. The council members were given the opportunity to discuss the appropriation ordinance. In addition each department head was asked to provide comments about their budgets.

Scott Townsend presented information from their list of suggestions for cost savings measures and stated last week the union voted at this time not to open contracts. He said they are willing to help and will look at PEPHP. They would like the council to further review essential vs. non-essential items in the budget taking a serious look at the revenue side. Firefighter Townsend spoke in opposition to the mayor's proposal to eliminate the deputy chief. There was a discussion whether the battalion chiefs could be union or non-union.

Alderman Corbin stated that the public is tired of tax increases and they expect the City to run on a lean budget based on the number of jobs that have been lost in the City and the economic times faced by citizens. He understands the budget is made up of 82% personnel costs and the council is working to save jobs but in order to do this it means to trim a little off of everyone's salary by maintaining a ceiling on the raises for this year of 2% across the board. Firefighter Townsend asked the council to look at revenue streams including a sales tax increase which would spread it out to everyone.

Firefighter James Jackson, 229 W. Homer spoke in regard to the professional department versus a volunteer department. He stated the Freeport Fire Department is the only professional department around for over 30 miles. Firefighter Jackson spoke about the negotiation of the contract.

Todd Marsh was asked about the AFSCME costs saving ideas. Terry Cowan was asked about the PDPA cost saving ideas. Discussion was held regarding various ideas to cut down on officer time for court hearings, 911 call false alarm service fee, alternative tree debris disposal, and charging a fee to hang banners. There was discussion on Fire Department staffing levels and two versus three fire stations.

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Community Development Director Shelly Griswold spoke about the budget cut concessions her department had already given including demolitions and professional services while at the same time raising revenues due to the number of grants received.

NEW BUSINESS

The aldermen were provided the opportunity to discuss items of significant importance. Alderman Bush referred to a petition he had been given in regard to 37 S. Hooker Street and he was going to turn it over the Community Development Director Shelly Griswold.

At 8:15 pm, upon a motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

 s/ Meg Zuravel
Meg Zuravel, City Clerk