



City Council

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

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING Monday, August 1, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Freeport, Illinois, City Council was called to order by Mayor George Gaulrapp with a quorum being present at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 1, 2011, in Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL

Present on roll call were council members Tom Klemm, Shawn Boldt, Ronnie Bush, Jennie DeVine, Dennis Endress, Michael Koester, and Andrew Crutchfield (7). Alderperson Scott Helms was absent. Corporation Counsel Sarah Griffin was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alderperson Endress.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Alderperson Endress moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Alderperson Koester. Motion prevailed by voice vote without dissent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Alderperson Klemm moved for approval of the minutes of the meeting held on July 18, 2011, seconded by Alderperson Koester. Motion prevailed by voice vote without dissent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEMS

There was no one signed on the sheet for public comments on agenda items this evening.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Water and Sewer Bills Payable (Register #583, 584, 587) ---- \$214,512.66
- B. Approval of Payroll for pay period ending July 16, 2011 --- \$418,818.83
- C. Approval of Finance Bills Payable (Registers #581, 582, 585, 586, 588) --- \$328,252.58

Alderperson Endress moved to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented, seconded by Alderperson Crutchfield. Motion prevailed by roll call vote of:

Yeas: Klemm, Boldt, Bush, DeVine, Endress, Koester, and Crutchfield (7)

Nays: none

PRESENTATIONS

Gary Anderson of Gary W. Anderson Architects, Rockford Illinois gave an overview of the inspections of the City Hall Building located at 230 W. Stephenson Street, Freeport, Illinois. He has reviewed the building foundation, masonry, roof, and stairwells. Mr. Anderson stated the gutters have many leaks and

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in addition, the gutters are directed under the sidewalk to the sewer system and these are leaking. In the basement along the Walnut side of the building the basement wall is getting washed out and it is even more evident after the last rain. The roof of City Hall has many leaks.

There is movement in the southwest corner of the building and in the center of the building the stairwell is moving away from the wall. In Council Chambers, which is in the southwest corner of the building, there is a secondary ceiling and above that an arch. This arch has been shifting. The arch also contains decorative molding that is wobbly and this will need to come down. To find out why the southwest corner has been shifting, there will need to soil borings and these will be done by the end of this week.

The stairwell movement could be caused by the all the air conditioning equipment that was put there many years ago and the vibration of those units. There is a masonry wall on the eastside where you have a lot of deterioration. On this wall, the mortar is shot and so is the brick and that may need to be replaced, if not in its entirety then a fairly good sized section. The other thing that they will need to find out will be the capacity of the joists that are holding up the HVAC equipment. Mr. Anderson stated they are getting some numbers on the weight of the equipment and the capacity of those joists and what could be causing the wall to shift out a whole inch from away from the stairway which is pretty alarming.

Mayor Gaulrapp asked once the soil boring tests are performed then how long it will take to get the results. Mr. Anderson stated the soil boring tests will be back in a few days and, hopefully, will they will be able to tell us what is the compaction ratio.

Mayor Gaulrapp stated there is a back-up plan in place in case we need to evacuate City Hall. Mayor Gaulrapp stated there were air quality tests performed on Friday, July 29, 2011. He stated that the air quality tests will take about two weeks to come back. Mayor Gaulrapp asked if there were any other precautions that should be taken. Mr. Anderson stated that, hopefully, all the bases are covered and being proactive is the smart thing to do and you are making the right moves.

Aldersperson Bush stated that is it time that we take serious consideration to moving City Hall somewhere else. He spoke of the history of the building housing the fire and police stations and the age of the building needing to look at a long term solution. Mayor Gaulrapp stated the reason the Anderson firm was called in to give some costs and options relative to what it would be to move to another building or to repair this building. He stated that two and a half years ago the City had the opportunity to purchase the building at 524 W. Stephenson and the council declined due to finances.

Aldersperson Boldt asked what will be the next step and what will be brought back to council. Mr. Anderson stated his firm will address these issues and also point out the other things for a building this age including the mechanical systems, looking at from the perspective as to the life expectancy in the building. When you put money into an older building you need to know the other side as to what you are up against and that will be brought to council.

Aldersperson Koester requested the time frame where we will be able to stay in the building if structurally sound or will it need to be vacated. Mr. Anderson stated that he is hoping within a couple of weeks to determine that if not sooner and the soil borings will tell us a lot. The issue is that in the southwest corner

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where Council Chambers is located when it comes to soil conditions and what is undermining the foundation. There are other things elsewhere that is a cause and effect that can be addressed. Mr. Anderson stated that water can do a tremendous amount of damage in a short period of time and if you don't recognize that and address it, then bad things can happen and you have already experienced that. Mayor Gaulrapp stated that the safety of the employees is first and foremost.

Mr. Anderson stated that the downspouts were put in down under the sidewalk and that is a place to rust out given the kind of material that is there and it should never have put in that way in the first place. There is a quality control issue that has caused some of the problems.

Aldersperson Klemm spoke about his history with Mr. Anderson and stated his opinion that some of the stuff was not done the best to begin with and from what he sees from the photos is more cosmetic than structural like tuck pointing and lack of maintenance. Mayor Gaulrapp stated that some of what has been done recently was to take down the additional ceiling in parts of council chambers and it was tested to find out that it does not contain asbestos.

APPOINTMENT

Aldersperson Klemm moved to accept the appointment of Casey Myers to the Board of Zoning Appeals Committee effective immediately through June 30, 2016, seconded by Aldersperson Crutchfield. Motion prevailed by a roll call vote without dissent.

Aldersperson Endress moved to accept the appointment of Steve Trosley to the Ethics Commission effective immediately, seconded by Aldersperson DeVine. Motion prevailed by voice vote without dissent.

Mayor Gaulrapp stated that this is the first time in many years that positions on the boards and commissions have been completely filled. Citizens were encouraged to participate if any opening should come from this point on by providing contact information to the Mayor's Office administrative assistant.

ORDINANCES – THIRD READING

(There are no items on council agenda for third readings)

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

2ND READING OF ORDINANCE 2011-44:

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF WATERWORKS REVENUE BONDS AND SEWERAGE REVENUE BONDS OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT, STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEFRAYING THE COST OF ACQUIRING, CONSTRUCTING AND INSTALLING WATERWORKS FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS AND SEWERAGE FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS, AND RELATED MATTERS

The first reading of this ordinance was held on July 18, 2011. A motion to adopt was given by Aldersperson Koester, seconded by Aldersperson Helms. Upon the second reading and no discussion, the ordinance was automatically laid over to the next meeting.

2ND READING OF ORDINANCE 2011-45:

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AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND PROVIDING FOR THE CITY OF FREEPORT, ILLINOIS, TO EXECUTE, ENTER INTO AND PERFORM LOAN AGREEMENTS WITH THE ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING A PART OF THE COST OF CONSTRUCTING, IMPROVING AND EXTENDING THE CITY'S WATERWORKS FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS AND SEWERAGE FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS, AND MAKING CERTAIN COVENANTS IN PROVIDING FOR THE OPERATION OF THE CITY'S WATERWORKS SYSTEM AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM AND THE PLEDGE, DEDICATION, COLLECTION, SEGREGATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE REVENUES TO BE DERIVED FROM THE OPERATION THEREOF

The first reading of this ordinance was held on July 18, 2011. A motion to adopt was given by Alderperson Klemm, seconded by Alderperson Helms. Upon the second reading and no discussion, the ordinance was automatically laid over to the next meeting.

ORDINANCES - FIRST READING

(There are no items on council agenda for first reading)

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #R-2011-45:

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE MAYOR TO EXTEND THE LEASE FOR A TERM NOT EXCEEDING THREE YEARS WITH FREEPORT DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION FOR PLACEMENT OF PARKING LOT KIOSKS IN DOWNTOWN AREA

Public Works Director Tom Dole presented the resolution stating that there are ten locations where the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation has directional kiosks located on the public right away and parking lots and we lease that property to them and this extends that agreement for three years.

Alderperson Klemm moved to place Resolution R-2011-45 on the floor for adoption, seconded by Alderperson Koester. Motion prevailed by roll call vote of:

Yeas: Klemm, Boldt, Bush, DeVine, Endress, Koester and Crutchfield (7)

Nays: none

Resolution #R-2011-45 was adopted.

OTHER

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Public Works

Public Works Director Tom Dole stated that due to the storm the Street Department has been working on limb pickup around the City and they will be following the snow plow routes for a period of two weeks. Alderperson Klemm provided comments and compliments to the Public Works Department for the storm cleanup to keep the City streets opened based on the number of trees in the right away. Mayor Gaulrapp reiterated the compliment to the street crews and added the Police and Fire Departments. Mayor Gaulrapp explained the flood damage assessment that will be aggregated together with Stephenson County as to whether the area will qualify for a disaster declaration. This declaration, if declared, would go to the President as to whether it qualifies for FEMA funds. The assessments were taken on Monday August 1, 2011 in City Hall and then through the end of the week will be done through phone calls to 815-235-8205.

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Community Development

Community Development Director Shelly Griswold was present and had no further report.

Finance

Finance Director Craig Joesten was present and had no report.

Water & Sewer/City Engineer

City Engineer Denise Ihrig provide information regarding the Big Four Projects. There is a project for 14 miles of sanitary sewers throughout the City of Freeport. Some of the sanitary sewer to be rehabilitated are located within sanitary sewer easements. The Commission has sent letters to property owners of 192 properties that hold sanitary sewers to inform them of inspections that will be held on August 3, 2011. These tours will consist of the bidders to these locations. Actual construction work will begin on or near October 1, 2011 and will be completed on or before October 31, 2013. A copy of the Water and Sewer Commission letters that were mailed on July 28, 2011 were provided to the council. City Engineer Ihrig spoke about the sanitary sewer on Mary in which there is a potential to take down the crown on Mary rather than putting in sewers, if feasible. If they can't get it to tie in, then they will put in slotted drain to help drain that area. The Water and Sewer Commission and Public Works Department will be working together to find a solution in the area of Mary Street.

Police

Chief of Police Jerry Whitmore spoke storm last week and the recent burglaries during that time. He asked citizens to call the police if they see any suspicious behavior in their neighborhoods and to describe the person/s or the vehicle. If there are people in the neighborhood asking to cut down trees or take care of shrubs, notify the police because they need to apply for a solicitors permit from the Police Department.

Fire

Fire Chief Kevin Countryman provided an update on the meetings with the department heads and the promoters of the music festival. The public safety for the event also holds meetings with the organizers to make sure things are in place for the event. The question is how many tickets they are going to sell. The departments have made the necessary arrangements to provide the personnel and equipment necessary which will be charged to the promoters of the event.

Library

Freeport Public Library Director Carole Dickerson spoke about her renewal for the American Library Association for the 35th year. She also spoke about the partnership with the Indian Trail Archers and the successful event that was held last Saturday at the Freeport Public Library. Another successful event that is held at the library is the Celebrity Readers program which is held each month.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Gaulrapp stated there are many events being held on the City this weekend including the Arts Center "Brats, Beer, and Blues Festival", the St. Joseph 150th Anniversary Celebration, and Cimino's Fest. There will also be a music festival titled, "The Spirit of Peace and Music Festival" on August 19, 20, and 21st at the Stephenson County Fairgrounds and ticket sales are underway currently.

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At this time Mayor Gaulrapp presented the State of the City 2011. He gave credit to the department heads and their departments for working through an economically stressful time in the City.

The following is an excerpt of the State of the City; “Yes, a lot has changed in the national environment over the six years I’ve been Mayor. And here in Freeport, we’ve been working hard to respond to those national conditions that threaten our local prosperity and sustainability. And it’s been difficult, don’t get me wrong. But we have risen to the challenge. And tonight I want to highlight some of the ways that we have responded to these challenges to help our community stay strong and prepare for our future growth and prosperity. I want to talk about how we are meeting the challenges of today and preparing for the opportunities of the future. The single largest portion of the City’s budget is personnel costs. They account for 84% of the City’s budget. And it’s not just salaries, but also the legacy costs – health care, pensions – that continue to rise, even as our revenue does not. So we’ve taken a good hard look at the way we do business, and we’ve been able to reorganize in some departments for greater efficiency. Just to name a few, we eliminated the Deputy Fire Chief position and moved to a Battalion Chief model. When an employee retired in the finance department, we looked at the workload and decided some work could be reallocated to other positions rather than hiring a full time replacement. And in Community Development, two inspector positions were combined into one when we were able to hire an individual qualified to hold both positions.

Over the past two years, when revenues from the State of Illinois were consistently late and often questionable, we trimmed \$800,000 in expenditures from 2009 to 2011. Last spring, the City’s cash position was so threatened by delayed revenues from the state that we had to borrow \$400,000 just to continue to make payroll. But we rolled up our sleeves and went about the business of shaving expenses. And as a result of that hard work, we ended our fiscal year with a \$1.2 million surplus.

We continuously review the role of consultants in the City’s business. We began this six years ago, recognizing that there may be some opportunities to gain efficiencies. As a result of those reviews, we have brought the operation of water and sewer back into the City, which yields annual savings of \$150,000. Last year, we brought an engineer on staff with the City, and that has resulted in our ability to handle some engineering functions in-house rather than pay for consultants, which has gained efficiencies and cut expenses.

We’re becoming more efficient to meet the challenges of today and prepare for the opportunities of the future.

We are embarking on a \$20 million upgrade to the City’s water and sewer infrastructure. These necessary improvements will enhance our water delivery system, improve our storm sewers, and modernize outdated technology. In an economic climate that makes it difficult to access capital for such a large project, we were able to secure financing through the Environmental Protection Agency at just 1.25% interest with 25% of the principal forgiven when the project is completed on schedule.

We are upgrading our infrastructure to meet the challenges of today and prepare for the opportunities of the future.” *Note from Clerk; the text of the State of the City is provided in full on the City of Freeport website under recent news.*

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NEW BUSINESS/COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Each council member was provided the opportunity to publicly address significant items of interest.

- Alderperson Endress requested an update on the Plaza Hotel. Director Griswold addressed the Plaza Hotel stating that owners are in the process of completing the required work to bring the building up to code and they are currently working on an alarm system.
- Alderperson Koester commended the City departments including emergency responders and public works for their response to the heavy rains in Freeport.
- Alderperson Crutchfield spoke about the Community Days that will be held on August 12 and 13, 2011 at the Faith Temple Church of God in Christ on Madison Street.
- Alderperson Klemm gave kudos for the swift response to the flooding in Freeport to the emergency responders, Public Works department, and the Stephenson County Emergency Management Team.
- Alderperson Boldt stated that the 2nd Ward has a Neighborhood Watch group that has met and they will be meeting again on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Alderperson Boldt requested that the topic of cul-de-sac plowing be brought up before this winter.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AGENDA OR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- Steve Carroll, 811 S. Oak, Freeport Illinois spoke about the convenience store located at on 716 S. Galena stating that, in his opinion, there has been several hundred calls to the police about disruptive behavior on and around that property. He has reported public urination, trash, vehicles blocking the street from the parking lot, noise violation from vehicles parked in lot and overall disruptive behavior. He spoke about another convenience store located on Galena, Glick's Triangle whose store does not have any of these problems because that kind of behavior is not tolerated. Mr. Carroll recommended a review of the ordinances such as the one crafted for Liquor establishments in which chronic nuisances are addressed for landlords renting to businesses that are drawing patrons that are being disruptive outside the business.
- Tom Teich, 659 E Jefferson spoke about the fundraiser for RAMP held this week.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

s/ Meg Zuravel
Meg Zuravel, City Clerk