



## **City Council**

City Council Chambers ♦ 524 West Stephenson Street ♦ Freeport, IL 61032

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### **MINUTES**

#### **CITY COUNCIL PLANNING SESSION**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2014**

**LOCATION: HAMPTON INN OF FREEPORT, 109 SOUTH GALENA AVE.,  
LOWER LEVEL – STEPHENSON ROOM, FREEPORT IL 61032**

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*The City Council Planning Session for Saturday February 1, 2014, was called by Mayor Gitz. Notification by electronic delivery of the agenda was provided to council members and department heads on January 29, 2014. The posting process was completed on January 29, 2014, including emailing to the media notice listing and posting the agenda to the City website.*

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Planning Session of the Freeport, Illinois, City Council was called to order in the Stephenson Room of the Hampton Inn, 109 South Galena Avenue by Mayor James Gitz with a quorum being present at 8:05 a.m. on Saturday, February 1, 2014.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present on roll call: Mayor Gitz and council members Tom Klemm, Ronnie Bush, Jennie DeVine, Dennis Endress, Michael Koester, Sally Brashaw, and Andrew Crutchfield (7). Absent from the meeting at roll call was Alderperson Shawn Boldt. *See notation at 8:37 am for Alderperson Boldt to enter meeting.*

City staff members included Corporation Counsel Sarah Griffin, City Clerk Meg Zuravel, Community Development Director Shelly Griswold, City Engineer Shaun Gallagher, Water and Sewer Director Tom Glendenning, and Accountant Duane Price.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Alderperson Endress.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEMS**

There was no one signed on the sheet for public comments.

### **INTRODUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW OF AGENDA**

Highland Community College instructor, Alan Wenzel was introduced as facilitator for this planning session. Council members and staff introduced themselves. Council members stated what they would like to see as a result of the session and identified what they felt as the top issues to discuss. Alan Wenzel reviewed discussion points and ways to facilitate open discussion in a relaxed and more casual manner than a regular council meeting. He stated if he sees someone dominating a discussion, he will draw in the other members or move on to another subject.

Through introductions council members stated their expectations for the planning session to be:

- Roadmap for discussion

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COUNCIL PLANNING SESSION**  
**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2014**

- Find out what departments are doing
- Serious/Frank Conversations
- Game Plan – Where we’re going
- Give Some Useful information
- Commonality of Goals
- Identify Possible ‘Sticky’ Points
- Plan so we can be proactive
- Future Outlook
- Discover what Council Thinks
- See Bigger Financial Picture
- Common Agenda – Oaring in same direction
- Priorities of Council – To Set Program
- Talk About Core Issues

**Planning and Discussion Topics - Infrastructure**

At 8:25 am, Water and Sewer Director Tom Glendenning was introduced to provide an overview of the Water and Sewer current status of projects and the suggested priorities of projects moving forward to work hand in hand with the street projects.

Director Glendenning stated, in the past year, he and City Engineer Gallagher have been working together to optimize resources so that street projects and their projects work hand-in-hand. Director Glendenning explained that 28% of the infrastructure is 148 years old. Another 26% has an age between 1930 and 1970. This segment seems to be causing most of the issues because it was spun cast pipes. Director Glendenning explained that the real need will be to implement a replacement program. Director Glendenning reviewed his major challenges including infrastructure replacement, water loss from watermain breaks, future raw water supplies and rehabilitation of water plant facility, equipment replacement, and regulatory requirements placed on the City by State and Federal Environmental Protection Agencies. He noted the importance of the hydraulic modeling project being worked on currently by the GIS Specialist and City Engineer and explained that as we move forward to bring the new water systems online this modeling will be most important. He is in the process of working on inventory and digital mapping, rating, planning and cost analysis of the operational expenses. In 2014, Director Glendenning will be working on completing and implementing the Big 4 projects and planning the future infrastructure needs and recommended financing options.

At 8:37 a.m. Alderperson Boldt entered bringing the number of council members present to eight.

Director Glendenning reviewed for the council members the importance of staffing and noted that he has quite a few employees with over thirty years of experience and will need to focus on training or hiring of other personnel as their retirement draws near as these employees are what is known as “single point failure” if a qualified person is not in this position.

Council members stated they would be interested in having a presentation from Water and Sewer Director Glendenning as “State of the Utility” in future council meetings.

**MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL PLANNING SESSION  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2014**

City Engineer Gallagher provided an overview of the street projects scheduled for 2014 and 2015. Currently, the City of Freeport has 116.50 miles of roadway. Of these roads, 90 local miles are funded by motor fuel tax dollars and 26.50 miles are funding by STU which requires a 20% match. The City is also responsible for two bridges including Hancock and Gladewood. The City is also working on two trail projects including bringing together the Jane Addams Trail and the Pecatonica Prairie Path into downtown Freeport. City Engineer Gallagher provided an overview of projects completed in 2012 including mill and overlay of eleven blocks and reconstruction of two blocks for a cost of \$1,096,000 which amounts to 1.2% of the overall streets in Freeport. In 2013, the MFT program funded projects to include thirty-six city blocks in the crack sealing program, seven blocks in the mill and overlay program, eighteen blocks in the patch program for a cost of \$523,000. He stated that this amounted to 61 blocks repaired or reconstructed which is 6% of the overall streets in Freeport. City Engineer Gallagher provided his suggested priorities including balance of maintenance and reconstruction, projects grouped by location, annual funding for trails, annual funding for bridges, multi-year planning to allow for in-house work, working with Water and Sewer Department to optimize projects and their expenses, bid larger quantities, and to work towards roads to having a 60-70 year life cycle.

He spoke about the cost effectiveness in combining that Water and Sewer infrastructure improvements with the road reconstruction. Discussion was held on the gas tax and the funds going into the Motor Fuel Tax dollars available for road projects. City Engineer Gallagher explained how the tax dollars are shrinking in comparison for the cost of oil to reconstruct a road.

**Planning and Discussion Topics – Finance**

Accountant Duane Price provided an overview of the sales tax history, the general fund revenue summary and the bond issues that the City funds are committed to through year 2034. He reviewed the revenue sources from the bond issues to include the General Fund, the Sewer Fund, the Fire Capital Improvement Fund, the Water Fund, the Downtown TIF, and the Landfill fund. Accountant Price provided an overview of the current year compared to budget for the first six months ending on October 31, 2013 which showed actual revenue was down below the actual expenses to bring in a \$98,084 loss. He attributed this to health care, wages and other expenses. Discussion was held on looking closely at future equipment, replacement from the capital fund, projections for finance for a 3-4 year period, and contract renewals for vendors as possible revenue sources.

**Planning and Discussion Topics – City Hall**

City Engineer provided an overview of the costs analysis as prepared by Architect Gary Anderson and Architect Scott Winter. He provided that there is now an agreement of the cost of rehabilitation of the City Hall building between the architects and City Engineer Gallagher with costs estimates coming in around \$3.9 million and \$4.7 million and they all agreed on the square footage of the building.

Discussion was held on public participation necessary to make sure that the community weighs in on the decision of the City Hall building. Council members discussed everyone having the opportunity for input on the topic that the input must represent all demographics, and how much input will be enough (would there be a specific number of surveys that would be required).

**MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL PLANNING SESSION  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2014**

At this time, council members requested to have Public Comments – Agenda or Non-Agenda Items (limited to 3 minutes per person) moved forward on the agenda to allow for Save City Hall members in attendance to provide their comments.

**Public Comments – Agenda or Non-Agenda Items (limited to 3 minutes per person)**

Deb Elzinga provided her comments on the City Hall cost estimates and moving forward with public commenting. She volunteered her services and the services of the Saving City Hall citizens to be involved with the public process and the community engagement process.

Andy Dvorak spoke about the costs being estimated between \$3.5 million and \$4.0 million as an investment of saving a building that has historical value to future generations.

Kathy Wilkin provided an overview of a newspaper article that was written when the building was first built and the features that are housed in the City Hall building.

At this time, the planning session broke for a time period for members to obtain food for lunch. Once they obtained their food, members went back to their seats to continue with the planning session.

**Planning and Discussion Topics –Jobs and Economic Development**

Discussion was held as the City's economic development goals and objectives for next year. Mayor Gitz reviewed a listing of goals and asked for input as to the next steps. Discussion was held on performance, funding, and goals for Northwest Illinois Development Alliance (NIDA).

During the discussion of the economic development at 12:10 pm, Alderperson Tom Klemm left the meeting due to a previous engagement.

**Wrap up - summary & next steps**

Alan Wenzel reviewed the note boards taken during the meeting and then asked for input of the council members to provide a top tier, middle tier and lower tier of projects. Discussion was held as to future retreat topics to included fire, police, neighborhoods, papers thrown and turning into litter especially on vacant properties, specific ward projects into budget, group home ordinance and art museum.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 1:17 p.m.

*S/ Meg Zuravel*

Meg Zuravel, City Clerk