

FREEPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Meeting | January 2, 2024 @ 6:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Members Comments

- A. Council President Rick Fennell opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- B. Council members present were Stephanie VanTine, Josh James, Rick Fennell, Sally Riley, and Lori Miller.
- C. Additional attendees included: Mayor Zack Gent, Borough Manager Zach Filous, Director of Public Safety Mike Greiser, Solicitor Matt Kalina, Chief of Police Chris Fabric, and KLH Engineering Rob Horvat.
- D. Stephanie VanTine personally thanked the previous 4 Council Members for their work and dedication to the community.

II. Citizen Comments

- A. Phyllis Hudek, owner of the Rainbow Bar, fundraised and donated \$1120 to the Fire Department. Additionally, an anonymous citizen will also be donating an additional \$500.
- B. John Chiado expressed concerns with the price increase of the borough storage units. The rates were raised from \$50 to \$150 per month.

III. Approval of the December 4, 2023, Minutes Regular Council Meeting

- A. **Motion** by Stephanie VanTine to approve the December 4, 2023, regular council meeting minutes. Seconded by Josh James. 2023 Council members motioned to approve; 2024 Council members abstained. **Motion carried 2/2.**

IV. Committee Reports

- A. *Borough Manager Report*
 - 1. **Motion** by Josh James to approve the Borough Manager report. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried 5/0.**
- B. *Public Safety Reports*
 - 1. **Motion** by Stephanie VanTine to approve the Public Safety Report. Seconded by Josh James. **Motion carried 5/0.**
- C. *Police Report*
 - 1. **Motion** by Josh James to approve the Police Report. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried 5/0.**
- D. *Invoices*
 - 1. **Motion** by Stephanie VanTine to approve the invoices. Seconded by Josh James. **Motion carried 5/0.**
- E. *Treasurer Report*
 - 1. **Motion** by Josh James to approve the treasurer's report. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried 5/0.**

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F. Mayor's Report

1. Mayor Gent wanted to thank the previous council people for all their service to the community and wanted to welcome the new council members and hopes to have a good working relationship with them moving forward. Gent wanted to thank the Borough Manager, Secretary, Public Works, Treasurer, all emergency services within the Borough, and SARPD for another great year of service. Gent will work with local politicians, work toward streetscape, and help plan events for 2024. Wants to start quarterly Mayor meetings.

G. Planning Commission Report

1. **Motion** by Josh James to approve the planning commission report. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried 5/0.**

H. Solicitor Report

1. Awaiting the issuance of a deed for 67 Main Street (Laneville). Once it is issued, sale of the property can move forward.

V. Standing Committees

A. Public Works

1. Sewage Treatment Plant Phase 2- Robert Horvat
 - a) The PA H2O Grant did not return any money.
 - b) Notice to Proceed has been issued.
 - c) EPA approval has been issued.
 - d) Finalizing Penn Vest and Senator Casey's money for project construction.
 - e) KLH is working with the Borough Manager to review potential Borough development and the impact to the sewer system.
2. Sewage Classes for New Employee
 - a) **Motion** by Josh James to approve sending new Public Work employee to sewage treatment classes. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried 5/0.**

B. Public Safety, Property, & Ordinance – Councilperson Josh James

1. Status - Blighted Properties
 - a) There are currently 13 blighted properties within Freeport Borough.
 - b) The Land bank demolishes properties and returns them to the tax roll.
 - c) The Land bank receives half of the tax revenue paid for the following 5 years.
2. 67 Main Street
 - a) Laneville property will be offered for closed bid once the deed is obtained.
3. 3. New Council keys, emails, and laptops
 - a) Will be issued to new members of council.

C. Parks, Recreation, & Community – Councilperson Stephanie VanTine

1. Boat Docks Sign-up
 - a) Boat dock sign-ups start today and will remain open until February 15.
 - b) Payment for current leaseholders is due by March 15.

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- c) After March 15, new leases will be issued to interested parties as established by the sign-up procedures.

D. Finance – Borough Manager Zach Filous

1. Delinquent Accounts
 - a) As of January 1, 2024, there are 75 delinquent sewage bills.
 - b) “Delinquent” is defined as an outstanding balance greater than \$150.
2. Delinquent Income Tax Collection
 - a) Sharp Collection recovered \$2.25 in delinquent income tax.
3. 2024 Budget
 - a) **Motion** by Sally Riley to approve the 2024 budget contingent on transferring \$68,042 from the General Capital Reserve in order to balance the 2024 books. Seconded by Rick Fennell. Josh James and Stephanie **abstained** from vote. **Motion carried** 3/3.
4. 2024 Treasurer Salary
 - a) **Motion** by Josh James to approve 2024 Treasurer Salary. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried** 5/5.
5. Resolution # 2024-1: Pension Chief Administrative Officer
 - a) This resolution proposes the pension chief administrative officer be the responsibility of the Borough Manager.
 - b) **Motion** by Josh James to approve Resolution # 2024-1. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried** 5/5.
6. Resolution # 2024-2: Act 44 Compliance
 - a) Written procedures need to exist specifying how professional services are selected for the pension plan.
 - b) **Motion** by Lori Miller to approve Resolution # 2024-2. Seconded by Sally Riley. **Motion carried** 5/5.

E. Electronics, Web

1. Nothing to report.

VI. Personnel

A. Council Committee Chairs

1. **Motion** by Josh James to table establishing Council Committee Chairs until the February 5 council meeting. Seconded by Stephanie VanTine. **Motion carried** 5/0.

B. External Audit vs. Elected Auditors

1. Financial audits are due by April 1 of the following year.
2. **Motion** by Stephanie VanTine to contract a CPA to complete the 2023 audit, not to exceed \$6,000 and have elected auditors certify the document. Seconded by Rick Fennell. **Motion carried** 5/0.

VII. Adjournment

- A. **Motion** by Rick Fennell to adjourn at 8:22 pm. Seconded by Josh James. **Motion carried** 5/0.