

State of Texas

County of Brazoria

City of Freeport

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the City Council of Freeport, Texas met on Monday, March 20, 2023 at 10:16 p.m. at the Freeport Police Department, Municipal Court Room, 430 North Brazosport Boulevard, Freeport Texas for the purpose of considering the following agenda items:

City Council: Mayor Brooks Bass  
Councilman Jeff Pena  
Councilman Jerry Cain  
Councilman Mario Muraira

Staff: Tim Kelty, City Manager  
Lance Petty, Assistant City Manager/PWD  
Betty Wells, City Secretary  
David Olson, Interim City Attorney  
Cathy Ezell, Finance Director  
Toby Cohen, IT Manager  
Jennifer Howell, Freeport Police Chief  
Donna Fisher, Human Resource Director  
Kacey Roman, Building Official  
Chris Motley, Fire Chief

Visitors: Diane McCleester  
Kent Holle  
Joe Penfield  
Shonda Marshall  
Con McCleester  
Manning Rollerson  
David McGinty  
Melanie Oldham

**Call to order.**

**COUNCIL REGULAR AGENDA**

Discuss and take possible action on ALL Braztex Reports by Zech and Navarro regarding the storage /possession, content delivery to the Council and its release to the public.

Councilman Pena withdrew item #1.

Discuss and Take Possible Action on the Legislation being proposed regarding the East End by the Port of Freeport.

Melanie Oldham said on February 23, 2023 the Port Commissioners voted to start a resolution in Austin to make the City of Freeport de-annex the whole East End to the Port. Ms. Oldham said there are other bills that will hurt the City. She said you have to decide if you are going to stand up to the Port.

Manning Rollerson said this council has to stand up. He said he fights for Freeport just as if it were his family. We cannot bow down and let the Port take it.

Councilman Pena said he put this on the agenda to make sure it isn't lost in the shuffle. He said it is important the City of Freeport know how we negotiate with the Port, for the East End.

Melanie Oldham spoke of the past land the City lost. She said the Port's plan is to expand through the City of Freeport. She said she wants the council to stand up.

Councilman Muraira said we are going to do the best we can for the City of Freeport.

Mayor Bass said the mere fact that one publicly supported tax entity would work with a representative that represents all of us, to take away our property, to de-annex, is awful. Mayor Bass said he will fight the eminent domain any way we can. He said I believe we will rise up, but we have to do it in a legal and reasonable way.

Discussion and possible action regarding issues of concern by the public about code enforcement, permits, and building department inspections, and possible new procedures and policies regarding the interaction of city staff in these departments with the public.

Councilman Pena said he brought this up because he gets all of the calls, about the concerns with code enforcement, building permit, and inspections that are related to building project. He said the residents are coming forward and speaking up, business owners are speaking up. He said there are a lot staying silent for fear of retaliation from City Hall. He said he is happy to be the voice of the public. He said there is selective enforcement by the Code Enforcement Department. Councilman Pena said he wants to get businesses opened up, not hinder them. He said let us help these businesses to thrive. Councilman Pena said we have a "Mob Boss City", and this has to end. He said if this means we have to change who is managing at City Hall, whether it is Tim Kelty, Kacey Roman, Lance Petty or Cathy Ezell; or any other director who is hindering our ability to grow.

Councilman Muraira said he respects Ms. Roman's work and the code enforcement they have a lot out there. He said he just ask that there be a middle ground. He said he thinks we can settle this issue.

Councilman Cain said customer service, in his line of work, it is priority one. Always has been. In his opinion it is not just code, I expect the highest level of customer service throughout the whole City. He said unfortunately the Code Department has a history of very low customer service. It has been documented and discussed. He said he encourages the City to look at this and do better. He said we need to be working with the citizens, and not against.

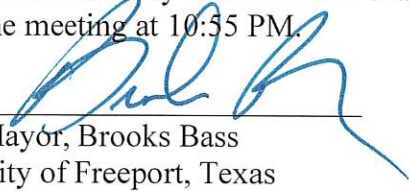
Mayor Bass asked how many housing builds have we had this last year, and this year? Ms. Roman said approximately six. Mayor Bass asked how many new businesses? Ms. Roman said over 30. Mayor Bass said making a point is important, but when you threaten people's jobs then it is a totally different direction. Mayor Bass said he gets phone calls also. He said he ask the question, "are they wrong?" He said we change the codes to update, and modernized to the make them safe for you. Mayor Bass said if anyone is being retaliated against, please come see me, I will take care of it; if it is factual. Mayor Bass said he agrees with Councilman Muraira, there has to be some middle ground.

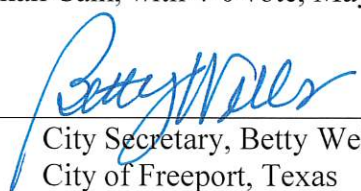
Discussion and Possible Action regarding the proper procedures related to Open Session and Executive Session during City Council Meetings.

Councilman Pena thanked Mr. Olson for articulating the point in executive session that the motion that we made was within the rules. He said we know what the rules are, we can exercise that rule again in the next meeting. He said he is satisfied with Mr. Olson's response.

Adjourn

On a motion by Councilman Pena, seconded by Councilman Cain, with 4-0 vote, Mayor Bass adjourned the meeting at 10:55 PM.

  
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Mayor, Brooks Bass  
City of Freeport, Texas

  
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City Secretary, Betty Wells  
City of Freeport, Texas