

State of Texas

County of Brazoria

City of Freeport

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the City Council of Freeport, Texas met on Monday, October 20, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Freeport Council Chamber located at 430 North Brazosport Blvd. , Freeport Texas for the purpose of considering the following agenda items:

City Council: Mayor Jerry Cain
Councilman Jeff Pena
Councilman Jarvis Davis
Councilman George Matamoros
Councilman Winston Rossow

Staff: Dan Pennington, Interim City Manager
Jennifer Howell, Police Chief/Assistant City Manager
Chris Duncan, Interim City Attorney
Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary
Ashlee Hurst, Finance Director
Toby Cohen, IT Director
Genesis Martinez, Human Resources Specialist
Chris Motley, Fire Chief
Maria Lopez, Main Street Coordinator

Visitors: Melanie Oldham Tom Pearson
Kenneth Hayes

Call to Order:

Call to Order - Jerry Cain, Mayor

Mayor Cain called the regular scheduled meeting of the Freeport City Council to order at 6:02P.M. on October 20, 2025, declaring a quorum was present.

Invocation - Councilman

Councilman Rossow led the Invocation.

Pledges - Pledge of Allegiance to the United States; Pledge of Allegiance to the State of Texas.

Councilman Rossow led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and the Pledge of Allegiance to the State of Texas.

Audience Participation – Anyone who has registered to speak prior to the meeting being called to order and desires to address the City Council will be heard at this time, or during the discussion of an item listed on the agenda. These forms are located by the City Secretary. After completing the form, give it to the City Secretary. She will give it to the Mayor. The Mayor will call on you when that item is presented, once a motion has been made by Council then public participation will not be allowed. You will have four (4) minutes to make your comments regardless of the number of agenda items to be addressed.

Tom Pearson addressed the City Council regarding concerns from the last council meeting. He expressed that while the council would likely appreciate positive feedback from citizens, he felt a significant disservice

occurred during the previous meeting. Mr. Pearson noted that citizens attending the regular scheduled meeting had to wait for three hours while the Council conducted an executive session pertaining to the sale of property and attorney interviews, which he stated took precedence over the public's time. Mr. Pearson raised concerns about the lack of adequate seating for citizens, noting that some attendees had to stand inside or sit outside on the concrete, exposed to mosquitoes, while others chose to leave. He suggested that the Council consider scheduling executive sessions on different days to prevent citizens from waiting for extended periods. He also observed that extended discussions by Council members could be contributing to declining attendance at Council meetings. Additionally, Mr. Pearson highlighted the ongoing shortage of police officers, stating that the City is currently five officers short with no applications, and noted that officers are leaving for other Cities due to leadership and pay issues. He emphasized that this shortage results in extended work hours, fatigue, and potential safety risks for officers. Mr. Pearson suggested that the City Manager and HR manager could interview current officers privately to identify key issues and develop possible solutions. Mr. Pearson concluded by urging that both the concerns regarding Council meeting scheduling and the police staffing shortage be addressed promptly to provide timely solutions.

Kenneth Hayes resides at 414 Mystery Harbor. He addressed the Mayor and Councilman Matamoros, stating that he was tired of hearing certain rhetoric that they are "fat, lazy, and stupid." He emphasized that he is a team builder, noting that he manages approximately 100 employees and that his focus is always on maintaining teamwork. Mr. Hayes expressed frustration that one individual was not allowing the team to function properly and said that many were becoming increasingly fed up with the situation.

Maria Lopez, Main Street Coordinator, presented information about a new community Christmas celebration called Christmas on Main. She explained that the City of Freeport Main Street Program, in partnership with the Freeport Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the City of Freeport, is organizing the event to engage residents and visitors. Ms. Lopez outlined that the tree lighting ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, December 6th, from 4:00P.M. to 8:00P.M. in downtown Freeport, with the official tree lighting at 6:30P.M. The celebration will feature a live DJ, family-friendly activities, and food vendors. Ms. Lopez emphasized that the event aims to showcase the Freeport Historic District, highlight ongoing efforts of the Main Street Program to revitalize downtown, promote local pride, and strengthen community connections. She noted that the celebration is intended to foster unity, raise awareness, and create lasting memories for residents and visitors alike.

Melanie Oldham resides at 531 West Brazos. She addressed the City Council regarding several community and city matters. She began by complimenting the Freeport Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Mr. Pennington, and others for their leadership and transparency. Ms. Oldham noted that during a recent EDC meeting, discussions were held regarding available funds, including the TIRZ fund and EDC reserves, and expressed approval that approximately \$450,000 was approved to redo Second Street. She emphasized that this project would complement the recent improvements to Highway 288 and support downtown traffic and a new downtown restaurant. Ms. Oldham also addressed the current status of the City's police officers, acknowledging that the department has competent personnel but noting concerns about shortages. She encouraged the Council to consider incentives to retain current officers and attract new hires. Additionally, Ms. Oldham commented on the ongoing City Manager selection process. She shared her observations from attending the open house for the candidates, noting that one candidate stood out due to grant writing experience and experience addressing wastewater challenges. She highlighted the candidate's openness, transparency, and willingness to listen to public input as strong leadership traits.

Manning Rollerson addressed the City Council regarding housing and police department concerns in the City of Freeport. Mr. Rollerson stated that housing is his primary concern and expressed hope that recent actions regarding urban land had not overlooked the City's need for additional housing. He also addressed the police department, acknowledging the quality of current officers and emphasizing the importance of retaining them. Mr. Rollerson highlighted challenges officers face with compensation, healthcare costs, and

other financial pressures, noting that proper support is necessary to ensure they remain in the community. He stressed that police officers and firemen play a critical role in public safety, responding to incidents such as fires and vandalism, and that maintaining their well-being should be a priority for the City. Mr. Rollerson concluded by emphasizing that decisions regarding public safety and officer support must be guided by fairness and righteousness.

Mayor Cain and the Council discussed item 6A before entering the Executive Session.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to invite the Cleer Career Representatives into Executive Session for the two City Manager Applicants only, seconded by Councilman Davis with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena emphasized that the Representatives should only be invited if there are questions for them and asked whether it is necessary for them to be present during the actual interviewing. Councilman Pena explained that the intention is to maintain as much privilege as possible for the Council. Mayor Cain noted that discussion would take place prior to inviting the first candidate in and that this would help answer some of the questions raised.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Executive Session

Executive Session regarding: Texas Government Code, Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) 1.) Interview of City Manager Applicants (Kelly, Jones, Holmes) 2.) Interview of City Attorney Applicants (Parker, Duncan, Bojorquez).

Discuss and Take Possible Action in Executive Session regarding: Texas Government Code, Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) 1.) Interview of City Attorney Applicants — to include the second round interview for Mr. Parker and interviews with the two candidates for the contract position (Mr. Duncan and Bojorquez). (Councilman Pena)

The Regular Session closed at 6:21P.M. and the Council entered into the Executive Session.

Reconvene into Open Session:

Take any action resulting from Executive Session.

The Executive Session ended at 11:13P.M. and the Council went back into Regular Session.

There was no action from the Executive Session.

Consent Agenda:

Action regarding Minutes, September 29, 2025 and October 6, 2025. - Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary

Action approving Monthly Financials through September 30, 2025- Ashlee Hurst, Finance Director

Action approving Resolution No. 2025-2982 and Resolution No. 2025-2983 to change City Manager from Lance Petty to Dan Pennington for acceptance of grants- Jennifer Howell, Police Chief

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by

Councilman Rossow with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena asked whether the ordinance being discussed applied to all grants or specific ones. Police Chief Jennifer Howell clarified that the ordinance pertained to two specific grants; one related to police radios and the other for protective vests. She explained that while additional grant applications were still pending, these two had been officially awarded. The purpose of the resolution was to update the name of the grants so that Interim City Manager Dan Pennington could formally accept the awards on behalf of the City.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Proclamations - Presentations and Updates

Upcoming Events - Museum Expansion Ribbon Cutting, Freeport Historical Museum, October 22, 3:00P.M.

Fright Night 2025, Freeport Municipal Park, October 23rd, 6:00P.M.-9:00P.M.

Merry Museum Christmas, Freeport Historical Museum, November 29, 11:00AM-2:00P.M.

Holiday on the Brazos, Freeport Municipal Park, December 5, 6:00P.M.-9:00P.M.

Blue Santa Pancake Breakfast, Freeport RiverPlace, December 6, 8:00A.M.-11:00A.M.

Christmas on Main, Historic Downtown, December 6, 4:00P.M.-8:00P.M.

Interim City Manager Dan Pennington gave updates on upcoming events.

Presentation of the Investment Report for Quarter Ending September 30, 2025- Ashlee Hurst, Finance Director

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst presented the Investment Report for the Quarter Ending September 30, 2025.

Business

Discuss and Take Possible Action to introduce a Budget Amendment to ensure the Police Department receives the full 6% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).

Councilman Pena stated that the topic had been discussed at length during the September 15th meeting and noted that the current discussion was likely more of a formality. He explained that he wanted to ensure the item was placed on the agenda as quickly as possible so that police officers could benefit from the cost-of-living adjustment sooner rather than later.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to pass the amendment to the budget for the 6% cost of living adjustment for the Police Department, seconded by Councilman Davis with discussion that followed.

Councilman Matamoros asked whether the increase would be an additional 6% or an additional half percent to make it 6.0% total. Mayor Cain said an additional half percent, noting that during a line-by-line review of the budget, the Council had conducted a straw poll and agreed on a 6% increase. He clarified that when the motion to approve the budget was originally made, the increase had been listed as 5.5%. The current item before the Council was to adjust the budget to reflect the agreed-upon 6% increase. Councilman Matamoros asked Finance Director Ashlee Hurst to confirm that the additional funds were available in the budget, which was affirmed, with the difference noted to be slightly over \$26,000.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Work Session

Councilman Pena Ward A announcements and comments.

Councilman Pena thanked everyone who attended earlier in the evening and participated in the meet and greets and interviews for the City Manager candidates. He stated that the Council had a very productive interview process during the executive session and that a candidate had been selected. Notifications regarding the Council's decision would be sent out that evening. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington noted that the formal announcement of the selected candidate would not be made at this time. He extended appreciation to everyone who provided feedback during the process and completed the evaluation forms. Councilman Pena then gave an update on the Downtown Memorial Park splash pad project. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington reported that the City was still waiting on two or three replacement parts for the splash pad and that due to limited suppliers.

Councilman Davis Ward B announcements and comments.

Councilman Davis began by thanking everyone for attending the meeting and expressed appreciation to City employees and police officers for their continued dedication and participation throughout recent meetings. He stated that the Council had a positive session earlier in the day with productive interviews and citizen engagement during the City Manager candidate meet and greet. Councilman Davis also extended his thanks to Clear Career Professionals for conducting the search and presenting experienced candidates for consideration. Councilman Davis inquired about a blinking stop sign he had previously mentioned during a workshop, asking if staff had followed up on the matter. He recalled that a resident had raised concerns about a particular intersection and reiterated his desire to identify a potential solution. He also addressed concerns related to the soccer field, noting that a Councilmember had complaints regarding this. After visiting the location himself, he spoke with nearby residents and observed that while some acknowledged occasional inconvenience, most did not find the situation problematic as long as vehicles did not block driveways and drivers maintained safe speeds due to children playing nearby. Councilman Davis emphasized that the Council should focus on identifying solutions rather than issuing citations, suggesting that utilizing the adjacent softball field parking area could alleviate congestion. He proposed directing soccer attendees to park in the existing concrete parking lot and walk a short distance approximately 50 yards along the sidewalk to the soccer field. He noted that this approach would mirror arrangements at other communities' fields and reduce the impact on residential streets. Interim City Manager Dan Pennington responded that Police Chief Howell and Public Works Director Rudy Ragle were already working on a plan with the City's engineering firm, Kimley-Horn. He explained that the engineers had drafted a design for an additional parking area and confirmed that hotel occupancy tax (HOT) funds could be used for the project. Once the design is finalized, the City will seek bids from several asphalt contractors to complete the work, with the goal of minimizing roadway congestion and improving access for emergency vehicles. Councilman Davis expressed support for addressing the parking issue but cautioned that the City should avoid encroaching on existing softball facilities. He noted that prior field adjustments had already reduced available warm-up areas and backstops for softball tournaments. Mr. Pennington clarified that the proposed parking addition would be situated behind the current soccer field area, near the pump or lift station, rather than within the softball field boundaries. Councilman Davis acknowledged this information but reiterated the importance of balancing improvements to avoid further loss of field space. He also suggested that the City make use of the existing softball parking lot and sidewalk connection to the soccer area as a cost-effective solution. Mayor Cain added that one of the reasons residents may not currently use the softball parking lot at night is due to inadequate lighting. Councilman Davis responded that the lighting issue could be easily resolved by activating the existing lights used for evening softball games, emphasizing that doing so would be more economical than constructing new parking areas. Councilman Davis reiterated that proactive planning and coordination would ensure continued community use while maintaining safety and efficiency.

Councilman Matamoros Ward C announcements and comments.

Councilman Matamoros said vote no Freeport.

Councilman Rossow Ward D announcements and comments.

Councilman Rossow greeted everyone and noted that he had been reminded earlier in the day about how late City Council meetings often run, acknowledging that while most people go to bed by 10:00P.M., some meetings simply require extended hours to complete City business. He commended the success of the recent National Night Out event, sharing that he attended and observed strong participation from vendors, families, and children. He expressed hope that the City of Freeport would continue hosting this nationwide community event each year. Councilman Rossow stated that he was looking forward to seeing how the City of Freeport will appear during the upcoming holiday season, expressing confidence that the decorations and overall presentation would reflect the City's pride and community spirit. He also commented positively on the City Manager interview process, echoing the remarks of Councilman Davis, noting that the process went smoothly and saw a high level of community engagement. Many residents, he added, were pleasantly surprised by the turnout and the opportunity to be involved in the selection process. Councilman Rossow concluded by expressing optimism about the City's direction, stating that once the new City Manager and City Attorney are finalized, the Council can focus on moving forward with its priorities. He remarked that the City of Freeport is "on its way up—up is where we belong."

Mayor Jerry Cain announcements and comments.

Mayor Cain expressed appreciation to everyone who attended the meeting. He also extended gratitude to all residents who participated in the City Manager candidate meet and greet earlier in the day, noting that the parking lot at the Velasco Community House was full and that community engagement was strong. He thanked the many citizens who took the time to fill out feedback forms, stating that the Council carefully reviewed and considered those comments during its decision-making process regarding the City Manager selection. Mayor Cain also reminded the public about the upcoming Fright Night event scheduled for Friday, October 23, from 6:00P.M. to 9:00P.M. He encouraged everyone to attend, adding that the event would be enjoyable for families and residents of all ages.

City Manager announcements and comments.

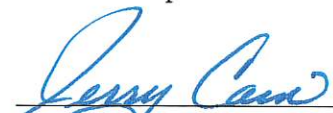
Interim City Manager Dan Pennington echoed the Council's appreciation for the strong public participation in the City Manager selection process. He stated that he was pleased to see so many residents in attendance, asking thoughtful questions, and engaging with the candidates. Mr. Pennington expressed gratitude to the candidates for their professionalism and for taking the time to participate in the process. He commended the City Council for conducting thorough interviews and noted that their diligence would continue as they finalized their decision. He concluded by stating that he is confident the City of Freeport is on the right path and thanked everyone for their involvement and support.

Councilman Pena inquired about early voting, asking if it was taking place that evening or during the week at the library. After confirming that early voting had started, he encouraged residents to "vote yes for the PD."

Adjournment

Adjournment – Jerry Cain, Mayor

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. Mayor Cain adjourned the meeting at 11:58P.M.



Jerry Cain, Mayor



Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary