State of Texas

County of Brazoria

City of Freeport

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the City Council of Freeport, Texas met on Monday, January 5, 2026 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:	Danielle M. Kelly, DPA, City Manager Jennifer Howell, Police Chief/Assistant City Manager Chris Duncan, City Attorney Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary Ashlee Hurst, Finance Director Toby Cohen, IT Director Donna Fisher, Human Resource Director Crystal Busch, Executive Administrative Assistant Reginald Harris, Building Official John Perez, Interim Public Works Director Chris Motley, Fire Chief

Visitors:	David McGinty Melanie Oldham Dana Glenn Jane Hawkins Brenda Laird Pamela Dancy Thomas Koole Bobby Edge	Linda Marshall Kenneth Hayes Manning Rollerson Patti Richardson Margaret Bachman Ron Bachman Keith Stumbaugh

Call to Order:

Call to Order - Jerry Cain, Mayor

Mayor Cain called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Freeport City Council to order at 6:00P.M. on January 5, 2026, 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.

Matters Subsequent to Posting.

Mayor Cain stated that City Manager Dr. Danielle Kelly had explained to him that she is accustomed to identifying and addressing any items that may have come up or changed in the posting after the agenda was posted. Mayor Cain asked Dr. Kelly to confirm that this understanding was correct, and Dr. Kelly confirmed that it was.

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.

James Carter stated he was present to introduce the new on-site manager with Veolia. Jovan Stallson stated that he has worked in wastewater for the past five years in the Freeport area. He further noted that he has served in multiple capacities and has been working with Veolia in service to the City of Freeport. Mr. Dawson expressed that he was happy to be present.

Mr. Manning Rollerson stated he had received a response from the Police Department but wanted to ask several serious questions regarding a recent eviction-related incident. Mr. Rollerson questioned whether the City supported constables, City police, and sheriff's department officers entering a residence in a stacked formation while carrying AR-15s and suppressors. He stated that if this was the protocol used during evictions, then no one in the City was safe. Mr. Rollerson expressed concern about officers entering homes in that manner and stated that he had seen similar tactics in Afghanistan. He stated that Freeport was not Afghanistan or California and questioned the motive for the officers responding that way. Mr. Rollerson referenced a statement from a Freeport officer indicating that there were nothing but children inside the residence and asked why such an approach was used if that was the situation. He stated that this incident made him believe that residents being evicted in Brazoria County were in danger. Mr. Rollerson requested that the constables and the City provide information regarding every officer involved and stated that he wanted their surety bond numbers. He advised that he intended to file every surety bond in order to obtain a serious investigation into the situation. Mr. Rollerson further stated that he had received a wastewater treatment memorandum from his lawyers from the City of Freeport and questioned why the City did not keep up with the information, stating that the City had been fined more than once. He also questioned why the wastewater treatment plant was not completed between 2014 and 2017 and stated that money from the Port of Freeport had been allocated to address the wastewater treatment plant. He asked what had happened since 2014 that the issue had not been fixed and stated that in 2025 the money had been reallocated for a new community to fix wastewater. Mr. Rollerson stated that answers were needed.

Flora Green stated that she was speaking as both a concerned citizen of Freeport and as a member of the City of Freeport Civil Service Committee. She stated that she wanted to be clear at the outset that her comments were not a personal attack on any individual and were not an attempt to undermine the authority of the Council or the Mayor. She explained that her remarks concerned policies, procedures, protocols, and public trust, which she described as the foundation of good governing. Ms. Green expressed concern regarding the recent appointment of the City oversight committee behind closed doors. She stated that her concern was not only about what was done but how it was done. She advised that when actions directly affecting accountability and transparency occur without public notice, decisions, and participation, it creates an appearance of secrecy and exclusion. Ms. Green stated that appearances matter, even if every action taken was technically legal, and she stated that the public presentation suggested proper procedure may have been bypassed, which she said could erode public trust. She stated that public servants are obligated not only to follow the law but also to uphold the spirit of openness that the law is meant to protect. Ms. Green stated that the situation raised important questions deserving thoughtful consideration, including whether open meeting requirements were fully satisfied, whether established City policies and protocols were followed, and whether the public was given a fair opportunity to observe and participate in a decision directly affecting oversight and accountability. She emphasized that these were not accusations but questions, and she stated that many members of the community were already asking those same questions. She stated that oversight committees exist to ensure transparency, fairness, and confidence in the system, and she stated that when the formation of such a body lacks transparency, it undermines the purpose it is meant to serve. Ms. Green stated that the good news was that the matter could still be made right. She stated that Council and the Mayor had an opportunity to pause, reflect, and correct course if needed. She stated that this could include revisiting the appointment process in an open meeting, clearly explaining the legal basis for the action taken, or redoing the process in a manner fully aligned with City policies, procedures, and public expectations. Ms. Green stated that doing so would not be an admission of wrongdoing but would demonstrate leadership, accountability, and respect for the people of Freeport. Ms. Green stated that trust in government is fragile and difficult to restore once lost. She stated that the City had an opportunity to strengthen public trust rather than weaken it. She urged the City Council and the Mayor to choose transparency, invite public confidence, and ensure that every action moving forward reflects not only what is permissible but what is right.

Thomas Koole stated that he wanted everyone present and anyone recording to hear him clearly. He began by thanking the City for fixing the light-up stop sign on Avenue J and Skinner and stated that while signs are expensive, he did not find it funny when residents treated such safety matters lightly. He stated that he was present to expose leaders or anyone else regarding his concerns for the safety of the citizens of Freeport, Texas. Mr. Koole stated that the City had recently installed two additional signposts on Pecan Street, one on each side of Fourth Street, with two signs on each post. He stated that one sign read cross traffic does not stop, and the other read slow, dangerous intersection. He further stated that the only other location in the City where cross traffic does not stop signage had been installed was at Velasco Boulevard and Highway 36, and he noted that traffic on Highway 36 moves fast. He stated that no other location in Freeport had signage stating slow, dangerous intersection. Mr. Koole stated that by installing those signs, City leaders were acknowledging that Pecan and Fourth Street is a very dangerous intersection and stated that traffic on Fourth Street moves fast. Mr. Koole stated that citizens were fearful, terrified, and lacked peace of mind when traveling through the intersection of Fourth Street and Pecan Street. He stated that the City might as well post a sign stating "travel at your own risk." He expressed concern that the current situation conveyed that leadership did not care about citizen safety at the intersection of Fourth Street and Pecan Street. Mr. Koole stated that he had received two testimonies from a sergeant and a corporal with the Freeport Police Department indicating that the intersection was a problem. He also stated that a Public Works employee installing the new signs told him he remembered a vehicle hitting a person on a bicycle at that intersection and that EMS was called. Mr. Koole questioned why City leaders were playing with citizen safety and peace of mind. Mr. Koole stated that several schools were located nearby, including an elementary school at Pecan Street and 11th Street approximately seven blocks away, an intermediate school on Fourth Street approximately five blocks away, and the high school on Second Street approximately five blocks away. He stated that he had testimonies and FOIA records and that he had witnessed three serious accidents involving children, with EMS being called and individuals transported to the hospital. Mr. Koole questioned what the City was waiting for and urged Council to take action to make the intersection of Fourth Street and Pecan Street a four-way stop. He stated that another serious accident was coming if action was not taken and urged Council to vote to approve the change. He stated that the situation was impacting citizens' mental state and urged Council to stop playing with community safety. Mr. Koole concluded by stating that Council would have the matter on their conscience.

<u>Consent Agenda:</u>

<u>Action regarding Minutes, December 15, 2025 - Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary</u>

<u>Action approving date change for the second City Council Meeting in January 2026 to Tuesday, January 20, 2026 due to Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday - Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary</u>

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

Councilman Rossow with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Proclamations - Presentations and Updates

Employee Recognitions – Employee of the Month, Lt. Justin Davison and FF/EMT Robert Phillips- Dr. Danielle Kelly, City Manager

Fire Chief Christopher Motley presented the Employee of the Month to Lt. Justin Davison and FF/EMT Robert Phillips for the month of December 2025.

Upcoming Events -
2026 MLK Parade, Downtown Freeport, January 19, 11:00A.M.
MLK Festival, Freeport Municipal Park, January 19, 12:00P.M.
Just FOIA Live Date-February 2026

City Manager Dr. Danielle Kelly gave updates on upcoming events.

Business

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2026-3016 appointing members to the Senior Citizens Commission.

City Manager Dr. Danielle Kelly presented the agenda item and advised Council that the City had received several resignations from the Senior Citizens Commission. She stated that the resignations were from Marcia Sidall, Linda Harrison, and Lorraine Mitchell. Dr. Kelly stated that the City needed to replace those volunteers with new candidates. Dr. Kelly advised that the current applicants included Dana Glenn, Diana Parker, and Carol Parker. She stated that these applicants would fill the slots that had previously been vacated and would serve through May 31, 2026.

Mayor Cain asked whether the appointments would result in a full board. City Manager Dr. Danielle Kelly responded that it would.

Dana Glenn addressed Council and stated that many years ago she had served on the Senior Commission. She stated that the commission had worked well with the Council and with the City and that she had enjoyed working with seniors and with her peers. She stated that working with her peers did not bother her. Ms. Glenn stated that she had been volunteering quite a bit and that she would like to serve again. She stated that it was up to the Council and thanked them for considering her.

Mayor Cain stated that, unfortunately, the City would not be able to make a full commission because only one person was present, and applicants are required to be present in order to be appointed.

A motion was made by Councilman Rossow to accept Ms. Glenn, seconded by Councilman Davis with discussion that followed.

Councilman Davis addressed the applicants and stated that he wanted to thank them for their service. He stated that he hoped the board would be filled back up quickly. He further stated that he had heard the group had a good time and commented that he might have to see if he could come join them.

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

Mayor Cain stated for the record he wanted to clear up any confusion regarding appointments to boards. He stated that the City had new rules for appointments, including the requirement that applicants must be present on the night of the appointment.

Consideration and possible action approving Resolution No. 2026-3017 appointing a member to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Building Official Reginald Harris presented the agenda item and advised the Council that on December 22, at the Planning and Zoning meeting, the board discussed the selection process for filling a vacancy. He stated that there were four candidates considered by the board: Melanie Oldham, Greg Bartosh, Patricia Richardson, and Landis Adams. Mr. Harris stated that the board's final recommendation being presented to Council was Melanie Oldham as the selection. He explained that the current member, Karla Clark, had resigned from the Planning and Zoning Committee. He stated that the Planning and Zoning board consists of five members and that the resignation left the board one short, resulting in one vacancy. Mr. Harris further stated that instructions were given to provide each member who had filed an application for the board the opportunity to be considered.

Melanie Oldham requested appointment to the Planning and Zoning Committee. She stated that she would love to serve on the board and advised that several years ago she served on the board for approximately a year and a half but had to step down due to health issues. Ms. Oldham stated that during her prior service, the board worked with a consulting company and rewrote ordinances for subdivisions and zoning. She stated that she learned a great deal during that time through the consulting company's guidance and through public input from residents who attended meetings and shared what they wanted to see in the City. Ms. Oldham stated that the City of Freeport is largely landlocked with a limited amount of land outside AE flood zones and other restricted areas. She stated that this made Planning and Zoning especially important and emphasized the role of public input in developing recommendations to the City Council. Ms. Oldham stated that she believed the City was at a crossroads and stated that Freeport could either become more of an industrial town or become a destination City through zoning that allows not only housing but commercial development and amenities such as an event center or sports complex. She stated that achieving that vision would require significant planning to make the best use of the land available. Ms. Oldham concluded by asking Council to vote in her favor so she could have the opportunity to serve.

Patricia Richardson stated that she homesteads at 21 North Avenue A. She stated that she believed it was important for decision makers to have skin in the game, including owning a home and property, because it means the outcome truly matters, and the City is not just a stop along the way but their home. Ms. Richardson requested that Council select her to serve on the Planning and Zoning Board. She stated that she had held a Texas real estate license for most of her life and noted that she is governed by the State of Texas and answers to the Texas Real Estate Commission. She stated that she exceeds ethical and educational standards and believes she is qualified for the board role. Ms. Richardson stated that as a real estate professional she would help the board accomplish essential residential and commercial growth for current and future generations. She stated that the work is not only about what happens in the next ten years but also about what happens over the next fifty to one hundred years. Ms. Richardson thanked Council and stated that she was ready to help Freeport take a step in the right direction and to help the Planning and Zoning Commission make a difference in Freeport.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros on the recommendation of our Planning and Zoning to appoint Melanie Oldham to fulfill the remaining term on the Planning and Zoning Board, seconded by Councilman Rossow with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena stated that he had been contacted by residents and candidates who had applied for the Planning and Zoning position when the PNZ board voted on the recommendation. He stated that he was informed that only two candidates were present at that meeting, specifically Ms. Richardson and Mr. Greg Bartosh, and that the question raised was whether candidates were required to be in attendance. Councilman Pena stated that the inquiry was made due to the ordinance recently passed regarding appointments. Councilman Pena stated that it was his understanding that the ordinance was relevant to City Council and all boards. He stated that he wanted to raise the question that evening to the City's legal counsel whether the ordinance applied to the boards, and if so, whether any nomination or recommendation made by PNZ for candidates who were not in attendance would be in violation of the ordinance and therefore not legal. City Attorney Chris Duncan responded that the ordinance regarding appointments applies to both City Council and Council-appointed boards. He stated that the ordinance provides that Council and Council-appointed boards must follow the same procedures and that Section Five specifies that neither Council nor a board may vote on a person unless that person is present in person. Councilman Pena stated that if the ordinance applied to PNZ, then only one nominee would be qualified based on attendance, as the other nominee was not present, and he stated that the motion would need to be revised. Mayor Cain asked legal counsel how the ordinance affects situations where boards submit recommendations without taking a formal vote, such as through a straw poll. Mr. Duncan responded that the ordinance wording no person may be selected or an appointment voted on unless the person is present in person, and it covers whether a person is selected or they are voted on.

Councilman Matamoros stated that he was curious whether the ordinance had been relayed to the board and to applicants, noting that it was a new ordinance and questioning how applicants would have known the attendance requirement. He stated that the ordinance was new. Councilman Pena stated earlier that evening the Council had not elected two individuals to the senior board due to the same rule, indicating that the ordinance must be followed. A discussion followed regarding how boards could vote or make selections when individuals were not present, and the presiding official requested that the conversation proceed one at a time. It was stated that whether through a straw poll or a vote, the ordinance requires the person to be in attendance, and that the nomination would not be legal if the individual was not present. Councilman Matamoros responded to the discussion regarding the attendance requirement and stated that it blows a hole through the argument that there was not a commission. He questioned how a board could vote on someone if there was nobody present to have a meeting. Councilman Pena responded that it was not his entire argument. Councilman Pena stated how the election is conducted was that the person must be in attendance, whether the board conducts a straw poll, no poll, or a vote. He stated that the issue was not a matter of withdrawing the nomination, but that the nomination was not legal if the person was not present.

City Attorney Chris Duncan stated that he concurred with the Mayor on the procedure and explained that either the motion could be withdrawn or Council could vote. He stated that if Council voted against the recommendation based on the rule, the recommendation would be denied and Council would move on to a second motion. He stated that if Council voted to proceed despite the rule, it would create a problem. Councilman Pena stated that voting in a manner that would break or violate the ordinance would create a problem. He further stated that Council could not violate the ordinance while knowing they were violating the ordinance. Mr. Duncan stated that procedurally, the motion was on the floor and had a second, and it would need to be withdrawn or go to a vote. Councilman Pena stated that the legal thing to do would be to withdraw, and if the motion was not withdrawn, Council would be breaking the law and setting a precedent that ordinances could be violated. He stated that citizens could use that precedent in arguments when ordinances are violated in the future and citations or tickets are issued.

Councilman Matamoros withdrew his motion.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to table this and to send this back to Planning and Zoning and have them vote on this with everybody present, with discussion that followed.

Councilman Rossow withdrew his second.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to table this and send it back to Planning and Zoning so they can do it properly, seconded by Councilman Rossow with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena stated that Councilman for Ward C said the item was being sent back to Planning and

Zoning and tabled because it was done improperly. He stated that what was not improper was that citizens who followed the rules were present and were qualified candidates, and expressed concern that tabling would disenfranchise those individuals who were in attendance. He stated that he was not sure it was fair, comparing it to the senior committee situation where applicants were not appointed because they were not present.

Mayor Cain stated that if the motion to table passed, he hoped Planning and Zoning would take that into consideration and stated that in his opinion, the ordinance rule requiring citizens to be present during the meeting was ludicrous, noting it was his opinion only.

Mayor Cain called the motion to a vote with all present and voting "Aye" 3-2. The Council approved the motion to table 4B. Councilman Pena voted "Nay". Councilman Davis voted "Nay".

Consideration and possible action approving the windstorm insurance policy renewal provided by TWIA.

Finance Director Ashlee Hurst presented the agenda item and advised Council that McGriff had provided the City with a windstorm and hail insurance policy effective tomorrow, 2026, through the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA). She stated that the coverage premium is $75,745, which is unchanged from the prior year, and that the policy includes the same 2% deductible. Ms. Hurst stated that McGriff specializes in working with municipalities to manage insurance and conduct the shopping process to find savings that TML no longer provides. She stated that McGriff began working with the City this year and has provided coverage with significant savings and improved coverage. Ms. Hurst stated that the most recent savings totaled $200,000 on October 1, 2025, for all other peril property insurance by switching from TML to Liberty Mutual Insurance, which also offers better coverage. Ms. Hurst stated that the ultimate goal is for McGriff to help the City combine it's all other peril policy with the City's two separate windstorm policies, which would simplify the process and allow the City to realize additional savings over time. She stated that McGriff has performed well and that the City is thankful for the partnership. Ms. Hurst stated that the City is eager to continue identifying areas for cost savings and is proud to report those findings to Council and the public. She stated that the cost of the premium was included in the budget.

A motion was made by Councilman Matamoros to approve the windstorm insurance policy renewal provided by TWIA as presented, seconded by Councilman Davis with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

Public workshop to discuss and take possible action regarding the maintenance and development of the Beach Plan for Freeport's Bryan Beach.

Councilman Pena stated regarding the workshop item related to the beach. He stated that he had intended to contact the City Manager to request that the item be removed from the agenda for that meeting and postponed to the next meeting. He stated that additional residents had also reached out to him and wanted to share more information, along with a couple of businesses.Councilman Pena stated that he wanted to ensure that the additional information was included in his presentation.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table this item (4D), seconded by Councilman Davis with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table 4D.

Work Session

Councilman Pena Ward A announcements and comments.

Councilman Pena welcomed those in attendance and wished everyone a happy new year, stating that he hoped everyone had a safe and fruitful holiday. He stated that the City was back in the saddle and had many matters ramping up. He thanked everyone for coming out, presenting questions, and giving presentations. Councilman Pena noted that Mr. Devin with Veolia had stepped out and stated that he wanted to congratulate him again on his new position. He stated that he wished him the best of luck and expressed hope that Veolia could help get the City's infrastructure up and running. Councilman Pena referenced comments made earlier by Mr. Rollerson regarding an eviction and stated that he was curious about the policy for the Freeport Police Department aiding constables during evictions. He asked whether City staff could provide guidance and asked if the police chief was present. City Manager Dr. Danielle Kelly stated that the chief was not present but she would look into the matter and provide additional information to Council. Councilman Pena stated that he appreciated that and requested information regarding whether the phrase "nothing but children are in here" was said and asked which officers made that statement. He further stated that he assumed there was video footage of the incident and expressed that, if Mr. Rollerson intended to pursue the matter seriously or sue the City, he wanted to ensure that the City was properly prepared to review recorded information before any response was made to the public or Mr. Rollerson. Councilman Pena also asked about the alleged wastewater fines and whether the City had any knowledge from its side. Dr. Kelly responded that she did not and stated she would look into that as well. Councilman Pena thanked staff and also thanked Ms. Green for coming forward and asking questions about the process on the Civil Service Board, stating that those questions would be reviewed. Councilman Pena then referenced Mr. Koole's comments regarding the intersection of Fourth Street and Pecan Street and asked for an update on the status of a study related to that intersection from Kendig Keist. Councilman Pena stated that he understood the study request had been initiated prior to Dr. Kelly's tenure and stated that he hoped an update could be provided. He stated that blinking lights were one measure, but that street reflectors were highly visible and cost-effective and suggested that those be considered. He also suggested that a speed bump near the intersection could be an option. Councilman Pena further asked about the splash pad for downtown and whether it would finally be able to be put back into operation. He stated that the fountain had been a nice backdrop during the holidays but that residents and he himself had been asking about the splash pad since July. He stated that he would like to see it up and running as soon as possible. Councilman Pena then stated that residents had informed him of construction and repairs occurring at a property located at 110 West Park, which he stated was next door to the recently deeded 112 West Park for Mama C's restaurant. He asked about the status of that space and whether another business was being identified for that location. He stated that residents had asked about the construction and future plans and that other businesses had reached out seeking available space similar to the arrangement provided to Mama C's. He stated that he wanted to understand the status so he could communicate the information to residents and businesses and asked whether permits were being pulled and who was doing the work. EDC Director Robert Johnson clarified that Councilman Pena meant 210 West Park, and Councilman Pena confirmed. Mr. Johnson stated that the space was being used by the Main Street program and that the activity observed involved an exterior wall being installed and an artist using the building to paint, which was permitted. He stated that there was no business currently moving into the space. Councilman Pena asked whether the space would be available for businesses seeking to use it, and Mr. Johnson stated that one business was considering it but that the building required substantial repairs, making the situation uncertain. Councilman Pena stated that the best course of action would be to forward contact information for interested parties, and Mr. Johnson encouraged him to do so. Councilman Pena thanked staff for the information and stated that he would like to receive an update, possibly after the meeting, regarding the Maddox contract and the related discussion concerning Skinner Street.

<u>Councilman Davis Ward B announcements and comments.</u>

Councilman Davis stated that the comments and announcements portion went quickly and that he was initially speechless and not prepared to speak, but noted that the City was starting off the year 2026 by getting in and getting out. He then extended New Year's greetings to everyone present and stated that he hoped everyone had a good Christmas and New Year's. He stated that everyone present had made it to that day and emphasized being thankful and grateful for a new year, noting that some people did not make it. Councilman Davis acknowledged Ms. Green and stated that he knew she had questions, and suggested that she speak with him afterward regarding some of the reasons. He stated that there was a lot to learn and that the public would also have a lot to learn regarding police officers, the union, and related matters. He stated that he wanted to ensure that nothing improper was said or done and stated that legal counsel had been consulted to determine what could and could not be done in the situation. He stated that he could not go into details because the matter was discussed in executive session, but emphasized that the purpose was to ensure that any public statement, change, or vote was done the right way. Councilman Davis also addressed citizen concerns regarding stop signs and stated that the citizen had been coming up regularly and that he had spoken with him before. He stated that he wanted citizens to understand that the City was not turning a blind eye and that the City recognized the issue as a problem. He stated that installing and changing traffic signs is a process and cannot be done immediately, noting that it requires studies and approval. He stated that slow signs and similar signs are informational signs intended to catch drivers' attention until a solution can be implemented. Councilman Davis stated that driver behavior remains a factor and that even if a four-way stop were installed, drivers might still run the stop sign. He provided an example of a location near the bridge where a tight curve had caused frequent monthly wrecks and fatalities, and stated that reflective chevron signs had not prevented accidents. He stated that blinking signage was ultimately installed at that location and that since installation the signs had been in place for two years without a fatality. He stated that prior to that, signs had to be replaced frequently because they were struck by vehicles, but since the blinking signs were installed, only one sign had recently been hit after two years. Councilman Davis stated that blinking signs make a difference because they catch drivers' attention and that this was a step the City was taking to keep citizens safe. He stated that the City could have done nothing, but instead chose to take action. He stated that the process requires patience and emphasized that the City cannot station an officer at an intersection all day. He expressed hope that the situation would calm down and concluded by thanking everyone for attending and stating that the City would have a great 2026.

Councilman Matamoros Ward C announcements and comments.

Councilman Matamoros stated that he did not have anything to report that evening.

Councilman Rossow Ward D announcements and comments.

Councilman Rossow emphasized the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr. parade. He stated that this would be the event's 40th year and described it as a significant celebration. He stated that there would be a festival in the park and expressed hope that the weather would cooperate, noting that the event had not been held for two consecutive years due to temperature conditions. He stated that the public would be notified if the event could not take place and encouraged residents to bring their children or attend themselves to participate in the festival, particularly the activities in the park. He stated that people come from all over to attend. Councilman Rossow also stated that something different would be done this year in addition to the food being served. He stated that in the parking lot at the high school, there would be a recycling opportunity where participants could bring cans and other recycling materials. He stated that the recycling event would take place the same day from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and noted that a fraternity was conducting the project and wanted to be involved with the MLK event. Councilman Rossow thanked everyone for attending the Council meeting and stated that he appreciated them spending their time there. He also thanked those watching from outside the meeting and concluded by stating, God bless Freeport.

Mayor Jerry Cain announcements and comments.

Mayor Cain addressed Council and stated that each week, at that point in the meeting, the City thanks everyone for attending and for watching, and he acknowledged that over time it may begin to sound routine. He stated, however, that he truly appreciated everyone for coming out. He noted that when he arrived that evening, there were no empty parking spaces in the parking lot, stating there was one spot left, and emphasized that public attendance and engagement meant a great deal. He stated that community involvement helps the City make Freeport the best it can be. Mayor Cain stated that he hoped everyone had a great holiday season and commented that he was personally glad it was over. He stated that he would soon begin taking down Christmas decorations and stated that he was looking forward to that. He stated that 2026 was here and that there was a lot of work ahead. He stated that the City had momentum that would be carried into the new year and expressed that he was looking forward to it and to doing what the City could to make Freeport the best City it can be.

City Manager announcements and comments.

City Manager Dr. Danielle Kelly addressed Council and stated that she wanted to let everyone know that she and her family have a house in Freeport, as they have received all of their furniture, unpacked, and now have a true home in the City. She stated that they could not have been happier and thanked everyone.

A motion was made by Mayor Cain to table the second item under Executive Session, which is Personnel Matters regarding EDC board member David McGinty with discussion that followed.

Mayor Cain stated that the reason for tabling the item was that there were allegations of misconduct and/or malfeasance, and that neither Council nor Mr. McGinty was aware of what the specific allegations were. Mayor Cain stated that in a situation such as this, the accused has the opportunity to have the matter discussed either in open session or in executive session. He stated that Mr. McGinty had requested that the matter be addressed in open session. Mayor Cain stated, however, that it is difficult for a person to defend themselves if they do not know what they are being accused of.

A motion was made by Mayor Cain to table the personnel matters concerning Mr. David McGinty, seconded by Councilman Matamoros with discussion that followed.

Councilman Pena stated that he wanted to be clear that the reason he had requested the item be placed on the agenda was because he had been contacted by former EDC board members and residents who raised serious concerns regarding Mr. McGinty and alleged misconduct and malfeasance related to mowing contracts through the EDC. He stated that he placed the item on the agenda and requested the contracts and stated that Council could get into the weeds of the matter. Councilman Pena stated that he was agreeable to tabling the item in order to collect additional information and ensure that Mr. McGinty was further informed and had the opportunity to provide an explanation. He stated that he would be sharing the details of the information he had received from residents and former EDC board members. He stated that if the scope of the investigation required additional EDC board members to be called upon, questioned, or investigated, that would occur. Councilman Pena stated that he was not proposing these investigations without residents coming forward with material information, and reiterated that the information would be shared with Council and the public.

Mayor Cain stated that all he asked was for Councilman Pena to provide the information to the Council and to the accused.

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

Mayor Cain asked Human Resources Director Donna Fisher and advised her that she had the choice to have the matter discussed in open session or in executive session. Ms. Fisher stated that she would like to have it in open session. Mayor Cain then asked legal counsel whether an executive session was necessary. City Attorney Chris Duncan responded that it was not. Mayor Cain stated that an executive session would therefore not be needed.

Councilman Pena addressed the Mayor and stated that, following the decision to table the Mr. McGinty issue, he also wanted to mention that Ms. Fisher's issue should be tabled as well, so that additional information could be presented to Council in advance.

A motion was made by Councilman Pena to table Executive Session item number one, seconded by Mayor Cain with all present and voting "Aye" 5-0. The Council unanimously approved the motion to table this item.

Executive Session

Executive Session regarding:

1. **Personnel Matters (Gov't Code § 551.074)**
   Discussion and possible action regarding personnel matters involving Human Resources Director Donna Fisher, including:
   a. Lance Petty's workers' compensation case [Unemployment Benefits Claim]
   b. Additional timesheet reporting violations
   c. Other alleged work-related violations (Councilman Pena)
2. **Personnel Matters (Gov't Code § 551.074)**
   Discussion and possible action concerning Economic Development Corporation Board Member David McGinty, specifically regarding alleged misconduct and malfeasance related to mowing and maintenance of EDC property. (Councilman Pena)

Reconvene into Open Session:

Take any action resulting from Executive Session.

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 7:10P.M.

Jerry Cain

Jerry Cain, Mayor

Clarisa Fernandez, City Secretary