

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN
HELD AT THE FRANKLIN MUNICIPAL BUILDING
46 MAIN STREET, FRANKLIN, NJ
MARCH 20, 2019**

Council President Skellenger called the meeting to order and stated Mayor Giordano is not present this evening, Council President Skellenger will run the meeting.

Council President Skellenger led the assembly in the flag salute.

Council President Skellenger stated "This meeting is being held in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et sequentes. It has been properly advertised by posting in Borough Hall and printed in the New Jersey Herald/Sunday New Jersey Herald on January 4, 2019, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

Council President Skellenger requested the Borough Clerk to call the roll. Upon roll call, the following members of the Governing Body were present: Mr. Limon, Mr. Postas, Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Soules, Mr. Zydon.

Absent: Mayor Giordano

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

Mr. Limon made a motion to open the meeting to the public for anyone wishing to address the Governing Body. Seconded by Mr. Postas. All were in favor.

Dick Durina, 23 Lozaw Road, Franklin stepped forward. Mr. Durina commented he isn't here tonight to ask to lower his taxes but to spend his tax dollars wisely. Mr. Durina stated Franklin needs a safe, reliable water system, spending tax dollars on safe roads, bringing in more income ratables, and a debt free budget, Franklin should not be spending more money on the opening of the pond, a study should be done first. Mr. Durina commented on the Neighborhood House property, new businesses needed on Main Street and the good and bad issues with Route 23. Mr. Durina also commented on budget introductions of other towns already published in the newspaper. Mr. Durina questioned if the Borough has a savings account and what the outstanding debt is.

Monica Miebach, CFO commented the Annual Debt Statement is on-line.

There being no one else present who wished to address the Governing Body, Mr. Snyder made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Postas. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

CY 2019 Municipal Budget

Monica Miebach, CFO/QPA was present for the discussion.

WATER AND SEWER BUDGET

Mrs. Miebach commented the water and sewer budget is funded by the rents for water and the rents for sewer, \$248,000 is being taken from out of fund balance, an additional \$119,853 because last year was an extremely wet year and SCMUA has charged the Borough approximately \$170,000 extra. The reserves for water and sewer have grown so we were able to cut within the budget reserve for I&I studies. There are 3 forms of debt on the water and sewer budget; refunding of the water bonds done in 2015, a trust loan and annual notes.

CURRENT FUND BUDGET

Mrs. Miebach stated the current fund budget is the tax payers' budget. Mrs. Miebach commented she does an analysis every year, the local schools, regional schools and the county is estimated to increase 2% over last year, our municipal tax increased approximately \$20,000 over last year. The annual total municipal [only] tax increase on an average home in Franklin will be \$8.43. The average home

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 20, 2019

assessed in Franklin is \$174,572. Mrs. Miebach reminded everyone we don't have any control over the school or the county budget. The Borough's RUT (reserve for uncollected taxes) number has gone up slightly from last year because our collection rate has gone down. There was a decrease in the budget for 2016, in 2017 and 2018 the budget stayed flat, leaving us this year with a very small increase. Mrs. Miebach explained the highlights of the budget, we are pulling in from some reserves, there is interest on investments from last year amounting to \$79,683, antenna leases, Hillside Estates, fees and permitting, grants, explaining a new grant from the Highlands Master Plan. Mrs. Miebach commented items in the budget have been kept to a minimum, legal has increased a little and there are three areas that did increase which we have no control of such as pension payments, insurances and debt went up \$57,000. Mrs. Miebach complimented the Finance Committee who really cut many different areas.

Mr. Snyder questioned what was the amount cut from the original budget when it was first presented prior to what we have tonight. Mr. Snyder commented some lines cut can be seen easily, others aren't. Mr. Snyder commented on cuts to the buildings and grounds line, there is some TLC work that needs to be done inside the buildings, are those cuts going to effect what needs to be done. Mr. Snyder questioned the 1.5% rate for salary increases within the budget.

Administrator McHose explained the majority of employees are covered under contracts and the 1.5% rate would only impact a small amount of people.

Mr. Snyder commented on concerns with the high amount in the police wages and salaries line, asking how many employees are in that department, Mr. Snyder also commented on police over time, contracts and the importance of receiving status updates on compensation time.

Mr. Skellenger commented the funding cuts to the buildings and grounds line were restored earlier this evening, there is a revised budget sheet reflecting that.

Mr. Zydon commented on other department cuts related to equipment and position changes.

Mrs. Miebach commented our fund balance is just under \$200,000 which is still very healthy and our credit rating is good.

Administrator McHose complimented the Finance Committee and Monica, CFO on the hard work and many hours they put into this year's budget; Mr. Snyder's many years of knowledge was missed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Snyder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40p.m., seconded by Mr. Soules. All were in favor.

Stephen Skellenger, Council President

Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk