

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN
HELD AT THE FRANKLIN MUNICIPAL BUILDING
46 MAIN STREET, FRANKLIN, NJ
MARCH 24, 2020**

Mayor Sowden called the meeting to order and requested the Borough Clerk to call the roll. Upon roll call, the following members of the Governing Body were present: Mr. Formica and Mayor Sowden, present via phone conference, Mr. Limon, Mr. Postas, Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder and Mr. Zydon.

Absent: None

Mayor Sowden led the assembly in the flag salute.

Mayor Sowden 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 5, 2020, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations this evening.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Formica reported tomorrow the State should be voting on possible budget extension deadlines. Once we have been notified officially as to the results, we will then continue to move forward with our budget meetings.

Mr. Limon had nothing to report.

Mr. Postas reported Mike Vreeland our water engineer has been in contact with Sprint regarding the cell towers on the water tank. With all that is going on right now we believe it will be best to wait on making any decisions at this time.

Mr. Snyder reported he is happy we have come to an agreement on the Animal Control Officer services that is on the agenda tonight. The Personnel meeting with the committees scheduled for tomorrow will hopefully be rescheduled to next month.

Mr. Zydon had nothing to report.

Administrator McHose thanked the Mayor for all his assistance and knowledge he has given in the past 2 weeks with all the decisions concerning the cleaning, custodial staff, procedure changes and products. Borough Hall hours and staffing in the building has been reduced until further clarification has been received by the Governor. Several staff members are equipped with laptops and are working from home. The staff can be reached by phone or email and payments can be made by using the drop box in the front of the building and through the mail. We appreciate the public's patience during this situation and we will get through this together.

Mr. Skellenger reported the Recreation Committee has postponed the Senior Spring Fling, once this [COVID-19] has passed we will set a date for the future.

Mr. Ursin had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden reported there is a lot going on in the world, it is important to maintain social distancing, don't take unnecessary risks and stay home if you can. Mayor Sowden commented he is sad to announce that Mr. Don Stoll passed away yesterday. He was a Franklin Firefighter, part of the First Aid Squad who wore many hats in this town. He was a great guy to talk with and will be missed.

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 24, 2020

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Sowden requested that all persons present review the consent agenda and offer any comments they may have at this time regarding the consent agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING ONLY OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. State of New Jersey, 219th Legislature Assembly adopted Resolution No. 78 urging counties and municipalities to create 2020 Census Complete Count Committees.
2. State of New Jersey, 219th Legislature Assembly adopted Resolution No. 79 designating March 12 through 20 of 2020 "Get Out the Count Week" to encourage full Census count of New Jersey's population.
3. Letter dated March 9, 2020, from Sidney A. Sayovitz, Schenck, Price, Smith & King LLP, to Darlene Tremont, Municipal Clerk re: Transfer of Service Electric Assets to CSC TKR, LLC.
4. Township of Sparta Ordinance 20-04 adoption amending Chapter XVIII, entitled "Comprehensive Land Management Code" of the Township of Sparta Code to amend section 18-8.5 entitled "Incentive Zoning and Mandatory Set Asides" to add additional incentive zoning and mandatory set aside provisions to the TCC, TCCO, TCLC and TCPB zones.
5. Township of Sparta Ordinance 20-05 adoption amending Chapter XVIII entitled "Comprehensive Land Management Code" to update and amend section 18-4.29e of the ed zoned district entitled "Specifically Discouraged Uses".
6. Sandyston Township Resolution 24-2020 in support of New Jersey Legislation adopting a vegetation management response act.
7. Township of Byram Resolution 052-2020 requesting that First Energy rapidly increase funding for JCP&L to quickly rectify long delayed, yet necessary, modernization upgrades to the electrical distribution grid.

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Sussex County Board of Health Report – February 2020.
2. Municipal Court Report – February 2020.

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Resolution #2020-25
Adoption of resolution 2020-25 in support of New Jersey Legislation adopting a Vegetation Management Response Act.
2. Resolution #2020-26
Adoption of resolution 2020-26 budget transfer of appropriation reserves-current fund in the amount of \$16,000.
3. Service Electric Cable Television of New Jersey, Inc. Consent under the Municipal Consent/Ordinance.
Approval of consent to the transfer and assignment by Service Electric Cable T.V. of New Jersey, Inc. to CSC TKR, LLC.
4. Payment of bills for the meeting of March 24, 2020.

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the consent agenda of March 24, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business for tonight's portion of the meeting.

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 24, 2020

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for March 10, 2020. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Animal Control Officer Shared Service Agreement

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the Shared Service Agreement between the Township of Vernon and the Borough of Franklin for the service of Animal Control Officer beginning April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021, in the amount of \$13,000.00. (Agreement provided in council packet)

Mr. Ursin commented there are some clerical changes that I have identified and this motion should be approved subject to the clerical changes and my review after it has been discussed with Vernon Township.

Mr. Formica read the clerical changes. In section Article II-Activities A. instead of "cats" it should be changed to "all pets and domestic animals" and Article IV, A. Duration, states "certified mail", "certified" is not necessary.

Mr. Formica amended his motion subject to the clerical corrections to approve the Shared Service Agreement between the Township of Vernon and the Borough of Franklin. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

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

Bob Allen, 24 Jenkins Road, Franklin, stepped forward. Mr. Allen commented he heard the President speak about the need for additional spaces to be used for facilities to care for the very sick and who are ready to pass away. He was informed that the Morley Shirt Factory building has already started working on this, they are partially complete, all they need is a cafeteria. Mr. Allen questioned what is causing the problem to finalize the project.

Mayor Sowden commented he wasn't aware of anything being sent to the Borough other than a request for a change of use for that building. Mayor Sowden requested Administrator McHose to see if she can get additional information.

Mr. Formica commented he received a few questions from a resident who has asked to remain anonymous that he would like to read.

Can the Borough enforce stores to operate on limitations for the amount of people who can shop at one time?

If an apartment complex has an outbreak can the Borough enforce the entire complex to go into isolation.

Mr. Ursin explained the State gives numbers and guidelines to the County Health Department. If an outbreak were to occur the decisions would be made by the County Health Department and they would be the responsible party to implement protocols with the support of the Borough.

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 24, 2020

Would the Mayor be willing to place a public recording that can be shared on social media urging the community members to stay home instead of gathering in social places?

Mayor Sowden commented he isn't aware of any way at this time to get a recording on social media. However, the Borough is researching utilizing an on-line meeting program for our next meeting. Mayor Sowden also commented he understands some stores have tried placing limits on the amount of people entering them but from what I've heard it doesn't seem to work. We just need to be mindful to maintain the 6 feet social distancing as recommended.

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

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Mr. Limon thanked the Mayor for his response in these troubling times and looking into doing a virtual meeting would be great. Mr. Limon commented he thinks using the Morley Shirt Factory as a COVID-19 center would be a good idea. Mr. Limon also commented Don Stoll was captain of the First Aid Squad and the Franklin Fire Department way back in the day, he was an excellent firefighter and he will be missed.

Mr. Snyder commented he is very sad about Don Stoll, rest in peace. Mr. Snyder thanked Mayor Sowden and Administrator McHose for working together to keep the residents informed on COVID-19.

Mr. Formica commented he would like to draft a letter to the Governor to reverse his order to close NJ background checks and ammunition and firearms retail locations. This basically stops people's 2nd amendment rights. Be safe, watch out for yourselves, take each day one at a time and we'll get through it.

Administrator McHose informed everyone Franklin Borough sent an email to the County Health Department offering the use of the Littell Center as a location for a potential drive up testing site with the support of Hardyston and Hamburg.

Mr. Ursin commented he and his office are very active in keeping track of what the State Government is doing and how it effects municipalities legally. We keep in contact with each other, talking frequently on how to react to everything coming out of Trenton. There was a new law that was signed this week that clarifies having electronic meetings is legal and emergency notice provisions for future meetings.

Mayor Sowden commented he usually attends 2 telephone conference meetings a week with the County Department of Health that includes hearing from other towns and how they are dealing with the many issues we are facing. The meetings are very informative and I try to get as much information out to the public as I can. The County reported as of today there are 22 positive cases in Sussex County and as of present, Franklin doesn't have any cases. However, there are cases all around us, it's out there. Please stay tuned, do what you can and we will all get through this.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Postas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:29p.m., seconded by Mr. Formica. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk