

REGULAR AGENDA
FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN,
HELD AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 46 MAIN STREET
FRANKLIN, NEW JERSEY AT 7:00 P.M. ON
OCTOBER 28, 2025

- A. **Mayor Sowden** will call the meeting to order; Clerk will call the roll.
- B. **Mayor Sowden** will invite all present to salute the flag.
- C. **Mayor Sowden** will state that "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 12, 2025, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."
- D. **PRESENTATIONS**
There are no presentations this evening.
- E. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:** **Mayor Sowden** will allow each member of the Council, Borough Administrator, Borough Clerk, and Borough Attorney to present their respective committee report.

Mayor Sowden will offer the Mayor's Report.

- F. **OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:** **Mayor Sowden** will request a motion to open the meeting to the public, for any questions or comments concerning the good and welfare of the Borough. **All comments should be directed to the Mayor and kept to a 3-minute maximum per person.**

After giving all persons present an opportunity to address the Governing Body, **Mayor Sowden** will request a motion to close the meeting to the public and return to the regular order of business.

- G. **CONSENT AGENDA:** **Mayor Sowden** will request that all persons present review the consent agenda. If any member of the Council or public wishes an item on the consent agenda to be discussed and considered separately, a motion to this effect shall so be made, at this time.

After all persons have had an opportunity to review the consent agenda and offer requests for changes, Mayor Sowden will request a motion to approve the consent agenda.

- H. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- I. **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Approval of the Minutes** for the regular meeting minutes for October 14, 2025. (Absent: None)
2. **Approval of the Minutes** for the executive session meeting minutes from September 23, 2025. (Absent: None)
3. **Resolution 2025-85** approving the Franklin Fire Department Coin Toss Fundraisers for the year 2026.
4. **Resolution 2025-86** approving an area in need of redevelopment designation and authorizing the Planner to draft a Redevelopment Plan for 263 Route 23.

REGULAR AGENDA – MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING OCTOBER 28, 2025

5. 2025 Best Practices Inventory to accept the 2025 best practices inventory prepared by the CFO and Administrator and Clerk as required by the Division of Local Government Services.
6. DPW Salary Step Increase to approve a DPW salary step increase for Andrew Burd to Grade Step 11 \$37.21/hr., as per the DPW contract, effective November 16, 2025 as recommended by Jesse Bogart, Road Supervisor.
7. DPW Salary Step Increase to approve a DPW salary step increase for Matt Kuperus to Grade Step 9 \$31.47/hr., as per the DPW contract, effective November 16, 2025 as recommended by Jesse Bogart, Road Supervisor.
8. Franklin Quilters Request to approve the Franklin Recreation Committee Sponsored, "Franklin Quilters" request to waive the fees and to use the Senior Center for their meetings on the 3rd Saturday of every month for year 2026. (Recreation approved sponsorship at its October 16, 2025 meeting)
9. Mayoral Appointment
Mayor Sowden will make the following appointment.

Recreation Committee

Zoe Heath, Member (3-yr. unexpired term) Expires 12/31/2026

J. **EXECUTIVE SESSION – IF REQUESTED**

Mayor Sowden will request a motion to adopt a resolution to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss certain items excluded from the public.

THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ALLOWS THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FROM A PORTION OF A MEETING IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, THAT THE PUBLIC SHALL BE EXCLUDED FROM DISCUSSION OF MATTERS ALLOWED BY NEW JERSEY LAW.

THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES WILL BE PLACED ON FILE IN THE BOROUGH CLERK'S OFFICE, AND WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AS PROVIDED FOR BY NEW JERSEY LAW.

Be further advised this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

- K. **MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS:** **Mayor Sowden** will allow each member of the Governing Body to offer any miscellaneous comments which they may have at this time.
- L. **ADJOURNMENT:** **Mayor Sowden** will request a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**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
OCTOBER 14, 2025**

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: Mrs. Carnes, Mr. Formica, Mrs. Heath, Mr. Limon, Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder and Mayor Sowden.

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 12, 2025, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

PRESENTATIONS

At this time the Mayor and Council presented the Walkkill Valley Girl Scouts with a certificate recognizing their donation of funds to a resident of Franklin Borough who lost their home due to a fire.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Heath commented that there are still seats available for the Windcreek Bus trip. October 25th is the Halloween Parade at 12pm and then 1pm is the PTO Trunk or Treat and at 5pm-8pm there is a party at fireman's park. The Recreation Committee donated 15 \$10.00 Wal-Mart Gifts for the fishing derby. The Franklin Fire Department is looking to have a Holiday Parade.

Mr. Limon commented that there was a public works meeting on October 8, 2025. There was a personnel meeting where we discussed the contract with the PBA and looking into health benefits with a Morris County Coop.

Mrs. Carnes commented that she attended the Eagle Scout Ceremony for Michael Christensen on Saturday and she presented him with a plaque from the Governing Body.

Mr. Snyder commented that with talking with the CFO, she informed that everything is fine with the finances of the town.

Mr. Skellenger commented that the mobile unit from Motor Vehicle that was at the pond at Tuesday went well.

Mr. Formica commented that DPW met with Buildings and Grounds and the engineers and discussed paving; because it is getting so late in the year he thinks they are going to wait until the spring. A couple questions on the sidewalk grant had to be redone; that looks like it is all cleared up so we can go out to bid on that shortly. The preliminary report on the sinkhole; looks to be concentrated in that one area and looks to be wide but only five feet deep which means that our DPW can work on it without having to outsource it. October 18th is the fishing derby, 7am is registration and the kids will start fishing at 8am. We have a few sponsors as of right now a local resident in town who is donating 30 fishing lures, Postas Barber Shop donated towards prizes and Braen Quarry is covering the cost of the fish and buying breakfast.

Mrs. Little commented that the 3rd quarter Cannabis Tax amount is \$284,664.55.

Mr. Spidaletto commented that we are in that time again where we are getting ready for the budget season and accumulating information from department heads on capital needs. Mr. Spidaletto commented that on the agenda this evening is a resolution in regards to the water meter project.

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 14, 2025

Mr. Ursin commented that during the last couple of council meetings there have been discussions about private roads and whether or not they would be plowed in the winter. In the past two weeks Mr. Ursin has worked with the Borough Engineer, who did quite a bit of work plotting out the deed from the NJ Zinc Company and his conclusion that he has shared, pretty conclusively, is that the right out of way that is commonly called Dunn Road. That is a right of way that was deeded to the Borough of Franklin back then and it has never been dedicated as a roadway or been improved as a roadway. Typically, you would want roads that you are going to own and maintain and plow to be up to standards and dedicated as roadways. It is in the Council's prerogative to decide that because Dunn Road is a deeded right of way to the Borough of Franklin, if the Council chose you could direct that the DPW continue to plow and maintain Dunn Road.

Mrs. Heath made a motion to direct the DPW to continue to plow and maintain Dunn Road. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Mr. Formica asked if a notation could be made on the tax map that way if anyone in the future looks at it they have the information available to them.

Mr. Ursin commented that the tax map should really be updated because the way the tax map is currently depicted as if it is not connected to the municipal road system.

Mayor Sowden commented that Dunn Road has a sewer and water line through it that goes out to Catlin Road and is also the access way to Concetto Towers if off that right of way. Mayor Sowden commented that the Borough took responsibility and ran those sewer lines back in 1988. So that is something that we should continue on and he also feels that in reviewing the deeds on the other pieces of property; the Borough of Franklin has looked them over for years and taken care of them and that we continue to do what we have been doing over the last 50 plus years.

Mr. Ursin commented that the motion and second that is on the table is with respect to continuing maintenance and plowing of Dunn Road.

Mayor Sowden commented that the front yards of the houses along Master Street are steep and he feels that the Borough has taken care of the access road by Master Street for years and should continue to do so.

Mr. Ursin commented that he followed up with the engineer and they spent a lot of time today examining that road and they conclude that it is not a publicly owned road. Mr. Ursin commented that the Borough should not maintain privately owned property.

Mrs. Heath commented that we have been doing it for 60 years and she doesn't see how we can put the brakes on now.

Mayor Sowden commented that the people have elected us to do the right thing for the Borough of Franklin and he feels the right thing to do is to treat this as our alley way and to continue to maintain it.

Mrs. Heath asked if special specifications were needed to make it an alley way.

Mr. Ursin commented that you can call it whatever you want, you do not own it; you do not have permission to be on it.

Mr. Snyder commented that there could still be liability problems.

Mr. Ursin commented that the problem is, if you take the logic that you have been doing something for 50 years and you discover that it was wrong and you don't fix it then that is going to apply to a lot of things. If the Council feels strongly about it, the next step would be to try and figure out who owns it and whether or not you could get permission or transferred to the Borough; that's a little more involved. There has been a very detailed study of the title of it.

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 14, 2025

Mr. Limon commented that we are voting on Dunn Road and will investigate that further as needed.

Mr. Ursin commented that you could direct that we make more efforts to try to find out who owns it.

Upon roll call vote to maintain and plow Dunn Road:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Mr. Ursin commented that on the other road, the discussion was to whether or not you want to make the effort, it will incur some costs, in going back to identify the owner to try to analyze this problem a little bit further.

Mr. Limon commented that if it figures out that it is ours, we just continue doing what we have been doing.

Mr. Ursin commented that it is highly unlikely to be yours at this point. We have gone far enough that he's pretty confident that you are not going to find that it is yours but I also do not know whose it is. Mr. Ursin feels that if you directed, we would engage a title searcher to go back through the records further than we can go and try to determine the owner and at that point he can give options to the Council.

The consensus of the Council was to engage in a title searcher to go back through records to try to determine the owner of the service road.

Mayor Sowden commented that he received a letter on October 9th, the Department of Transportation is again talking about revitalizing local freight impact fund for roads.

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

Mr. Snyder 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.

Ms. Pat Morris stepped forward. Ms. Morris commented that when you look at a map you are looking at flat land; you're not looking at a topographical map. When Mr. Spidaletto delivered the letter, the top of his truck when he parked on Master Street would be even with her cellar floor. She has two retaining walls in front of her property; she does not have a driveway to Master Street no body of the five houses has a driveway to Master Street. If you do not snow plow, Ms. Morris will be locked in her house.

Ms. Renee Zierold stepped forward. Ms. Zierold acknowledged all the work that was done and thanked the Council for being open minded and kind and looking at the reality of the situation.

Ms. Dawne Rowe stepped forward. Ms. Rowe stated that it is very commendable on the work that was done to rectify one problem and little more work to do. Ms. Rowe commented that she reads the minutes and asked why the answers to the questions asked by the public are not included in the minutes. If you want to continue to build as is frequently in front of this council, what does that mean for the wells and water in this town. Ms. Rowe voiced concerns regarding loud exhausts and back firing from vehicles. Ms. Rowe congratulated the Girl Scouts.

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 Mrs. Carnes. All were in favor.

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. 2025 Certification of Equalized Valuations

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 14, 2025

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. County Board of Health Report – August 2025
2. Water/Sewer Division Report – August 2025
3. Police Department Report – August 2025
4. Permit Summary Report – September 2025
5. Permit List – September 2025
6. COH Report – September 2025
7. Municipal Court Report – September 2025

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Payment of bills for the meeting of October 14, 2025.

Mr. Limon made a motion to approve the consent agenda of October 14, 2025. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: Skellenger

OLD BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for September 23, 2025. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Snyder.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-83

Mr. Limon made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-83 authorizing the award of non-fair and open contracts for professional services for engineering services. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-84

Mr. Limon made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-84 authorizing the purchase of a 2026 Ford F-350 Regular Cab 4x4 from a NJ State Contract Vendor. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Adoption of Ordinance 18-2025

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Ordinance 18-2025 entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, COUNTY OF SUSSEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING SECTION 230, ENTITLED 'SOLID WASTE'". Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Prior to final roll Mayor Sowden requested a motion to open the meeting to the public for ordinance 18-2025. Mr. Skellenger made a motion to open the meeting to the public for Ordinance 18-2025, seconded by Mrs. Carnes. All were in favor.

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 14, 2025

There being no one present who wished to address the Governing Body, Mr. Skellenger made a motion to close the meeting to the public for Ordinance 18-2025, seconded by Mrs. Carnes. All were in favor.

Upon roll call vote:
Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder
Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Peddler Permit Application
Mrs. Carnes made a motion to approve the peddler permit submitted by Ryan Devine for the solicitation of solar panels. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:
Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder
Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Mayoral Appointment
Mayor Sowden will make the following appointment.

Crossing Guard Hire
Kim Siccardi as substitute crossing guard at the rate of \$16.18/hr. effective October 16, 2025, contingent upon successful physical and background check, as recommended by Rebecca Babcock, Crossing Guard Captain.

Auction of Borough Owned Properties
Mr. Ursin commented that the Borough has passed two ordinances indicating that municipally owned properties are no longer needed for public purposes the auction and sales are made strictly according to the terms of the ordinances. If someone is a successful bidder tonight, they will provide their name and address to the clerk at the conclusion of the meeting and any deposit due would be due by Thursday at the close of business or the results of the auction will be considered void.

Block	Lot	Minimum Bid
102	6	\$4,300.00
802	6	\$2,750.00
2101	1	\$3,600.00

Mr. Ursin commented that he recommends that the Council make a motion to conclude the auction for Ordinance 15-2025 with no bids received. These can always be renewed and placed up for auction again if adjoining property owners indicate an interest in purchasing the properties.

Mr. Formica made a motion to conclude the auction for Ordinance 15-2025 with no bids received. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger. All were in favor.

Block	Lot	Minimum Bid
703	2	\$2,800.00
908	24	\$5,750.00
1005	1	\$8,100.00

Mr. Ursin commented that he recommends that the Council make a motion to conclude the auction for Ordinance 14-2025 with no bids received. These can always be renewed and placed up for auction again.

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to conclude the auction for Ordinance 14-2025 with no bids received. Seconded by Mr. Formica. All were in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
There was no executive session.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS
There were no miscellaneous comments.

MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 14, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Snyder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:52p.m., seconded by Mr. Skellenger. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Colleen L. Little, Municipal Clerk

Borough of Franklin, County of Sussex

Resolution #2025-85

BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN FIRE DEPARTMENT COIN TOSS FUNDRAISER

WHEREAS, the Franklin Fire Department benefits the Borough of Franklin by providing fire services;

WHEREAS, the Franklin Fire Department has requested approval of coin toss fundraisers for the year 2026 on February 21st and 22nd (Rain Date February 28th and March 1st), April 25th and 26th (Rain Date May 2nd and 3rd), July 18th and 19th (Rain Date July 25th and July 26th) and November 21st and 22nd (Rain Date November 28th and November 29th);

WHEREAS, the coin toss fundraisers will occur at the location of the intersection of State Route 23 North and South and Franklin Avenue;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Franklin that the Franklin Fire Department coin toss fundraisers for February 21st and 22nd (Rain Date February 28th and March 1st), April 25th and 26th (Rain Date May 2nd and 3rd), July 18th and 19th (Rain Date July 25th and July 26th) and November 21st and 22nd (Rain Date November 28th and November 29th) 2026; are hereby approved contingent upon receiving any necessary County or NJDOT approval and further contingent upon complying with any requests, recommendation or directions of the Franklin Borough Police Department.

CERTIFICATION: I, Colleen L. Little, Municipal Clerk of the Borough of Franklin, in the County of Sussex, State of New Jersey do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Governing Body of the Borough of Franklin, at a regular meeting held on October 28, 2025.

Colleen L. Little, Municipal Clerk

RECORD OF COUNCIL VOTES				
COUNCIL MEMBER	AYES	NAYES	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
PATRICIA CARNES				
CONCETTO FORMICA				
RACHEL HEATH				
JOSEPH LIMON				
STEPHEN SKELLENGER				
GILBERT SNYDER				
MAYOR SOWDEN (Tie Only)				

Borough of Franklin, County of Sussex

Resolution #2025-86

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, IN THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX, NEW JERSEY APPROVING AN AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT DESIGNATION AND AUTHORIZING THE PLANNER TO DRAFT A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 263 ROUTE 23

WHEREAS, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, *N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.* (the “**Redevelopment Law**”), authorizes municipalities to determine whether certain parcels of land in the municipality constitute “areas in need of redevelopment”; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Redevelopment Law, the Borough Council (“**Borough Council**”) of the Borough of Franklin, in the County of Sussex, New Jersey (the “**Borough**”), duly adopted Resolution 2025-53 authorizing the Borough of Franklin Planning Board (the “**Planning Board**”) to conduct a preliminary investigation of whether the properties identified on the tax maps of the Borough as Block 1010, Lot 11 and Block 1401, Lot 3, more commonly known as 263 Route 23, Franklin, New Jersey 07416, qualify as an “area in need of redevelopment” and

WHEREAS, on October 20, 2025, the Planning Board, in accordance with the obligations in *N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6*, recommended that the Borough Council determine that the properties located at Block 1010, Lot 11 and Block 1401, Lot 3, more commonly known as 263 Route 23, Franklin, New Jersey 07416, are an area in need of redevelopment (the “**Redevelopment Area**”); and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council desires to accept the Planning Board’s recommendation and declare the Redevelopment Area as an area in need of redevelopment pursuant to the Redevelopment Law; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Redevelopment Law, the Borough Council is empowered to adopt a redevelopment plan pursuant to which redevelopment projects are to be undertaken or carried out within an “area in need of redevelopment”; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to that authority, the Borough Council wishes to direct J. Caldwell & Associates to prepare a redevelopment plan for the Redevelopment Area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Franklin, in the County of Sussex, New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1. The aforementioned recitals are incorporated herein as though set forth at length.

Section 2. The Borough Council hereby accepts the Planning Board’s recommendation to designate the properties identified on the tax maps of the Borough as Block 1010, Lot 11 and

Borough of Franklin, County of Sussex

Resolution #2025-86

Block 1401, Lot 3, more commonly known as 263 Route 23, Franklin, New Jersey 07416 as an area in need of redevelopment in accordance with the Redevelopment Law.

Section 3. J. Caldwell & Associates is hereby authorized and directed to prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the Redevelopment Area in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Redevelopment Law.

Section 4. The Borough Clerk shall immediately forward a certified copy of this Resolution upon all record owners of property located in the Redevelopment Area and upon each person who filed a written objection thereto, if applicable, in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Redevelopment Law.

Section 5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Council member	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain	Recuse
Skellenger, Stephen							
Limon, Joe							
Carnes, Patricia							
Snyder, Gilbert							
Formica, Concetto							
Heath, Rachel							

Adopted:

Attest: _____
Colleen L. Little
Municipal Clerk

John M. Sowden IV
Mayor