

**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
DECEMBER 19, 2023**

This meeting is being held in person adhering to the CDC guidelines and through a virtual meeting platform called ZOOM. The public who attended through ZOOM has been notified and instructed on how to join the meeting and participate during the public session.

Council President Postas 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, Mrs. Heath, Mr. Postas, Mr. Skellenger and Mr. Snyder

Absent: Mr. Limon and Mayor Sowden

Council President Postas led the assembly in the flag salute.

Council President Postas 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 6, 2023, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations for tonight's meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Heath commented that Recreation is holding a holiday light contest and tomorrow night we will be awarding the prizes.

Mr. Skellenger commented that there was a meeting held with the police department and he emailed everyone with information to review for the January 23, 2024 meeting.

Mr. Formica commented that he met with French and Parrello to discuss the plans for 2024. A portion of Junction Street has been added on the NJDOT grant and has been approved. Mr. Formica commented that there was an ordinance passed in July limiting the amount that professionals can charge applicants for a TCC Meeting. It was found that some professionals charged over the limits. Mr. Formica asked what the best route would be to correct this.

Mr. Ursin commented to send him a copy of the bills and he will take a look and try to give the planning board secretary some advice.

Mr. Snyder had nothing to report.

Mr. Formica commented that the personnel committee would like to add funds to the temporary budget for costs on training. The Council had no objections.

Mr. Postas commented that the water tank is painted and back in service. There is no update on the test well.

Mr. Ursin had nothing to report.

Mrs. Tremont commented that she spoke with Denis Keenan in regard to Main Street and Junction Street 4 way stop. Mr. Keenan said that the lights that are now blinking yellow just need red lenses. It's an old light so that will be the biggest hurdle. Mrs. Tremont will reach out to DPW about line striping and finding the red lenses, not sure about the stop signs. Mrs. Tremont investigated costs for new tablets, they range in price from \$250 - \$500 depending on the type and amount of storage needed.

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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.

Ryan stepped forward. Ryan commented that he is currently looking into some of the commercial real estate that is in the area. It was suggested that a TCC meeting should be scheduled.

Dan Larco stepped forward. Mr. Larco commented that he is having a problem with his neighbor and that he has spoken to various departments (zoning officer and police department).

Mr. Postas recommended that he continue to work with the zoning officer.

There being no one else present or on Zoom who wished to address the Governing Body, Mr. Snyder made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Skellenger. 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. Letter from SCMUA in regard to FY2024 Final Rate Schedule effective December 1, 2023
2. Township of Vernon resolution in support of assembly bill no 5548 prohibiting the state from imposing a mileage-based user fee.
3. Township of Green resolution in support of assembly bill no 5548 prohibiting the state from imposing a mileage-based user fee.
4. Letter from SCMUA in re: estimated annual charge FY2024 SCMUA Sewage Treatment Services
5. NJLM letter dated September 29, 2023 in re: proposed increase of membership dues

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Police Department report – October 2023
2. DPW Report – October 23 – October 27, 2023
3. DPW Report – October 30 – November 3, 2023
4. DPW Report – November 6 – November 10, 2023
5. DPW Report – November 13 – November 17, 2023
6. Construction Permit Activity Report – November 2023
7. Permit List – November 2023
8. COH Report – November 2023
9. Municipal Court report – November 2023
10. County Board of Health Report – November 2023

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Resolution 2023-141 – budget transfer in the amount of \$6,013.00.
2. Resolution 2022-142 – authorizing a disabled veteran exemption on Block 1401 Lot 42
3. Payment of bills for the meeting of December 19, 2023.

Mrs. Heath made a motion to approve the consent agenda of December 19, 2023 with the removal of purchase order number 55892. Seconded by Mr. Snyder.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve purchase order 55892. Seconded by Mr. Snyder.

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Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: Heath

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Snyder asked if there were any updates on Rowetts Garage.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Postas made a motion for the regular meeting minutes and executive session meeting minutes for November 28, 2023. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Construction Department Shared Service Agreement

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve a Construction Department Shared Service Agreement between the Township of Hardyston and the Borough of Franklin beginning January 1, 2024 ending December 31, 2028 and to have the Mayor and Clerk execute the same. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Mr. Formica asked about the percentage split.

Ms. Carrine Piccolo-Kaufer, Hardyston Township Manager, stepped forward. Ms. Kaufer explained the reason for the 60/40 split rather than the 50/50 split. Any additional monies received are put into a trust for potential unforeseen costs such as vehicle replacement, additional staffing and any other incidental costs.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Construction Software Shared Service Agreement

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve a Construction Software Shared Service agreement between the Township of Hardyston and the Borough of Franklin, Town of Newton, Borough of Hamburg and Township of Wantage for Software System upgrade and annual maintenance and to have the Mayor and Clerk execute the same. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Shared Municipal Court Services Agreement

Mrs. Heath made a motion to approve the shared municipal court services agreement between the Borough of Franklin and the Township of Hardyston for the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2026. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Resolution 2023-134

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-134 authorizing the award of electrical services bid to EM Electric at the cumulative rate of \$1,077.00. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

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Resolution 2023-135

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-135 to approve the Franklin Fire Department 2024 Coin Toss Fundraisers on February 24th and 25th, April 20th and 21st, July 20th and 21st and November 23rd and 24th. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Resolution 2023-136

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-136 to accept the dedication of certain utilities and approving a utility easement. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Resolution 2023-137

Mr. Snyder made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-137 authorizing the amendment of Resolution 2023-01 non-fair and open contracts for professional services to French & Parrello Associates and VanCleeef engineering Associates, LLC for 2023. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Mr. Formica commented that we need to have some safe measures in this going forward. The engineers are doing their job, however every time they are called it is being charged to the borough. Can a quarterly report be requested to see how much money has been paid to the professionals.

Mr. Skellenger requested to go out to bid for the professionals.

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to go out for proposals for Borough Engineer and Water/Sewer Engineer. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote for proposals:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Upon roll call vote for Resolution 2023-137:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Resolution 2023-138

Mr. Snyder made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-138 approving the cancelation of prior year open items. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Resolution 2023-139

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-139 to approve the Governor's Council on alcoholism and drug abuse fiscal grant cycle FY2025. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Resolution 2023-140

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-140 to approve determining that Block 605 Lot 5 is an area in need of redevelopment without the power of condemnation. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

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Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

Shared Service Agreement for Deer Carcass Removal

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve the Shared Service Agreement through December 31, 2024, between Space Wild Animal Farm Inc. and the Borough of Franklin for deer carcass removal from Municipal Road rights-of-way at the rate of \$29.00 per deer. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: Formica

ADDENDUM

Resolution #2023-143

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt resolution 2023-143 to authorize Concerning Sewer Allocation for 16 Park Drive and Past Due Amounts. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: Limon Abstentions: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Mrs. Heath wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Mrs. Heath thanked the office staff.

Mrs. Tremont commented that this is our last ZOOM meeting. Starting in 2024 all meetings will be in person. Mrs. Tremont wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

ADJOURNMENT

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

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk