

**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
AUGUST 12, 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. Skellenger, and Mayor Sowden.

Absent: Mr. Limon, Mr. Snyder

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

There were no presentations for tonight's meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Heath commented that National Night Out was a success. Upcoming events for Recreation, September 11th is the 9/11 Ceremony, September 27th is the Yankee Game bus trip, November 8th is a paint and sip event at the Firehouse, November 15th is a bus trip to Windcreek and November 29th is the tree lighting. Mrs. Heath commented that she had the honor of going with the Franklin Seniors to Lake Hopatcong to the boat ride.

Mr. Skellenger had nothing to report.

Mr. Formica commented that the Ordinance committee met and there are two ordinances on the agenda that were discussed. Mr. Formica also had a discussion with Jesse from DPW about the beach. Mr. Formica commented that it does not look like the swimming will be coming back so they wanted, because the weeds are starting to grow in, if they can go and rake it all out and smooth it all out one last time and plant grass seed and install a decorative guiderail along the edge.

Mrs. Carnes commented that a personnel meeting was held and those items are on the agenda for consideration tonight.

Mrs. Little had nothing to report.

Mr. Spidaletto commented that we need to address the air conditioning in the meeting room.

Mr. Ursin had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden commented that about two to three weeks ago we met on the rails to trails program down at the Franklin Pond and walked the trail between the Franklin Pond and Wildcat Road. The State recommends that we open the trail from Maple Road to Wildcat Road as phase 1 of the project.

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 Mrs. Heath. All were in favor.

Ms. Elayna Hall stepped forward. Ms. Hall commented that she heard from a few people that the back streets in between Rutherford and Master are not going to be plowed and there are two others.

Mayor Sowden commented that we are going to have more discussion on this.

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Ms. Hall commented that the majority of people on all of those streets have their garages there and they walk through to get to their front door.

Mr. Ursin commented that we are pretty confident that it was discovered that the Borough does not own those roads.

Ms. Hall asked who owns the roads.

Mr. Ursin commented that he is unsure of who owns the roads; there is a document somewhere that says who does. But if the Borough does not own the road the Borough is not allowed to plow it.

Administrator Spidaletto commented that the notices will be coming put within a week to notify the property owners that the roads will not be plowed by the Borough due to the fact that the road is privately owned.

Ms. Joann Tatka stepped forward. Ms. Tatka questioned the resolution for the DPW phone stipend, questioned the ordinance for the police department vehicle, the fire truck purchase and Kubota Track Loader. Ms. Tatka asked if there are going to be seats put in the gazebo. Ms. Tatka commented that what ever you are doing for the geese at the pond seems to be working.

Ms. Dawne Rowe stepped forward. Ms. Rose commented that she attended the rails to trails meeting and voiced her concerns regarding the backfiring of vehicles.

Mayor Sowden asked Administrator Spidaletto to follow up with the police chief regarding Ms. Rowe's concerns about vehicles backfiring.

There being no one else present who wished to address the Governing Body, Mr. Skellenger made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mrs. Heath. 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. County of Sussex Resolution authorizing the placement of a public question on the official ballot for the general election on November 4, 2025 concerning a proposition authorizing the County of Sussex to continue a trust fund to support farmland preservation, recreation and open space programs, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:12-15.1, et seq.
2. 2nd quarter sewage flows from the SCMUA.
3. Township of Hardyston Ordinance amending article III, supplementary zone district regulations, of chapter 185, Zoning, of the municipal code of the Township of Hardyston to supplement regulations governing the parking of recreational vehicles at single-family residences.
4. Township of Hardyston Ordinance amending article XIX, signs, of chapter 185, zoning, of the municipal code of the Township of Hardyston to remove and revise certain obsolete and duplicate provisions.
5. County of Sussex Resolution amending the Sussex County resolution establishing county roads as through streets.
6. Borough of Hamburg Ordinance amending the Borough zoning ordinance to prohibit nuisance outdoor lighting.

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Water/Sewer Division Report – July 7th – July 11th
2. Police Department Report – June 2025
3. Water/Sewer Division Report – July 14th – August 1st
4. Municipal Court Report – July 2025
5. Permit List – July 2025
6. COH Report – July 2025
7. Permit Summary Report – July 2025

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APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Application for use of the Senior Center from Jason Dugan for Franklin Boy Scout Troop 90 on various dates beginning September 8, 2025 through June 22, 2026 as per the attached schedule and to waive the associated fees.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Payment of bills for the meeting of August 12, 2025.

Mrs. Heath made a motion to approve the consent agenda of August 12, 2025.
Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: Skellenger

OLD BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the regular meeting and executive session minutes for July 15, 2025. (Absent: Heath) Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: Heath

Resolution 2025-68

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-68 rescinding Resolution 2024-61 and awarding phone stipend to DPW Foreman and On-Call staff.
Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-69

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-69 authorizing through NJ State Contract a purchase for a Kubota SVL97-3HFCC compact track loader in an amount not to exceed \$100,515.09. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-70

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-70 authorizing a contract for the purchase of a Fouts 4 Mini-Pumper Fire Truck in an amount not to exceed \$415,200.00. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-71

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-71 authorizing the hiring of a seasonal laborer for maintenance in the Department of public works at the rate of \$20 per hour not to exceed 25 hours per week. Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

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Resolution 2025-72

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-72 authorizing a salary adjustment for the deputy clerk/deputy registrar in the amount of \$6,669.99 per year bringing her annual salary to \$50,960 effective May 1, 2025. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-73

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-73 authorizing a salary increase for Frederick Babcock of an additional \$1.00 per hour bringing his new hourly rate to \$20.57 per hour effective August 1, 2025. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-74

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-74 to approve certifying the Franklin Borough Governing Body has reviewed the 2024 Audit comments and recommendations as required by N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-75

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-75 to accept and approve for filing the corrective action plan for the Audit Report year 2024 prepared and filed by the Borough's Chief Financial Officer. (Corrective Action Plan attached) Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-76

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-76 permitting the award of window contracts under the New Jersey Election Transparency Act. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2025-77

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-77 authorizing the hiring of full time laborers for the Department of Public Works. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Adoption of Ordinance 10-2025

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to adopt Ordinance 10-2025 entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, COUNTY OF SUSSEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING SECTION 119-2, FEES". Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Prior to final roll call Mayor Sowden requested a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Formica made a motion to open the meeting to the public for Ordinance 10-2025, seconded by Mrs. Carnes. All were in favor.

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There being no one present who wished to address the governing body regarding Ordinance 10-2025, Mr. Formica made a motion to close the meeting to public. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger. All were in favor.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Introduction of Ordinance 11-2025

Mr. Formica made a motion to introduce Ordinance 11-2026 entitled "CAPITAL ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR PURCHASE OF A SILVERADO 1500 PICK UP TRUCK FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, BY AND IN THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, IN THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$95,000.00 THEREFOR FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THE COST THEREOF". Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Mayor Sowden announced that the public hearing will be held on September 9, 2025.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Introduction of Ordinance 12-2025

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to introduce Ordinance 12-2025 entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, COUNTY OF SUSSEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO ESTABLISH SECTION 108, ENTITLED "CURFEW". Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Mayor Sowden announced that the public hearing will be held on September 9, 2025.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Introduction of Ordinance 13-2025

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to introduce Ordinance 13-2025 entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN COUNTY OF SUSSEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO ESTABLISH SECTION 101, ENTITLED "CAMPING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY". Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Mayor Sowden announced that the public hearing will be held on September 9, 2025.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

Approval of NJ State Firemen's Association Membership Application

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve the application for membership of Daniel Engelhardt, 9 McDole Road, Hamburg, as Firematic member to the Franklin Fire Department as endorsed by Corey Houghtaling, Franklin Fire Department Chief. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Skellenger

Nays: None Absent: Limon, Snyder Abstentions: None

DPW Salary Step Increase

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve a DPW salary step increase for Grady VanEk to Grade Step 3 \$23.12/hr., as per the DPW contract, effective September 1, 2025 as recommended by Jesse Bogart, Roads Supervisor. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

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

DPW Salary Step Increase
Mr. Formica made a motion to approve a DPW salary step increase for Michael Luterzo to Grade Step 2 \$21.99/hr., as per the DPW contract, effective August 16, 2025 as recommended by Jesse Bogart, Roads Supervisor. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes

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

Discussion on Property Auction
The Governing Body held a discussion on which Borough owned properties should be sold at auction.

Mr. Ursin commented that he is in the process of preparing the ordinance to auction the properties.

Mr. Skellenger commented that we are taking off 50 Cork Hill Road.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
There was no executive session.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS
There were no miscellaneous comments.

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08p.m., seconded by Mrs. Carnes. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Colleen L. Little, Municipal Clerk