

**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
FEBRUARY 10, 2026**

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 11, 2026, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

PRESENTATIONS

Kyle Stuber, Director of Development and Pam Vreeland, Chief Operating Officer, from Habitat for Humanity spoke regarding the Edison School House/Hungarian Church and the proposed use of the building. Habitat for Humanity would create administrative office space and it would also be a community collaboration and meeting location. Mr. Stuber commented that Habitat for Humanity would really like to utilize this building and turn it into an active epicenter of Main Street. Mr. Stuber commented that Habitat for Humanity has a crew ready to restore this building in a historic way that will preserve the history of it but also put it into an active and community-based purpose.

Mr. Limon asked if they were looking at this site for their offices.

Ms. Vreeland commented that it would be administrative space for Habitat for Humanity, a place where they could run some of their programs out of as well as other programs.

Mr. Snyder asked what the time frame would be for this project.

Ms. Vreeland commented that they are proposing late 2026 to early 2027. They are also looking at a space to open up a restore in Franklin. A restore is a location where they receive donated goods and resell to support their affordable housing programs.

Mrs. Heath commented that we are familiar with your projects and restoring homes and she believes that this is something new for Habitat also. We are very pleased to welcome you to Franklin.

Mr. Limon asked how Franklin was selected.

Mr. Stuber commented that he attended a local chamber of commerce meeting for Franklin and Hardyston and he was talking to John Drake and Keri Marino and he presented what their needs were in Sussex County.

Mr. Joe Pugliese of Gates Flag and Banner spoke regarding flags for the 250th Anniversary and also Hometown Hero flags.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Snyder commented that there will be an ordinance meeting later this month and we will be talking about the budget soon.

Mrs. Carnes commented that there was an EDC meeting and there is a lot of thought as to what direction for EDC. The next EDC meeting will be held March.

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Mr. Limon commented that he was unable to attend the last Historical Meeting and a public works meeting will be set up soon.

Mr. Formica commented that there was meeting with the engineer to discuss road paving, parking lots and possible DOT grants for roads. Mr. Formica commented that he is happy to announce that for FY2026 appropriations Minibus package was signed into law on Friday, January 23, 2026 in Washington. The Minibus package included a public safety road improvement for the Borough of Franklin for the amount of \$216,000 and what this will do is upgrade our radio system in town for the first responders. We tried a few grants and landed this one and we will keep pursuing more.

Mr. Skellenger commented that he is working on getting the Mobile Unit for MVC to come to the pond sometime in May.

Mrs. Heath commented that there was a personnel meeting and we are moving forward on contracts. The Recreation Committee will be holding the Spring Fling on April 18th and we are looking for nominations for Senior of the Year. Saturday, February 21st is the Wind Creek trip and March 8th is the Devil's game trip.

Mrs. Little had nothing to report.

Mr. Spidaletto thanked the people who made presentations tonight. Mr. Spidaletto asked that Resolution 2026-26 be tabled as we are waiting on paperwork from iParametrics.

Mr. Windles had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden thanked Habitat for Humanity and thank you for coming tonight to get ready to celebrate our 250th Anniversary.

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

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

Ms. Elaine Tizzano stepped forward. Ms. Tizzano commented on the application that she submitted for the Changing the Face of Addiction Walk. This year is the 12th year of the event. Ms. Tizzano thanked the Council for allowing this event to happen.

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. Formica. All were in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Sowden requested that all person's 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 reappointing William Joseph as the official town crier for the County of Sussex for 2026.
2. County of Sussex resolution reappointing Dr. William Truran as Sussex County Historian for term expiring December 31, 2026.
3. 2025 Annual Raffle Report
4. SCMUA Daily flow readings for October, November and December 2025.
5. Hampton Township Resolution urging Jersey Central Power and Light to improve infrastructure maintenance, including tree management and debris cleanup.
6. County of Sussex resolution for 2026 Board of County Commissioners Municipal Liaisons.

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. County Board of Health Report – December 2025
2. Water/Sewer Division Operations Report – December 2025
3. Permit Summary Report – January 2026

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4. Permit List – January 2026
5. COH Report – January 2026

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Special Event Request from Elaine Tizzano and Louie Lavin, for their twelfth annual walk in conjunction with the Center for Prevention and Counseling to be held on August 1, 2026, to bring awareness and treatment for substance use disorder.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Payment of bills for the meeting of February 10, 2026.

Mr. Limon made a motion to approve the consent agenda of February 10, 2026 with the removal of PO#39776 and PO#38880. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Mrs. Heath made a motion to approve PO#39776 and PO#38880, 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. Formica made a motion to approve the organization meeting minutes for January 6, 2026. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Skellenger

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for January 13, 2026. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-23

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-23 authorizing a disabled veteran exemption on block 801 lot 20. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-24

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-24 authorizing a disabled veteran exemption on block 302 lot 9. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

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Resolution 2026-25

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-25 authorizing the award of a non-fair and open contract for appointing Overcoat LLC as business development consultant at a cost not to exceed \$19,800. Seconded by Mr, Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-26

Mr. Formica made a motion to table Resolution 2026-26, until the next Council meeting, authorizing the award of a non-fair and open contract for appointing iParametrics as grant writer for the year 2026 at a cost not to exceed \$25,000. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote to table:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-27

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-27 authorizing the American Legion Auxiliary to hold a coin toss fundraiser on May 23, 2026 from 8am-12pm at the location of the corner of Route 23 and Franklin Avenue. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-28

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-28 authorizing the submission and execution of a grant agreement to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs in the amount of \$75,000. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-29

Mr. Snyder made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-29 to approve a budget transfer in the amount of \$11,390.00. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-30

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-30 authorizing the purchase of a police department body camera and taser system from Axon - a NJ State contract vendor in an amount not to exceed \$321,000. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Introduction of Ordinance 01-2026

Mr. Limon made a motion to introduce Ordinance 01-2026 entitled "BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY CALENDAR YEAR 2026 ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)". Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Mayor Sowden announced that the public hearing will be held on February 24, 2026.

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Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Peddlers Permit Application

Mr. Snyder made a motion to approve the peddler permit application submitted by Carol Zofrea for the sale of ice cream. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Discussion on 250th Anniversary

Mr. Fred Babcock, Chairperson of Recreation, stepped forward. Mr. Babcock commented that Franklin Day/Nite celebration is scheduled for June 27th and fireworks are already booked. We talked about doing events in the morning such as kayaking, barbeque at the pond, bands and a community kickball game. Miss Franklin is being held the day before.

Ms. Holly Bradley of the Franklin Band stepped forward. Ms. Bradley commented that they have a concert on Sunday, May 17th which they plan on celebrating the 250th Anniversary that day. They have the school locked in from 12pm-4pm both the gymnasium and auditorium. The Franklin Bands proposal would be to have a mini parade at noon, from the fire house to the school, and then followed by activities outside and a 2pm concert in the auditorium.

Mr. Phil Crabb of the Historical Committee stepped forward. Mr. Crabb commented that we could still have opportunities beyond what recreation is doing on the weekend that they already have planned; on the actual July 4th weekend. July 4th is a Saturday and maybe we could have a fire department hose spraying contest, old fashioned tug of war contest and maybe a concert at Fireman's Park. We could arrange to open up the Trotter Mining Area to have people go down by the open cut.

Mrs. Judy Williams stepped forward. Mrs. Williams shared her ideas regarding the 250th Anniversary Celebration. Mrs. Williams will work with Holly on all those activities for May 17th. The County, through the D.A.R., are doing memorial markers for Revolutionary Patriots who are documented buried here in Sussex County. We do have a patriot in Franklin Borough, back in the 1700's and fighting the Revolutionary War was our patriot Michael Rourek and he is buried in the Oak Street Cemetery. Mrs. Williams is personally cleaning off his gravestone area and the paperwork has been submitted for his memorial marker. The D.A.R. is looking for the oldest flag in our community. A resident from Ogdensburg wants to put together a quilt for the County Courthouse. We are looking for each municipality to be represented. On July 26th the Franklin Band will be at Firemen's Park for a concert.

The Governing Body made a committee for the 250th Anniversary consisting of Mr. Formica, Mrs. Heath and Mr. Limon. The first meeting will be held on February 19th at 6:30pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Mrs. Heath asked when the official ribbon cutting will be for the rails to trails.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mrs. Heath made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:39p.m., seconded by Mrs. Carnes. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Colleen L. Little, Municipal Clerk