

**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
SEPTEMBER 8, 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 and Mayor Sowden.

Absent: Mr. Skellenger and 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 posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

PRESENTATIONS

Shane Hrbek Eagle Scout Award. Councilwoman Heath presented Shane Hrbek with an Eagle Scout Certificate.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Limon commented that a Public Works and Buildings and Grounds meeting was held.

Mrs. Carnes commented that there may be an EDC meeting this week.

Mrs. Heath commented that the 9/11 ceremony is on Friday at the pond. She commends everyone and everything is perfect and beautiful. The Wind Creek Casino trip is September 26. October 17 is a food truck festival, October 24 is the Halloween parade/trunk or treat and party. She wants to place a box in the Boro Hall for candy donations. November 14 is a vendor fair at the Franklin Firehouse. November 28 is the Christmas tree lighting.

Mr. Formica commented buildings & grounds met and talked about the paving, sidewalks and we talked about Christmas lights. Met with the engineer regarding the walking path.

Mrs. Little had nothing to report.

Mr. Spidaletto commented the drilling for the well should happen within the next few weeks, Resolutions on tonight's agenda are similar to the last agenda just some corrections on wording which were already approved last time. He reached out to our contact at JCP&L to attend our September 22 meeting.

Mr. Windles had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden commented that he's looking forward to the 9/11 Ceremony at the pond, 7pm.

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

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

Bill Geiger, resident of Franklin House, voiced concerns about the rent increases proposed and lost services like the exterminator and will probably come to the Board of Health about this, the window cleaners.

Romina Batiste, resident of Franklin House, voiced concerns over the rent increase.

Donald Vandermast, resident of Franklin House, voiced concerns regarding the rent increase.

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Darleen Milligan, resident of Hardyston, spoke regarding the rent increases at the Franklin House.

Sharon Leiba, resident of Franklin House, voiced concerns regarding the Franklin House.

Dawne Rowe, spoke regarding the Franklin Senior House.

There being no one else present who wished to address the Governing Body, Mrs. Heath made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Limon. 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 requesting a full, independent and transparent investigation into the improper registration of non-citizens to vote in New Jersey and calling for additional safeguards to protect election integrity.
2. Borough of Hopatcong resolution urging the New Jersey State Legislature and Governor to repeal the gas tax escalator and restore accountability to fuel tax increases.
3. Town of Newton Resolution encouraging the Sussex County Board of County Commissioners to establish a county homelessness housing trust fund.
4. Township of Fredon resolution in support of New Jersey Assembly Resolution No. 149 (AR-149), and supporting all law enforcement officers and urging each county and municipality to similarly express such support.
5. Township of Fredon Resolution in support of a full, independent and transparent investigation into the improper registration of non-citizens to vote in New Jersey and calling for additional safeguards to protect election integrity.
6. Borough of Hamburg resolution in support of New Jersey Assembly resolution no. 149 (AR149) recognizing the invaluable contributions of state and local police officers.
7. Borough of Hamburg resolution urging the New Jersey State Legislature and Governor to repeal the gas tax escalator and restore accountability to fuel tax increases.

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Municipal Court Report – July 2026
2. County Board of Health Report – July 2026
3. Zoning Department Report – July 2026
4. Water/Sewer Division Report – July 2026
5. Water/Sewer Division Report – August 2026
6. Zoning Department Report – August 2026
7. Road Department Report – August 2026

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Payment of bills for the meeting of September 8, 2026.

Mr. Limon made a motion to approve the consent agenda of September 8, 2026. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Carnes spoke regarding the bricks for the 9/11 Memorial and clarified staff did all they could and the paperwork was just never received.

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NEW BUSINESS

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for August 11, 2026. (Absent: Limon) Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: Limon

Resolution 2026-83

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-83 rescinding Resolution #2026-78 and approving an emergency appropriation. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-84

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-84 authorizing a refund of overpayment on Block 601 Lot 14 in the amount of \$1,959.09. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-85

Mr. Limon made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-85 authorizing the hiring of Alexa Odllakoff as full-time violations clerk at the annual salary of \$50,000 conditioned upon the completion of a successful background check. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-86

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-86 authoring a water/sewer account overpayment refund for Account #7221-0 in the amount of \$167.00. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-87

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-87 authorizing the refund of a vendor fee to Created by Jaz Studio in the amount of \$25.00. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-88

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-88 authorizing the refund of \$200 for the fee paid to attend the Mets game from Emily Conklin. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-89

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Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-89 authorizing a water/sewer account overpayment refund for account #1251-0 in the amount of \$9,761.25. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-90

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-90 requesting a full, independent and transparent investigation into the improper registration of non-citizens to vote in New Jersey and calling for additional safeguards to protect election integrity. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-91

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-91 authorizing a 2.5% reduction in the health care contribution percentage, or a 2.5% increase in the health benefit waiver amount, for all employees not covered by the current PBA Contract effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Introduction of Ordinance 2026-09

Mr. Limon made a motion to introduce Ordinance 2026-09 entitled "CAPITAL ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR PURCHASE OF UPFITTING FOR THE NEW POLICE CARS FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, BY AND IN THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, IN THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND APPROPRIATING \$18,531.00 THEREFOR FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THIS PURCHASE." Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Mayor Sowden announced that the final reading will be held on September 22, 2026

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Autoagent Data Solutions Agreement

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the agreement between Autoagent Data Solutions and the Borough of Franklin for the purposes of an online payment portal known as MuniciPay at a one-time implementation fee of \$1,000 and the cost of a credit card machine at a cost not to exceed \$500. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: None

Mayoral Appointment

Mayor Sowden made the following appointment:

Crossing Guard Hire

Natasha Gonzalez as substitute crossing guard at the rate of \$16.67/hr. effective September 9, 2026, contingent upon successful physical and background check, as recommended by Rebecca Babcock, Crossing Guard Captain.

Crossing Guard Hire

Richard Havel as substitute crossing guard at the rate of \$16.67/hr. effective September 9, 2026, contingent upon successful physical and background check, as recommended by Rebecca Babcock, Crossing Guard Captain.

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Discussion of Fire Department Small Business Line of Credit

Mr. Spidaletto spoke regarding the Fire Departments request for their business line of credit for various improvements. Mr. Formica made a motion to support the request of the Franklin Fire Department for a business line of credit. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath

Nays: None Absent: Skellenger, Snyder Abstentions: Limon

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Mrs. Heath commented regarding the Franklin House and is looking forward to the 9/11 celebration.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mrs. Heath made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:51p.m., seconded by Mrs. Carnes. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Colleen L. Little, Municipal Clerk