

**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  
MARCH 10, 2020**

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: Mr. Formica, Mr. Limon, Mr. Postas, Mr. Skellenger, via phone, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Zydon 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 5, 2020, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

### **PRESENTATIONS**

There were no presentations this evening.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Limon reported there was a Public Works meeting regarding street paving this year and updates on the water tower painting. The cell antennas on the water tower will need to be removed prior to painting.

Mr. Postas reported there was a Public Works meeting in the past two weeks. The bid specifications have been written for the painting of the water tower, the one hold-up is to find who is responsible for removing and replacing the cell antennas; it is costly. The first roads are on schedule to be paved per Mr. Knutelsky which are Paddock, Junction and Newton Streets. Mitchell Avenue will be after that, the work on the catch basins have been completed. As reported previously, the Borough has received NJDOT Grants for both Mitchell Avenue and Scott Road. We are not sure if Scott Road will be able to be done this year, it depends on the weather; however, the Borough has next year to utilize the NJDOT Grant money for Scott Road.

Mr. Snyder reported there was a Personnel meeting and we went over the evaluations of the Administrator and DPW Superintendent, Brian [VanDenBroek], the police chief wasn't able to be done, he wasn't available that night. On tonight's agenda is a salary step increase correction for one of the DPW employees, the step increase should have been from a step 2 to step 3. We are in the process of getting additional information for the Animal Control Officer contract with Vernon Township in order to finalize that soon.

Mr. Ursin had nothing to report. However, Mr. Ursin did comment the Council is aware that there's been a discussion of a personnel matter and possible settlement of a dispute of that personnel matter. That matter is not on the agenda or been finalized and will not be an action item tonight.

Mr. Formica reported the Finance Committee met last night. We are working on numbers and noticed some high energy costs with all the buildings combined. We are going to look into what can be done to lower them. The playground numbers are starting to come in, we would like to start taking out some equipment that needs to be removed and do any other work in the meantime while waiting for the balance of those numbers to come in.

Mr. Zydon reported the Ordinance Committee met on Tuesday, March 3, 2020 discussing fencing ordinance issues, that was brought to our attention by the Zoning Officer. Mr. Ursin reviewed it and it is also being reviewed by the Planning Board. We also looked at "Help Wanted" signs. We tweaked the Employee Handbook regarding Council reviewing department heads, the committee members will review

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it and have it at the next meeting. The Committee reviewed the old BPW [Board of Public Works] ordinance and the old Industrial Commission ordinance, more information will be needed. Lastly, we are going to work with Mr. Ursin on an ordinance for sewer/water late payments.

Mayor Sowden commented the EDC meeting will be held this Thursday, [March 12, 2020], and they will be discussing the Industrial Commission as well.

Councilman Skellenger arrived at 7:11PM.

Administrator McHose reported the County has informed her there will be a meeting of the OEM tomorrow to discuss information on the Coronavirus in regard to the Senior Center and the Congregate Nutrition Lunch Program that is provided there every day. It might be possible that they will need to suspend the lunches in order to protect the seniors. They will be in contact with us following the meeting to give us an update. The Fire Department has a trailer they use for equipment and storage that is in need of painting and lettering. She has tried to get students of Sussex Tech to paint the trailer for us. If I am able to get them the only cost to the Borough would be for the paint and stickers. If the Council agrees, I can pursue getting the costs for the materials. Mayor Sowden explained that type of paint is expensive and we should check with the CFO to see if there is funding available for it.

Administrator McHose invited Freddie Babcock Jr. to step forward. Administrator McHose asked Mr. Babcock if the Fire Department will be able to bring the trailer to Sussex Tech and commented there is visible rust on it. Mr. Babcock commented it is empty, with only surface rust on it and yes, they can bring it over to Sussex Tech.

Administrator McHose commented this current Council is very appreciative to you [Mr. Babcock, Jr.] personally for all your work you've done and would like to present you with a little recognition of your time as [Fire] Chief. You stepped in when we needed one and continued for another term and it is much appreciated.

Mayor Sowden presented Mr. Babcock with a plaque and mug in appreciation for his service.

Mr. Babcock thanked the Mayor and Council.

Mr. Skellenger reported the Recreation Committee met at the Littell Center to review any items the Borough might want to keep. We also continued to plan for the Spring Fling.

Municipal Clerk had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden informed the public, Mr. Pete Sheldon, a former firefighter and close to many in Franklin passed away last week. He was a great firefighter and responsive guy always looked forward to helping everybody in Franklin. This brings me to the gentleman that just received an award. Mayor Sowden commented Freddie Babcock is following in the same footsteps, moving in the same direction as Pete and always willing to help when needed.

Mayor Sowden requested a moment of silence for Mr. Pete Sheldon.

### **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. Postas. All were in favor.

Joanne Tatka, 151 Maple Road, Franklin stepped forward. Ms. Tatka commented on the three streets to be paved that Mr. Postas stated and asked if Susquehanna Street was being paved. Mr. Postas made a correction, stating it is Susquehanna Street not Junction Street that will be paved.

Lockland Riley, Boy Scout for Franklin Borough, stepped forward. Mr. Riley commented he is here to observe the Mayor and Council meeting and also

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interviewed Councilman Postas as part of a requirement to obtain my Citizenship and Community and Merit Badge.

There being no one else present who wished to address the Governing Body, Mr. Zydon made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Postas. 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. Township of Sparta Planning Board notice of adoption of the February 5, 2020 reexamination report of the master plan of the Township of Sparta
2. Township of Hampton resolution in support of the right guaranteed by the second amendment of the United States Constitution.
3. Borough of Hamburg resolution 2020-31 to Proclaim the Month of April 2020 as Child Abuse Prevention Month.
4. Borough of Hamburg resolution 2020-32 Declaring Borough of Hamburg a Second Amendment Borough. (amended from 2020-19 resolution)

**REPORTS** (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Construction Permit Activity Report – February 2020
2. COH Report – February 2020
3. Construction Report – February 2020

**APPLICATIONS** (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

**RESOLUTIONS** (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Resolution #2020-23  
Adoption of resolution #2020-23 authorizing the assignment of Ferraioli, Wielkotz, Cerullo & Cuva, P.A. auditing service contract to Wielkotz & Company, LLC.
2. Resolution #2020-24  
Adoption of resolution 2020-24 supporting a site-specific plan amendment to the Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority Sewer Agreement.
3. Payment of bills for the meeting of March 10, 2020.

Mr. Zydon made a motion to approve the consent agenda of March 10, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

**OLD BUSINESS**

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

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Limon made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for February 25, 2020. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

**DPW Salary Step Increase Amendment**

Mr. Snyder made a motion to amend the motion made on February 11, 2020, to approve a DPW salary step increase for Andrew Burd from Grade Step 2, \$19.49/hr. to Grade Step 3, \$20.53/hr., as per the DPW contract, effective February 16, 2020,

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as recommended by Brian VanDenBroek, DPW Director, Administrator McHose and the Personnel Committee. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

**Information Systems Group, LLC Estimate**

Mr. Postas made a motion to approve the Information Systems Group, LLC Estimate in the amount of \$13,720.00 to update the Franklin Borough Municipal Building Phone System utilizing previously appropriated funds of the Capital Budget. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

**Introduction Ordinance #01-2020**

Mr. Zydon made a motion to introduce ordinance 01-2020 entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING SECTION 218-6 REGARDING SIGNS".

Mr. Zydon questioned the placement of the signs wording as written.

Mr. Ursin explained the ordinance as written is allowing the signs in a window or physically on the building itself. If you would like to allow freestanding signs to this ordinance a little bit would have to be added. In the past there was an issue with many businesses putting up freestanding signs that it became important to regulate the freestanding signs.

Mr. Postas questioned how will we regulate the signs that get placed, how many and the size.

Mr. Zydon commented the [sign] size is already in the ordinance and businesses will be told if they don't follow the ordinance.

Mr. Snyder commented on NJDOT involvement.

A discussion continued on ordinance 01-2020.

Mr. Zydon made a motion to table ordinance 01-2020, seconded by Mr. Limon. All were in favor.

**Child Abuse Prevention Month Proclamation**

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt the Proclamation proclaiming April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

**OPEN PUBLIC SESSION II**

Mr. Zydon 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.

There being no one present who wished to address the Governing Body, Mr. Zydon made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Formica. All were in favor.

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**MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS**

Mr. Limon questioned the high energy costs and where will we be looking to cut costs.

Mr. Formica commented we are going to look at everything for each building; electric, heating, etc.

Mr. Snyder commented we can start updating the Fire Department and First Aid Squad buildings to LED lighting.

Mayor Sowden commented on possible State rebate programs that may be available to help with energy cost savings.

Mr. Formica stated St. Patrick's Day is coming up, everyone have fun, but stay safe.

Mr. Zydon commented payments are starting to come in for our overdue water/sewer bills, our collector is doing a good job. We are still aggressively seeking those accounts that are well overdue.

Mr. Snyder questioned the [sewer line] problem that took place by Route 23 and John Wilton Street.

Mayor Sowden commented there was a blockage that was cleared rather quickly utilizing our new sewer jet machine.

Mr. Postas questioned how can we stop those from repeatedly letting their accounts become extremely overdue in the future.

Mr. Zydon commented we will be working with Mr. Ursin on that. In the past we used setting a monetary amount prior to collection letters going out, we would like to start using a date such as 90 days.

Mr. Postas commented on if we can shut off those services.

Mr. Ursin explained he will be working with the Ordinance Committee on that and it will come back to the Council.

Mayor Sowden commented he has been working on some historic district ideas and some other things that were done in other towns that I will be discussing with Mr. Zydon and the Ordinance Committee. There are some interesting things that we will be looking at. The intention is to have everyone in the town working together; EDC, Historical Commission, Mayor and Council, etc. as a joint effort to move Franklin in the right direction.

Mr. Zydon commented he heard the schools are interested in the historic designation too.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no executive session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Limon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36p.m., seconded by Mr. Postas. All were in favor.

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John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

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Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk