

**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
APRIL 14, 2020**

This meeting is being held through a virtual meeting platform called ZOOM. The public has been notified and instructed on how to join the meeting and participate during the public session.

Councilman Snyder and Mr. Ursin, Borough Attorney used a phone-in link from the website.

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, 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 had nothing to report.

Mr. Postas had nothing to report.

Mr. Snyder commented the buildings and grounds report will be updated by Administrator McHose.

Mr. Formica commented Debbie [Bonanno], CFO will explain more about the time line of the budget.

Mr. Skellenger thanked the Recreation Committee for having a meeting and for helping to organize with the Franklin Fire Department to have the Easter Bunny be able to ride around town. The residents appreciated seeing the Easter Bunny. Mr. Skellenger also thanked the Franklin Fire Department and the Wallkill First Aid Squad for their participation.

Mr. Zydon had nothing to report.

Mr. Ursin had nothing to report.

Administrator McHose reported the Borough Hall is not open to the public. Employees are working staggered hours, the Clerk was in on Friday March 30, 2020, to be able to receive petitions for the primary election. The mail is being picked up from the post office and from the dropbox in the front of the building. There has been no notification from the State as to any tax payment deadline extensions. Taxes are still due May 1, 2020 with a 10-day grace period as usual, if anything changes we will post it on our website and Facebook page. We are considering starting an emergency notification Facebook page to avoid confusion with general notices that are put on the regular Facebook page. Administrator McHose thanked the staff for their cooperation in rotating their hours in order to comply with the Governor's request for social distancing. DPW has been doing various projects in town including some maintenance work at Borough Hall.

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Ms. Bonanno reported we are delaying the budget for as long as we can until we can see if state funding will still be available. Currently the state aid has been certified but it isn't guaranteed. We would like to wait to gather more information.

Mayor Sowden thanked everyone. He never thought we would be running meetings and trying to run the Borough under these circumstances. Mayor Sowden commented he is very impressed by everybody and the Council has been very supportive. Mayor Sowden reported the COVID-19 updates are 535 confirmed cases and 2 new deaths in Sussex County with a new total of 19 cases in Franklin Borough. This is updated regularly on the Franklin Borough website and Facebook page. It seems to be helping by continuing to wear masks and social distancing. Mayor Sowden also reported Sussex County will now have a testing area at the County College of Morris in Randolph, unfortunately it is the closest site. It is by appointment only. There are 325 available tests, of which 75 are allocated for Sussex County residents. Additional information is available on our website.

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.

Mr. Formica requested Resolution 2020-28 be removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately.

CORRESPONDENCE (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING ONLY OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Township of Sparta Ordinance 20-05 notice of adoption amending Chapter XVIII entitled "Comprehensive Land Management Code" to update and amend section 18-4.29e of the ed zoned district entitled "Specifically Discouraged Uses".

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Franklin Police Department Report – February 2020
2. Construction Permit Activity Report – March 2020
3. COH Report – March 2020
4. Construction Report – March 2020

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Resolution #2020-27
Adoption of resolution 2020-27 Storm Recovery Reserve Funds.
2. Resolution #2020-28
Adoption of resolution 2020-28 Furloughing Certain Employees that are not needed during the pandemic. **(This item was removed from the consent agenda)**
3. Payment of bills for the meeting of April 14, 2020.

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve the consent agenda without resolution 2020-28 of April 14, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Zydon.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Mr. Zydon made a motion to adopt Resolution 2020-28 Furloughing Certain Employees that are not needed during the pandemic. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Limon, Postas, Skellenger, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: Formica

OLD BUSINESS

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

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NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for March 24, 2020. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Discussion of Appointment of LSRP for the Franklin Revolver and Rifle Association

At this time there was a discussion on the appointment of a Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) for the Franklin Revolver and Rifle Association.

Mr. Postas commented is this [appointment] just for the licensing services.

Mr. Ursin explained we have completed just one part of what is required under our agreement with the gun club [Franklin Revolver and Rifle Association]. We sent the first licensed site remediation professional to do an evaluation of the site and essentially problems were identified. When estimates for this type of work are received they can be for various parts of the clean-up making it difficult to compare. Mr. Ursin recommended to get an LSRP that we know and trust appointed, then have them define the next steps and examine every possible way to make this more efficient to save the Borough money. This LSRP [French and Parrello] was involved in 2017 and has experience with gun clubs and has interacted with people within our administration. Mr. Ursin commented it is important to have the LSRP set up a plan for a future maintenance program in order to avoid something like this from happening again.

Mr. Formica questioned why we didn't use them initially.

Mr. Skellenger commented he remembered dealing with them back in 2017 but doesn't know where the confusion happened between then and now.

Mr. Postas commented we have received numerous quotes and was just inquiring on whether or not we knew more on the total costs for the project. Most of the costs are going to be for disposal which can be subjective. It is important to have someone to investigate what is actually needed to be taken out.

Mayor Sowden commented he has had a few meetings with them and believes they are competent and capable. We will be watching this very closely to avoid any excess costs.

A discussion continued on the process for the remediation and appointment of an LSRP.

Mr. Postas made a motion to approve the appointment of French and Parrello for LSRP services for the Franklin R & R Associates. Seconded by Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session this evening.

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 Mr. Skellenger. All were in favor.

Martin Tabias, 44 Mabie Street, Franklin raised his hand. The host allowed Mr. Tabias permission to join the meeting virtually. Mr. Tabias read a list of questions.

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1. Are water bill payments due on May 1, 2020, with no deferment in the same manner as the tax bills?
2. Will the branch pick-ups still be done as usual on a monthly basis?
3. Is the hydrant flushing still continuing?
4. Would like to see more local testing locations closer than Randolph, NJ.
5. Will our parks be open soon as long as we practice social distancing?
6. Can our OEM, Jim Williams post some type of report.
7. Where can future virtual meeting agendas be obtained?

Administrator McHose commented yes the water/sewer bills due dates are the same as the tax bills. The regular branch pick-ups are as scheduled in the calendar, every 4th Thursday of every month starting this month. Blue Diamond has not changed any of its' schedule at this time, if that changes in the future we will let the public know. The hydrant flushing is being done as scheduled. The Borough has volunteered the Littell Center to the County Health Board. There have been some rumors that they are looking into the Sussex County Community College, and it is believed that demand and staffing has a lot to do with it. The public area of the park at the pond is still open. It is being monitored and we are requesting residents to respect social distancing. Only the softball and baseball fields are closed. Agendas are placed on our website at www.franklinborough.org usually the Friday before the meeting. Administrator McHose offered her email address admin@franklinborough.org if he is unable to get the agenda from the website.

Mayor Sowden commented we are in the process of working together with Mr. Williams to have a report.

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

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Mr. Limon thanked Mayor Sowden for all the information updates from the County he sends out.

Mr. Postas thanked the Franklin Fire Department, First Aid Squad and the Recreation Committee. We needed a positive distraction from all that is going on. Mr. Postas commented we knew things might be difficult but is confident that the Mayor has the town's interest in heart. We are going to pull together as a Council and a Mayor but as a town through this. Mr. Postas stated when this is over he looks forward to be focusing on the towns future again, moving Franklin in the right direction.

Mr. Postas asked if we are tracking all costs associated with this situation to be directed through FEMA.

Ms. Bonanno commented yes all associated costs are being tracked. I have spoken to Jim Williams and we are gathering information as well as starting the FEMA application.

Mr. Formica welcomed Debbie Bonanno. Mr. Formica thanked the Recreation Committee, the First Aid Squad and especially the Franklin Fire Department for what they did, [Easter Bunny] it was a nice break and we definitely needed it. Mr. Formica commented now that we have the virtual meetings available and precautions set, we need to have other meetings taking place. We need to move forward during this time.

Mr. Formica questioned the status of receipt of the playground equipment.

Mr. Sowden commented the trucking company isn't operating, they are considered non-essential. They [DPW] are doing some work there as their workload permits, but basically it is on hold because we are waiting for the parts.

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Mr. Zydon commented it was nice to see the Easter Bunny. Mr. Zydon also commented besides the sickness we are dealing with we must watch out that our citizen's rights aren't being trampled on. Mr. Zydon stated he is happy he hasn't seen this happening in Franklin.

Mr. Skellenger commented the Recreation Committee will be conducting their meeting this Thursday [April 16, 2020] via ZOOM. Notices will be posted and will be on our website and Facebook page. Mr. Skellenger again thanked the Fire Department, the First Aid Squad and the Recreation Committee for arranging the Easter Bunny to come out.

Mr. Snyder welcomed Debbie Bonanno and wished her good luck and is looking forward to seeing her soon. Mr. Snyder commented on the possibility of scheduling a Personnel meeting maybe through ZOOM.

Mayor Sowden commented he is discussing meeting options and hoping to work towards getting some normal meeting schedules in place in the next week or so.

Mayor Sowden commented it was great to see that beam of sunshine with the Easter Bunny and thanked the Recreation Committee, the Fire Department and the First Aid Squad for moving forward with that and for all they do.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40p.m., seconded by Mr. Postas. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk