

**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE ORGANIZATION MEETING
OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE
BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN
HELD VIRTUALLY AT 12:00PM ON
JANUARY 1, 2021**

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.

Councilmen Snyder used a phone-in link from the website.

Mayor Sowden called the meeting to order.

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."

Mayor Sowden invited all present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Roll Call of 2020 Borough Council Members

Mayor Sowden requested a roll call of the 2020 Governing Body.

Present: Mr. Formica, Mr. Limon, Mr. Postas, Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Zydon and Mayor Sowden.

Absent: None

Oaths of Office

- a. **Ms. Tremont** read the "Statement of Determination" of the Board of County Canvassers.
- b. **Ms. Tremont** administered the Oath of Office to Councilman-elect **Joe Limon** for a three-year term as Councilman of the Borough of Franklin.
- c. **Ms. Tremont** administered the Oath of Office to Councilman-elect **John E. Postas** for a three-year term as Councilman of the Borough of Franklin.

Roll Call of 2021 Borough Council Members

Mayor Sowden requested a roll call of the 2021 Governing Body.

Present: Mr. Formica, Mr. Limon, Mr. Postas, Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Zydon and Mayor Sowden.

Absent: None

Council Appointment: Council President

Mayor Sowden opened the floor for Council nominations to the position of **Council President** for 2021.

Mr. Zydon nominated Gilbert Snyder as the Council President for the year 2021. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Fire Department Chief and Line Officers

Mayor Sowden recognized the Chief of the Franklin Fire Department for 2021, Chief Khyle Conklin.

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Ms. Tremont administered the Oath of Office to the Chief of the Franklin Fire Department for 2021, Chief Khyle Conklin.

Ms. Tremont recognized Fire Chief Khyle Conklin who introduced the 2021 Line Officers and Administrative Officers of the Franklin Fire Department.

Ms. Tremont administered the Oath of Office to the **Line Officers and Administrative Officers** of the Franklin Fire Department for 2021.

Mayor's Appointments

At this time, **Mayor Sowden** presented his nominations for appointment to the various positions of Borough Government for the year 2021.

Prosecutor (1 yr.)	Anthony DenUyl
Public Defender (1 yr.)	James Opfer, Esq.
Municipal Housing Liaison (1 yr.)	Deborah Bonanno
Right to Know Coordinator	Brian VanDenBroek
Assessment Search Officer (1 yr.)	Darlene Tremont
Tax Search Officer (1 yr.)	Township of Wantage
Borough Physician (1 yr.)	Dr. Bollard, Premier Health
Animal Control Officer (1 yr.)	Vernon Township
School Crossing Head Guard (1 yr.)	Lynn Warr Prtorich
School Crossing Guards (1yr.)	Rebecca Babcock, Rose Breidenstein, Kathleen Clohessey, Lisa Conte, Ann Grabkowski, April Kunz-Oleksy, Cathy Martinez, Mary Payton, Cara Ross, Amanda Tassillo, Rachel VanDyk, Margaret Wellenheider, Glenn T. Gavan
Judge (3 yr.) expires 12/31/23	

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to confirm the Mayor's Appointments. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Appointments: Planning Board

Mayor Sowden commented the **Council** shall, by motion, select a representative to serve on the Planning Board as a Full Member Class III (1 yr.)

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to nominate Councilman Formica to serve as the Class III member for a 1-year term to the Planning Board. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Mayor Sowden made the following appointments to the Planning Board:

Mayor (Class I)	Mayor Sowden
Fire Safety (Class II) 1 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Jim Williams
Member (Class IV) 4 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2024)	Wes Suckey
Member (Class IV) 4 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2024)	Richard Knopf
Alternate #1 2 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2022)	Michael Raperto
Alternate #2 2 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2022)	Steve DeFinis
Alternate #3 2 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Sharon Schultz
Alternate #4 2 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Vacant

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Mr. Skellenger made a motion to confirm the Mayor’s appointments for Planning Board. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Appointments: Boards and Commissions

Mayor Sowden made the following appointments for the various Boards and Committees of the Borough of Franklin for 2021.

FRANKLIN/HARDYSTON JOINT RECREATION COMMITTEE

All current Board of Recreation Committee Members 1-year term

Mr. Zydon made a motion to confirm the Mayor’s appointment for the Franklin/Hardyston Joint Recreation Committee Members. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Council Liaison Stephen Skellenger

Mr. Postas made a motion to confirm the Mayor’s appointment for Recreation Committee Council Liaison, Stephen Skellenger. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

BOARD OF HEALTH

Member	4-year term (term expires 12/31/2024)	Robin Bruscano
Member	4-year term (term expires 12/31/2024)	Connie Cholminski
Secretary	1-year term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Rachel Heath

Mr. Zydon made a motion to confirm the Mayor’s appointments for Board of Health Members and Secretary. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Mayor	1-year term	John M. Sowden
Deputy	1-year term	Gregory Cugliari
Member/OEM	1-year term	Jim Williams
Member/FFD	1-year term	Khyle Conklin
Member/WVFAS	1-year term	John Friend
Member	1-year term	Deborah Bonanno
Member	1-year term	Steve Sluka
Member	1-year term	Dayne Hill
Member	1-year term	James Nidelko
Member	1-year term	Brian VanDenBroek

Mr. Postas made a motion to confirm the Mayor’s Appointments for Local Emergency Management Council. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

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Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Member/Chair	1-year term	Patti Carnes
Member/Secretary	1-year term	Judy Williams
Member	1-year term	Keith Yodice
Member	1-year term	Dawne Rowe
Member	1-year term	Vacant
Member	1-year term	Vacant
Member	1-year term	Vacant
Member/Council	1-year term	Stephan Zydon
Alternate #1	1-year term	Vacant
Alternate #2	1-year term	Vacant

Mr. Postas made a motion to confirm the Mayor’s Appointments for Economic Development Committee. Seconded by Mr. Snyder.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

RENT LEVELING BOARD

Member	5-year term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Vacant
Member/Council	1-year term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Vacant
Member/Council	1-year term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Vacant
Alt# 1	1-year term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Vacant
Alt# 2	1-year term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Vacant
Attorney	1-year term (term expires 12/31/2021)	Angelo Bolcato Laddey, Clark & Ryan

Mr. Postas made a motion to confirm the Mayor’s Appointments for Rent Leveling Board. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

COUNCIL COMMITTEE DUTIES

Mayor Sowden announced the Council Committee duties for the year 2021 with the Mayor named as Ex-Officio Member of each Committee. These committees may be reassigned if needed during the year.

a. **ORDINANCE:**

- Member: Mr. Postas - Chairman
- Member: Mr. Snyder
- Member: Mr. Limon

b. **FINANCE, BUDGET AND INSURANCE:**

- Member: Mr. Skellenger - Chairman
- Member: Mr. Postas
- Member: Mr. Zydon

c. **PUBLIC UTILITIES:**

- Member: Mr. Snyder - Chairman
- Member: Mr. Formica
- Member: Mr. Skellenger

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d. **PERSONNEL & NEGOTIATIONS:**

Member: Mr. Snyder - Chairman
Member: Mr. Zydon
Member: Mr. Skellenger

e. **PUBLIC SAFETY: Police & Fire**

Member: Mr. Zydon - Chairman
Member: Mr. Formica
Member: Mr. Postas
Alternate: Mr. Limon

f. **BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE**

Member: Mr. Formica - Chairman
Member: Mr. Snyder
Member: Mr. Zydon
Alternate: Mr. Limon

g. **COMMUNITY RELATIONS:**

Council Representative: Joe Limon

Recreation Committee, Economic Development, also serves as the "Awards Committee."

Member:	Stephan Zydon, John Postas	Economic Development
Member:	Stephen Skellenger	Recreation Committee
Liaison:	Stephen Skellenger	Joint Recreation Commission

Mr. Limon made a motion to confirm the Mayor's appointments for Council Committee Duties. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Approval of Consent Agenda

Mayor Sowden requested that all present review the consent agenda. If any member of the Council or public wishes an item on the consent agenda to be discussed and considered separately, a motion to this effect shall be made at this time.

1. **RESOLUTION #2021-01 – PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

A motion is in order for the Council to adopt a Professional Services Resolution #2021-01 for various professional services (Borough Attorney, Borough Engineer, Borough Auditor, and etc.).

2. **RESOLUTION #2021-02 - TEMPORARY BUDGET – CURRENT FUND**

A motion is in order to adopt resolution # 2021-02, 2021 Temporary Municipal Budget Current Fund with attached schedule B entitled Borough of Franklin Current Fund 2021 Temporary Appropriations Budget.

3. **RESOLUTION #2021-03 - TEMPORARY BUDGET- SEWER & WATER OPERATING**

A motion is in order to adopt resolution # 2021-03, 2021 Temporary Municipal Budget; sewer and water temporary operating with attached schedule A entitled Borough of Franklin Water/Sewer Operating Fund 2021 Temporary Appropriations.

4. **RESOLUTION #2021-04 – RATES OF INTEREST/DELINQUENT TAX PENALTY**

A motion is in order to establish the rate of interest to be charged for non-payment of taxes and water/sewer bills, on or before the date when they

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would become delinquent and to authorize the Tax Collector to charge a six percent penalty to a taxpayer with a delinquency in excess of ten thousand dollars, who fails to pay the delinquency prior to the end of the calendar year, as per the attached resolution #2021-04.

5. RESOLUTION #2021-05 - OVERPAYMENT/UNDERPAYMENT OF TAXES

A motion is in order to authorize the tax collector to cancel any record of overpayment or underpayment of taxes in the amount of \$10.00 or less for the calendar year 2020, in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 54:4-99, as per the attached resolution #2021-05.

6. RESOLUTION #2021-06 – MEETING DATES

A motion is in order to establish the regular meeting nights of the Mayor and Council for the calendar year 2021, as per the attached resolution #2021-06.

7. RESOLUTION #2021-07 – OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS

A motion is in order to designate the New Jersey Herald and the New Jersey Sunday Herald of Newton, N.J. to be the official newspapers of the Borough of Franklin for the year 2021, as per the attached resolution #2021-07.

8. RESOLUTION #2021-08 – DEFENSE AGAINST TAX APPEALS

A motion is in order to adopt resolution #2021-08 to authorize the Borough Attorney and the Borough Tax Assessor to defend the Borough of Franklin against all tax appeals filed during the calendar year 2021.

9. RESOLUTION #2021-09 – PAYMENT OF RECURRING BILLS

A motion is in order to adopt a resolution #2021-09 for payment of recurring bills.

10. RESOLUTION #2021-10 – TO ADOPT A CASH MANAGEMENT PLAN

A motion is in order to adopt resolution #2021-10 for the year 2021, to serve as the cash management plan of Franklin Borough.

11. RESOLUTION #2021-11 – REAUTHORIZING PETTY CASH FUNDS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2021

A motion is in order to adopt resolution #2021-11 reauthorizing petty cash funds for the Calendar year 2021.

12. RESOLUTION #2021-12 – DESIGNATING DEPUTY CUSTODIANS OF PUBLIC RECORDS

A motion is in order to adopt resolution #2021-02 designating deputy custodians of public records.

13. RESOLUTION #2021-13 - DESIGNATING PUBLIC AGENCY COMPLIANCE OFFICER (P.A.C.O.)

A motion is in order to adopt resolution #2021-03 designating public agency compliance officer (P.A.C.O.).

14. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

A motion is in order to direct that copies of the minutes of meetings be made and delivered to each meeting of the Governing Body at least 24 hours prior to the next regular council meeting, in order that the reading of the minutes may be dispensed with at the meeting.

15. RULES OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

A motion is in order to adopt the Rules and Regulations of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Franklin for the calendar year 2021.

16. FIRE DEPARTMENT LINE OFFICERS

A motion is in order to approve the ratification of 2021 Line Officers for the Franklin Fire Department, as per the recommendations submitted by Chief Khyle Conklin.

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17. FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU ATTORNEY

A motion is in order to approve the Borough Attorney as the official Fire Prevention Bureau Attorney for the calendar year 2021, in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Fire Code.

After all persons present had an opportunity to review the consent agenda and offer requests for changes, **Mayor Sowden** requested a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Mr. Limon made a motion to approve the consent agenda for January 1, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Mayor's Statement

Mayor Sowden wished everyone a very happy and healthy new year and thanked everyone for joining us on our 108th reorganization meeting of the Borough of Franklin. Mayor Sowden welcomed back Councilmen Joe Limon and John Postas to another 3-year term and is looking forward to working with you and the rest of the Council this year. Mayor Sowden commented on the past year and the challenges of working through this historic pandemic. We, the Franklin Borough residents have always found a way to survive. Franklin Borough will change its future by leveraging our past and invites everyone to join us on the journey as Franklin Borough moves forward with projects that will once again define this town. Mayor Sowden explained his plans for the year starting with formally establishing the Historical Commission and the receipt of our certificate of eligibility from the State of New Jersey Historic Preservation Office. We will use this to benefit our history. We will not allow anymore demolition of buildings from our past, but rather to enhance the education of our children. We will preserve the Edison School House/Hungarian Church. This will become a show case to remember the Neighborhood House. We will utilize grants and other sources of income for the work that will be needed to be done. Mayor Sowden stated this will become "ground zero" for the revitalization of Main Street, announcing "the talking is over we will roll up our sleeves and get to work". Next, Mayor Sowden spoke of focusing on the upper Zinc Mine Property along with the Franklin Theater that will become the main anchor of the Main Street revitalization. Other items we want to focus on is the pond, athletic fields, playgrounds and walking paths so more people can enjoy what we have to offer. Mayor Sowden complimented the office staff in Borough Hall, DPW, Police Department, Fire Department and First Aid Squad, along with the many Board members that help run our town. Mayor Sowden concluded by stating "taking back our heritage and preserving our future, ladies and gentlemen, let's get started".

Council Comments

Mayor Sowden invited each member of the Council to offer remarks concerning the 2021 Council's goals and priorities.

Mr. Limon commented on the items the Mayor spoke of regarding Main Street and an article that was in the newspaper about preserving the history of Main Street, which he supports greatly. Mr. Limon also commented he is worried about taxes and the difficult year we've had. He reminded everyone that we are only a portion of what makes up the tax rate and we must keep our portion down. He looks forward to working with everyone this year.

Mr. Postas thanked the Mayor and Council for this past year. Mr. Postas commented we held the line on our taxes. We are still in the middle of a pandemic but the town progressed through it all. With the Mayor's vision for the future along with the rest of the Council I see nothing but a bright future for this

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town. We want to invest back in the town to keep the population we have here and so they don't want to go anywhere else. Mr. Postas offered his condolences to Councilman Zydon and his wife, Sarah on the loss of her grandfather.

Mr. Snyder wished everyone a happy new year and congratulated Councilmen Limon and Postas on their re-election for another 3-year term. Mr. Snyder thanked all the volunteers that have helped keep everyone safe and to all the employees of Franklin. Mr. Snyder also thanked the Council for the confidence shown by electing him as Council President. It has been a struggle to keep taxes down but we will find a way to do it. We must never give up.

Mr. Formica wished everyone a happy new year. Last year was my first on the Council, it was certainly a crash course in everything from the pandemic, budget, rules, etc. and this year he wants to be more involved. We have so much potential in this town, many avenues to open up and as was said we must stop talking about it and take action. It's time to move forward and get the ball rolling.

Mr. Skellenger wished everyone a happy and healthy new year and congratulated Councilmen Limon and Postas on their re-election. Mr. Skellenger thanked all the volunteers who have protected us through this pandemic. Mr. Skellenger commented he looks forward to working with everyone on the Council this year.

Mr. Zydon wished everyone a happy new year and thanked Mr. Postas for his condolences on his wife's grandfather who was 96 years old, a veteran of WWII and worked for Picatinny Police force. Mr. Zydon commented Franklin has been here a long time and we will not let it die. Mr. Zydon also commented he agrees the talk is over and we must get moving. He is glad he is still on EDC; they have been working actively in getting businesses interested in our town. Mr. Zydon stated he is glad to work with everyone; let's make 2021 a stellar year and leave 2020 behind.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Snyder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:43p.m., seconded by Mr. Skellenger. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk