

**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 27, 2021**

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 (via Zoom), Mr. Postas (arrived at 7:05 via Zoom), Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Zydou 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 6, 2021, 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. Snyder reported we are going to be conducting a second interview of an applicant for the replacement of Lisa Smith. The Public Works Committee will be conducting interviews for the DPW position and the DPW and Police Department contract negotiations are progressing.

Mr. Postas joined the meeting at 7:05 because of technical difficulties via Zoom.

Mr. Postas had nothing to report.

Mr. Skellenger had nothing to report.

Mr. Limon reported a Public Works meeting is scheduled for Wednesday at 7:00PM.

Mr. Formica reported the playground equipment has been delivered, installation hasn't been scheduled yet. We have begun a grant application process for the pond area. Submission deadline for that grant is May 24, 2021.

Mr. Zydou had nothing to report.

Mr. Ursin reported some negotiations have begun for adding antennas to the top of the water tower. There is a two-step co-ordination of lease amendments to the work that must be done to repaint the water tower and discussions on adding some additional antennas that would generate revenue. Mr. Ursin anticipates providing an idea on the numbers involved at the next meeting so that the Council can determine how they want to proceed.

Mayor Sowden asked if there is an approximate start date for the project.

Mr. Ursin commented the projection is to start in 2021 but it will be based on lease amendments and information received from the current cell companies regarding their equipment removal.

Mr. Limon commented on paint scheme renderings for the water tower.

Administrator Bonanno had nothing to report.

Clerk Tremont had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden had nothing to report.

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.

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CORRESPONDENCE (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING ONLY OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Adoption of Borough of Hamburg ordinance 06-2021 Stormwater Control of the Borough of Hamburg.
2. Township of Vernon resolution 21-105 disapproving of the County of Sussex imposing additional staff overtime election fees.
3. Township of Andover resolution R2021-52 disapproving of the County of Sussex imposing additional staff overtime election fees.
4. Township of Montague resolution 2021-32 disapproving of the County of Sussex imposing additional staff overtime election fees.
5. Township of Green resolution 2021-86 disapproving of the County of Sussex imposing additional staff overtime election fees.

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Franklin Police Department Report – March 2021
2. Sussex County Board of Health Report – March 2021

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Resolution #2021-35
Approval to adopt resolution 2021-35 authorizing participation in self-examination program of the Municipal Budget for the 2021 budget year.
2. Resolution #2021-38
Approval to adopt resolution 2021-38 disapproving of the County of Sussex imposing additional staff overtime election fees.
3. Payment of bills for the meeting of April 27, 2021.

Mr. Zydon made a motion to approve the consent agenda of April 27, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Snyder.

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. Zydon made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for April 13, 2021. (Absent: Skellenger) Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Limon, Postas, Snyder, Zydon

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: Skellenger

Mayor Sowden invited Mr. Ray Sarinelli, Borough Auditor to speak about the CY2021 budget introduction.

Mr. Ray Sarinelli, of Nisivoccia joined the meeting via Zoom. Mr. Sarinelli introduced himself stating he is a CPA and an RMA (Registered Municipal Accountant). Mr. Sarinelli explained his role as independent auditor. He is able to give a unique perspective on your municipal budget, providing information and guidance to help your municipality make decisions. Franklin Borough's budget is a good budget, but can be better. There are some areas that he would like to help with to make it even better for the future. Considering the situation, the Borough has been put in it's the best budget you could put forward. "As we work together over the next few years there are some things we can do to try and help the financial stability of the town and bring stability to the tax rate to meet the needs of the town". Overall, it is a good plan with a lot of good capital planning with more to come in the future.

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Mr. Zydon questioned the usage of the fund balance.

Mr. Sarinelli commented the Borough used \$650,000; the same amount as last year.

Mr. Zydon asked how much was put back into the fund balance.

Mr. Sarinelli commented there was an increase of approximately \$88,000 over the previous year.

A discussion continued on the usage of fund balance.

Mr. Limon asked about the tax collection rate.

Mr. Sarinelli commented the tax collection rate for 2020 was 96.98% and 2019 was 96.77%, a slight increase. This has surprised many accountants considering the circumstances with the pandemic.

Administrator Bonanno commented the average assessed value of a home in Franklin Borough this year is \$174,137.77. Our budget will include an approximate annual tax increase of \$63.21 per average household. We are achieving a lot of goals of the municipality and the community in this budget.

Resolution #2021-36 Introduction of the CY2021 Municipal Budget

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt resolution 2021-36 introducing the CY2021 Municipal Budget for the Borough of Franklin. Seconded by Mr. Formica

Public Hearing: May 25, 2021.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution #2021-37

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt resolution 2021-37 authorizing submission and execution of a grant agreement to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs in the amount of \$500,000. Seconded by Mr. Zydon.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Campy's Amusements Agreement

Mr. Formica made a motion to approve the agreement with Campy's Amusements for the amusement rides and related services at the Franklin Carnival. Seconded by Mr. Snyder.

Mr. Limon commented on the Governor's restrictions that limit no more than 500 people and how this will be implemented.

Mr. Formica commented the carnival will handle all procedures through their own state regulations and guidelines. They will be handling the ticket sales on line, monitoring the amount of people attending the event and all other aspects under the state guidelines. None of our volunteers will be used.

Mr. Zydon asked if the Police Department and DPW have been contacted regarding the event.

Administrator Bonanno commented not at this time but doesn't anticipate any issues.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

Mr. Postas 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.

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Administrator Bonanno directed anyone in person or on Zoom who wished to address the Governing Body to raise their hand.

Rachel Heath, 2016 Sussex County Senior of the Year, 7 Hemlock Drive, Franklin was granted permission to join the meeting after raising her hand. Mrs. Heath commented on chapter 96, building construction of the Borough's code book that includes a certificate of habitability requirement. Since starting our construction shared services with Hardyston Township, they informed the Borough they won't provide that inspection. The fee associated with that service is \$75. Mrs. Health strongly suggested to re-instate the requirement, with all the movement in rentals and home purchases there is no accountability or inspections confirming compliance.

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

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Mr. Formica thanked all the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts who came out to help clean the pond. They did a great job.

Mr. Snyder asked how the Girl Scout Town-Wide Garage Sale turned out.

Mr. Zydon commented there were 95 participants.

Mr. Formica commented they will be sponsoring another one this year in September.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Zydon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:34p.m., seconded by Mr. Formica.

All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk