

**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 23, 2024**

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, Mrs. Heath, Mr. Limon, Mr. Postas, Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder and Mayor Sowden.

Absent: None

Mayor Sowden led the assembly in the flag salute.

Mayor Sowden requested a moment of silence in remembrance of Mrs. Emily Bazelwich.

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 7, 2024, and posted on the Borough website, which adequate notice has been certified by the Clerk."

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations for tonight's meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Limon had nothing to report.

Mr. Postas commented that the EDC Committee is working on the Pondsides Market and looking into a fee schedule and method of payment. We are also planning on entertainment for each month that the market is there. The first event we have will coincide with Franklinite. We are going to have three food trucks and we are also looking into a beer tent that Brick and Brew will attend to.

Mr. Snyder had nothing to report.

Mrs. Heath commented that the Spring Fling was on Saturday and Mr. Eddie Mindlin is the Senior of the year. The 5k race is on May 4th. Mrs. Heath commented that Ms. Bazelwich will be dearly missed.

Mr. Skellenger commented that the Mobile unit from Motor Vehicle is scheduled to come to the pond the second week in August. One month beforehand, the appointments will be posted on the website for scheduling.

Mr. Formica commented that public safety met with Darlene and interviews were conducted for police officers. We got approval from the police department about having a beer garden but would require approval from the council to allow them to have a one-day permit.

Mrs. Tremont commented that a notice was sent on April 20, 2024, to the Rowett property. The line striping on Main and Junction is being scheduled. We received notification from the Finance department that our first quarter taxes from Ascend were \$464,328.33. Mrs. Tremont commented that the last ordinance that needs to be adopted is for tree removal/replacement. Mr. Ursin explained the consequences if this ordinance is not adopted. Mrs. Tremont commented that our goal is to have this ordinance on the next agenda for introduction. If anyone has any input, they can contact Mr. Ursin or the Administrator. Mrs. Tremont asked if everyone received her email regarding Hemlock Drive and the sidewalks and asked if anyone had any changes or objections.

Mr. Ursin had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden had nothing to report.

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OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

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

Mrs. Patti Carnes stepped forward. Ms. Carnes commented that the Spring Fling was well attended (70 people). Brick and Brew provided the food and for next year we are looking to schedule this event in May.

Mr. Alan Henderson stepped forward. Mr. Henderson commented that he is one of five candidates running for Sussex County Commissioner and he is looking for all to come out and vote.

Mr. Mike Raperto stepped forward. Mr. Raperto commented on the 4-way stop at Main and Junction and asked if DOT approval was received.

Mrs. Tremont commented that according to the Borough Engineer, DOT approval was not needed for this stop intersection as it does not intersect with a State Highway.

Mr. Raperto asked if Franklin was eligible for the bearproof garbage cans that Hardyston and Sparta received from the NJDEP.

Mr. Skellenger commented that those towns received trash cans as they had an uptick in incidences with bears.

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. 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. Borough of Ogdensburg Ordinance 06-2024 amending chapter 30 "Land Development.

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. COH Report – March 2024
2. Permit List – March 2024
3. Construction Department Report – March 2024
4. DPW Report – March 11 – March 15
5. Court Report – March 2024
6. Board of Health Report – March 2024
7. DPW Report – March 18 – March 22
8. Registrar Report – January – March 2024
9. Police Department report – March 2024

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Payment of bills for the meeting of April 23, 2024.

Mrs. Heath made a motion to approve the consent agenda of April 23, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

OLD BUSINESS

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

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NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing on the 2024 CY Municipal Budget

Mayor Sowden requested a motion to open the meeting to the public for public comments on the 2024 CY Municipal Budget. Mr. Postas made a motion to open the meeting to the public for public comment on the CY2024 Municipal Budget, seconded by Mr. Skellenger. All were in favor.

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

Resolution #2024-51

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt resolution 2024-51 to adopt the 2024 CY Municipal Budget. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for April 9, 2024. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes for April 15, 2024. (Absent: Limon, Postas) Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: Limon, Postas

Resolution 2024-52

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt resolution 2024-52 approval to submit a grant application and execute a grant contract with the New Jersey Highlands Council for stormwater and Tier A Compliance. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger

Nays: Postas, Snyder Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2024-53

Mr. Limon made a motion to adopt resolution 2024-53 declaring the Borough of Franklin resolution of support for the JCP&L EnergizeNJ Program BPU Docket No. EO23110793. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: Postas Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2024-54

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt resolution 2024-54 in support of the request to the NJDOT from the Franklin Police Department to consider a left-hand turn lane on Route 23 in the vicinity of mile marker 32.5. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

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Adoption of Ordinance 06-2024

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt ordinance 06-2024 entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING SECTION 119-4, GENERAL FEES." Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Prior to final roll call Mayor Sowden requested a motion to open the meeting to the public for Ordinance 06-2024. Mr. Postas made a motion to open the meeting to the public for Ordinance 06-2024, seconded by Mr. Snyder. All were in favor.

There being no one 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.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Introduction of Ordinance 07-2024

Mrs. Heath made a motion to introduce ordinance 07-2024 entitled "BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS 2024 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, BY AND IN THE BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN, IN THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY; APPROPRIATING \$1,413,021 THEREFOR (INCLUDING A GRANT FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION) AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,168,173 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF." Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Mayor Sowden announced that the Public Hearing will be held May 14, 2024.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Approval to Extend Conditional Offer(s)

Mr. Formica made a motion to extend conditional offer(s) to Police Officer candidate(s) as recommended in the Police Chief's April 18, 2024 letter. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Peddlers Permit Application

Mr. Snyder made a motion to approve the peddler permit submitted by Juan Zerna for the sale of ice cream. Seconded by Mr. Postas.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Formica, Heath, Limon, Postas, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: Skellenger

Discussion on letter from Historical Preservation Committee

Mayor Sowden read into record the letter from the Historical Preservation Committee that was sent to the council.

Mrs. Heath commented that she does not know how the council can designate something historical.

Mayor Sowden commented that it can be recommended by the council, but the state has to make the determination.

Mr. Postas commented that the building has been there for 17 years with no funding being done. What has stopped the historical society/committee or those that have been involved with it from obtaining grants in the past. Just because it is historically

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designated does not mean grants cannot be obtained. If this building is designated historical, it will take it out of the council's hands and the town's hands in perpetuity. What has been done with past funds. There may be a new project across the street that we should concentrate on.

Mayor Sowden commented that the church has been deemed historic by the state.

Mr. Formica commented that if the church has been deemed historic, the paperwork should be presented to the council.

Mr. Formica commented that he wants to explore different options.

Mrs. Heath asked what the \$150,000 loan was used for.

Mayor Sowden commented that it was used to relocate the building to its present location.

Mr. Formica asked if the loan was paid back. Mayor Sowden commented that the loan wasn't paid back. Only parts of the loan were paid back in interest only but then it was forgiven.

Mr. Snyder commented that the Hungarian Church had 3 options to move the church to. The church has not been taken care of. Mr. Snyder was not against the church, just the location of the church.

Mayor Sowden explained the different locations for the church.

Mayor Sowden invited Judy Williams, Historical Society Chair, to step forward.

Mrs. Judy Williams stepped forward. Mrs. Williams commented that the church was built on Edison Mountain for his residents. Mrs. Williams explained the history of the church. When it was proposed to the historical society to move the building the whole idea was to incorporate revitalization to Franklin Borough and restart Main Street. The reason it was chosen there, the old neighborhood house site, is because the neighborhood house served the community from the zinc company it was never a ratable, it was on Main Street, and it fit in the zone. The Main Street site was vacant for 12 years. This property has 3 front yards which makes it difficult to develop. The loan that was obtained was for moving and all costs were accounted for. The lease agreement mentioned going forward and it has been defaulted on because we couldn't move forward. The trees on the property are in memory of various people and a lot of energy was put in for the good of the people. We need to find the funding to fix it for the best of the town.

Mr. Snyder commented there was a conflict with the council when voting to move it in the beginning.

Mrs. Williams stated let's all work together. Mrs. Williams asked if a subcommittee can be formed to discuss the possibilities of keeping the building.

ADDENDUM

Mr. Postas made a motion to adopt the National Association of Letter Carriers Proclamation proclaiming the second Saturday in May as the National Association of Letter Carriers food drive. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

There were no miscellaneous comments.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:29p.m., seconded by Mr. Postas. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Darlene J. Tremont, Municipal Clerk