

**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
JANUARY 13, 2026**

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: Mrs. Carnes, Mr. Formica, Mrs. Heath, Mr. Limon, Mr. Skellenger, Mr. Snyder 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 11, 2026, 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. Snyder had nothing to report.

Mrs. Carnes had nothing to report.

Mr. Limon had nothing to report.

Mr. Formica commented that he met with Neil last week to meet with the grant writer and started looking into a couple different avenues, different ways to possibly do some combined services with surrounding towns as there are grant opportunities for that. We are looking into grants for Main Street to try to redo the sidewalks and lighting.

Mr. Skellenger thanked Councilwomen Heath and Carnes for a great first personnel committee meeting.

Mrs. Heath commented that we had a personnel meeting and we discussed the PBA contract and she feels that they are starting to reach an agreement. Saturday February 21st there is a bus trip to Wind Creek Casino and March 8th there is a bus trip to a Devils Hockey Game.

Mrs. Little had nothing to report.

Mr. Spidaletto commented that today base line testing was done by our hydrologist in regards to the Well B rehab. There will be a lot meetings in the next couple months.

Mr. Windels had nothing to report.

Mayor Sowden commented that he had a discussion with some of the people from the State on the rails to trails project.

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 Mrs. Heath. All were in favor.

Ms. Joanne Tatka stepped forward. Ms. Tatka commented that back when Dr. Crowely was Mayor the Borough was going to sign everyone up with an electrical supplier and then it would be up the residents if they didn't want it, they would have to back out of it. Well, the town never went through with that because there was so much opposition and she has been talking to different people and the electric bills

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are going out of sight. Ms. Tatka asked who the Borough has for the supplier of electric.

Mayor Sowden commented that we get our power generated through power and light.

Ms. Tatka questioned a Facebook ad she saw from Levinson Axelrod regarding Cosmed Group.

Mayor Sowden commented that there is nothing new.

Ms. Tatka questioned whether the development by Taylor Road is still happening.

Mayor Sowden asked that same question and someone told him that there was some kind of asbestos issue and they are waiting for the permits for that.

Ms. Tatka questioned the annual LOSAP amount, asked if the garbage contract was from 2026-2028 and questioned the bid threshold resolution. Ms. Tatka commented that she was reading payments on the consent agenda and about a month ago she saw that there was \$26,000 paid out for a Kawaski for the Fire Department and she doesn't remember any discussion in the Borough at any meetings regarding this. Ms. Tatka asked what the Fire department was going to do with a motorcycle.

Mr. Formica commented that it is a side by side and it will be used for recovery operations by the Fire Department.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Sowden requested that all person's 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 Hardyston Ordinance adopting an amendment to the 2022 Hardyston Vacant Land and Landfill Redevelopment Plan, pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et. seq.

REPORTS (ACCEPTANCE FOR FILING OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Police Department Report – October 2025
2. Police Department Report – November 2025
3. Permit Activity Report – December 2025
4. Permit List – December 2025
5. COH Report – December 2025
6. Municipal Court Report – December 2025

APPLICATIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. None filed.

RESOLUTIONS (APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING):

1. Payment of bills for the meeting of January 13, 2026.

Mr. Limon made a motion to approve the consent agenda of January 13, 2026. Seconded by Mr. Formica.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Heath, Limon, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: Skellenger

OLD BUSINESS

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

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NEW BUSINESS

Approval of the Minutes

Mrs. Heath made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for December 16, 2025. (Absent: None) Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes for December 30, 2025. (Absent: Mrs. Heath) Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

Ayes: Carnes, Formica, Limon, Skellenger, Snyder

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: Heath

Resolution 2026-18

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-18 authorizing the award of non-fair and open contracts for professional services for the year 2026. Seconded by Mr. Snyder.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-19

Mrs. Heath made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-19 to establish the bid threshold for the Borough of Franklin. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-20

Mr. Formica made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-20 authorizing advertisement and solicitation of bids for the improvements to Master Street, Warren Street and Green Street. Seconded by Mr. Limon.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-21

Mr. Limon made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-21 authorizing the award of solid waste and recycling collection Bid #25-02 to Blue Diamond Disposal Inc for a 3-year term, January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028 in the amount not to exceed \$2,016,000. Seconded by Mr. Skellenger.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Resolution 2026-22

Mr. Skellenger made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-22 to approve the Governor's Council on substance use disorder fiscal grant cycle July 2027 – June 2031. Seconded by Mrs. Carnes.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

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Congregate Nutrition Program Shared Services Agreement

Mrs. Carnes made a motion to approve the Shared Service Agreement between the County of Sussex and the Borough of Franklin for the Franklin Congregate Nutrition Programs from January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026 in the amount of \$27,700.00. Seconded by Mrs. Heath.

Upon roll call vote:

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

Nays: None Absent: None Abstentions: None

Mayoral Appointments

Mayor Sowden made the following appointments.

Planning Board

Mayor (Class I)	Mayor Sowden
Fire Safety (Class II)	1 yr. term (expires 12/31/2026) Jim Williams
Member (Class IV)	4 yr. term (expires 12/31/2029) Keri Marino
Member (Class IV)	4 yr. term (expires 12/31/2029) Sharon Schultz
Member (Class IV)	4 yr. term (expires 12/31/2029) George Drossel
Alternate #1	2 yr. term (expires 12/31/2028) James Affinito
Alternate #2	2 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2028)
Alternate #3	2 yr. term (term expires 12/31/2028)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Mr. Snyder commented on the number of cars being parked in the lot around Borough Hall and making difficult for residents who are attending meetings. Mr. Snyder commented that he remembers we allowed a few cars to park along the building and we allowed them to park in the back part of the parking lot near the garage.

Mr. Spidaletto commented that we will look into this.

Mr. Snyder asked if the areas along Route 23 can be cleaned up.

Mr. Spidaletto commented that he did discuss those properties today with Zoning and the EDC Consultant.

Mr. Snyder commented if the trucks that are parked by the Franklin Diner are still being allowed to park there.

Mr. Spidaletto commented that there have been discussions about that as well and he has personnel looking at that to see exactly what the situation is there.

Mr. Spidaletto commented that the 2024 totals, which are paid in 2025 was \$10,000 and we won't have the 2025 figures until July.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items for discussion by the Mayor and Council, Mrs. Carnes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:27p.m., seconded by Mr. Formica. All were in favor.

John M. Sowden IV, Mayor

Colleen L. Little, Municipal Clerk