

MINUTES  
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE/BOARD OF HEALTH  
WORK SESSION/REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024  
7:30 PM

**Franklin Township Municipal Building, 202 Sidney Road, Pittstown, NJ 08867**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Homulak at 7:30 pm. Mayor Homulak read the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) Statement and led the flag salute.

Roll Call: Sebastian Donaruma (present) Michael Homulak (present)  
Craig Repmann (present) Deanna Seiple (absent) Alexa Tarby (arrived at 7:32 pm)

Also present: Igor Bykov, Attorney (Lavery, Selvaggi, Abromitis & Cohen)  
Christine Burke, Municipal Clerk  
Chief Timothy Snyder, Police Department  
Adam Wisniewski, P.E., Township Engineer, Colliers Engineering & Design

Mayor Homulak briefly explained the agenda.

Comments from the Public on Agenda Items Only:

No one from the public spoke regarding Agenda Items.

Proclamations & Presentations: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the February 22, 2024, Township Committee/Board of Health Work-Session/Regular Meeting & Executive Session minutes: Repmann Second: Donaruma

Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Absent) Tarby (Aye)

Payment of Bills:

Motion to approve the Bills List: Repmann Second: Donaruma

Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Absent) Tarby (Aye)

Committee Member Reports:

Mayor Homulak updated those present on a zoning violation complaint made against 24 Baker Road, which was explained at January 25<sup>th</sup> meeting with updates provided at the previous two meetings. He explained the owner of the property had provided an agreement to the court to remove the items, had obtained a lease for a commercial warehouse facility to store the items, and had provided a trucking schedule to the Police Department for the removal of the items. He explained that the removal of the items was scheduled to begin on March 4<sup>th</sup> and end on March 14<sup>th</sup>. He further explained that all that could be done was wait for compliance. The Township Attorney confirmed that the matter was now in

the hands of the Municipal Court and indicated that for each date the matter continued, additional violations could be accrued. He further explained that any failure to adhere to the terms of the agreement would need to be explained to the court. Mayor Homulak indicated that the Zoning Officer had not yet seen any effort being made to uphold the removal schedule. A resident explained the current activity on the property and a festival schedule with locations the items were expected to be moved to.

Mayor Homulak further reported Jersey Central Power & Light's (JCP&L) efforts to address power outages in Franklin Township. He explained that the company has an online outage map, and that Franklin Township was experiencing pocket outages which require more resources to address than substation outages.

Committeeman Repmann explained that the Township Engineer was present to address updates on the New Municipal Building project. He reported that efforts for obtaining water and sewer rights for the Township's Affordable Housing Development project were ongoing, and that a meeting with the Town of Clinton had yet to be scheduled.

Mayor Homulak and the Township Attorney addressed a resident's questions regarding violations issued by the Fire Marshal to the owner of 24 Baker Road. They indicated that the Fire Department and the Township were two separate entities but that they had been keeping each responding authority updated on their efforts to correct the situation. Deputy Mayor Donaruma explained that both the municipal and fire department violations would be handled in the same court. Upon questioning by residents of Baker Road, the Township Committee confirmed that residents could attend the court hearings, that the municipality only has the authority to issue summonses, and that it would be up to the court to determine any fines.

Committeewoman Tarby reminded those present that the community Easter Egg Hunt would be held on March 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Clinton Elks Lodge at Noon. She also advised those present that the Hunterdon Polo Match was a community charity event that would take place on June 8<sup>th</sup> and that the Hunterdon Games, a competition between towns, was scheduled to be held on August 24<sup>th</sup> at Heritage Park in Bethlehem. She reported that she had been in contact with Frank Bell, Hunterdon County Architect and Project Manager, regarding the county owned portion of the New Municipal Building property. She indicated a meeting had been scheduled to discuss and negotiate park usage.

Deputy Mayor Donaruma reported that he had walked the Capoolong Creek Trail with Elizabeth Basile, Frank Tota, and the Student Conservation Association. He indicated some positive efforts in addressing the trail's repair and maintenance and that he was still seeking contact with the State.

Budget: *Postponed until further notice due to technical difficulties with the State's Financial Automation Submission Tracking (FAST) System.*

- ~~1. Introduction & First Reading of Ordinance 2024-xx: Calendar Year 2024—Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank.
  - ~~a. Public Hearing and Final Adoption scheduled for <to be determined>.~~~~
- ~~2. Resolution 2024-xx: Introduction of 2024 Municipal Budget of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, for the Year 2024.
  - ~~a. Public Hearing and Final Adoption scheduled for <to be determined>.~~~~

Mayor Homulak explained, per the Chief Finance Officer (CFO), the State's Financial Automation Submission Tracking (FAST) System was experiencing system errors, and that the Budget's introduction would have to be postponed.

Ordinances:

1. Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Ordinance 2024-01: An Ordinance of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Lease for Hunting Purposes of Certain Property Owned by the Township and Not Required for Public Purposes.
  - a. Block 5, Lots 2 & 3 (approximately 11 acres), more commonly known as the municipal property behind the Cracker Barrel.

Mayor Homulak read the following Summary & Explanation:

The Local Lands and Buildings Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12-14 authorizes the lease by municipalities of any real property, capital improvements or personal property or interests therein, not needed for public use to the highest bidder by open public lease at auction or by submission of sealed bids after the required newspaper advertisements.

Currently, the Township owns Block 5, Lots 2 & 3 (approximately 11 acres), more commonly known as the municipal property behind the Cracker Barrel, which remains vacant as efforts are made to develop the property as Affordable Housing. While the property is not needed for public use, the Township leases the property for hunting purposes.

Mayor Homulak further explained the location of the property and the bid results.

Motion to open Public Hearing: Repmann      Second: Donaruma      All in favor. Motion carried.

Upon questioning by a resident, Deputy Mayor Donaruma explained that the hunting club was from Glen Gardner and Mayor Homulak explained that the hunting club had held the lease before.

Motion to close Public Hearing: Repmann      Second: Donaruma      All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-01: Repmann      Second: Tarby

Roll call: Donaruma (Aye)   Homulak (Aye)   Repmann (Aye)   Seiple (Absent)   Tarby (Aye)

2. Introduction & First Reading of Ordinance 2024-02: Ordinance of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey Amending and Supplementing Section 242-5 “Enforcement” of Chapter 242 – Nuisances, Prohibition of, to Vest the Zoning Officer with the Power to Enforce the Provisions of the Chapter.
  - a. Public Hearing and Final Adoption scheduled for April 11, 2024.

Mayor Homulak explained the timeline for the ordinance’s introduction, public hearing, and final adoption. The Township Attorney provided a brief explanation for the ordinance, indicating that the ordinance allows more enforcement authority to the Zoning Officer for the purposes of addressing nuisances.

Motion to introduce: Repmann Second: Donaruma  
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Absent) Tarby (Aye)

**Resolutions:**

1. Resolution 2024-23: A Resolution of Franklin Township Authorizing the Purchase of Electricity Supply Services for Public Use on an Online Auction Website.

Mayor Homulak explained that the resolution addressed standard Township business conducted every three years.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2024-23: Donaruma Second: Repmann  
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Absent) Tarby (Aye)

**Board of Health:** None.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

1. Proposal for Professional Engineering Services – Future Municipal Building Site Improvements – 43 Lower Landsdown Road.
  - a. Colliers Engineering & Design Proposal No.: FKT130P

Mayor Homulak explained that the presentation being made to the Township Committee was intended for the Township Committee’s understanding and that questions from the public would not be entertained at this meeting. He advised the public that they could forward any questions they may have to the Township Clerk.

Adam Wisniewski, P.E., Township Engineer, Colliers Engineering & Design, explained the progress of the New Municipal Building renovation project and provided a brief timeline for the interior improvements. He indicated that an occupancy date could be available in the late summer or early autumn. He further explained that the exterior of the building would require some improvements for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, citing improvements to parking areas and sidewalks. He indicated that a later phase of the project would include an enclosure for a transfer area for Police Department

detainees. He further indicated that there were some required septic improvements to accommodate the Police Department detainee restroom. He explained that after the improvements were made, the Township would have an updated, comprehensive municipal building.

The Township Engineer briefly summarized the proposal and indicated that he was seeking approval from the Township Committee to continue progression on the project. Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Donaruma, the Township Engineer explained that the proposal addresses some of the concerns expressed by the Department of Corrections (DOC) and septic permitting complications regarding what types of septic systems can be authorized by the County and what would need Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approval. He explained that any permits requiring DEP approval would take months to acquire. He indicated that the proposal would assist in expediting the progress of the project. Mayor Homulak explained that though the Department of Public Works (DPW) is willing to assist where they can, they have explained that they are uncomfortable in ensuring appropriate ADA compliance for this project. Upon Committeeman Repmann's questioning, the Township Engineer explained that the proposal would authorize a survey to be performed to evaluate the site and prepare a comprehensive plan to perform the necessary site improvements. Mayor Homulak confirmed the Township Committee's desire to complete the project correctly the first time. A brief discussion followed regarding the Police Department's sally port's inclusion in a future phase of the project, ADA compliance and Code Enforcement. The Township Engineer confirmed that if the project was constructed as presented, ADA compliance would be met, and Code Enforcement would grant approval.

Motion to approve the proposal for Professional Engineering Services: Repmann

Second: Donaruma

Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Absent) Tarby (Aye)

Mayor Homulak thanked the Township Engineer for his presentation. Committeeman Repmann briefly discussed seeking grants, including those offered by the County, to assist in funding the construction. He indicated that he would speak with the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) regarding grant assistance.

2. Letter of Support – Franklin Township School – Local Recreation Improvement Grant
  - a. Refurbish an existing open space into a mulch turf track.

Mayor Homulak briefly advised those present of a request for a Letter of Support from the Franklin Township School to seek a Local Recreation Improvement Grant for refurbishing an existing open area into a mulch turf track. He explained that time constraints regarding the grant application submission resulted in submitting the letter to the school before being addressed at the meeting and that adding the topic to the agenda places the letter in the public record.

3. Proposed Ordinance Amendment – Residential Ground Mount Solar Array Ordinance – Permitted Use

The Township Attorney explained that the Land Use Board (LUB) had addressed ground mount solar arrays, and their requirements, the prior year and that their intentions were to ease access to residential ground mount solar arrays. A draft ordinance had been sent to the LUB for confirmation of their



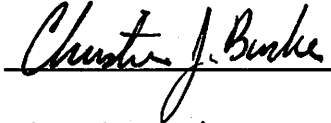
**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn: Repmann Second: Not Recorded

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:36 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk

  
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Adopted: 03/21/2024