

**MINUTES  
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE/BOARD OF HEALTH  
WORK SESSION/REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 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 (present) Alexa Tarby (present)

**Also present:** Igor Bykov, Attorney (Lavery, Selvaggi & Cohen, P.C.)  
Christine Burke, Municipal Clerk  
Cameron Keng, Chief Finance Officer/Human Resources (CFO/HR)  
Chief Timothy Snyder, Police Department  
Chief Bradley Patkochis, Quakertown Fire Company/Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Mayor Homulak briefly explained the agenda and indicated that an Old Business Discussion Item would be added regarding funding for an ambulance. Deputy Mayor Donaruma indicated that an additional Executive Session topic would be added regarding police staffing.

**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 April 11, 2024, Township Committee/Board of Health Work-Session/Regular Meeting & Executive Session minutes: Tarby Second: Donaruma  
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

**Payment of Bills:**

Motion to approve the Bills List: Repmann Second: Donaruma  
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

**Budget:**

Mayor Homulak thanked the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and the department heads for their efforts to compile the annual budget. He explained that the budget was being introduced and would be scheduled for public hearing and final adoption on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. He further explained that copies of



**Ordinances:**

1. Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Ordinance 2024-03: Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Ordinance 2024-03: Ordinance of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey Amending and Supplementing Chapter 220 – Land Use – by Removing Section 220-24.2 Entitled “Ground Array Solar Energy System” from Article V – Conditional Uses – and Inserting Same into Article III – Use Regulations – to Designate Ground Array Solar Energy Systems as a Permitted Accessory Use in the Township.

Mayor Homulak read the following explanatory statement:

The LUB recently recommended that the Township Committee amend the Solar regulations to permit ground-mounted solar in the RR 5 zone in addition to the AR 7 zone, with a minimum lot size of 5 acres. This was intended to make it easier for residents in the RR 5 zone to utilize ground-mounted solar, without the need to go to the LUB for approvals.

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

No one from the public spoke regarding Ordinance 2024-03.

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-03: Seiple      Second: Donaruma

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

**Resolutions:** None.

**Board of Health:** None.

**Old Business:**

1. Quakertown Fire Company – New Ambulance Funding Referendum.

Chief Bradley Patkochis, Quakertown Fire Company/Emergency Medical Services (EMS), explained that a new ambulance would cost approximately \$310,000 and that the fire company was working with a vendor. He further explained how grant funding could be utilized to offset the cost by approximately \$30,000 and recommended that the Township keep an amount of approximately \$250,000 for approval by referendum. He indicated that the fire department currently has two ambulances in service and had no further incidents since the event earlier in the year. The Township Attorney explained that the governing body would need to approve an ordinance by the end of July to accommodate the deadline for placing a referendum on the General Election ballot. Upon Mayor Homulak’s request that the Township Attorney draft the necessary paperwork to place the referendum on the General Election

ballot, the Township Attorney requested that the Township Committee take formal action to initiate the process.

Motion to authorize the Township Attorney to create the paperwork necessary to place a referendum for an ambulance purchase on the General Election ballot: Donaruma Second: Tarby  
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

Upon questioning by Mayor Homulak, the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) provided a brief explanation of how to finance the Township's emergency medical services (EMS) capital budget. Discussion followed. Chief Patkochis explained that he was seeking both a capital and an operation budget contribution and that the fire company was seeking to place the ambulances on an eight-year replacement cycle. Mayor Homulak recommended that Chief Patkochis work with the Township Attorney and CFO regarding the referendum's wording. Upon questioning by Chief Patkochis, the Township Attorney clarified that the referendum could only be non-binding and that binding referenda are only available for Faulker Act municipalities. Chief Patkochis responded to Deputy Mayor Donaruma's question regarding workers' compensation. Upon questioning by a resident, Chief Patkochis explained how changes in medical technology affected the ambulances and how the fire department acquired funding from the various municipalities in their jurisdiction.

New Business: None.

Committee Member Reports:

Mayor Homulak reported that the property violation complaint against 24 Baker Road had concluded, been settled for a fine of \$5,000, and that the property has been put up for sale. He further reported on mandatory classes for the Land Use Board (LUB) members and that a news article regarding another municipality's difficulties with their LUB commenting on a Facebook group had been circulated to the Township's LUB and Township Committee. He also reported that the Township Planner was addressing the new Affordable Housing laws. He advised those present that Jersey Central Power & Light (JCP&L) would be performing tree trimming the following month. He reminded Township officials that they needed to file their Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS). He reported that the Franklin Township School District would hold a meeting regarding their budget on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and that the North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional High School District would be holding their budget meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024. He informed the Township Committee that an invitation to a pig roast had been received from the Hunterdon Trail Association.

Committeewoman Seiple advised those present that the "Tap Into" community organization was seeking articles from local communities and recommended the story regarding the Capoolong Creek Trail. She reported that she had received correspondence from Congressman Kean's office regarding a Community Project Funding grant with a deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Committeeman Repmann reported that the application for water allocation for the Township's Affordable Housing project had been submitted and that overtures were taken for sewer capacity. He further reported that the 78/22 Coalition meeting had included the perspective of an expanded local

business and an emphasis on “Read to Film” towns. He explained that the Township already had a filming ordinance and recommended exploring being certified as a “Ready to Film” town. He also reported on the status of the New Municipal Building Interior Improvements Project, explaining that the work was progressing and that the walls had been enclosed.

Committeeman Reppmann left the meeting at 8:04 pm.

Committeewoman Tarby reported that she had attended the Environmental Commission’s 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Tree Seedling Giveaway on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, in honor of Earth Day and praised the efforts of John Benscoter, Environmental Commission, who coordinated the event. She reminded those present that the Fishing Derby would be taking place on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and advised that prizes would be given. Committeewoman Seiple explained the date, location, and rain date of the event. Committeewoman Tarby further reminded those present that the Polo Match would take place on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, provided information regarding the organization’s website, and explained that the organization supports local organizations in Hunterdon County.

Deputy Mayor Donaruma reported that the State representative had received the engineering report regarding the Capoolong Creek Trail and indicated that the State representative would be meeting with the engineer regarding the report. He explained that the Township would not be able to participate in that meeting, but it was possible that the Township could participate in future meetings.

Comments from the Public:

Rick Conley, 17 Landsdown Road, questioned the results of the 24 Baker Road violations, specifically the violations levied by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The Township Attorney explained that the DCA violations were not in the municipality’s jurisdiction. Mayor Homulak explained that the owners were leaving the property. Chief Patkochis explained that the owners were still dealing with the Fire Department fines.

Chief Bradley Patkochis, Quakertown Fire Company, commented that Kingwood Township had received \$4 Million in funding from a federal grant concerning distressed communities.

Christina Faragalla, 205 Sidney Road, commented on Mayor Homulak’s Committee member report regarding commenting on Facebook and expressed her support for interactions between municipal officials and community members. She requested that the Township adopt a social media policy.

Executive Session:

The Township Attorney explained the need to enter Executive Session, that action may be taken, and that all attendees of the meeting could wait outside of the meeting room except for the Committee, Police Chief Timothy Snyder, the Chief Finance Officer/Human Resources (CFO/HR), the Township Clerk, and the Township Attorney.

Upon confirmation of the absence of all but the required attendees, the Township Clerk stopped audio recording of the meeting.

Motion to enter executive session: Seiple  
All in favor. Motion carried.

Second: Tarby

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:12 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Attorney-Client Privilege/Contractual – County of Hunterdon – Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – Use and Maintenance of Open Space on New Municipal Building Property.
2. Attorney-Client Privilege/Litigation/Contractual – Lease of Township Owned Property – Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS).
3. Personnel – Police Department – Staffing.

Committee exited Executive Session at 8:54 pm.

Motion to exit executive session and resume regular meeting: Seiple    Second: Donaruma  
All in favor. Motion carried.

The Township Attorney explained the topics discussed in Executive Session, that action would be taken, and that minutes would become available once the need for confidentiality was no longer required.

Action by the Committee:

Motion to authorize the hiring of Alan Hill, contingent upon the passing of all necessary background checks: Donaruma                      Second: Tarby

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

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Donaruma    Second: Seiple

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk

  
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Adopted: 05/09/2024