

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE/BOARD OF HEALTH
WORK SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 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
Sue Larson, Senior Group

Mayor Homulak briefly explained the agenda.

Comments from the Public on Agenda Items Only:

No one from the public spoke on Agenda Items.

Proclamations & Presentations: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Committeewoman Tarby clarified statements she made at the August 22, 2024, meeting regarding the Parks & Recreation Grant. She indicated that she had spoken with the Township Engineer, rather than the Department of Public Works (DPW), regarding the DPW's possible intention to utilize the old tennis court site for a salt shed.

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

Second: Seiple

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

Payment of Bills:

Motion to approve the Bills List: Repmann

Second: Tarby

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

Ordinances: None.

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2024-41: A Resolution of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Hunting Lease of Certain Property Owned by the Township and Not Required for Public Purposes, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A: 12-14 Et Seq.

Mayor Homulak explained how the Township leases Township owned properties for hunting purposes, that the hunting would only take place on the wooded portions of the properties, and that the properties are also separately leased for agricultural purposes. He further explained that the Township leases the properties every few years.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2024-41: Repmann

Second: Seiple

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

2. Resolution 2024-42: Resolution of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Police Department to Solicit Bids to Purchase a 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe Black SSV 4WD 4DR (or Equivalent) for the Department.

Upon questioning by Mayor Homulak, the CFO confirmed that the purchase of the vehicle was included in the annual budget. Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Donaruma, Chief Timothy Snyder confirmed that the Police Department was seeking a 2023 model year Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV).

Motion to adopt Resolution 2024-42: Donaruma

Second: Tarby

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

3. Resolution 2024-43: Amend Resolution 2023-62: 2023 Budget Appropriation Transfer Resolution.

Upon questioning by Mayor Homulak, the CFO explained that the resolution was a clarification of line items in the 2023 Budget and did not reflect any increases to the Budget.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2024-43: Donaruma

Second: Tarby

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

Board of Health: None.

Old Business:

1. Hunterdon County Municipal Park and Recreational Grant Program.
 - a. Resolution 2024-44: Authorizing Submission of the Hunterdon County Municipal Park & Recreation Grant Application.

Committeewoman Tarby explained the subject grant and how much the county and municipality would pay into the project. She also explained that she had worked with Committeewoman Seiple and the Township Engineer regarding options. She indicated that the grant application would be for either a pavilion or gazebo and explained that the pricing of a double tennis court would well exceed the

Township's budget. She further explained that the Township would pay the municipal portion from the Open Space Fund which is already set aside for such projects. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) further clarified the Open Space Fund and how it is utilized. Committeewoman Seiple explained that they had decided to go with a project that could be added onto in the future and intended to make the space a place that anyone can enjoy. She further explained that the cost of a playground could be "astronomical". She also explained that the grant application would be for either a pavilion or a gazebo but not both.

Mayor Homulak commented that when the property was first purchased there was discussion taking a pavilion into consideration. He explained that the Township Committee was more preoccupied with getting into the building at that time. He further explained that the Township Open Space tax is set at the lowest level but has accrued money that can only be used for open space, recreation and historic purposes.

Committeewoman Seiple acknowledged comments and questions received from the public.

Committeewoman Tarby explained that the Township would apply for the maximum amount allowed in the grant application though that figure is not addressed in the resolution. She further explained that there was a desire to make the space "look nice" and that other amenities, such as grills, would be considered. She indicated that composite materials would be utilized to reduce maintenance costs and commented on stormwater considerations. She explained that small details add up and impact the cost. Committeewoman Seiple explained that the Township can revise the grant with an explanation of the changes. She and Committeewoman Tarby explained that a strategy would be included in the grant application. Upon questioning by the Township Committee regarding synergy with the County's trail, Committeewomen Seiple and Tarby confirmed that they were maintaining the Township's relationship with the County. Committeewoman Tarby confirmed that everything would be ready for the September 20th grant application submission deadline. Deputy Mayor Donaruma thanked Committeewomen Tarby and Seiple for preparing the grant opportunity on a short deadline.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2024-44: Tarby

Second: Seiple

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

2. Shared Services Agreement – Franklin Township School – Class III Special Officer.

Chief Timothy Snyder, Police Department, explained that the contract would renew the prior year's contract with a salary increase that was comparable in the state. Mayor Homulak explained that the salary increase would pass through the Township but would be paid for by the school. Upon questioning by Mayor Homulak, Chief Snyder expressed his approval of Officer Molina, indicating that he has a great performance and can speak the Spanish language. Committeewoman Seiple expressed her approval of her interactions with Officer Molina.

Motion to approve the Shared Services Agreement with the Franklin Township School for a Special Class
III Officer: Repmann Second: Donaruma

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

3. New Municipal Building (43 Lower Landsdown Road) – Status Update

- a. Colliers Engineering & Design Project No. FKT130 – Proposal for Professional Services – Construction Administration and Observation – Future Municipal Building Site Improvements, 43 Lower Landsdown Road.

Mayor Homulak explained that the Committee had already discussed this topic at the last meeting that the Township Engineer had attended.

Motion to approve the Proposal for Professional Services with Colliers Engineering & Design for Construction Administration and Observation of the Future Municipal Building Site Improvements, 43 Lower Landsdown Road: Donaruma Second: Tarby

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

New Business: None.

Committee Member Reports:

Committeewoman Tarby advised that Community Day would take place Saturday, September 21st at the Elks. She further advised that the Hunterdon Games had been rescheduled to October 26th with a rain date of October 27th. She indicated that an email would go out and that the Franklin Township team would merge with Glen Gardner with a team name of "Frankglen". She indicated that a team meeting was being coordinated.

Deputy Mayor Donaruma reported that he had spoken with the Environmental Commission regarding the Capoolong Creek Trail group and explained that the Environmental Commission had tabled their discussion regarding the group at their last meeting due to some questions. He indicated that the Environmental Commission would approve the Capoolong Creek Trail group at their next meeting in September.

Committeewoman Seiple reported that school had begun the prior week and that there had been some bussing concerns. She indicated that maps would be posted that advised of delays and timely notifications would be sent regarding delays.

Committeewoman Tarby advised that a Nixle sign-up link would be posted on the Township website by the Deputy Clerk.

Committeeman Repmann reported that he had attended a construction meeting regarding the New Municipal Building sidewalks and paving improvements with Topline Construction. He indicated that the plan was straight-forward. He further indicated that he would follow up on the interior site improvements and explained that some progress had been made.

Mayor Homulak reported that the Township did get approval from the County regarding the grant submitted for the New Municipal Building improvements and indicated that the grant money would help pay for the septic work on the property. He further indicated that the Department of Public Works (DPW) had saved money by assisting with the septic improvements. Committeeman Repmann commented that some of the DPW employees involved were also Township residents. Mayor Homulak further reported that he had attended the regionalization meeting regarding the school and encouraged residents to read through the regionalization paperwork. He commented on a volunteer incentive program as implemented by other municipalities. He indicated that the Township could pass an ordinance for volunteer tax relief and explained that he would work on such an ordinance with the Township Attorney.

Deputy Mayor Donaruma commented on including the cost of a speed sign in the budget. The Chief Finance Officer indicated that he would investigate.

Comments from the Public:

Frank Tota, 16 Upper Kingtown Road, questioned the estimated time of completion on the New Municipal Building project. Mayor Homulak and Committeeman Repmann indicated late November. Upon further questioning by Mr. Tota, the CFO explained that Nixle was an emergency contact sign-up program. Committeewoman Tarby explained the program's connection to the discussion and meeting regarding getting information to the community in emergency events. She explained that it would be utilized in conjunction with Township email blasts. Deputy Mayor Donaruma explained that residents could sign up for the service on the Nixle.com website where subscribers could choose the locations they wanted to sign up for. He further explained that the Township would limit the program's use to avoid causing "white noise" that might discourage residents from acknowledging messages.

Elizabeth Basile, 16 Upper Kingtown Road, questioned the specific amount being asked for in the County Parks and Recreation grant application. Committeewoman Tarby explained the amount. Upon questioning by Ms. Basile regarding when the Land Use Board (LUB) would be amending the Master Plan, the Township Clerk explained that the request had been sent but could not confirm when the topic would be on the Land Use Board's agenda, citing the board's need to investigate their budget. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) explained the Land Use Board's budget, specifying how the board acquires money beyond escrow. He invited Ms. Basile to contact him for more details. Mayor Homulak explained that the Land Use Board was a separate entity from the Township Committee and invited Ms. Basile to ask her questions at the Land Use Board meeting.

Sue Larson, Senior Group, thanked the Township for the inclusion of a directory in the tax bills, expressed her approval of the school's Special Class III officer, and commented on a letter the Senior Group had sent to the Township Committee.

Craig Metz, Franklin Township School Liaison, introduced himself, commented on a grant opportunity and requested the assistance of the Department of Public Works (DPW) for one of their projects. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) indicated that the Township had assisted the school with such requests in

the past and requested that the school pick up the cost of their materials to avoid hiccups with the Audit.

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, 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: Donaruma
All in favor. Motion carried.

Second: Tarby

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:14 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Personnel – Administration – Staffing – Deputy Tax Collector/Assistant Finance Officer.
2. Attorney-Client Privilege/Litigation/Contractual – Lease of Township Owned Property – Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS).
3. Contractual – Affordable Housing.

Committee exited Executive Session at 8:32 pm.

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

Second: Seiple

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

Action by the Committee: None.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Repmann Second: Unrecorded

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:33 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 09/26/2024