

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE/BOARD OF HEALTH
WORK SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025
7:30 PM

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

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

Roll Call: Sebastian Donaruma (present) Donald Scott Edelmann (present)
Jessica Moustakas-Blew (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) (arrived at 7:34 pm)
Diane Burgess, Environmental Commission Chair

Mayor Donaruma briefly explained the agenda.

Comments from the Public on Agenda Items Only:

Elizabeth Basile, 16 Upper Kingtown Road, questioned why two resolutions for Tax Title Lien Redemptions of Lienholder were being utilized for the same address. The Township Clerk explained that they addressed two different certificates. The Township Attorney further explained that the certificates were dated for two different years.

Proclamations & Presentations:

1. Memorializing Resolution 2025-28: Appointment – Police Officer – Tyler Sutton.
 - a. Oath of Office.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-28: Tarby Second: Edelmann
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Edelmann (Aye) Moustakas-Blew (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

The Township Attorney administered the Oath of Office to Patrolman Tyler Sutton in the presence of Officer Sutton's family, friends, and fellow members of the Police Department.

2. Environmental Commission – Community Energy Plan Grant.

Diane Burgess, Chair of the Environmental Commission, explained that the Township had been awarded a \$10,000 Community Energy Plan (CEP) Grant the prior year and explained how the grant is utilized to assist municipalities in addressing their obligations to the periodically updated New Jersey State Energy Master Plan. She described the State's energy goals and strategies for rapid reductions in green house

gas emissions. She explained that a CEP is designed to work towards a better environment for all residents. She further explained that the State had updated the Municipal Land Use Law to include energy plan development, and that the Township's CEP could assist in meeting that obligation. She indicated that the current grant was utilized for the creation of a CEP and that the plan could be utilized to assist in acquiring future grants aimed at achieving the plan's goals. She advised that the Township had one year from the execution of a grant agreement to complete the CEP and indicated that the grant agreement had not yet been received, which provided the Township with additional time to complete the grant obligation. She continued to explain the following topics: stakeholders, overarching strategies guiding the State Energy Master Plan, and possible actions that could be taken. She explained that she had reached out to the Mayor, Township Planner and Township Engineer to begin the process of creating the grant. She indicated that she was waiting for a quote from the Township Planner and that the cost of the work to create the CEP should not exceed the amount of the grant. She advised that she required liaisons with the Township Committee and municipal staff and that the grant agreement had to be approved by the Township Committee.

Upon questioning by Mayor Donaruma, Ms. Burgess explained that the future grants available after the creation of the CEP could be utilized for LED (Light Emitting Diode) upgrades to the New Municipal Building. Deputy Mayor Seiple questioned the inclusion of energy plan development in the Master Plan and how that affects the recent amendment being conducted by the Land Use Board.

Committeewoman Tarby explained that the amendment addressed only the Cannabis Businesses topic of the Master Plan and that it was a separate procedure from a Re-Examination of the Master Plan. The Township Clerk advised that the last Re-Examination of the Master Plan was completed in 2019. Mayor Donaruma indicated that staff would be contacted but that determining an appropriate staff member would require an explanation of responsibilities. He further indicated that the Township Committee would have to discuss who best to appoint as Township Committee Liaison. Brief discussion followed regarding potential future grants and potential strategies. Ms. Burgess explained that any strategy utilized would have to be appropriate for the community and indicated that the assistance of the Township Planner would be helpful.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the March 27, 2025, Township Committee/Board of Health Work-Session/Regular Meeting & Executive Session minutes: Tarby Second: Seiple

Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Edelmann (Aye) Moustakas-Blew (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

Payment of Bills:

Motion to approve the Bills List: Edelmann Second: Seiple

Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Edelmann (Aye) Moustakas-Blew (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

Ordinances: None.

Resolutions:

1. Resolution: 2025-29: Amending Resolutions #2019-59, #2020-58, #2021-50, #2022-49 and #2023-59: "Governor's Council on Substance Use Disorder Fiscal Grant Cycle October 2020 – June 2026".

Mayor Donaruma explained that Resolution 2025-29 was standard business for the Township and that the resolution supports the Governor’s Council on Substance Use Disorder Grant.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-29: Tarby Second: Moustakas-Blew
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Edelmann (Aye) Moustakas-Blew (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

Upon request by the Township Clerk, Mayor Donaruma confirmed and explained that he was adjusting the agenda to address Resolutions 2025-31 and 2025-32 prior to Resolution 2025-30.

3. Resolution: 2025-31: Tax Sale Redemption of Lienholder – Certificate #22-00012 – Block 34, Lot 13 – 206 Cherryville Road.
4. Resolution: 2025-32: Tax Sale Redemption of Lienholder – Certificate #23-00008 – Block 34, Lot 13 – 206 Cherryville Road.

Motion to adopt Resolutions 2025-31 & 2025-32: Tarby Second: Edelmann
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Edelmann (Aye) Moustakas-Blew (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

2. Resolution: 2025-30: Resolution in Support of the Sidney Road Bridge Over Lehigh Valley Main Line Railroad Project.

Mayor Donaruma explained that a meeting was held regarding planned improvements to the Sidney Road Bridge over the Lehigh Valley Main Line and that the meeting had been attended by the Fire Chief and Department of Public Works (DPW) Supervisor who had concerns regarding the implementation of the project. He recommended waiting to approve the resolution until their concerns were addressed. The Township Committee agreed to postpone action on the resolution. Resolution 2025-30 was Tabled.

Old Business:

1. Capoolong Creek Trail Repair and Maintenance Report and Update.

Mayor Donaruma reported that a meeting with the State representative was scheduled for April 24th and that he would report further on the topic at that time.

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

Mayor Donaruma reported on the status of the upgrades to the New Municipal Building, indicating that he was not able to attend the prior construction progress meeting and had been informed on the progress of the upgrades. He indicated that the next Township Committee meeting scheduled for April 24th would be held in the New Municipal Building meeting room.

3. Affordable Housing Development – Block 5, Lots 2 & 3 (Behind Cracker Barrel Restaurant) – Ingerman Project.

Mayor Donaruma reported that the project was still waiting on the acquisition of sewer capacity.

4. Oak Grove Road Improvements Project

- a. Proposal for Professional Engineering Services – Construction Administration and Observation – Oak Grove Road Improvements Project Phase III

Mayor Donaruma and the Township Clerk explained that the current proposal would authorize the Township Engineer to oversee the work being conducted in response to the bid award approved by resolution in November of the prior year.

Motion to approve Proposal for Professional Engineering Services – Construction Administration and Observation – Oak Grove Road Improvements Project Phase III: Tarby Second: Seiple
Roll call: Donaruma (Aye) Edelmann (Aye) Moustakas-Blew (Aye) Seiple (Aye) Tarby (Aye)

New Business: None.

Committee Member Reports:

Committeewoman Moustakas-Blew reported that the Easter Egg Hunt had been postponed to its rain date due to anticipated inclement weather, and would now take place on Sunday, April 13th at 10:00 am. She further reported on a Spring Donation Drive to take place at the Quakertown Fire Company.

Deputy Mayor Seiple indicated that she had requested Committeewoman Tarby to attend a Hunterdon County Shared Services Forum.

Committeewoman Tarby reported on her attendance at a Hunterdon County Shared Services Forum, explaining that the forum was designed to bring the municipalities and county committees together to express their various services. She reported that the County Clerk had attended the meeting to advise those present on the availability of the County Clerk's Office for the acquisition of Passports and Passport Cards, which could be utilized as Real IDs. She further indicated that the County Clerk had provided a brief explanation of the recent change in voting machines. Committeewoman Tarby further reported that the County Parks & Recreation department had issued another grant opportunity like the opportunity that resulted in funding for the construction of a pavilion at the New Municipal Building awarded the prior year. She indicated that it was possible to seek grant funding for an addition to the current project and that efforts had begun to select the appropriate pavilion for the property. Committeewoman Tarby advised that the County had commented on the utilization of Shared Services for the street sweeping required by the new State law, indicating that municipalities may save money by contracting with the County. Committeewoman Tarby advised that the Land Use Board would be holding a public hearing at the end of the month for the Master Plan Amendment that would remove Cannabis Businesses from the Township's Master Plan. Mayor Donaruma commented on the prior year's Recreation Grant Award and explained that the County was offering an opportunity to also take "spill-over" into the adjacent County property into consideration for the new grant opportunity.

Committeeman Edelmann reported that the Police Department's new officer had been sworn in earlier in the meeting after graduating the Police Academy. He further reported on the Department of Public

Works' (DPW) activities, citing the following activities: vehicle repairs, road clearing after weather events, pulling the snow plowing guide posts, New Municipal Building renovations, and roadside potholes.

Comments from the Public:

Elizabeth Basile, 16 Upper Kingtown Road, inquired about renovations and potential new ratables being conducted by the hotel (Hampton Inn, 16 Frontage Drive) next to the Cracker Barrel Restaurant. Mayor Donaruma recommended that Ms. Basile contact the Construction Department regarding the renovations.

Executive Session:

Mayor Donaruma explained the need to enter Executive Session, that action was not anticipated to 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: Seiple
All in favor. Motion carried.

Second: Moustakas-Blew

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:09 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Attorney-Client Privilege/Litigation/Contractual – Lease of Township Owned Property – Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS).
2. Attorney-Client Privilege/Contractual – Potential Lease of Township Owned Property – Current Municipal Building (202 Sidney Road).

Committee exited Executive Session at 8:35 pm.

Motion to exit executive session and resume regular meeting: Edelmann

Second: Tarby

All in favor. Motion carried.

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: Seiple Second: Tarby

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 04/24/2025