

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

Franklin Township New Municipal Building, 43 Lower Landsdown Road, Annandale, NJ 08801

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 (absent) 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)
Craig Repmann, Liaison for Ingerman (COAH) Project

Mayor Donaruma 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 June 12, 2025, Township Committee/Board of Health Work-Session/Regular Meeting & Executive Session minutes: Tarby Second: Edelmann

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

Payment of Bills:

Motion to approve the Bills List: Tarby Second: Moustakas-Blew

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

Ordinances:

1. Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Ordinance 2025-02: Ordinance of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey Creating Chapter 230 Entitled "Lead-Based Paint Inspections" to Require Lead-Based Paint Inspections in Certain Residential Dwellings, as Mandated by P.L. 2024, C. 182.
 - a. LEW Environmental Services – Proposal/Contract for Professional Services – Staffing from a NJ Department of Community Affairs Certified Lead Evaluation Contractor – Proposal Number 4219.

Mayor Donaruma explained that the ordinance and professional services contract would not cost the Township any additional money as the company is not charging for their services.

Motion to open Public Hearing: Edelmann Second: Tarby All in favor. Motion carried.

Dan Connor, 248 Cherryville Road, requested a copy of the ordinance and criticized the lack of physical copies of the ordinance at the meeting. The Township Clerk explained publication and posting procedures regarding introduced ordinances.

Motion to close Public Hearing: Tarby Second: Moustakas-Blew All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-02: Tarby Second: Moustakas-Blew

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

Motion to approve Professional Services Agreement – LEW Environmental Services – Certified Lead Evaluation Contractor: Tarby Second: Edelmann

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

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2025-44: Resolution of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, Authorizing and Supporting the Submission of the Hunterdon County Law Enforcement Direct (LED) Grant Program Application.

Mayor Donaruma explained the grant opportunity.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-44: Edelmann Second: Moustakas-Blew

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

2. Resolution 2025-45: Approval to submit a grant application and execute a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Locust Grove Road Improvements project.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-45: Tarby Second: Moustakas-Blew

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

3. Resolution 2025-46: Appointment – Municipal Historian – Unexpired Term – Lynne French.

Mayor Donaruma explained that Lora Jones has resigned from her position as the Township Historian and advised that she would be honored at a future meeting for her years of dedicated service to the Township.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-46: Tarby Second: Edelmann

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

4. Resolution 2025-47: Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit (CY 2024).

Mayor Donaruma indicated that the resolution reflects standard annual Township business.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-47: Tarby

Second: Moustakas-Blew

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

5. Resolution 2025-48: Accept and Approve Corrective Action Plan for CY2024 Audit.

Mayor Donaruma acknowledged a minor typographical error on the agenda in which the resolution number reflected the prior year and that the resolution number should reflect the current year. He explained that the resolution was in response to the Audit.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-48: Edelmann

Second: Moustakas-Blew

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

6. Resolution 2024-49: Authorizing an Increase in the Bid Threshold.

Mayor Donaruma explained that the State has allowed for an increase in the bid threshold.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-49: Tarby

Second: Moustakas-Blew

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

Old Business:

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

Mayor Donaruma reported that a meeting with state representatives is tentatively scheduled for early August to discuss funding options.

2. Hunterdon County Municipal Park and Recreational Grant Program.

a. New Municipal Building Pavilion.

Committeewoman Moustakas-Blew reported that quotes had been solicited from a local resident regarding the construction of a pavilion on the New Municipal Building property. Committeewoman Tarby explained that the vendor had questions regarding the soil at the site and had been directed to the Township Engineer. She further advised that the Township would be applying for another grant this year. Mayor Donaruma explained that the Township currently has a grant for the project and that the new grant may be utilized to cover any overages. Committeewoman Tarby further explained that the Township's portion of the funding for the project would be coming from the Open Space Trust Fund.

3. River Road Drainage Improvement Project.

a. Proposal for Professional Services: River Road Drainage Improvements - Colliers Engineering & Design Proposal No.: FKT0134P. (Supplemental Permitting Services)

Mayor Donaruma explained that the Township Engineer had requested additional money for State required permits.

Motion to approve Proposal for Professional Services: River Road Drainage Improvements - Colliers Engineering & Design Proposal No.: FKT0134P. (Supplemental Permitting Services): Tarby
Second: Edelmann

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

New Business:

1. State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Farmland Preservation Program
 - a. SADC ID# 10-0313-DE – Lamborn, Gloria M. & Messenger, Marion M. – Block 46, Lot 3 (626 Pittstown Road)

Mayor Donaruma explained that the Township Committee supports preservation of local farms but requires that such preservation opportunities be done strategically so that the Township does not tax residents out of the municipality. He explained that he had reviewed the County preservation plan and advised that the plan preserves all of Franklin Township which is not feasible. He recommended that a subcommittee be formed to review the plan and specify targeted properties. He explained that this parcel was a smaller property. Committeewoman Tarby expressed her desire for tax relief from the State in association with farmland preservation. Mayor Donaruma explained the limitations of any potential housing placed on the property due to the zoning restrictions.

Lora Jones, former Township Historian, 7 Spring Hill Road, explained that the State pays for most of the preservation and that the County and Municipality pays for only a small portion. Mayor Donaruma explained that the issue is not funding for the preservation but that the Township can't preserve everything. He further explained that the property could become a future clean ratable via expansion of the home/office use.

A representative of the State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC) offered to answer questions. Mayor Donaruma reiterated that the Township would be happy to preserve everything with the promise of State tax relief. The representative indicated that they did not have the authority to provide tax relief but would be willing to participate in the subcommittee.

Upon questioning by Ingrid Taff, 41 Upper Kingtown Road, the Township Committee confirmed that the State could preserve the property without support from the Township.

Upon questioning by Dan Connor, 248 Cherryville Road, the Township Committee explained that the property was not currently zoned as commercial property.

Lynne French, Township Historian (current), 224 Sidney Road, questioned if the property could support a farm-to-table hybrid establishment. The SADC representative responded regarding recent legislation that opens opportunities to farms and advised that the SADC would be addressing that matter at its own public meeting.

Committeewoman Tarby requested additional time to review the property.

The Township Committee tabled the discussion to a later meeting.

Committee Member Reports:

Committeewoman Tarby reported that the Hunterdon Polo Match event was a success. She advised those present that the Hunterdon Games would take place on August 23rd and that a list of activities would be posted for sign-ups. She explained prior events. Committeeman Edelmann explained that residents could attend the event without participating and encouraged attendance, citing that the event was fun and supported the community. Committeewoman Tarby further reported that Community Day would take place on September 27th at the Clinton Elks Lodge.

Committeeman Edelmann reported on the activities of the Police Department, citing that the new officer was doing well and that the speed sign was currently located outside the New Municipal Building. He further reported on the activities of the Department of Public Works (DPW), indicating that the department was busy mowing and filling potholes. Mayor Donaruma explained that the DPW had also volunteered to assist in the move to the New Municipal Building by moving furniture and other large items.

Mayor Donaruma reported that the Township had received quotes for video options that would allow live streaming of Township meetings.

Comments from the Public:

Craig Repmann, 397 Sidney Road, commented on the potential rental of the current Municipal Building property and questioned if the Township Committee had any additional thoughts on selling the property via auction. Mayor Donaruma explained that all options were being considered. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) briefly explained the value of the property as provided by an expert in property values. Mr. Repmann expressed concerns regarding potential future litigation and explained that it did not cost the Township anything to put the property up for auction with a minimum bid to establish value.

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, Craig Repmann (Liaison for Ingerman (COAH) Project), 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: Tarby
All in favor. Motion carried.

Second: Edelmann

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:09 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Contractual – Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) Development Updates – Ingerman Project – Block 5, Lots 2 & 3 (Behind Cracker Barrel Restaurant).
2. Attorney-Client Privilege/Litigation/Contractual – Lease of Township Owned Property – Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS).
3. Attorney-Client Privilege/Contractual – Potential Lease of Township Owned Property – Current Municipal Building (202 Sidney Road).

Committee exited Executive Session at 9:01 pm.

Motion to exit executive session and resume regular meeting: Tarby Second: Moustakas-Blew

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.

Committeewoman Tarby provided a brief clarification regarding the new county recreation grant opportunity and the pavilion project.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Edelmann

Second: Tarby

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 08/14/2025