

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2020
7:30 PM

(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://zoom.us/j/921538687>)

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Koury at 7:32 pm. Mayor Koury read the OPMA Statement and led the flag salute.

Roll Call: Mayor Philip Koury (present) Deputy Mayor Diane Burgess (present)
Sebastian Donaruma (present) Mike Homulak (present) Craig Repmann (present)

Also present: Katrina L. Campbell, Municipal Attorney
Christine Burke, Municipal Clerk
Cameron Keng, Chief Finance Officer
Captain Timothy Snyder, Police Department

Comments from the Public on Agenda Items Only:

No one from the public spoke regarding Agenda Items.

Presentation: None.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the March 12, 2020 minutes Work Session/Regular Meeting and Executive Session:

Repmann Second: Donaruma

Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

Payment of Bills

Motion to approve the Bills List: Repmann Second: Burgess

Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

Ordinances:

Mayor Koury explained that the Public Hearing of Ordinance 2020-01: Amend Chapter 88, "Salaries & Compensation" to Add Qualified Purchasing Agent had been postponed to April 9, 2020.

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2020-22: Authorize Hunterdon County Municipal Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement

Upon questioning by the Committee, Captain Snyder explained the need for the Mutual Aid Agreement and how it would benefit and impact the Police Department. He further explained that the agreement only addressed municipalities with their own police departments and would not include municipalities that utilized the services of the State Police.

Motion to adopt: Homulak Second: Donaruma

Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

2. Resolution 2020-23: Tax Refund of Homestead Rebate – 18 Lower Kingtown Road – Block 18, Lot 11

Motion to adopt: Donaruma Second: Burgess

Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

Staff Administrative Reports:

Police: Captain Snyder reported that the Governor’s Executive Order had been keeping people off the roads resulting in a traffic decrease. He explained that the County was looking into updating its Mutual Aid agreement and further explained the additional affects the COVID-19 Pandemic had on criminal activity, such as price gouging of medical supplements and hand sanitizer. He further reported that there had been an increase in Firearms ID permit applications, a delayed application process and that, due to the Governor’s Executive Order to close non-essential businesses, sales of firearms had decreased.

CFO: The Chief Finance Officer reported that the update to the Township’s IT infrastructure proved timely and that the operations of the Finance Department were unchanged.

Administrative: The Township Clerk reported that the Administrative staff were operating remotely and utilizing a rotating schedule for physical time in the office. She further reported that operations had slowed due to social distancing and that the staff was utilizing the time to work on records retention.

Upon further questioning from Deputy Mayor Burgess regarding tax payments, the Chief Finance Officer encouraged residents to utilize the online payment options and explained that though residents could use the physical drop box at the Municipal Building, it would result in a delay in receipt of payment. He further explained that the administrative staff was still answering phone calls and encouraged anyone with questions to call and leave a message. The Mayor requested that the link for online payments be more prominent on the website. The Municipal Attorney explained that no taxes were currently due and any notices that had been received were for delinquent taxes that had a previous due date. She further explained that some municipalities had pushed the May 1st tax collection due date to June 1st but said efforts would not affect taxes paid through mortgage companies. The Chief Finance Officer explained the percentage of tax payments received from mortgages and generational home owners. He further explained that generational home owners may need assistance in paying taxes should the pandemic cause them financial hardship. Mayor Koury requested that the CFO look into it so that the Committee could discuss it at the next meeting. The CFO provided an estimation of taxes the Township would have to distribute to other government agencies and informed the Committee of the option to use Tax Anticipation Notes (TAN).

Board of Health: None.

Old Business:

1. Repairs at the Franklin Township Elementary School

The Attorney updated the Committee on a request from the Franklin Township Elementary School for repair work to be performed by the Department of Public Works. She indicated that she would send a draft Shared Services Agreement to the School for their approval.

New Business:

1. Community News: Passing of Former Mayor August W. Knispel

Mayor Koury shared the news that former Mayor August W. Knispel had passed away and indicated that he had requested that the Clerk and Deputy Clerk reach out for information for the creation of a Proclamation. Deputy Mayor Burgess offered guidance on appropriate individuals to reach out to for more information. Mayor Koury explained that a more formal event would take place in the summer months and that a monument to Mayor Knispel was in front of the Municipal Building.

Committee Member Reports:

Committeeman Sebastian Donaruma updated the Committee on efforts to obtain radar trailers for the Township.

Committeeman Mike Homulak reported that he had been in daily contact with the township's emergency services and explained that the Fire House was closed to public access but experiencing no break in services.

Deputy Mayor Diane Burgess reported that the Department of Public Works was taking down the snow fencing throughout the township while practicing social distancing. She further reported on her efforts to reach out to Sue Larson of the Township's Senior Group to ascertain how the Township can assist the seniors and vulnerable population. She recommended that individuals who need assistance reach out to the Township for more information on their options.

Committeeman Craig Repmann reported that the various volunteers of Franklin Township were ready to assist and thanked the Mayor for his efforts during a difficult time.

Mayor Phil Koury thanked everyone for their efforts in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. He reported that he had participated in phone conferences with the mayors of Hunterdon County and State of New Jersey regarding the pandemic. He further thanked the township's department heads, municipal attorney and Deputy Mayor for their efforts to keep the Township safe and functioning. He reported that Franklin Township did not have any cases of COVID-19 and indicated that the Township was one of the safest in the County.

Committeeman Mike Homulak reported that the State had closed all schools. The Mayor indicated that all daycares were also closing.

Comments from the Public:

No one from the public spoke.

Executive Session: None.

The Attorney explained that the DCA had advised against Executive Sessions when utilizing tele-communication and online meeting options.

Action by the Committee: None.

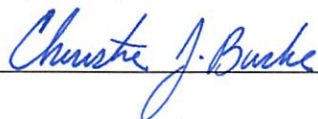
Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Burgess Second: Repmann

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 04/09/2020