

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018
7:30 P.M.

The Franklin Township Committee held a regular meeting at **7:30 P.M., Thursday, January 25, 2018** at the Municipal Building. This meeting has been properly noticed in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mayor Craig Repmann called the meeting to order and led the flag salute.

Roll Call: Joseph Darocha PRESENT Philip Koury PRESENT

Susan Soloway PRESENT Diane Burgess PRESENT Craig Repmann PRESENT

Also present: Katrina L. Campbell, Municipal Attorney
 C. Richard Roseberry, Municipal Engineer

Some others present: Members of the family for Philip Koury’s Oath of Office, members of the family for Erik Eccles for the Oath of Office, the Police Department, Cameron Keng CFO

The Municipal Attorney formally administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Committee Member Philip Koury.

The Municipal Attorney also administered the Oath of Office to Class II Special Police Officer Erik Eccles.

Mayor Repmann expressed the Committee’s sympathy to the families of Bill Tinnes and Don Gordon. Both gentlemen were long-time residents of Franklin Township and active in local services.

Comments from the public on agenda items: None

CONSENT AGENDA

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Township Committee and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Motion to Adopt all items listed under the Consent Agenda.

Moved Soloway	Second Burgess
Current Fund Expenditures 7 – 01	\$ 20,354.64
Current Fund Expenditures 8 – 01	\$1,046,845.24
Open Space	\$ 67,911.20

TOTAL 1,135,111.087

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

Department Head/Subcommittee Reports

- **Administration, HR/Benefits: Koury/Darocha**

No reports at this time.

Appointments: Additional appointments will be made as per the attached Appointment list.

Committee Member Soloway reported on Bond Counsel. The County and several other municipalities have appointed Archer & Greiner and she suggested the township also appoint this firm.

Motion to appoint John M. Cantalupo of the firm Archer & Greiner to serve as Bond Counsel for Year 2018.

Moved Soloway Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

Land Use Board appointments as follows:

Class I	Joseph Darocha
Class III	Susan Soloway
Class IV Alternate I	Mike Chabra
Class IV Alternate II	Erica Amon
Class IV Alternate III	Lou Moreira

Municipal Officials appointed as per list to also include:

Coordinator, Office of OEM	George Reichert
Deputy OEM	Daniel Snyder

The Township Committee asked for clarification on Building Inspector since two officials (Tom Lance & Pete Buchanan) share the duties. The Municipal Attorney suggested one be designated Building Inspector and one be designated Alternate Building Inspector.

Environmental Commission:

Chair	Diane Burgess with term expiring 12/31/18
Member	Diane Burgess with 3 year term expiring 12/31/19
Member	P. J. Magala with 3 year term expiring 12/31/20

Motion to appoint Darlene Green of Maser Consulting to serve as COAH Planner for Year 2018.

Moved Soloway Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

Public Hearing on **Ordinance 2018 – 01** Lease of Municipal Land for Cell Tower is scheduled for Thursday, February 8, 2018.

- **Finance, Insurance, IT: Repmann/Burgess**

CFO Cameron Keng is recommending the township change payroll processing agency from R & L to Prime Pay. He believes Prime Pay will provide more efficient reporting and he is scheduling the change-over for February 15th so as not to disrupt service.

Motion to authorize the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor to execute a contract Between the Township of Franklin and Prime Pay as payroll agency for the township.

Moved Burgess Second Soloway

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

8:00 P.M. BOARD OF HEALTH

RECESS

Motion to recess the Township Committee meeting in order to convene the Board of Health.

Moved Soloway Second Burgess All in favor. Motion carried.

RETURN TO REGULAR MEETING

Motion to reconvene the Township Committee regular meeting.

Moved Soloway Second Burgess All in favor. Motion carried.

Discussion: 2018 Budget

Cameron Keng addressed the budget issue. He said he believes there was a disconnect in the budget process in the past and he suggests the effort should be more of a team preparation. He would like to go over the budget line by line with department heads and subcommittee heads and he will send an email to get convenient times for everyone to meet. He will also rely on the auditors.

Motion to **Adopt Resolution 2018 – 13** Unity Bank, Corporate Authorization Resolution.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

The Municipal Attorney addressed the issue of 2018 pre-payment of property taxes due to the change in federal law regarding a \$10,000.00 limit on property tax deductions. In some municipalities, residents are requesting refunds on 3rd and 4th quarter taxes since estimated amounts were paid as there was no assessment yet established. The Local Finance Notice 2018 – 04 addresses this issue and gives guidance to municipalities. If the township wants to do a refund, a resolution would be necessary. She also gave examples of a resident possibly overpaying 3rd and 4th quarters and an option for the township to either refund the money at the end of the year or apply it to a future tax quarter. If the township's policy is not to do a refund and someone makes a request, the township can respond requesting whether or not the homeowner wants a refund at the end of the year or do they want to apply the overpayment to 2019. **Committee Member Soloway said that at her request signs were posted at the Municipal Building in December notifying residents that no refunds would be made for pre-payment of taxes.** She does not think there will be any requests. Cameron Keng reported that he is aware of the many residents who prepaid the first two quarters of 2018 but not many for the full year. He said at this time to his knowledge there have been no requests for refunds. He believes the township collected over a million dollars in prepayments.

Motion to establish a policy for the township that no refunds of pre-paid taxes for year 2018 shall be made to any taxpayer in the Township of Franklin. Should a request be submitted, it must be in writing and the taxpayer shall be notified of the option to receive a check at the end of the year for 3rd and 4th quarter overpayments or taxpayer may request overpayment to be applied to 2019 property taxes.

Moved Burgess

Second Soloway

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

- **Public Safety (PD, Fire, EMS, OEM, Court, Health): Darocha/Koury**

Motion to **Adopt Resolution 2018 – 12** Appoint Erik Eccles to the position of Class II Special Police Officer at a salary of \$20.00 per hour on an as-needed basis.

Moved Soloway

Second Darocha

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

Lt. Timothy Snyder presented his reports to the Township Committee. He reported on monthly activities for December which included but was not limited to arrests, summonses, investigations, assists, motor vehicle accidents, radio calls, animal complaints, etc. He also reported that there were 6 heroine arrests in the township. Lt. Snyder also provided the Township Committee with a year-end comparison, 2016 vs. 2017. There was a 79% increase in arrests, drug arrests have also increased (18 in 2016 and 44 in 2017). He attributes this to the officers being out there on patrol and very active. Three officers have also been sent to a Street Smart Pro-active Policing course which has aided them. Dispatch calls have increased 20%, 32% increase in accidents, 1 fatal in 2017, domestic violence calls increased 33% with just a slight increase in assaults. Tickets remain about the same and we get back about \$60,000.00 from the court. There were no residential burglaries in 2017 and theft in general is down by 15%. Committee Member Koury asked how Franklin Township's statistics compare with surrounding municipalities. Lt. Snyder said with larger townships there is almost no comparison and some smaller towns have a larger police force. Deputy Mayor Darocha asked Lt. Snyder where he feels he need most help and the response was patrols and calls. Cameron Keng commented on the police being pro-active and wanting to be sure they have the proper equipment for safety purposes and he's working with the Police Department on a vehicle replacement schedule. The Mayor officered kudos to Lt. Snyder for his great leadership and the effects made apparent in the statistics presented.

Motion to **Introduce Ordinance 2018 – 02** An Ordinance of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey to Amend, Revise and Supplement Chapter 182, "Fees," and Chapter 193, "Fire Prevention," of the Code of the Township of Franklin to Revise Fees for Fire Prevention. Public Hearing to be scheduled for a meeting to be held at 7:30 P.M., Thursday, February 22, 2018.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

All in favor. Motion carried.

- **Department of Public Works: Burgess/Repmann**

Alan Dilley, Supervisor DPW, has provided all with his monthly report which includes but is not limited to record keeping, vehicle maintenance and repair, catch basin work, recycling, salting/plowing, etc.

The Township Committee briefly discussed the recent request from Mike Beneduce regarding tourist signage on county and township roads for **Beneduce Vineyards**. A previous Committee considered this request in 2012 and expressed no interest in the signs being placed in Franklin Township. Mr. Beneduce is working with Mark Saluk, the economic development director for Hunterdon County and he plans to attend an upcoming Committee meeting to discuss this further. He is waiting to see if the County

supports the tourist oriented directional (TOD) signs before pursuing this again with Franklin Township. **Committee Member Soloway also reported that she too met with Mark Saluk and discussed lands for agri-tourism.**

- **Land Use (Land Use Board, Open Space, Planning, Zoning, Construction, Environmental): Soloway/Darocho**

The Land Use Board is scheduled to hold their Reorganization Meeting on Wednesday, February 14, 2018. Darlene Green, COAH Planner, will discuss affordable housing and also on the agenda will be the re-examination of the Master Plan.

The Environmental Commission will meet on Monday, January 29 and will discuss the Ash Borer. Katrina Campbell will send Deputy Mayor copies of some sample ordinance she received from our insurance company. A Forestry Management Plan will need to be formulated and Committee Member Soloway suggested someone from the Department of Public Works attend the classes for certification. Someone from the Environmental Commission might also be considered for appointment.

- **Community Outreach, Business, School, Recreation, Seniors: Soloway/Repmann**

Committee Member Soloway attended a recent **school board meeting** at the Franklin Township School. George Burdick is President of the school board. There are also two new members on the board. She met with the Superintendent to discuss the school getting more interactive with the township. The school is also agreeable to sending something out regarding the February 1 roll out for **Planet Civic**. The "voting" opens on February 1 and closes the end of February. Ms. Soloway suggested the Committee might want to consider being at the Municipal Building for one evening should residents have questions about Planet Civic. She is trying to get some photos of Franklin Township for the initiative: changing the name of the township to "Franklin Hills". The initiative is non-binding. **There was some discussion both pro and con as well about possibly putting a "softer" initiative out there initially.** Since not many people are aware of the voting, perhaps this is not the time for an important question to ask for the first initiative. There was also a question from the Committee on the cost should the township change the name. Would the school also have to change its name? Cameron Keng said it is a costly process. Committee Member Phil Koury felt the township has been "Franklin Township" since 1845 and didn't understand the need for change.

Committee Member Soloway also reported on having attended a Senior Citizen's meeting. Discussed various people assisting seniors with their income tax filing.

Mayor Repmann said he was slated to keep time at a Recreation Committee basketball. There was a problem with condensation on the gym floor due to the change in weather and the game was cancelled.

Ms. Campbell reported that she spoke with Rick Roseberry, Municipal Engineer, about the Grandin Road matter. The township is in receipt of HART's application for conducting a speed study on Grandin Road. Mr. Roseberry also suggested a possible temporary closing of the road with alternate routes and see what happens. This was suggested by him in lieu of a full blown traffic study at this time. Committee Member Phil Koury asked how the residents feel about this and Committee Member Soloway said she spoke to one resident and others on the road do not want the closing of the road. Member Koury said

Twp. Comm. Reg. Mtg.
Jan. 25, 2018

we also have to consider emergency service access. The Committee also thinks most of the problem is with Race Street coming out to Pittstown Road on a steep incline.

Motion to authorize Ursula Stryker and Lt. Tim Snyder to complete and submit the Speed Sentry Sign and Speed Study Agreement with HART for Grandin Road.

Moved Burgess Second Soloway

HART anticipates a March date for the equipment to be placed on Grandin Road for the study.

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

Stormwater Management: Rick Roseberry, Municipal Engineer, has anticipated a cost of \$8,250 to do the required work to comply with new State regulations. He will be meeting with Alan Dilley, DPW Supervisor, next week at the Municipal Building to discuss this matter. Basins in the township need to be identified and Alan will provide Mayor Repmann with the scope of work he can handle and the Committee can talk to Mr. Roseberry further about his quote.

REMINDER: PBA contract expires December 31, 2018.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to adopt a resolution for the Township Committee to enter executive session at 9:15 P.M. for discussion of matters pertaining to two contractual matters.

Moved Soloway Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Darocha AYE Koury AYE Soloway AYE Burgess AYE Repmann AYE

Motion carried.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motion to return to open session at 10:03 P.M.

Moved Soloway Second Burgess All in favor. Motion carried.

Matters discussed in executive session were workers' compensation insurance, the township's farm leases, personnel regarding pension paperwork and litigation for George Burdick vs. the Township of Franklin.

The Township Committee discussed some municipal owned properties, COAH properties and properties targeted for farmland preservation. There was some discussion about the proposed purchase of property on Pittstown Road by Grow-A-Row. If the township did any cost sharing for this project, they

Twp. Comm. Reg. Mtg.
Jan. 25, 2018

would like to see an exception area since they believe this is a prime site for a possible commercial operation. The open space tax was discussed along with the process to raise or lower it. Deputy Mayor Burgess will reach out to Lora Jones to discuss the township's strategy and goals regarding farmland preservation so she is made aware of the township's position. The Committee would be interested in maybe the top five properties for preservation and an anticipated cost over the next five year period. There was a brief discussion about the budget and unencumbered funds in the open space account. The CFO and the auditor feel there is an imbalance between capital, which the township doesn't put much into, and open space.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 10:03 P.M.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Ursula V. Stryker, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Date of Adoption: 2-8-2018