

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021
7:30 PM

(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87297158244>)

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Koury at 7:30 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
Captain Timothy Snyder, Police Department
Marc Saluk, Hunterdon County Office of Economic Development
Virginia Evans, Board of Education
George Reichert, Office of Emergency Management

Comments from the Public on Agenda Items Only:

No one from the public spoke regarding Agenda Items.

Proclamations & Presentations:

1. Hunterdon County Office of Economic Development (Marc Saluk) – County Economic Development Initiatives

The Municipal Clerk gave Marc Saluk, Hunterdon County Office of Economic Development, Zoom Meeting Application host privileges at 7:33 pm.

Marc Saluk, Hunterdon County Office of Economic Development, explained the purpose of the Hunterdon County Economic Development Department and how COVID-19 affected various businesses throughout the County. He indicated that manufacturing and agri-business had done well throughout the pandemic, that offices were at 90% occupancy and that municipal main streets were now recovering as business were opening. He further indicated that Hunterdon County was posed well to take advantage of post-pandemic recovery and that business opportunities were looking into Hunterdon County. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, Mr. Saluk indicated that the uptick in business opportunity had begun after the start of the pandemic and that the County offered an environment where people want to live and work. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury and Deputy Mayor Burgess, Mr. Saluk indicated that the Township could focus on vineyards, distilleries, and boutique hotels as opportunities to expand and grow a business element in the Township and requested that the Township provide a list of available locations to his office. The Municipal Attorney responded to Mayor Koury's questions regarding the rules for tasting.

The Municipal Clerk reclaimed host privileges at 7:44 pm to admit participants waiting in the Zoom Application's Waiting Room. Upon admittance she returned host privileges to Mr. Saluk and requested that he admit any additional participants that arrive during his presentation.

Marc Saluk introduced and highlighted the features of the 579 Trail Website, indicating that the website was posted the previous year during the COVID-19 pandemic and has proven successful. He also introduced the Hunterdon Main Streets website as a concept expansion that presented the cultural, dining and shopping experiences of various municipalities in Hunterdon County. He indicated that the Main Streets website could be utilized to advertise vacancies in the various municipalities. He further highlighted the efforts of the 78/22 Coalition, the Hunterdon County Film Commission and Hunterdon County Tourism to assist residents and visitors with becoming familiar with the assets of Hunterdon County. Mayor Koury briefly spoke regarding activities available in Hunterdon County and his appreciation for the map features of the website. Mayor Koury further explained Franklin Township's centralized location in the County and the Township's efforts to expand business zones via smart development strategies.

The Municipal Clerk reclaimed host privileges at 7:55 pm.

Mayor Koury offered the Committee an opportunity to ask questions regarding Mr. Saluk's presentation. Committeeman Repmann thanked Mr. Saluk for his attendance at the meeting. Upon opening the meeting to questions from the public, Elizabeth Shaw, Rural Awareness, questioned Mr. Saluk on the public's requests for public transportation options. Mr. Saluk indicated that his department was not involved in public transportation efforts, but Hunterdon County LINK was looking into it. He further indicated that efforts to expand public transportation were hindered by financial feasibility and that the best options for expansion of public transportation would come from individual municipalities.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the March 11, 2021 minutes Work-Session/Regular Meeting and Executive Session:
Donaruma Second: Repmann

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

Payment of Bills

Motion to approve the Bills List: Homulak Second: Burgess

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

Ordinances:

1. Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Ordinance 2021-03: An Ordinance of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Lease for Hunting Purposes of Certain Property Owned by the Township and Not Required for Public Purposes.

Motion to open Public Hearing: Donaruma Second: Homulak All in favor. Motion carried.

No one from the Public came forward to speak.

Motion to close Public Hearing: Donaruma Second: Burgess All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion to adopt: Donaruma Second: Burgess

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

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2021-14: Proclamation/Resolution Supporting the 2021 UDrive. UText. UPay. Distracted Driving Crackdown April 1-30, 2021

Captain Timothy Snyder explained the resolution's connection to a reimbursement grant for distracted driving law enforcement efforts.

Motion to adopt: Donaruma Second: Burgess

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

Staff Administrative Reports:

OEM: George Reichert reported on efforts to update the mitigation plan.

BOE: Virginia Evans reported on the status of the school budget and explained that the Public Hearing would be held virtually via the Zoom Application on Tuesday, April 27th, 2021 at 6:00 pm. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, Ms. Evans indicated that the school would be holding virtual classes for one week after the conclusion of spring break and that all students had the option to attend in-person classes starting on April 19th, 2021.

Police: Captain Snyder reported on the Police Department's efforts to investigate a breaking and entering incident on Sidney School Road and indicated that the department would be assisting the State Police with a Justice Reform Rally at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in Union Township.

Administrative: The Township Clerk reminded the Committee that the next Township Newsletter was scheduled for publication in May and that articles needed to be submitted by April 1st.

Board of Health: None.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Committee Member Reports:

Mayor Koury thanked Craig Repmann for his participation in the 78/22 Coalition.

Deputy Mayor Burgess reported that she had spoken with Alan Dilley, Department of Public Works Supervisor, regarding his pending retirement and thanked the Municipal Clerk for her efforts to assist the Public Works Department with the maintenance of the Municipal Building by salting the building's

steps during the February snowstorms and performing the monthly tests of the emergency lights and weekly tests of the building generator. She indicated that the Committee would need to begin discussion of a succession plan.

Mayor Koury reported that the Land Use Board meeting scheduled for March 24th, 2021, had been cancelled as there were no Bills List or Discussion items. He indicated that the Township Engineer was working on an application for the next meeting. He further reported that he and the Municipal Attorney continued to meet with representatives of the NJDEP regarding the site behind the EMS building on Pittstown Road. Mayor Koury provided the Committee with a Vaccine Clinic status update. Elizabeth Shaw indicated that she had worked at the clinic and that educators were now being vaccinated. Mayor Koury thanked the volunteers at the clinic. Mayor Koury reported that the Farmland Preservation Application for Furlong Farm had been denied by the County due to lack of municipal support and thanked the Committee for their focus on smart preservation and economic development. Mayor Koury updated the Committee on efforts to fund the publication of a book regarding the history of the Township. The Municipal Attorney confirmed that the Auditors indicated that the Township could not use Open Space Trust funds for the publication but could seek other means to fund the effort. The Mayor requested that the Finance subcommittee seek alternative options to fund the publication and seek reimbursement through book sales. He further requested that Committeeman Repmann begin planning efforts for the Township's annual Community Day event.

Comments from the Public:

No members from the public came forward to speak.

The Municipal Attorney updated the Committee on the status of the contract to purchase the Faith Wesleyan Church property on Lower Landsdown Road and indicated that the process was now in the "due diligence" phase and would start the inspection process. Mayor Koury and Committeeman Repmann agreed to form a "Due Diligence" subcommittee and make sure that all appropriate inspections were obtained. The Municipal Attorney further reported that she had spoken with the County regarding the purchase of a portion of the property.

The Municipal Attorney informed the Committee that she would be sending information for discussion at the next Committee meeting regarding the new Cannabis legislation. Mayor Koury indicated that the legislation provisioned that if a municipality did nothing, they would automatically be opted in for a five-year period.

Executive Session: None.

Action by the Committee: None.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Repmann Second: Donaruma

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 04/08/2021