

MINUTES  
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2021  
7:30 PM

**(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83205368621>)**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Koury at 7:31 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 Financial Officer  
George Reichert, Office of Emergency Management  
Virginia Evans, Board of Education  
Bob Hornby, Hunterdon County Agricultural Development Board Administrator

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 April 8, 2021 minutes Work-Session/Regular Meeting and Executive Session:

Burgess Second: Donaruma

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

Payment of Bills

Motion to approve the Bills List: Donaruma Second: Burgess

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

Mayor Koury explained that the Bills List included the school payment.

Ordinances:

1. Introduction & First Reading of Ordinance 2021-04: Bond Ordinance Providing for the Acquisition of, and Payment of the Purchase Price for, Certain Real Property (Including Real Property Commonly Known as 43 Lower Landsdown Road) and Improvements thereon, by and in the Township of Franklin, in the County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey; Appropriating \$1,155,000 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$1,100,000 Bonds or Notes of the Township to Finance Part of the Cost Thereof.

- a. Public Hearing and Final Adoption scheduled for May 27, 2021.

Motion to Introduce: Donaruma Second: Burgess

Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, the CFO and Township Attorney explained that the bond was for the maximum amount and would cancel the remaining balance of any unused funds by resolution.

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

2. Introduction & First Reading of Ordinance 2021-05: Ordinance Authorizing the Purchase by Franklin Township of Real Property from Faith Wesleyan Church, Inc., Known as Block 8, Lot 1.02.

- b. Public Hearing and Final Adoption scheduled for May 27, 2021.

Motion to Introduce: Donaruma Second: Burgess

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

Mayor Koury expressed his appreciation for the purchase. Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Burgess, the Township Attorney clarified that there would be public hearings and final adoptions for both ordinances on May 27, 2021.

**Resolutions:**

1. Resolution 2021-16: Farmland Preservation – Final Cost Share Approval – Magnolia Creek Farm – 555 Pittstown Road – Block 42, Lots 1 & 1.02

Bob Hornby, Hunterdon County Agricultural Development Board Administrator, provided a description of the farm and explained its current use. He explained that the resolution authorizes the Township to provide a 20% cost share for preservation of the farm. The Committee briefly discussed the soil and use of the farm and compared it to other preserved properties. The Township Attorney explained that the Township could play for the cost share out of the Open Space Trust Fund. Mr. Hornby explained how the County would pay their cost share and clarified that the farm was on the County's target list for preservation.

Motion to adopt: Donaruma Second: Homulak

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

2. Resolution 2021-17: Statewide Joint Insurance Fund – 2021 Renewal

The CFO explained the renewal of the insurance contract and that funds were available.

Motion to adopt: Donaruma Second: Homulak

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

3. Resolution 2021-18: Resolution of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, Adopting a Form Required to be Used for the Filing of Notices for Tort Claim Against the Township of Franklin in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Tort Claims Act, N.J.S.A. 59:8-6.

The Township Attorney explained Tort claim procedures and the insurance provider's request for the Township to adopt an official Tort Claim form.

Motion to adopt: Burgess Second: Donaruma

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

Staff Administrative Reports:

**Police:** Mayor Koury advised the Committee of Captain Snyder's absence due to a death in his family and that Sergeant Bollaro would oversee the Police Department while Captain Snyder is out of the office.

Motion to authorize the Municipal Clerk to order a fruit basket for the Snyder family: Burgess  
Second: Donaruma All in favor. Motion carried.

**CFO:** The CFO updated the Committee on the status of documenting the purchase and inspections of 43 Lower Landsdown Road. He specified the efforts of Colliers Engineering & Design (formerly Maser Consulting) to inspect the property and an upcoming meeting with Donnelly Energy to assess the property's utilities. He thanked Mayor Koury for his roll in organizing the energy assessment of the property.

**Administrative:** The Township Clerk reminded those present that the New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign Day would be taking place the following day. She indicated that she had picked up the saplings in the morning with Alan Dille, supervisor of the Department of Public Works.

Old Business:

1. Proposal for Professional Services: Site Survey and Building/Septic System Evaluation – Lot 1.02, Block 8 – 43 Lower Landsdown Road

Motion to authorize: Donaruma Second: Homulak

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

**OEM:** George Reichert reported on his attendance of two FEMA Flood Plain seminars regarding flood insurance.

**BOE:** Virginia Evans reminded those present that the school's Budget presentation would be taking place the following week on Tuesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> and that a link to the Zoom meeting would be posted on the school's website one hour before the meeting. She thanked the Department of Public Works for their assistance in preparing the ball courts and fields and their snow removal efforts.

**Open Space:** Lora Jones explained that she was in support of the County's efforts to preserve the Magnolia Creek Farm. Mayor Koury explained his efforts to improve maintenance of the Pittstown Road Trail.

New Business: None.

Board of Health: None.

Committee Member Reports:

Deputy Mayor Burgess reported on the Environmental Commission's efforts to host the New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign Day. She explained that annual well testing advertising would be distributed at the event in addition to information on the trees being provided. She further explained that the event has produced an increased interest in the Environmental Commission. Mayor Koury thanked the Environmental Commission for their efforts. Deputy Mayor Burgess thanked the Township Clerk for her assistance and efforts in advertising the event.

Committeeman Repmann reminded those present that the Franklin Township Recreation Socially Distanced Spring Fishing Derby would be taking place the coming Saturday and required residents to pre-register for the event.

Committeeman Homulak reported that he had received a request from the Fire Department that he would forward to the subcommittee for review.

Mayor Koury reminded those present of the connection between Earth Day and the Township's New Jersey Tree Recover Campaign Day. He requested that the Township Clerk place the Hunterdon County Department of Health's Mosquito and Vector Control information on the Township website. He explained that the Township Attorney is working on an ordinance to assist the Township's police officers with the new Cannabis legislation. The Township Attorney explained the intent of the ordinance to prohibit use of cannabis and alcohol in public and quasi-public locations, and that she was waiting on confirmation from the Franklin Township School about the inclusion of school properties. Mayor Koury updated those present on information he received from Senator Booker regarding COVID-19 relief funds and requested that the finance subcommittee investigate the Township's options.

The Township Attorney updated the Committee on the status of the Township's Farm Leases. She explained the need for publicly advertised requests for bids and the request for a 7-year lease from an interested party. She reminded the Committee of the costs incurred by the Township by continuing to have the Department of Public Works maintain the properties. She also updated the Committee on the County's visit to the 43 Landsdown Road property and explained their interest in trail access for horses. She recommended acquiring the survey of the property before mapping out trails. She further updated the Committee on the disposition of other Township owned properties and her efforts to acquire the opinion of an appraiser to maximize property value.

Comments from the Public:

Christina Faragalla, 205 Sidney Road, expressed her approval of the Township's New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign Day. She questioned the Township's intended use of the property on Lower Landsdown Road and what variances were being sought for the properties adjacent to the Municipal Building. The Township Attorney explained the purchase of 43 Lower Landsdown Road and that the Township was exploring a partial land sale to the County for trail access. The Attorney further explained that the Township is exploring options to sell the properties next to the Municipal Building, that the lots were currently undersized for the building of residential properties, and that a variance would be required to combine the lots to make them buildable which would increase their value. Ms. Faragalla questioned efforts to maintain safety on a trail that included pedestrian, bicycle, and horse access. Mayor Koury explained the State and County jurisdiction over the trails.

Executive Session: None.

Action by the Committee: None.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Donaruma    Second: Homulak                      All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk

  
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Adopted: 05/13/2021