

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2021
7:30 PM

(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84444593600>)

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
Cameron Keng, Chief Financial Officer
George Reichert, Office of Emergency Management
Virginia Evans, Board of Education

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 22, 2021 minutes Work-Session/Regular Meeting: Donaruma

Second: Burgess

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

Payment of Bills

Motion to approve the Bills List: Homulak Second: Donaruma

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

Ordinances:

1. Introduction & First Reading of Ordinance 2021-06: An Ordinance to Create Chapter 285 of the Township of Franklin, Hunterdon County, New Jersey to Prohibit Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco and Cannabis Products in Public Places.
 - a. Public Hearing and Final Adoption scheduled for June 10, 2021.

Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, the Township Attorney explained that the ordinance was in response to Committee discussion from previous meetings and had been awaiting approval from the school to include school property.

Motion to Introduce: Burgess Second: Donaruma

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

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2021-19: Proclamation/Resolution Supporting the Click It or Ticket Mobilization of May 24 – June 6, 2021.

Captain Snyder, Police Department, explained the annual nature of the resolution and compared it to Resolution 2021-14 which was adopted at a previous meeting.

Motion to adopt: Donaruma Second: Homulak

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

2. Resolution 2021-20: Resolution Amending 2021-05, "Resolution Appointing Various Municipal Positions" by Appointing Members of the Environmental Commission.

Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, the Township Attorney indicated that the appointees should complete a Citizen Leadership Form.

Motion to adopt: Donaruma Second: Repmann

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

Staff Administrative Reports:

Police: Captain Snyder reported on the April monthly activities of the Police Department, specifying background and criminal investigations, arrests, motor vehicle warnings, tickets, accidents, radio calls, animal complaints, property checks, and others. Mayor Koury specified the Police Department's involvement in traffic events regarding a truck that ran out of fuel and an accident on Route 78. Captain Snyder also specified the Police Department's assistance with a protest held at the nearby correctional facility.

CFO: The CFO updated the Committee on the status of 2nd quarter tax collection, indicating that collection rate was a little over 93%. He further indicated that the Township would be mailing two separate tax notices. He reported that the Finance Subcommittee was reviewing the current year Budget. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, the CFO indicated that 232 tax accounts remain outstanding.

Administrative: The Township Clerk reported on the status of renewing the Township's liquor licenses. She reminded those present that June 8th is Primary Election Day and that the polling locations would be open for in-person voting. She also reported that there was an increase in marriage license application questions, and she anticipated an increase in summer wedding ceremonies.

OEM: George Reichert reported on training for FEMA initiatives and referenced a previously received monthly report. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, Mr. Reichert indicated that he did not need specific assistance from the Committee at this time.

BOE: Virginia Evans reported on the successful passing of the School Budget and indicated that the public hearing was available for public access on the school's website, www.ftschoool.org.

Old Business:

1. Authorize use of Open Space Funds for the repair of the Franklin Township Historic One-Room Schoolhouse

Committeeman Repmann updated the Committee on the school's efforts to repair the Franklin Township Historic One-Room Schoolhouse, indicating that the project is anticipated to cost approximately \$24,000.00, and sought the advice of the Township Attorney on how to proceed in utilizing Open Space Funds to assist in the restoration efforts. After questioning official ownership of the schoolhouse, the Attorney advised that the Committee commit funds via motion or formal resolution after receiving an official request from the school, complete with formal quotations for the repair work. The Township Attorney further indicated that she would begin preparation of the official resolution.

New Business: None.

Board of Health: None.

Committee Member Reports:

Committeeman Donaruma provided a status update to the Committee on the Public Safety Subcommittee's efforts to address requests received from the Fire Department.

Committeeman Repmann reported on the success of the Franklin Township Recreation Socially Distanced Spring Fishing Derby and thanked Sgt. Bollaro, Franklin Township Police Department, for his assistance with the event. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, he indicated that he was not aware of any specific summer events.

Deputy Mayor Burgess reported on Franklin Township's COVID-19 status, specifying available vaccination opportunities, and indicating that there is a small uptick in cases in Franklin Township. She also reported on the success of the Environmental Commission's New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign Day, indicating that the event ran out of trees within two hours, and that reports still had to be sent to the State. Mayor Koury praised the Environmental Commission's effort to host and publish the event. Deputy Mayor Burgess reminded those present of the upcoming well-testing event and recommended that residents get at least a basic test. She further reported that Homestead rebates were being applied to residential property taxes.

Committeeman Homulak reported on the Public Safety Subcommittee's meeting with the fire district regarding their requests. He further reported that he had met with the CFO regarding the annual

Budget. He promoted the Quakertown Fire Company BBQ fundraiser event to take place on Sunday, May 16th, 2021.

Mayor Koury reported on the Land Use Board meeting that took place the previous night, indicating the approval of the bills and a public hearing for an application. He further indicated that board members were taking Stormwater Management classes. He provided a status update to the Committee regarding the Township Engineer's efforts to conduct inspections of the new property located at 43 Lower Landsdown Road, indicating the Committee's intention to move Municipal offices into the new building. He further indicated that he had received information regarding NJDOT 2022 Municipal Aid Grant Applications and that Alan Dilley, Department of Public Works Supervisor, recommended that the Township apply to continue efforts to improve the conditions of Oak Grove Road. Upon advice of the Township Attorney the Mayor requested a motion to authorize the Township Engineer to begin preparing an application.

Motion to authorize Adam Wisniewski, P.E. of Colliers Engineering & Design, to apply for 2022 NJDOT Municipal Aid Grant for the continuation of the improvements on Oak Grove Road to the east of Lockatong Creek to address the poor condition of the road surface, lack of drainage and dangerous winter icing conditions: Donaruma Second: Homulak

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

Mayor Koury continued his report, indicating that the Construction Official had informed him of new electronic requirements for construction forms.

Upon request by Mayor Koury, Committeeman Donaruma updated the Committee on his efforts to research the reactions of other municipalities to the Cannabis Act. Committeeman Donaruma indicated that other municipalities were opting out of everything with the intent to release restrictions later as more information is provided by the State. The Township Attorney confirmed that the deadline for municipal action was August 22nd.

The Township Attorney updated the Committee on her efforts to evaluate the resale value of municipal-owned properties next to the Municipal Building and on Cherryville Road. She indicated that she had sought the opinion of an appraiser and a cost estimate from the Township Engineer for the Township to weigh its options. Mayor Koury explained that the Township was seeking ways to raise funds and reduce costs to the Township. He questioned if the Committee would be willing to consider a cell tower lease option on the property next to the Municipal Building, indicating that there was a need for cellular signal boost in the area and it could provide an option for high-speed internet. The Committee indicated that they would like to see an appraisal comparison for all three lots.

Committeeman Donaruma explained his efforts to acquire estimates and the requirements for the Police Department to move into the 43 Lower Landsdown Road property. The Township Attorney recommended reaching out to West Amwell Township as they had recently moved their Police Department into their Municipal Building. The Committee briefly discussed the estimated costs of moving the Police Department and options to utilize Shared Services Agreements for specific police

related activities. Mayor Koury indicated a need to review estimates before beginning floor planning for the new building.

The Township Attorney updated the Committee on her efforts to explore the option to sell a portion of the 43 Lower Landsdown Road property to the County. She indicated that she would make a draft contract for the County to review.

Upon request by Deputy Mayor Burgess, the Township Attorney updated the Committee on efforts to resume leasing the Township's farmland properties. The Township Attorney explained one farmer's interest to farm animals on one of the properties and indicated that there were details to be considered before adding that option to a request for bids. She further explained the Township's historic difficulties in leasing the farmland properties.

Comments from the Public:

John Bencoter, 171 Old Franklin School Road, thanked the Committee for his appointment to the Environmental Commission and spoke regarding the Environmental Commission's success in holding the NJ Tree Recovery Campaign Day. He questioned the Township's official position regarding COVID-19 vaccination. He further questioned the Committee on details regarding the purchase of the 43 Lower Landsdown Road property. Mayor Koury confirmed the use of bonds to purchase the property and that COAH funds were not involved in the properties next to the Municipal Building. Mr. Bencoter requested more public outreach from the Committee regarding the purchase of the property. The Township Attorney explained the timeframes involved in the Bond Ordinance and Purchase Ordinance regarding the property. Mayor Koury thanked Mr. Bencoter for his comments, explained the status of the current Municipal Building and the Committee's efforts to analyze the Township's options for updating the Municipal Building. Upon further questioning by Mr. Bencoter, the Mayor explained that the total cost for the purchase of the property was included in the Bond Ordinance and that the Committee was discussing options regarding Township properties. Upon Mr. Bencoter's request for access to Town Committee meeting recordings, the Township Clerk indicated that he could acquire those records from her office.

George Reichert, 392 Pittstown Road, offered his assistance, as a resident, in the restoration of the Township's historic one-room schoolhouse.

Executive Session:

The Township Attorney explained the need to enter Executive Session, that action could potentially be taken upon return to open session, and that all attendees of the meeting could wait in the Zoom application's Waiting Room except for the Committee, the CFO, the Township Clerk, and the Township Attorney. Upon confirmation of the absence of all but the required attendees, the Township Clerk stopped audio-visual recording of the meeting.

Motion to enter executive session: Donaruma Second: Homulak
All in favor. Motion carried.

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:45 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Personnel – Department of Public Works
2. Personnel/Contractual – Police Contract

Committee exited Executive Session at 9:34 pm.

The Township Clerk resumed audio-visual recording of the meeting.

Action by the Committee: None.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Repmann Second: Unrecorded

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:34 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 05/27/2021