

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2021
7:30 PM

(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81695575759>)

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 Finance Officer
Captain Timothy Snyder, Police Department (arrived at 7:45 PM)
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: None.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the July 8, 2021 minutes Work-Session/Regular Meeting: Burgess

Second: Repmann

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

Payment of Bills

Motion to approve the Bills List: Donaruma Second: Homulak

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

Upon questioning by the Committee, the CFO explained charges for stamps needed to expedite the mailing of Tax Bills and a water test for the 43 Lower Landsdown Road property purchase.

Ordinances: None.

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2021-36: Resolution to Extend Grace Period for Third Quarter Taxes Due August 1, 2021.

The CFO explained the purpose of the resolution based upon the mailing date of the Tax Bills.

Motion to adopt: Repmann Second: Donaruma

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

2. Resolution 2021-37: Refund Tax Overpayment – Disabled Veteran – 58 Joe Ent Road – Block 36, Lot 44.07.

Motion to adopt: Burgess Second: Donaruma

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

3. Resolution 2021-38: A Resolution of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Agricultural Lease of Certain Property Owned by the Township and Not Required for Public Purposes, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-14 Et Seq.
4. Resolution 2021-39: A Resolution of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Hunting Lease of Certain Property Owned by the Township and Not Required for Public Purposes, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-14 Et Seq.

The Township Attorney explained the subject properties, their locations, portions used for agriculture and hunting, and minimum bid requirements.

Motion to adopt Resolutions 2021-38 and 2021-39: Burgess Second: Donaruma

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

5. Resolution 2021-40: Resolution Authorizing Fireworks Display – South Ridge Community Church – 7 Pittstown Road – Fall Launch – Friday, September 17, 2021 (Rain Date – Saturday – September 18, 2021).

Upon questioning by Committeeman Donaruma, the Township Clerk explained that the resolution was required for South Ridge Community Church’s application to the Quakertown Fire Department.

Motion to adopt: Repmann Second: Burgess

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

6. Resolution 2021-41: Green Team Advisory Committee.
7. Resolution 2021-42: Sustainable Land Use Pledge (Re-Affirmation of Resolution 2014-60)

Deputy Mayor Burgess explained that the resolutions were required for the Township’s application to renew the Sustainable Jersey Certification.

Motion to adopt Resolutions 2021-41 and 2021-42: Burgess Second: Homulak

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

8. Resolution 2021-43: Certification of Audit (2020).

The CFO explained the results of the 2020 Audit and compared them to previous years. He indicated that the Township had been making improvements each year and that there were no significant deficiencies.

Motion to adopt: Homulak Second: Donaruma

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

9. Resolution 2021-44: Adopt Corrective Action Plan (2020 Audit).

The CFO compared the Corrective Action Plan to the previous year and explained the need to keep orderly records. He also explained that efforts to correct the concerns regarding the Animal Control Fund had already begun.

Motion to adopt: Burgess Second: Repmann

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

The Township Clerk reminded the Committee that they would need to sign the corresponding Affidavit and that failure to do so could result in a personal fine.

Staff Administrative Reports:

CFO: The CFO provided an update on the funding for the new Municipal Building. He explained how the County purchase of a portion of the property would reduce the bond amount and the status of the Bond Anticipation Note (BAN).

Administrative: The Township Clerk reported that the administrative staff had assisted with the receipt of Farmland Assessment forms and had begun taking in third quarter tax payments.

Police: Captain Snyder indicated that he had nothing to add to the July report he had submitted previously. He further indicated that the Police Department had been busy with weather related events.

OEM: George Reichert indicated that he had nothing to add to the July report he had submitted previously. He reported that Fire and EMS had responded to 90 calls in July.

Board of Health: None.

Old Business:

1. Discussion: Township Planner's Analysis of Cannabis Implementation into the Current Zoning Ordinance.

Mayor Koury explained that he had requested that the discussion item remain on the agenda. Captain Snyder advised the Committee of a presentation regarding cannabis trends and legal enforcement, that would be taking place on September 7th, 2021. He indicated that he may attend the presentation and offered an opportunity to attend to Committee members. Mayor Koury recommended that Captain Snyder and a member of the Committee attend the presentation. He indicated that he and

Committeeman Repmann should form a subcommittee to meet with interested parties. Committeeman Donaruma expressed his interest in the presentation but would not be able to attend. Committeeman Donaruma advised the Committee of a conflict in Readington regarding a neighborhood smell that is associated with a Cannabis facility. The Township Attorney explained that smells related to Cannabis were associated more with processing facilities than growing facilities and recommended that the Committee speak with the Township Planner and that developer's agreements be implemented for any Township cannabis facilities. Committeeman Repmann requested more details regarding the air filtration system for the Readington facility. Deputy Mayor Burgess indicated an interest in attending the presentation on September 7th. Mayor Koury requested that the Township Clerk coordinate attendance to the presentation. The Township Attorney updated the Committee on the decisions of other municipalities to opt in or opt out of the Cannabis legislation.

2. Property Purchase – 43 Lower Landsdown Road (New Municipal Building) – Status Update

The CFO updated the Committee on the results of the water tests. Mayor Koury inquired as to the results of the mechanical inspection. The Township Attorney explained that the due diligence period was over and that the water system had failed the lead tests. Committeeman Donaruma indicated that he had spoken with the Department of Corrections regarding moving the Police Department to the new building. He stated that the State would be reasonable if the Township could prove that the facility was superior to the current facility and that waivers could be applied for. He indicated that the State had offered an on-site meeting to assess the property and that moving the Police Department was possible and not cost prohibitive. The Township Attorney explained that the County's offer to purchase a portion of the property would be discussed later in Executive Session.

New Business:

1. Request for fee waiver: Hunterdon Healthcare Auxiliary (HMCA) – Municipal Portion of Temporary Food License Application Fee (\$25.00) – "Taste of Autumn" Event to be held on October 3rd, 2021.

The Township Clerk explained that the request to waive the municipal fee was forwarded from the Zoning/Health Officer.

Motion to authorize waiver of Municipal portion of Temporary Food License Application Fee (\$25.00) for the "Taste of Autumn" Event to be held by Hunterdon Healthcare Auxiliary (HMCA) on October 3rd, 2021: Repmann Second: Donaruma All in favor. Motion carried.

2. Discussion Item: Agritourism Land Identification Project.

Mayor Koury explained the County's interest in agritourism and that Marc Saluk, Hunterdon County Director of Economic Development, had planned to group Franklin Township and Kingwood Township together in a list of agritourism sites. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, the Committee expressed interest in supporting the County's Agritourism Land Identification Project and briefly discussed appropriate Township properties.

Committee Member Reports:

Deputy Mayor Diane Burgess provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic, explaining that Franklin Township had 233 cases but no deaths. She indicated that wearing a mask was not required but was recommended for vaccinated individuals. She reiterated that non-vaccinated individuals should continue to wear masks. She reported on the efforts of the Environmental Commission to renew the Township's Sustainable Jersey Certification and educate the public on plastics and recycling. She indicated that she would be providing information to be placed on the Township website. The Township Clerk answered her questions regarding website update notices and email blasts. Deputy Mayor Burgess updated the Committee on the status of the Department of Public Works. Upon questioning by Committeeman Repmann regarding advertising a Public Works position by the beginning of September, the Township Attorney explained that the Committee should authorize the posting of the position.

Motion to authorize the posting & publication of an employment position in the Department of Public Works: Burgess Second: Repmann All in favor. Motion carried.

Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Burgess, the Committee indicated that they would be comfortable with the recommendation of the subcommittee and chose not to interview candidates at a Committee meeting.

Committeeman Repmann indicated that he did not have anything to report and thanked the CFO and Township Clerk for the positive direction the Township had taken in compliance with the Audit.

Mayor Koury reported on his contact with JCP&L regarding the recent storm. He advised those present of an excessive heat advisory and recommended energy conservation. He updated those present on JCP&L's tree trimming efforts. He reported that the Land Use Board would not meet again until September 8th, 2021.

Upon invitation to speak by Mayor Koury, Virginia Evans, Franklin Township Board of Education, reported that school would begin on August 26th, 2021, and that there would be a Board of Education meeting on August 23rd, 2021, at 6:30pm. She explained that the Board of Education meeting would be held in-person with an option to listen in remotely. She advised those present that a COVID-19 vaccination clinic would be held on August 27th, 2021, likely in the Union Township School, that was open to Franklin Township school and municipal employees.

Comments from the Public:

No members from the public came forward to speak. James Witkowski declined Mayor Koury's offer to speak.

Mayor Koury advised those present to keep cool but not to excessively use their air conditioning units.

Executive Session:

The Township Attorney explained the need to enter Executive Session, that action could be taken, and that all attendees of the meeting could wait in the Zoom application's Waiting Room except for the Committee, Captain Timothy Snyder, 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: Burgess Second: Donaruma
All in favor. Motion carried.

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:16 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Contractual & Attorney/Client Privilege – Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS) Lease
2. Contractual – County Purchase of Portion of 43 Lower Landsdown Road
3. Personnel – Police Department

Committee exited Executive Session at 9:26 pm.

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

Action by the Committee:

Motion to authorize the mayor to execute the contract with the County of Hunterdon for the sale of the open space portion of the property the Township is in the process of buying: Donaruma

Second: Repmann

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

Motion to authorize the Township Attorney to write a letter as discussed in Executive Session: Repmann

Second: Donaruma

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

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Repmann Second: Burgess

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:27 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 09/09/2021