

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2021
7:30 PM

(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84519516374>)

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 (absent) Mike Homulak (present)
Craig Repmann (present)

Also present: Katrina L. Campbell, Municipal Attorney (Lavery, Selvaggi, Ambromitis & Cohen)
Igor V. Bykov, Attorney (Lavery, Selvaggi, Ambromitis & Cohen)
Christine Burke, Municipal Clerk
Cameron, Keng, Chief Finance Officer
Captain Timothy Snyder, Police Department
Alan Dilley, Director of Public Works (arrived at 7:37 pm.)
George Reichert, Office of Emergency Management
Elizabeth Shaw, Rural Awareness
Lynne French, Rural Awareness

Comments from the Public on Agenda Items Only:

No one from the public spoke regarding Agenda Items.

Proclamations & Presentations:

1. Rural Awareness – Daffodil Bulb Planting Day – October 2, 2021

Lynne French, Rural Awareness, greeted those present and thanked the Committee for their efforts. She provided a description of the Daffodil Bulb Planting Day event, specifying the number of bulbs, the date, and site locations. She thanked Alan Dilley, Department of Public Works Supervisor, for his assistance in providing appropriate locations. Upon request by Deputy Mayor Burgess, Ms. French further explained the site locations as municipal properties located in the Township, specifying the Municipal Building property, the junction at Upper and Lower Kingtown Road, the Hamden River Road and Lower Landsdown Road curve, and “Roger’s Pond” (or “Roger’s Grove”), located on Pittstown Road. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, Ms. French explained that 22 bulbs were being planted because the plants would bloom in 2022, and that she hoped the correlation would encourage more child participation and introduce gardening.

Elizabeth Shaw, Rural Awareness, explained that the event would begin around 9:30 am in the Municipal Building parking lot where participants would be provided bags of bulbs. She indicated that she had requested that the event be advertised via the school’s digital newsletter and flyers. Mayor Koury requested that the Township Clerk post the event on the Township website. Ms. Shaw indicated that

there were no preregistration requirements. She further indicated that the event was taking place on the same date as the Quakertown graveyard ceremony, but she hoped the daffodil bulb planting event would complete before 2:00 pm. The Town Committee expressed their approval of the event. Ms. French expressed her appreciation for the community, Town Committee and Rural Awareness.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the August 12, 2021 minutes Work-Session/Regular Meeting & Executive Session:

Burgess Second: Homulak

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

Payment of Bills

Motion to approve the Bills List: Repmann Second: Homulak

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

The CFO explained items on the Bills List that correspond to school payments and road repairs.

Ordinances: None.

Resolutions: None.

Staff Administrative Reports:

OEM: George Reichert reported on his efforts to prepare for Tropical Storm Ida and its aftermath with the County, Department of Public Works, Emergency Medical Services and Police Department. He indicated that he was working on getting information to the County for reimbursement for the Township's storm response. Mayor Koury indicated that the storm had closed three bridges that affect Franklin Township. Mr. Reichert explained that the bridges would be repaired by the County and were not the Township's responsibility. He further indicated that residents would have to use detours around the bridges until they were re-opened.

Police: Captain Snyder reported on the August monthly activities of the Police Department, specifying background investigations, other investigations, arrests, motor vehicle warnings, tickets, accidents, radio calls, animal complaints, property checks, and others. Captain Snyder commended Officer Caccavale's second successful deployment of Narcan at a private residence. Mayor Koury questioned how to reach more residents regarding the dangers of drug abuse. Captain Snyder explained Sergeant Bollaro's efforts to re-implement drug awareness classes.

Administrative: The Township Clerk reported that numerous updates had been placed on the Township's website, including news regarding the storm, low flying planes, bid advertisements, items required by the Police Department and for the Sustainable Jersey application, and a job posting for the Department of Public Works. She further explained the procedures for requesting items to be placed on the Township website. She reminded those present that Bids for Agricultural and Hunting Leases of Township Property were now being accepted in the Clerk's Office. She indicated that the bid notice had been advertised in the newspaper and on the website and packages had already been picked up in the Clerk's Office. She explained that the bid openings would take place on September 15th, 2021, at 10:00

am for the agricultural bids and at Noon for the hunting bids. She further explained that the awards would be made at the next meeting.

CFO: The CFO updated the Committee on the status of the Bond and Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) for the purchase of 43 Lower Landsdown Road (the new Municipal Building). He reported on the Township's storm expenses and explained that most of the expenses were the County's responsibility. He indicated that the Township would be responsible for the damage to Oak Grove Road and explained the Department of Transportation (DOT) grant that the Township had already submitted for may be able to assist in repair costs. He further explained the Phase 1 and Phase 2 efforts of the grant project and how they may be utilized to update the design of the road to withstand storms. He reported that the Township's required financial reporting had been completed for this year and that efforts to begin the 2022 Budget would take place next month. He reported on the status of tax collections and the tax sale. He thanked the Department of Public Works for their storm response efforts and indicated that the Township had received a lot of positive feedback. He briefly discussed Stormwater Manager training and explained that the Township Engineer had confirmed the Township's status as "Tier B" and that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) did not currently require the Township to have a Stormwater Manager.

DPW: Alan Dilley reported on the status of the Township's roads and explained that there were two other storm events prior to Tropical Storm Ida. Mayor Koury thanked the Department of Public Works for their efforts. Mr. Dilley explained that Tropical Storm Ida was the Township's first instance of actual flash flooding.

Committeeman Homulak questioned the CFO regarding opportunities for State and Federal recovery relief. The CFO, Director of DPW and OEM Coordinator explained that FEMA assistance was based on regional consideration, but they would be applying for assistance. Mayor Koury requested that grants be sought for additional pro-active efforts. Mr. Reichert, OEM Coordinator, explained that the Fire Company had already started looking into acquiring a high-clearance vehicle for these events. Mr. Reichert also explained that FEMA classified the flooding event caused by Tropical Storm Ida as a 200-year flood as opposed to a 100-year flood and explained FEMA's criteria for each classification. Upon Deputy Mayor Burgess' questioning, Mr. Dilley, Director of Public Works, indicated that Oak Grove Road would need to be replaced and that the Township Engineer was currently working on a design as part of the DOT grant. Upon further questioning by Deputy Mayor Burgess, Mr. Dilley and Mr. Reichert explained the routine maintenance of storm drains, that most of the storm drains held well in the flood event, and that most of the Township's storm drains were designed to withstand the 100-year flood. Mayor Koury thanked the Department of Public Works for their efforts. Mr. Reichert praised the Department of Public works for their maintenance efforts and their efforts during the storm. He emphasized the importance of cleaning out catch basins.

Committeeman Repmann questioned the CFO on the final terms of the Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) and requested a comparison to previous estimates. The CFO indicated that the Township had done better than the estimates and described the interest rates. Upon further discussion and questioning by the Committee, the CFO explained the strategies used to ensure the best deal for the Township.

Committeeman Homulak indicated that JCP&L had provided regular updates during the storm and asked if there was a similar liaison for CenturyLink as there were still customers without service. Mayor Koury indicated that residents have had problems with the company in the past and indicated that the

company's services were currently down for a large part of Franklin, Alexandria, and Union Townships. Mr. Reichert explained that the Office of Emergency Management had been seeking contact information for the company for years but that the Township is not considered a customer. Committeeman Repmann indicated that the Township had written a letter to the Board of Public Utilities in the past. Committeeman Homulak indicated he would like the Township to look further into the matter to assist affected residents. The Township Attorney offered a contact e-mail address that had been provided to Kingwood Township.

Board of Health: None.

Old Business:

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

Mayor Koury reiterated the CFO's report that the bonding documentation had been completed for the purchase of 43 Lower Landsdown Road and explained that the closing would take place at the end of the month. The Township Attorney confirmed the September 28th, 2021, closing date. Mayor Koury indicated that the Township staff would not be moving into the building immediately since the layout of the building would need reconfiguration and that the Department of Corrections would not meet with Committeeman Donaruma regarding moving the Police Department until the Township owned the building.

Committeeman Repmann advised the Committee of residents' questions regarding the status of the building during the storm. Mayor Koury explained that access to the building was unavailable during the storm due to flooding and loss of access to the bridge. The Director of Public Works explained that the building had no water damage and that the water does not come up that high on the property.

a. Proposal for Professional Services: Lot Consolidation and Variance Plan Preparation, Lots 41 and 42, Block 16 – 204 and 206 Sidney Road, Lot 12, Block 36 – 326 Quakertown Road

Mayor Koury explained the Proposal for Professional Services as part of the Township's strategy to reduce costs by selling off Township-owned properties and return them to the tax rolls. The Township Attorney explained her discussion with an auctioneer and estimates for the price of the properties with and without consolidation. She explained the quote from Colliers Engineering (formerly Maser Consulting) and indicated that the Committee could wait upon approval if they need more time to discuss the quote.

Upon questioning by the Committee, the Attorney confirmed that the properties would conform to the surrounding community, that the wells and septic systems had been removed from the properties during demolition and that the well and septic systems had been included in the quote's pricing. Upon further questioning by Committeeman Repmann, the Attorney explained the level of work encompassed in the quote and that Collier's Engineering is the Township's Engineering firm. The Committee further discussed and compared the quote amount, the benefits of the sale of the properties, and the how the sale of the properties were part of the plan to purchase the new Municipal Building. Upon questioning

by Committeeman Repmann, the Township Attorney indicated that she would speak with Collier's Engineering regarding deadlines.

Motion to approve Proposal for Professional Services: Lot Consolidation and Variance Plan Preparation, Lots 41 and 42, Block 16 – 204 and 206 Sidney Road, Lot 12, Block 36 – 326 Quakertown Road: Repmann
Second: Homulak

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

Committeeman Homulak questioned how the Committee would proceed with repairs and moving into the new building upon completion of the purchase and recommended that the Committee consider hiring a temporary project manager to avoid unnecessary delays in progress. Mayor Koury and Deputy Mayor Burgess agreed, and the Committee briefly discussed options for hiring a project manager. Deputy Mayor Burgess explained that there are certified project managers. The Attorney advised the Committee on options for hiring a project manager. Committeeman Homulak expressed his willingness to assist, and Mayor Koury appointed Committeemen Repmann and Homulak as the new subcommittee regarding the new building plan.

New Business:

1. Decommission Railroad Crossing – Norfolk Southern 362811X crossing Grandin Road

Alan Dilley, Director of Public Works, and the Township Attorney explained the advantages of decommissioning the railroad crossing and that an accident had already taken place at the location.

Motion to authorize the decommissioning of Norfolk Southern railroad crossing 362811X: Repmann
Second: Burgess

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

Committee Member Reports:

Committeeman Repmann reported that he had attended school meetings in the previous weeks and praised the Board of Education for their efforts. He further praised James Witkowski for his former efforts with the Board of Education and explained that he was looking forward to working with him again.

Committeeman Homulak praised the Department of Public Works for their response to Tropical Storm Ida.

Deputy Mayor Diane Burgess provided those present with an update on the COVID-19 status in Franklin Township, explaining that there had been ten cases in the Township in the past month and no deaths. She reported on the efforts of the Environmental Commission to increase recycling efforts in the Township. She explained that the Environmental Commission has been in contact with a company willing to place an ink cartridge recycling container in the Municipal Building and asked the Committee if

they were interested. The Committee briefly discussed the details of the ink cartridge recycling program and expressed approval. Deputy Mayor Burgess indicated that she would acquire more details about the program. Mayor Koury requested that the boy scouts or girl scouts be approached for the creation of the container. Deputy Mayor Burgess updated the Committee on the status of the Sustainable Jersey Recertification application and that the application would be forwarded to the municipal staff for submission in the future. She indicated that various township documents would need to be updated for future submissions. Deputy Mayor Burgess explained that Township staff had contacted Raritan Headwaters to request that a fall well-testing event be held due to the flooding caused by Tropical Storm Ida.

BOE: James Witkowski, Board of Education, thanked Committeeman Repmann for his remarks. He explained that school was open and updated the Committee on the status of school renovations. He explained that the Union Township School was allowing the use of their facilities while the gymnasium was being renovated. He advised those present of the school's need for substitute teachers. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, he explained that the school fared well through Tropical Storm Ida.

Mayor Koury reported that he had been in contact with JCP&L during the storm and that he had gone out after the storm to survey the Township. He expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the Department of Public Works and the Township's first responders. He thanked Committeeman Repmann for his well testing recommendation and the Clerk's Office staff for their updates. He reminded those present that the Township's Dump Day was scheduled for Saturday, September 11th, 2021. He reported that information had been placed on the website regarding coyotes after discussion at the Land Use Board Meeting. He further reported that the drainage work done on Doe Run suffered no damage from the storm.

Comments from the Public:

No members from the public came forward to speak.

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, the CFO, the Township Clerk, and the Township Attorney. Igor B. Vikov, Attorney from Lavery, Selvaggi, Ambromitis & Cohen, the Township Attorney's office, was also permitted to observe.

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: Repmann Second: Burgess
All in favor. Motion carried.

Committee entered Executive Session at 9:03 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Contractual & Attorney/Client Privilege – Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS) Lease
2. Personnel – Department of Public Works

Committee exited Executive Session at 10:00 pm.

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

Action by the Committee: None

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Repmann Second: Burgess

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 09/23/2021