

MINUTES  
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2022

(Immediately Following Town Committee & Board of Health Re-Organization Meetings beginning at 7:30 pm)

**(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89025962267>)**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Koury at 7:45 pm. Mayor Koury read the OPMA Statement.

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  
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 December 23, 2021 minutes Year End Meeting: Homulak

Second: Burgess

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

Payment of Bills

Mayor Koury advised the Committee of the CFO's explanation of line-item discrepancies, indicating that the discrepancies are a result of the 2021 year-end system turn-over.

Motion to approve the Bills List: Burgess Second: Repmann

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

Ordinances:

1. Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance 2022-01: An Ordinance Amending the Revised General Ordinances of the Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon to Amend Chapter 220, "Land Use," to Create Article XV "Cannabis Related Businesses", and to Amend Chapter 332, "Taxation," to Create Article II "Cannabis Transfer Tax".
  - a. Public Hearing and Final Adoption scheduled for February 10, 2022.

The Township Attorney explained that, upon introduction, the ordinance would be forwarded to the Land Use Board for a consistency review at one of their meetings. Upon questioning by Committeeman

Donaruma regarding odors emanating from a cannabis production facility, the Township Attorney explained how the ordinance and the Land Use Board application procedure could be used to reduce odors. Mayor Koury explained that similar odors emanate from hemp growing farms and were not regulated by the Township as they are covered by "Right-to-Farm". Deputy Mayor Burgess indicated that any applications for a cannabis production facility should be presented to the Environmental Commission in addition to the Land Use Board. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, the Township Attorney explained that, should the ordinance be altered or amended for any reason other than a typographical error, it would need to be re-introduced. She further explained that questions from the public would be taken at the Public Hearing scheduled for February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Upon further questioning by the Committee on how to tighten up the ordinance, the Township Attorney advised the Committee that the ordinance was meant to be general while the Land Use Board would review applications and tighten restrictions through their application. She further advised the Committee to make the Land Use Board aware of their concerns. Committeeman Donaruma expressed his desire to wait on implementing cannabis business facilities in the Township citing that the State's legislation was new. Committeeman Repmann indicated that cannabis growing facilities have been in New Jersey for five years. Deputy Mayor Burgess indicated that the ordinance would allow the possibility of business income to come into the Township. The Township Attorney advised the Committee that waiting to implement cannabis businesses would encourage businesses to seek elsewhere. Mayor Koury reminded those present that the Land Use Board and Township Planner had discussed and prepared for cannabis business implementation throughout the previous year. Upon further discussion regarding odors and the Readington facility's inability to remediate them, Mayor Koury advised the Committee that he was also on the Land Use Board and that he would forward their questions and concerns to the Land Use Board. Upon Committeeman Homulak's questioning, Mayor Koury confirmed that the Land Use Board had three scheduled meetings before the scheduled Public Hearing of the ordinance.

Motion to introduce: Burgess                      Second: Repmann  
Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Nay) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2022-11: Resolution Authorizing the Award of Contract for Professional Services for Animal Control Services for Years 2022-2024.

Motion to adopt: Repmann    Second: Donaruma  
Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

2. Resolution 2022-12: Resolution Re-Appointing Chief Finance Officer.

Motion to adopt: Homulak    Second: Repmann  
Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

Staff Administrative Reports:

**OEM:** George Reichert, Office of Emergency Management, was invited to speak but did not issue a report.

**Police:** Captain Snyder reported on the December monthly activities of the Police Department, specifying background investigations, arrests, motor vehicle warnings, tickets, accidents, radio calls, animal complaints, property checks, and others.

**Administrative:** The Township Clerk reported on the training of the new finance employee, Ibrahim Keita, indicating that he had primarily begun learning duties related to the Finance Department but had also begun training in dog licenses and processing requisitions.

**BOE:** Virginia Evans, Board of Education, reported on the results of the Board of Education Re-Organization meeting and explained that the next Board of Education meeting would take place on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022. She further reported that the school had begun to work on the oil tank. She explained that in the process of assessing the oil tank for maintenance work scheduled for the summer, the tank had been disturbed and needed to be remediated. Upon questioning by Committeeman Reppmann, Ms. Evans confirmed that the school would be closed the following day in anticipation of snow. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, Ms. Evans indicated that the school had a plan for snowplowing for the current winter season but would investigate shared services with the Township in the future.

**Board of Health:** None.

**Old Business:**

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

Committeeman Reppmann advised those present that Mike Chabra would be meeting with the architect the following Tuesday at the site of the New Municipal Building. He explained that the meeting had been scheduled for the following day but had been postponed due to the anticipation of snow.

**New Business:** None.

**Committee Member Reports:**

Deputy Mayor Burgess updated the Committee on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Township. She indicated that the hospital was close to capacity and had suspended elective surgeries. She reported that Franklin Township had 15 cases in the past two weeks and experienced its first death. She advised those present that Hunterdon County was hosting new vaccine clinics. She further reported that she would schedule a meeting with Committeeman Donaruma the following week to begin working on the Department of Public Works (DPW) contract.

Committeeman Reppmann expressed his support of the mayor's efforts to proceed with shorter meetings in the new year.

Mayor Philip Koury explained that he would speak with the Chair of the Land Use Board regarding 2022 Land Use Board appointments.

Comments from the Public:

No members from the public came forward to speak.

Executive Session: None.

The Township Attorney informed the Committee that the arbitrator's response regarding the Police Contract had been received and was only a matter of instructing the CFO on how to proceed.

Action by the Committee: None.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Repmann    Second: Unrecorded

All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk

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Adopted: 1/27/2022