

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK-SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022
7:30 PM

(Location Changed to Online Application: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87021513085>)

Mayor Koury requested that all participants appropriately identify themselves in the online Zoom application program.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Koury at 7:30 pm. Mayor Koury read the Open Public Meetings Act (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: Igor Bykov, Attorney (Lavery, Selvaggi, Ambromitis & Cohen)
Christine Burke, Municipal Clerk
Cameron Keng, Chief Finance Officer/Human Resources Officer
Chief Timothy Snyder, Police
Frederick Roll, Director, Department of Public Works
George Reichert, Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
Mike Chabra, Project Manager, New Municipal Building
Deanna Seiple, Newly Elected Committee Member (2023-2025)

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 November 10, 2022, minutes Work-Session/Regular Meeting: Donaruma

Second: Burgess

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

Payment of Bills:

Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, the CFO explained the Police Department's expense for car washing. Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Burgess, the CFO explained that the Rutgers class was attended by the Assistant Finance Officer for training purposes.

Motion to approve the Bills List: Burgess Second: Repmann
Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

Ordinances:

1. Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Ordinance 2022-08: Ordinance by the Township Committee of the Township of Franklin, Amending the Township Code of Ordinances to Repeal Chapter 199, "Flood Damage Prevention", to Adopt a New Chapter, Chapter 199, Entitled "Floodplain Management and Regulations"; to Adopt Flood Hazard Maps; to Designate a Floodplain Administrator; and Providing for Severability and an Effective Date.

Motion to open Public Hearing: Burgess Second: Homulak All in favor. Motion carried.

Shirly Sakos, 10 Baker Road, questioned if this public commentary was specifically for comments on the ordinance. Upon confirmation from the Township Committee, she indicated that she would hold her comment until later.

Motion to close Public Hearing: Burgess Second: Donaruma All in favor. Motion carried.

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

The Township Attorney reminded the Township Clerk that a physical and digital copy of the adopted ordinance should be forwarded to the State.

Resolutions:

1. Resolution 2022-52: Setting the Salaries for Administrative Employees for CY2023

Motion to approve Resolution 2022-52: Donaruma Second: Homulak
Roll call: Burgess (Aye) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

2. Resolution 2022-53: 2022 Budget Appropriation Transfer Resolution

Mayor Koury clarified that a typographical error on the agenda should read Resolution 2022-53 as opposed to 2021-53.

The CFO explained that all municipalities adopt annual transfer resolutions as a good practice standard. Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Burgess, the CFO explained that the large transfer amounts in salaries was due to internal realignments in response to the new employee hired in the Finance/Tax Collection Department and adjustments to staff responsibilities. He further explained that the Police Department adjustment was in response to overtime.

Motion to approve Resolution 2022-53: Burgess

Second: Repmann

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

Board of Health: None.

Staff Administrative Reports:

OEM: George Reichert, Emergency Management Coordinator, indicated that he had nothing further to add from his previously provided report to the governing body. He explained that the Township had been relatively quiet and expressed his hope that it continues in that manner for the upcoming year. Mayor Koury explained that he had been given notice of available Code Blue Shelters and indicated that the Township Municipal Building was assigned as a shelter. Mr. Reichert explained that some faith-based communities had made their facilities available as Code Blue shelters and advised that he had their contact information.

POLICE: Chief Timothy Snyder reported on the November monthly activities of the Police Department, specifying background investigations, other investigations, arrests, motor vehicle warnings, tickets, accidents, radio calls, alarm calls, assist calls, animal complaints, service calls, property checks, and others. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, Chief Snyder indicated that his department had been responding to a shoplifting and warrant arrest at the Walmart Plaza when the life alert incident was being addressed at the South Ridge Community Church.

Mayor Koury reminded newly admitted public participants to appropriately identify themselves in the online Zoom application program.

CFO: The CFO reported that the Finance and Tax Collection Departments were currently working on required year-end tasks such as the budget transfer and salary resolutions.

ADMINISTRATIVE: The Township Clerk reported that the Clerk's Office was currently working on required year-end and new-year preparation tasks.

Old Business:

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

New Business:

1. Discussion Item: 2023 Reorganization Meeting & Annual Meeting Schedule
 - a. Resolution 2022-54: Resolution to Adopt the Town Committee 2023 Annual Meeting Schedule.

Mayor Koury explained the Township Committee's responsibility to adopt an Annual Meeting Schedule, explaining that the dates reflect that the Township Committee holds their meetings on the second and

fourth Thursdays of each month. The Township Clerk explained that the notice is required to be published and is also required to set the location. Mayor Koury explained that Township Committee meetings would be conducted on the online Zoom application program until the New Municipal Building was ready. He indicated that other agencies had been contacted to host the annual meeting schedule, but each agency denied the request. Committeeman Donaruma explained that he had also reached out to Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS) who had also denied the request.

Additional Staff Report – DPW: Upon realizing that Frederick Roll, Director of Public Works, was also in attendance, Mayor Koury offered Mr. Roll an opportunity to give a report. Mr. Roll explained that he had provided a monthly report to the DPW Subcommittee and that he did not have that report available to reference at that time.

Motion to approve Resolution 2022-54: Repmann Second: Donaruma
Roll call: Burgess (Abstain) Donaruma (Aye) Homulak (Aye) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye)

Deputy Mayor Burgess explained that the Annual Meeting Schedule did not pertain to her, as her appointment would be ending at the end of the month.

Committee Member Reports:

Deputy Mayor Burgess reported that the Environmental Commission had met and had received Sustainable Jersey Re-Certification. She indicated that the Commission had reviewed the solar field application currently being heard by the Land Use Board (LUB) and had drafted comments to be submitted to the LUB.

Old Business:

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

Upon noticing that Mike Chabra, Project Coordinator for the New Municipal Building, was in attendance, Mayor Koury offered him an opportunity to update those present on the status of the project. Mr. Chabra indicated that the official plans had been completed and that he anticipated the process to be completed by the end of the month, allowing the Township to proceed with the bidding process in January. Mayor Koury expressed his priority preference to get the meeting space open as soon as possible. Upon questioning by Committeeman Homulak, Mr. Chabra indicated that a draft diagram of the layout of the building (with the Police Department layout redacted), could be made available to post at the Municipal Building upon completion of the Committee’s review and approval.

Committeeman Donaruma requested an update from the CFO on the search for speed signs. The CFO explained that the signs he had been able to locate were cost prohibitive and were more expensive than anticipated. Upon questioning by Mayor Koury, Chief Snyder indicated that he could inquire about renting or leasing such signs from other towns. He explained that that he was aware that some municipalities had fixed position signs.

Committeeman Repmann expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the CFO, begun years ago, to have Jersey Central Power & Light (JCP&L) provide funds for the removal ash trees in Franklin Township.

Committeeman Homulak indicated that the Police Contract was scheduled to be discussed in Executive Session later in the meeting. He reported on his attendance at an Economic Development and Implementation Team (EDIT) meeting, explaining that he had advised the group on the appropriate process to have the team made into an official ad hoc committee for the Township. He indicated that the group needed to clarify and cite their mission objectives.

Mayor Koury reported that he had been discussing how to make the EDIT group an official group of the Township with the Township Attorney. He commented on JCP&L's efforts to address power outages in Franklin Township and reminded those present to report outages. He reported that the Land Use Board (LUB) would be holding their next meeting the following week and explained that the board conducts their meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. He further reported that he had been speaking with the LUB Chairman about corrections to the current solar panel ordinance, particularly as it pertains to ground-mount solar panels on smaller lots. He explained that the current ordinance makes it more difficult for residents on smaller lots to install ground-mount solar panels and that that had not been the intention of the Board. He further explained that he had also been speaking with the Township Attorney and Zoning Officer on addressing Garage and Yard Sales in the Township's ordinance.

Mayor Koury wished everyone a happy and blessed holiday season and reminded those that travel to have their neighbors report suspicious activity and inform the Police Department so they could perform property checks. He thanked Deputy Mayor Burgess for her tenure on the Township Committee and expressed his appreciation for her continued efforts with the Environmental Commission.

Comments from the Public:

Bruce DeRites, 119 Locust Grove Road, commented that the Township Committee was being solely conducted on the online Zoom application and that Union Township was conducting a hybrid (in-person and online) meeting. The CFO responded that the topic of conducting hybrid meetings had been discussed many times and that it is the Township's aim to have the option made available in the New Municipal Building. He further explained that the Township did not wish to put any additional money into the current Municipal Building and that the decision to move the meetings to the online Zoom application was made in response to a reasonable request for accommodation by a Township resident.

Shirly Sakos, 10 Baker Road, requested additional police presence on Baker Road, particularly in the morning, to address speeding. Chief Snyder explained the time of year, current officer assignments, that the Franklin Township School post takes priority in the morning, and that he would do his best to show more police presence on Baker Road. Ms. Sakos explained that the road also experiences increased speeding traffic in the evening.

Bruce DeRites, 119 Locust Grove Road, commented that the Township Police Department did not have the staff to monitor speeds on local roads, specifying cut-through roads. He indicated that the Township required new technology, specifically speed radar signs, and that he had found a sign for less than

\$10,000. He further explained that other municipalities had signs, specifically mentioning Raritan and Clinton. Chief Snyder explained that Clinton would not rent their sign, that Raritan needed theirs for their jurisdiction, and that municipalities generally would not rent their signs out on a regular basis. He explained that the County would offer utilization of their signs on a rotating basis. He further explained how the purchase of a \$10,000 sign would affect the Police Department Budget. Mayor Koury recommended that the Township search for grant money to assist in purchasing the sign and reminded those present that a local resident had offered to pay for a mounted sign. Mr. DeRites indicated that he knew the resident who had offered to make the donation to the Township and that the resident had specified a stationary digital sign for approximate \$3,500.00.

Sharyn Sawczak, 7 Nixon Farm Road, requested a clarification on the total amount of the Police Department's Budget and compared it to the Senior Budget. Mayor Koury clarified the difference between the two budgets. Ms. Sawczak indicated that she was aware of another perpetual garage sale and thanked Mayor Koury for discussing zoning regulations in Executive Session. Mayor Koury indicated that she should direct her complaint to the Zoning Officer and clarified that the discussion on including garage and yard sale regulations in the ordinance was being conducted between himself, the Township Attorney and the Zoning Officer, not in Executive Session.

Linda Peterson, 438 Quakertown Road, requested that the Township Committee adopt a policy requiring all Township officials and employees to turn on their video when using the online Zoom application.

Sharyn Sawczak, 7 Nixon Farm Road, questioned if the Senior group's budget was occasionally re-evaluated. The CFO explained the reason for including the Senior group's expenses in the Budget, that the group was mindful of their expenses, and that the group's reduction of expenses for the past two years was in response to social distancing restrictions placed by the governor in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 online Zoom application's Waiting Room except for the Committee, the Chief of Police, the CFO/Human Resources Officer, the Director of Public Works, the Township Clerk, and the Township Attorney. Newly elected Committee-member, Deanna Seiple, was also invited to observe at 8:32 pm.

Upon confirmation of the absence of all but the required attendees, the Township Clerk stopped audio/video recording of the meeting.

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

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:23 pm.

Topics discussed:

1. Personnel/Contractual – Department of Public Works (DPW)
2. Personnel/Contractual – Police Department
3. Contractual – Lease of Township Property – Quakertown Volunteer Emergency Medical Services (QVEMS)

Committee exited Executive Session at 8:51 pm.

Motion to exit executive session and resume regular meeting: Repmann Second: Donaruma
All in favor. Motion carried.

The Township Attorney explained the topics discussed in Executive Session and that minutes would become available once the need for confidentiality was no longer required.

Action by the Committee:

Motion to hire the person discussed in Executive Session for the amount discussed in Executive Session:
Homulak Second: Repmann

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

In response to questions by the Township Committee, the Township Attorney indicated that the Committee did not need to take action on the Police Contract at this time and that they should review the proposed contract before taking formal action. The CFO explained the next steps.

Mayor Koury reminded those present that the next meeting would take place on December 22nd at 9:00 am on the online Zoom application.

Adjournment:

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

Meeting was adjourned at 8:56 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 12/22/2022