

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE/BOARD OF HEALTH
WORK SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2023
7:30 PM

Franklin Township School, 226 Quakertown Road, Pittstown, NJ 08867

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Philip Koury at 7:30 pm. Mayor Philip Koury read the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) Statement and lead the flag salute.

Roll Call: Mayor Philip Koury (present) Deputy Mayor Michael Homulak (present)
Sebastian Donaruma (absent) Craig Repmann (present) Deanna Seiple (present)

Also present: Igor Bykov, Attorney (Lavery, Selvaggi, Ambromitis & Cohen)
Christine Burke, Municipal Clerk
Cameron Keng, Chief Finance Officer/Human Resources (CFO/HR) (arrived at 8:36 pm.)
Chief Timothy Snyder, Police Department (arrived at 8:36 pm.)
Diane Burgess, Chair, Environmental Commission

Comments from the Public on Agenda Items Only:

Elizabeth Basile, 16 Upper Kingtown Road, questioned items on the Bills List. Deputy Mayor Homulak clarified the annual municipal audit fee. Mayor Koury recommended that specific questions regarding items on the Bills List be directed to the Chief Finance Officer. Ms. Basile further questioned financial statements included on Resolution 2023-29 which was approved at the prior meeting. Committeeman Repmann explained the proposal for affordable housing development. The Township Attorney further explained how the financial information may fluctuate based on the number of units built. Mayor Koury and Committeeman Repmann directed Ms. Basile to the financial page of the project proposal located on the Township website. The Township Clerk clarified where the proposal was located on the Township website.

Proclamations & Presentations: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the March 23, 2023, minutes Township Committee Work-Session/Regular Meeting &

Executive Session: Repmann Second: Seiple

Roll call: Donaruma (Absent) Homulak (Abstain) Koury (Aye) Repmann (Aye) Seiple (Aye)

Payment of Bills:

Motion to approve the Bills List: Repmann Second: Homulak

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

Ordinances: None.

Resolutions: None.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

1. Letter of Support – Environmental Commission application for ANJEC grant.

Diane Burgess, Chairwoman of the Environmental Commission, explained the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) grant opportunity and how the Franklin Township Environmental Commission would utilize any funds they received to support the Environmental Commission's activities. She further explained that the grant application process required a Letter of Support from the Township's Administrator, citing that Mayor Koury would fulfill that role. Upon Mayor Koury's questioning, Chairwoman Burgess explained the grant applications submitted to Sustainable Jersey the previous month and that the ANJEC grant was the third grant that the Environmental Commission would be applying for. Upon questioning by Deputy Mayor Homulak, Chairwoman Burgess explained the timeframe for when the Environmental Commission would be informed of either approval or denial of the various grant applications.

Chairwoman Burgess advised those present of the Tree Recovery Campaign Day event to be hosted by the Environmental Commission on April 22nd, 2023. She indicated that there was a limited supply of saplings and that residents would be allowed two saplings per household. Mayor Koury explained that he had been informed that the supply was limited due to a lack of volunteers to dig up saplings.

Motion to authorize Letter of Support for the Environmental Commission's application for an ANJEC grant: Repmann Second: Homulak All in favor. Motion carried.

2. Discussion Item: Electronic Newsletter

Mayor Koury expressed his appreciation for Committeewoman Seiple's efforts to compile a Township Newsletter and explained the interest in providing such a newsletter. Committeewoman Seiple explained her efforts in compiling the newsletter, that she had spoken with staff and other organizations, and that the newsletter was intended to be published quarterly.

Elizabeth Basile, 16 Upper Kingtown Road, indicated that Union Township publishes a digital newsletter.

Committeeman Repmann, Mayor Koury and Deputy Mayor Koury followed up on Ms. Basile's Bill's List questions from earlier in the meeting, indicating that the Open Space Line-Item Check was for a Green Acres purchase done years ago and that it was paid for with Open Space funds.

Committeewoman Seiple responded to Mayor Koury's questions regarding newsletter articles and timeline.

Committee Member Reports:

Committeeman Homulak reported on the success of the Township's Household Clean-up Day, also known as "Dump Day", held on April 1st.

Committeeman Repmann reported that the Recreation Committee held an Easter Egg Hunt the Sunday before Easter Sunday. Committeewoman Seiple requested that attendees forward pictures taken at the Easter Egg Hunt.

Mayor Koury reported on his attendance at the Township's Household Clean-up Day held on April 1st. He explained that it has been discovered that the Township is now being charged \$15 for the disposal of each mattress. A brief discussion with the public regarding Hunterdon County's fee charges based on weight and other possible municipal fee charges for mattresses followed. One resident recommended adding mattresses to the list of unaccepted items. Committeeman Homulak recommended that any action taken remain uncomplicated. Mayor Koury indicated that the matter needed to be addressed sooner rather than later. Mayor Koury further expressed his approval of the Department of Public Works (DPW) staff for their efforts at the event and indicated that Committeeman Repmann had supplied sandwiches for the staff.

Mayor Koury went on to report that the Land Use Board meeting scheduled to be held the previous night had been cancelled and that the public hearing would be rescheduled to the next meeting. He further reported that he had met with the Senior Group and discussed topics such as the New Municipal Building, affordable housing, the Department of Transportation's (DOT) proposed change to the Route 78 intersection and water changes that had affected the Township's wells.

Comments from the Public:

Rick Conley, 17 Landsdown Road, questioned where the New Municipal Building expenditures were in the introduced 2023 municipal Budget. Deputy Mayor Homulak explained that the expenditures would be in the Capital Appropriations.

Mayor Koury commented that the Senior Group had asked about the New Municipal Building particularly regarding hosting meetings. He explained that the building needed to be de-winterized and that there were questions as to when that should be done and if meetings should be moved to the building before the bidding process was complete. He recommended having the New Municipal Building subcommittee speak with the Project Coordinator. The Township Attorney provided a brief update on the status of the bidding process.

Committeeman Repmann provided a brief update on the status of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in connection to the Affordable Housing Development project approved at the previous meeting. He explained that the developer and the Township were aligned on their understanding of objectives and that the Township may need to make an investment regarding procedural matters in getting a water supply for the project, specifically involving the Township's Land Use Board (LUB). Mayor Koury indicated that the Township should do as much due diligence as possible but that he was not in favor of stalling the project. He further indicated that a Clinton resident had expressed concerns over the development project at the Senior Group meeting. He reiterated his preference for balancing preservation with proper development. Committeeman Repmann explained that there was a great

need for senior housing in Hunterdon County. Mayor Koury commented on the large amount of development in Clinton and cost-of-living increases while seniors live on a fixed income. Mayor Koury praised the Township Committee for their efforts to balance preservation and development.

Elizabeth Basile, 16 Upper Kingtown Road, commented on a Board of Education survey regarding a school safety officer. Mayor Koury explained that the Township Committee would support whatever decisions the school made regarding a School Resource Officer versus a Class III Special Officer. Committeewoman Seiple recommended that any resident who had an opinion on the topic should attend a School Board meeting and share their opinion. She also indicated that any member of the public could e-mail any Board of Education member to express their opinion.

Upon further questioning by Ms. Basile, Deputy Mayor Homulak explained that the Fire Budget is under the control of the Quakertown Fire Department and that the municipal budget supplies emergency medical services (EMS) funding only. He recommended that concerned residents go to a Fire District meeting regarding the fire budget or other fire district related matters. He explained that a lot of the questions being asked were out of the Township Committee's purview.

Rick Conley, 17 Landsdown Road, questioned if the school safety officer would report to the Police Department. Mayor Koury and Committeeman Repmann confirmed that the school safety officer would report to the Chief of Police.

Mayor Koury reiterated that the Township Committee would support any decision made by the school. Committeeman Repmann explained that the public would be paying for the officer regardless of the source budget. Diane Burgess explained that no organization has control over all agencies. Mayor Koury explained that the municipality serves as a collection agency for the other agencies and that the Township is required to submit payment to the other agencies even if the taxes have not been collected. He further explained that New Jersey law has no provisions to authorize a single organization to have control over each agency's budget. Diane Burgess explained that the removal of school elections stopped the school budget from being voted on at an election. Deputy Mayor Homulak explained that he had previously attempted to pull together the financial efforts of the Township's agencies. Mayor Koury encouraged residents to reach out to each organization and agency. Committeeman Repmann explained that the Township lacks revenue sources to balance expenditures and that there is no coordination between agencies.

Executive Session:

Mayor Koury explained the need to enter Executive Session, that action may be taken, and that all attendees of the meeting could wait outside of the meeting room except for the Committee, the Chief of Police, the CFO/Human Resources Officer, the Township Clerk, and the Township Attorney.

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

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

Committee entered Executive Session at 8:25 pm. (Chief Timothy Snyder, Police Department, and Cameron Keng, CFO/HR arrived at 8:36 pm.)

Topics discussed:

1. Personnel – Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Coordinator
2. Personnel – Police Department
3. Personnel/Contractual – Department of Public Works (DPW)

Committee exited Executive Session at 9:13 pm.

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

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

Action by the Committee:

Mayor Koury appointed Chris Vallat as Office of Emergency (OEM) Coordinator as discussed in Executive Session.


Motion to authorize advertisement for Class II Officer as discussed in Executive Session: Repmann
Second: Homulak All in favor. Motion carried.

Adjournment:

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

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Prepared by Christine Burke, Township Clerk



Adopted: 04/27/2023