

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
June 7, 2023**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at the Municipal Building, 2nd Floor, Council Chambers, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA. Councilors present: Brian Chandler, Theodore Cormier-Leger, Robert Dellorco, Cobi Frongillo, Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegri, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: None. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney.

**CALL TO ORDER:** ► Chair Mercer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Chair Mercer called for a moment of silence. All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** ► Chair Mercer reviewed the following as posted on the agenda. A Note to Residents: All citizens are welcome to attend public board and committee meetings in person. Meetings are live-streamed by Franklin TV and shown on Comcast Channel 11 and Verizon Channel 29. In an effort to maximize citizen engagement opportunities, citizens will be able to continue to participate remotely via phone or Zoom. He announced that this meeting is being recorded by Franklin TV; this meeting may be recorded by others.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** ► Mr. Richard Ciccone, 185 Chestnut Street, stated that a previous Town Council discussed saving an old generator from the old high school. He stated that for many years he was told it was going to be used. He stated that the generator is no longer where it was at the DPW. He asked the Town Council to look into where it is. He stated that it was an expensive piece of equipment, and he does not think it was used. ► Ms. Marcella Dichiaro, 29 Charles River Drive (via Zoom), stated that she was the mother of two public school children. She thanked the Town Council for their service. She stated that she wanted to address the budget crisis in the school. ► Chair Mercer stated that this is an agenda item tonight; so, it cannot be spoken about during citizen comments. He stated that citizen comments are for items that are not on the agenda. He stated that she will be able to speak during this item during legislation for action. ► Ms. Dichiaro stated that she can hold off speaking. ► Ms. Mary O'Neill, 102 Beaver Street, stated that she had a sign made for her lawn which she held up to show that it says kindness matters. She stated that people at Allegra Printing loved it; they printed 100 signs. She stated that she hopes lots of people in town will take some. She stated that it makes people think. She would like to see them throughout the town.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** ► *April 12, 2023, April 26, 2023, & May 3, 2023.* ► **MOTION** to Approve the April 12, 2023 meeting minutes by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Jones. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE:** Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0. ► **MOTION** to Approve the April 26, 2023 meeting minutes by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Jones. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE:** Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0. ► **MOTION** to Approve the May 3, 2023 meeting minutes by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Jones. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE:** Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.

**PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS:** ► *Recognition: Electric Youth.* ► Chair Mercer stated that this is a proclamation recognizing Electric Youth. He read aloud the proclamation honoring Electric Youth on the occasion of their 2023 European tour. ► Ms. Raye Lynn Mercer thanked the Town Council and reviewed the tour. She noted some of the performers at The Black Box. ► Electric Youth members introduced themselves and gave a singing presentation.

**APPOINTMENTS:** ► *Annual Reappointments of Boards and Committees.* ► Mr. Hellen stated that the list of reappointments is provided. He stated that his memo to the Town Council dated June 2, 2023, which is provided in the meeting packet, provides a list of vacancies. He noted that there is one new appointment which is for Bill Batchelor as a member of the Finance Committee for a full term.

► Councilor Jones read the Committee Appointments June 2023 document. ► **MOTION to Ratify** the Annual appointments to the following boards and commissions (as listed on the Committee Appointments June 2023 document) by **Jones. SECOND by Dellorco. No discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► Chair Mercer thanked all those who were just appointed.

► ***Davis-Thayer Building Reuse Advisory Committee.*** ► Councilor Jones read the appointments.

► **MOTION to Ratify** the appointments of the names listed (on the document) by the Town Administrator to serve as members of the Davis-Thayer Building Reuse Advisory Committee with terms to expire on December 31, 2023, by **Jones. SECOND by Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen reference his memo to the Town Council dated June 2, 2023, which was provided in the meeting packet. He stated that there were many great applicants. He explained how the applicants were selected for committee membership. ► Councilor Chandler thanked Mr. Hellen for doing all of this. He stated that he thinks people were concerned about whether they were going to rent, sell, or even give Davis-Thayer to Dean College. He stated that he wants people to know that a lot of people were concerned about that.

► Councilor Jones stated that he heard the same thing. He stated that he lives close to Davis-Thayer. He stated that he has full faith in the members who are going to sit on the committee. He stated that the ultimate hope is that Davis-Thayer becomes some form of community building. He stated that one of the best things about Davis-Thayer when it was an elementary school is that it was one of the top performing elementary schools in Massachusetts. He thanked all who worked in the building over the years.

► Councilor Dellorco stated that he has full confidence in the committee. ► Councilor Pellegri thanked all those who sent in applications for the committee. She confirmed that after the committee makes their recommendation, it will go to the full Town Council. ► Chair Mercer stated that they are looking for some options from the committee. ► Mr. Hellen stated that the movers will be cleaning out the building so they can do an open house. He stated that the committee will have to walk through the building to see it regarding the potential reuse of the building. He does not think there is a legally required public hearing. He stated that the fiduciary responsibility is to maximize the asset that the public owns. The economics of it will have to be carefully considered. He explained that they would like to have the meetings in the Council Chambers so they can be videotaped, but there is a lot of competition to use the room. ► Mr. Richard Ciccone, 185 Chestnut Street, stated that this Town Council six months ago voted money for a consultant to look into sites. He stated that they put \$150,000 into that study. He stated that he is passionate about that site as a police station. He stated that there are no drawbacks to that building; it will be cleared out except for the four walls. He stated that it can be done. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**HEARINGS: 7:00 PM.** ► ***License Modification - Change of Officers/Directors/LLC Managers, Change of Stock Interest: Dharma Bhakti Corporation d/b/a Liquor World, Located at 365 West Central St., Franklin, MA 02038 (License Transactions (a)).*** ► Chair Mercer declared the public hearing open. ► Mr. Hellen stated that these are kind of pass throughs for the Commonwealth. ► Mr. Matthew Porter, attorney for the applicant (via Zoom), explained that this is just an internal transfer; there are no changes to the structure of the business. ► Chair Mercer declared the public hearing closed.

**LICENSE TRANSACTIONS:** ► ***License Modification - Change of Officers/Directors/LLC Managers, Change of Stock Interest: Dharma Bhakti Corporation d/b/a Liquor World, Located at 365 West Central St., Franklin, MA 02038.*** ► Councilor Jones read the license transaction. ► **MOTION to Approve** the request by Dharma Bhakti Corporation d/b/a Liquor World, located at 365 West Central St., Franklin, MA 02038, for a License Modification for Change of Officers/Directors/LLC Managers, Change of Stock Interest, by **Jones. SECOND by Dellorco. No discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**HEARINGS: 7:00 PM (continued).** ► ***Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-894: To Amend Chapter 185, Section 3 of the Code of the Town of Franklin to add Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Definition (Legislation for Action Item #9a).*** ► ***Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-895R (formerly 23-895): To Amend***

**Chapter 185, Attachment 8, Use Regulations Schedule Part VII: Accessory Uses of the Franklin Town Code to Add Accessory Dwelling Residential Units (Legislation for Action Item #9b).** ► **Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-896: To Amend Chapter 185, Section 19 of the Code of the Town of Franklin to Add on Accessory Dwelling Unit Setbacks (Legislation for Action Item #9c).** ► Chair Mercer declared the three public hearings open. ► Mr. Hellen explained that these three pieces of legislation which are in the public hearing process are all first readings. He discussed the legislation that has been through the EDC + Steering Committee which was a 6-0-1 vote. He reviewed that at their April 12 meeting, the Town Council voted to refer these three bylaws to the Planning Board. He explained that 23-894 and 23-896 were referred to the Planning Board unanimously and 23-895 (now 23-895R) was referred to the Planning Board as amended with a vote of 6-2. He reviewed that the Town Council altered the EDC's recommendation to allow ADUs by right in the rural zoning districts. He reviewed that the Planning Board voted unanimously (5-0) at their May 8 meeting to recommend adoption of all three, as originally presented by the EDC + Steering Committee, to the Town Council. In other words, the Planning Board is recommending to reject the amended version of 23-895. He explained that the legislation has not been altered as the Planning Board only makes a recommendation; therefore, it is still in the form that the Town Council approved. ► Building Commissioner Gus Brown discussed his thoughts on the bylaws. He stated that it is his opinion that ADUs should be a right and not require a relative to live in the home. He stated it should still require a special permit from the ZBA for the zones that Mr. Hellen brought up. He stated that what worries him is if an ADU were to be introduced in an open space subdivision such as Bridle Path or Skyline Drive. He stated that his opinion is that they have an obligation to notify the abutters which is the way it is now. He stated that the Building Department already receives calls from neighbors asking why they were not notified of a building project. He discussed if ADUs should be granted by right. He sees in the future abutters feeling blindsided if an ADU is given the go-ahead to be built on a nearby property. He stated that it is important for the Town to maintain control; if you make it by right, you lose control. He stated that he asked the Town Council to vote down any allowed by right ADUs. He stated that he has been here for 25 years and the process that the ZBA works with has not had any issues. ► Councilor Hamblen asked about Skyline Drive and stated that they do not fit the setbacks of a Rural Residential 1 zoning district which would make it become a special permit. ► Mr. Brown stated that it could become a variance. He discussed that if this is approved without the requirement of a special permit, the Building Department will get phone calls because abutters will feel blindsided that something is being built next to their home and why were they not notified. The way the process works now is flawless with the ZBA. This is the way to proceed. If an ADU is done by right, they are going to get the blindsided feedback from people. He stated that he thinks it is a huge step forward that it does not have to be a relative. That helps people out if they are having financial issues, and we want more housing in Franklin. ► Councilor Hamblen thanked the Steering Committee members and the Town staff for their work on the bylaw. She stated that it is great that we brought these things out. She reviewed the process for how the bylaw moves forward. She stated this is how we get to the best possible proposal. She stated that the goal is to incrementally increase density. She discussed her thoughts on the bylaw definition. She is glad to have these discussions. She stated that she is okay with recommending what the Planning Board said with the caveat that we still agree we have more steps to go to make it easier for people to do this. ► Councilor Chandler thanked the EDC and Planning Board. He stated that he believes that people have a right to do what they want on their property by right. He does not want to see the ZBA deny any resident who wants to help their child or elderly parents move onto their property. He stated that the real question he has is why some zones can do this by right and not everybody. He thinks that everybody should have that right. The process is not easy and if it was by right, it would be easy. He stated that he does not want to control everybody. He asked why do they have to go to the ZBA. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger confirmed that a permit is still required even if it is by right. He stated that seems like the control piece over the project. ► Councilor Dellorco stated that if it were by right, the neighbors would have no say. He stated that is his concern. ► Councilor Pellegrini stated that this has been going on for a long time. She asked how do you know who is going into the apartment and it is a family member when someone is moving out. We should allow people to have whoever they want to move into the apartment. ► Mr. Brown stated it is a challenge. He stated that it is fantastic now that it does not have to be a relative.

► Councilor Frongillo stated that he has been beaming at all the comments from his colleagues. He stated that we are talking about the by right in the rural areas. He stated that it has been said that the ZBA process works, but he asked who has it worked for. He discussed that many homes are larger than the people need. In response, accessory dwellings units have been recognized. He stated that the states of California and Connecticut allow accessory dwelling units by right. He stated this is where people are going. He discussed what it means to be by right. He stated that by right still means that you need a building permit. He discussed the special permit and stated that it can be denied and can inherently be a risk for people moving forward. We say that we want affordable housing units and more revenue, and this is an opportunity. ► Chair Mercer stated that he does not support the by right at this juncture. He supports the bylaws. He thinks they are great steps forward. He stated that one of his concerns is the neighbors. By going by right, the neighbors do not get to speak about what is getting built right next to them. He stated that he does believe in these bylaws and he does see steps forward such as it getting away from being a family member and being attached. His concern is that maybe they are going too fast. He stated that once they give something, they are not going to get it back. He reviewed the Franklin for All work. He stated that they can change things going forward, but let us take small steps forward. ► Director of Planning and Community Development Bryan Taberner stated that he wanted to address the amendment that was made. He discussed that one column in the chart was changed and sent to the Planning Board. That would give by right to those four zoning districts: RI, RII, RVI, and RVII. He discussed each of those districts being discussed for ADUs by right. He stated that regarding the amendment that was made, he does not think it was appropriate for RVI and RVII at all. He stated that maybe for RI and RII it should be allowed under certain circumstances only. ► Mr. Hellen summarized that what the public is hearing tonight is not consensus. The Planning Director and staff, Town Council, Planning Board, and ZBA are not all in agreement and have different views. This has to give all of us a little pause and are we going a little too fast. If this is how we feel in the room, this may be how the public is feeling, and it may be the reaction people have to certain ADUs for their neighbors or on their street. He stated that this is a major change in zoning for Franklin. He noted that the ZBA has only denied one in their history. He stated let us see how these go for a year or two and then revisit this. He stated that he does not hear that the ZBA denies very much at all. He summarized that this is an amazing conversation. But, as a community, taking this step forward for a year or two and seeing how these are and how they work out is a much more civil step forward than saying they should allow them by right everywhere as he sees there may be a potential consequence to that. ► Councilor Jones stated this has been vetted and the general consensus is that it should be by special permit for those zones. He noted that RI and RII can be readdressed in the future regarding making them by right. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that he has a point of information. He stated that the way the current amendment is written in RVII which is Cook's Farm and someone brings an accessory dwelling unit proposal, within 15 ft. of a neighbor, is that allowed by right for this proposal or do they have to go to the ZBA. ► Mr. Brown stated that if they can meet the setbacks and the amendment passed, it would be by right and there would be no oversight by any board. ► Mr. Taberner discussed that the development is a condo ownership, and there is only one lot with all the houses on it. There is a 40 ft. setback around the perimeter of the lot but not between buildings. If someone wanted to build an ADU separate from their building, they would be building on the condo association property. In that case, if you are allowing an ADU by right, they could allow them within the building without changing the shape of the building. They could have an ADU inside every one of the buildings. They would be coming to the building commissioner for a permit to add a kitchen to the structure. He does not think everyone in that neighborhood would want everyone to have a second kitchen in their house. ► Chair Mercer stated that the question was what are the setbacks for zone RVII. ► Discussion commenced on the by right in zone RVII and the required setbacks. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that he thinks that is wrong and reviewed what he thought were the setbacks for ADUs. ► Mr. Taberner reviewed the setbacks for accessory use for buildings separate from the primary structure and ADUs internal within the primary dwelling. ► Councilor Jones noted the general consensus for the zones discussed. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked about the number of bedrooms for an ADU. ► Mr. Brown stated that the way the bylaw reads is that it is up to two. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger stated that the law states that the septic system is by bedroom and not by people. He stated that this can be a gigantic barrier to people

doing this. ► Councilor Chandler asked if we did this by right, would it allow mobile homes and trailers. ► Mr. Brown stated that currently there is no definition that either allows or disallows mobile homes. ► Councilor Chandler confirmed that anyone could put a mobile home in their backyard right now. ► Mr. Brown said not now, not until the bylaw is weeded out. Right now, there is a separate bylaw that reads that only one principal dwelling unit is allowed on a residential lot. If they were to add a mobile home, it would be in violation of zoning and they would need a variance. ► Councilor Chandler discussed that if this were by right, they could do something like that. ► Mr. Brown said that is very possible. ► Chair Mercer declared the three public hearings closed.

#### **PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: None.**

#### **LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:**

**Note:** Two-Thirds Vote requires six votes; Majority Vote requires majority of members present and voting.

- a. ***Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-894: To Amend Chapter 185, Section 3 of the Code of the Town of Franklin to add Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Definition - First Reading (Motion to Move Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-894 to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).*** ► Councilor Jones read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move** Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-894: To Amend Chapter 185, Section 3 of the Code of the Town of Franklin to add Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Definition to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Councilor Hamblen stated that this is what everyone agreed on, and this is what we need to do which will lead us to the goal. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
  
- b. ***Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-895R (formerly 23-895): To Amend Chapter 185, Attachment 8, Use Regulations Schedule Part VII: Accessory Uses of the Franklin Town Code to Add Accessory Dwelling Residential Units - First Reading (Motion to Move Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-895R to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).*** ► Councilor Jones read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move** Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-895R (formerly 23-895): To Amend Chapter 185, Attachment 8, Use Regulations Schedule Part VII: Accessory Uses of the Franklin Town Code to Add Accessory Dwelling Residential Units to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Councilor Sheridan confirmed this is the one that has the disagreement. ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is the amended one. The Planning Board recommended to amend this back to the original proposal from the EDC. ► **MOTION to Follow the Planning Board's Recommendation** to Amend RI, RII, RVI and RVII Back to the Original recommendation from the EDC + Steering Committee to change the "Y" to a "BA" by **Hamblen. SECOND** by **Jones. Discussion:** ► Councilor Frongillo stated that we have a pressing need to provide housing options. He stated that we have created an environment that people are no longer allowed to do what they want to do with their property without going before a board of peers. He stated that this is a small option to create specifically tailored housing units for people like myself as I live in an accessory dwelling unit, the only reason I can afford to live in Franklin, and this is a small way in one small area to do this. ► Councilor Sheridan discussed why he would be voting against this. ► Councilor Chandler discussed that people have made some good points. He noted that we can change this going forward. He would support this. ► Chair Mercer stated this vote is on the amendment to revert back to the original "BA" in the first column. ► **VOTE: Yes-7, No-2, Absent-0. (Councilors Frongillo and Sheridan stated NO.)** ► Chair Mercer stated now we vote to move it to a second reading as amended. ► **MOTION to Move** Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-895R (formerly 23-895) **AS FURTHER AMENDED:** To Amend Chapter 185, Attachment 8, Use Regulations Schedule Part VII: Accessory Uses of the Franklin Town Code to Add Accessory Dwelling Residential Units to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Jones. No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

- c. ***Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-896: To Amend Chapter 185, Section 19 of the Code of the Town of Franklin to Add on Accessory Dwelling Unit Setbacks - First Reading (Motion to Move Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-896 to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).*** ► Councilor Jones read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move** Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-896: To Amend Chapter 185, Section 19 of the Code of the Town of Franklin to Add on Accessory Dwelling Unit Setbacks to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- d. ***Resolution 23-39: FY2024 Budget Adjustment (Motion to Approve Resolution 23-39 - Majority Vote).*** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 23-39: FY2024 Budget Adjustment by **Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen reviewed his memo to the Town Council dated June 2, 2023, which is included in the meeting packet. He reviewed that before the Town Council is a FY24 budget amendment to increase the Franklin Public Schools bottom line budget by \$736,652. This figure includes approximately \$177,000 in additional state aid which reflects the higher local aid amounts approved in the state senate budget before Memorial Day. It is critical to note the final state budget will not be approved until sometime in July at the earliest. The transfers include all of the recommendations as presented to the Finance Committee and the Town Council at their budget hearings. The staff and I also dug through the budget to identify a few more areas to transfer to increase the school budget line item in lieu of the fact that my estimated local aid from the state might have been a little higher as well as the fact that the state budget is not legally adopted. The resolution before the Town Council this evening itemizes out the transferred amounts of money. If approved, this transfer will bring the school budget to a hair below \$72,000,000 for FY24 and a 2.5 percent increase. He stated that he has been raising the flag on this issue for years. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked about taking the money away from police and fire and what is that impact. He stated that he wanted to make sure everyone is aware that once the money goes to the School Department, the Town Council cannot control how it is spent. So, there is no guarantee that the School Department will use the money for the music programs or items that were outlined as concerns. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed that this will not have any impact on the gear the police and fire departments need this year. He reviewed that the requests will continue to be seen every year until we can find a way to fund them every year as recurring. ► Councilor Pellegrini stated that what bothers her is that they do not have the right to say what the money is to be used for. She explained that they cannot do anything regarding the extra money they are giving to the School Department; they can only hope that the School Department will use the money for what has been discussed. She stated that she hopes the parents let the School Department know what they should use the money for. She noted that this is a lot of money being taken from the Town departments to go to the School Department. ► Councilor Jones commented that the money being provided to the School Department will be appropriated by the School Department, and the Town Council cannot determine where the money will be used. ► Councilor Frongillo discussed that this is still not enough money, and we do not have enough money for all the services that we want to enjoy. ► Councilor Hamblen thanked all who worked on this. ► Councilor Sheridan stated that 22 teachers are a lot to be cut; the teacher is the most direct contact with the students. ► Chair Mercer stated that he echoes all the comments; he stated that there were nine different departments that put together the money to give to the School Department. He stated that he thinks this gets the schools to the similar number that they have been given over the last half dozen years. He stated that the parents need to understand that the Town Council does not control how the schools spend their money. He encouraged the parents to state their concerns to the School Committee. ► Ms. Marcella Dichiaro, 29 Charles River Drive (via Zoom), confirmed that this item has not officially been passed. She stated that the \$736,652 is funding that is shifting from other departments to the schools which is wonderful. She stated that she is worried about the narrative that the schools are a big burden and taking away from other deserving departments to fund the things important to us. She stated that she is nervous about the narrative. She asked if the Town Council was concerned about that. She stated that this seems like a temporary fix. She asked how can we develop a long-term strategy. She stated that she wants to move from what can

we do to here is how we can all take action and help our Town Council solve the larger issue of the budget crisis. ► Chair Mercer discussed that during the budget process and the public hearings, we spent a lot of time talking about this and how we move forward. As a Town Council, we have to look at sustainability. He asked how do we sustain the services with inflation growing and we can only increase taxes 2.5 percent. He discussed that we need to look at a forecast and look out three to five years and what do we need to do to sustain the services currently being provided. The start of that is to look at forecasts from the School Committee and then the Town Administration and combining the forecasts and putting together a meeting with those committees. He discussed the next public hearing with the joint budget subcommittee. He stated that the Town Council does not see the schools as a burden. He stated that we are looking at trying to take care of the entire community the best way possible. ► Mr. Hellen stated that he agrees with Chair Mercer. He stated that the community must start to make sacrifices. The only way out of this is to raise property taxes or revise the service delivery which includes what the School Department provides. He stated this is a huge learning curve for the community. He stated that it is going to take hours for parents to review the documents and watch the meetings so they understand. He stated that they will start the budget process in November and everyone will wonder what is happening. We need people to get engaged. He noted that there is a budget webpage for people. He suggested everyone see where the financial pressures are. ► Ms. Dichiaro stated that she is willing to put in the time and work on this, and a lot of parents are. At this point, it does not seem that there is a long-term finalized plan. She stated that putting in the hours is worth the effort. ► Mr. David McNeill, chair of the Schools Budget Subcommittee (via Zoom), stated thank you for doing this, and the spirit of collaboration is appreciated. He stated some of this will go to some of positions that would have been cut and some of the programs. He looks forward to being part of the discussions coming up with the joint budget committees. ► Ms. Heather Sansoucy, 1 Dartmouth Road, stated that she is interested in hearing about the joint budget meeting. She questioned why the approximate \$736,000 was not discussed sooner as it would have alleviated much time. She stated that you hear it all the time that it is an us versus them. She stated that she understands that the Town Council does not state where the money can be allocated, but they do have the authority to allocate money all over town. She stated concern that the \$736,000 was found and said that it makes you scratch your head that did you not know about it three weeks ago. She stated that she had the opportunity to speak to a parent who has not attended any meetings but was concerned about the cuts. She stated that she spent about 25 minutes with that person and summarized the exact position they are in right now. She asked what is the plan to get the marketing out to the community that there is a budget crisis. She asked if a mailer could be done for this. She stated that we do not read newspapers anymore. No one has the information unless they are looking for it. ► Mr. Hellen stated that he thanked her for showing up for several other meetings. He stated that he did present the information about the approximate \$750,000 at a Finance Committee meeting in early May and he gave a slideshow. He thinks the reason parents came into the room is when there were talks about layoffs/cuts. He stated that this is like Groundhog Day; the pot is not big enough. He explained that when you have a limited pot, you have a high competition for those dollars. He noted that not everyone in the public is engaged in this. He stated that he has presented this Plan B previously. He suggested that it was the music cuts that got people's attention to tune in. He discussed that there are people starting to get tuned in. He stated that the Town staff and School staff are prohibited from doing a mailer on that; it takes citizens to go out and do this. He discussed the numerous ways people can get information about the meetings. He confirmed that he understands that nothing is done in newspapers; there are numerous ways via social media and electronically to get information. ► Chair Mercer outlined some of the steps of the process moving forward. He explained this is about educating the parents; they need to get engaged. ► Mr. Sherlock stated that the recording of the school budget subcommittee is available. He stated that of the 22 teachers cut, some number of those, possibly 16, were going to be cut anyway because of the declining enrollment. Also, to get informed, follow Franklin Matters; that is where all the recordings are. He stated that there are notes and archives. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

- e. **Resolution 23-40: MECC Stabilization Account Transfer to MECC Appropriation FY24 (Motion to Approve Resolution 23-40 -  $\frac{2}{3}$  Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 23-40: MECC Stabilization Account Transfer to MECC Appropriation FY24 by Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. No discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** ► Mr. Hellen noted the event at the Sculpture Park; he stated that the Sculpture Park is revamped and publicly available for people to apply to put sculptures there. He noted the Nason Street Tot Lot opening. He thanked the 4H Alarm Robotics group who rent the Red Brick Schoolhouse for thanking everyone and noting how grateful they are for the Red Brick Schoolhouse.

#### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** None.
- b. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Hamblen stated they met before the full Town Council meeting. She stated a \$0.5M grant was received by Mr. Taberner to clean up the Nu-Style building. It will take about three to four years to clean it up. She stated they also talked about zoning and an impervious coverage amendment. She stated that their next meeting is on June 21, 2023.
- c. **Budget Subcommittee.** None.
- d. **GATRA Advisory Board.** None.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** ► Councilor Sheridan asked if they could look into the missing generator. ► Chair Mercer stated that they did address that. He stated that six months ago this was addressed at a Town Council meeting by the Facilities Director. We were not able to use it in any of our facilities, so it was sold and money was received by the Town. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked to put the ad hoc flag subcommittee on the radar.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger thanked everyone who engaged in the meeting. He thanked and said good luck to Electric Youth. He stated it is June and it is Pride month. He stated that they had a celebration on the Common last week. He stated that some items were vandalized and stolen. It was disheartening. He stated that we need to continue to be a welcoming and affirming community. It is no place for hate. He discussed a personal situation that was disheartening and stated that we still have some work to do. He stated that the human rights campaign for the first time in their 40-year history had to issue a state of emergency for the United States because they are so concerned about the anti-LGBT legislation happening throughout the country that they are warning people about which states they can and should visit and which they should take caution and visit. He stated that is incredibly disturbing. ► Councilor Chandler stated that he was thankful for Mr. Hellen's plan B. ► Councilor Pellegrini reviewed the Joint Budget Subcommittee dates. She gave condolences to the Cusson family. She thanked the department heads for getting together the \$750,000 for the schools. ► Councilor Sheridan stated that the Nason playground looks great. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that the Sculpture Park looks great. He noted the Strawberry Stroll on Friday. He stated that the Franklin Food Pantry is opening. He noted office hours are next Thursday at the Senior Center. He stated that he heard some Franklin residents checked out many LGBT books so that others could not check them out during the month of June. He discussed the frustrations with people not being engaged enough in their community, and he wants to give people an invitation to get engaged. He stated that your voice does matter. ► Councilor Hamblen thanked everyone for everything they already said. She stated that she is sorry there was vandalism, and we have to spread love and be kind. She stated the Nason Street Tot Lot and Sculpture Park were fantastic. ► Councilor Jones discussed that Town councilors have sacrificed and have done hard work to make the community the best place. He noted the first Master Plan Committee meeting is next Wednesday. He noted the Food Pantry's grand opening. ► Councilor Dellorco discussed that no one is born with hate, they are taught. He noted that the art on the electrical boxes is amazing. ► Chair Mercer told Councilor Cormier-Leger that he was sorry he had to deal with that situation. He offered his condolences to the Cusson family for their loss. He thanked the police chief, fire chief, and DPW director who came here in support of what we were

doing this evening, and they sat here all night long. He noted Mr. Brown stayed here all night in support of the things the Town Council was doing tonight. He thanked Mr. Sherlock for all he does. He reminded everyone of the Strawberry Stroll on Friday with a rain date of Saturday. He noted the Food Pantry ribbon cutting on Monday morning. He wished his mother Happy Birthday. He encouraged everyone to get engaged; he stated that we are One Franklin.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.**

**ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Dellorco. SECOND by Jones. No Discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:13 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary