

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 4, 2022**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, May 4, 2022, at the Municipal Building, 2nd Floor, Council Chambers, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA. Councilors present: Theodore Cormier-Leger, Robert Dellorco, Cobi Frongillo, Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegrini, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: Brian Chandler. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney; Alecia Alleyne, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

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 and shown on Comcast channel 11 and Verizon Channel 29. This meeting may be recorded by others. He announced that Councilor Chandler will not be attending the meeting.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: ► Mr. Colin Cass, 146 Longhill Road, discussed the environmental crisis. He stated that the global environment is threatened. The effect of all the crises on the environment is predictable. Priorities get shifted and the problem does not get solved. He stated that his question is what should the Franklin Town Council be expected to do in the face of a global problem like climate change. He stated that the Town should expect to act independently and single-mindedly toward net zero for Franklin. No Town business should occur without net zero as an explicit objective. The Town's budget should begin from the premise.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: ► *March 16, 2022 and April 6, 2022.* ► **MOTION to Approve** the March 16, 2022 meeting minutes by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Jones. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.** ► **MOTION to Approve** the April 6, 2022 meeting minutes by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Jones. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: ► *Proclamation - Harriet DiMartino.* ► Chair Mercer stated that Ms. DiMartino reached her 100th birthday on April 18, 2022. Her two sons Donald and David were present at the meeting; Ms. DiMartino was watching the meeting from home. Chair Mercer read aloud the proclamation honoring Ms. Harriet DiMartino on the occasion of her 100th birthday. ► Representative Jeff Roy read aloud a resolution from the Massachusetts House of Representatives congratulating Ms. Harriet DiMartino and extending sincere best wishes on the occasion of her 100th birthday. Representative Roy stated that Governor Baker asked him to deliver a certificate from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts congratulating Ms. DiMartino on the occasion of her 100th birthday. Mr. Donald DiMartino stated thank you.

APPOINTMENTS: **None.**

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: ► *Discussion: Congressman Jake Auchincloss, 4th Congressional District.* ► Chair Mercer welcomed Congressman Jake Auchincloss and thanked him for attending the meeting. He stated that he made this inquiry to the congressman because there has been so much activity at the federal level on infrastructure. He thought it might be helpful to have a discussion

regarding this. He stated that he wants to focus on federal policy that affects the operations of our local government in our community. ► Congressman Jake Auchincloss stated that he would like to go over federal policy that they are working on that he thinks they can get passed in the next six months. He reviewed what they are working on in Congress. He stated that at the widest level in international affairs we are still grappling daily with the war in Ukraine starting on February 24, 2022. He stated that NATO has rallied in unity. He stated that they will continue to provide substantially a blank check for what they need to defend themselves. He stated that Republicans and Democrats are in strong support of the President to give the Ukrainian forces what they need for the fairest fight they can get. He stated that they are also dealing with the ongoing challenge of Covid. He stated that we need to maintain vigilance. He reviewed the pending funding in Congress for the Covid effort. He stated that he strongly believes in the \$15 billion package for this effort. He stated that from the war and Covid there has been an upending in the supply chain and a recognition domestically that our supply chains are not as resilient as they should be. He stated that the America Competes Act is something that Congress should be able to pass in the next six month which makes critical investments in manufacturing and workforce development and should help us be more productive. He discussed Build Back Better. He stated that a slimmed down version of that package is possible to pass. He stated that this would be the largest investment in clean energy; he stated that they have the votes in the Senate to pass the bill. He stated that they also need to pass before the midterms the Electoral Count Act which would formalize Congress's roll in tabulating electoral results from the states. He stated that he would close with the most directly local item which is infrastructure. He stated that in March 2021 they passed the American Rescue Plan which got shots into arms, helped the schools reopen, provided relief to hardest hit Americans, and provided \$350 billion to state and local governments nationally to be used for a wide variety of purposes with infrastructure being one of them; Massachusetts received \$8 billion for this. He stated that there are historic sums of money available for infrastructure. He noted that Franklin is using a lot of their funds on water infrastructure projects. ► Town Council members thanked Congressman Auchincloss for his presentation and asked questions. ► Congressman Auchincloss discussed housing development and affordable housing. He discussed that there is more funding available for water infrastructure than ever has been. He stated that this is the time to act. He discussed that they are pulling back in the expansion of new highways and stated that there are funding streams for public transit. He noted investments in walking and cycling infrastructure. He reviewed the America Competes Act and noted that the food supply chain and food insecurity is not really addressed in this act. He stated that there is serious progress being made that every school-aged child is getting a full set of nutritious meals daily. He talked about the surge in children's mental health issues and that it has to be addressed and hard conversations are needed about what is driving this. He stated that there is anxiety about the systematic challenges that we have. He stated that what makes this country great is that we have never given into that hopelessness. He stated that he is excited about the 118th Congress. He told students to get engaged locally; start working with people in an authentic face-to-face way. He talked about the biking money available from two grant programs for cities and towns trying to do complete streets. He reviewed that the Town receiving the ISO #1 rating is very good. He provided his view on policing in the state for the future; he stated that he respects the work that police officers do. He stated that there is a tremendous amount of work being done at the federal level to increase funding for mental health care. ► Mr. Richard Ciccone, 185 Chestnut Street, asked if some money through the federal government could be used for the MBTA to revitalize Dean Station. He stated that whatever help Congressman Auchincloss could provide would be appreciated. ► Ms. Eileen Mason, 62 Beaver Street, stated that she was a realtor in town. She stated that Dean Station is great, but they do not want to encourage more commuter parking there. She stated that she would like the commuter parking at the Forge Hill Station. She asked if there are any funds to get a parking garage at Forge Park. ► Congressman Auchincloss discussed where the federal grants come in. He stated that the Town and the State usually apply together for a grant. ► Mr. Brutus Cantoreggi, Director of Public Works, stated that the Town is using ARPA funds. He discussed the water lines, infrastructure, and capital management plan. He provided an update of the Beaver Street Interceptor. ► A resident noted the Supreme Court's decision that may be coming down. She stated that there is a lot of stress and trauma. She wanted to know

what Congress's role is in being involved in this conversation. ► Congressman Auchincloss discussed the leaked draft of an opinion that would overturn *Roe v. Wade*. He stated that access to reproductive health care is a human right. He reviewed the issue as it is presented in the House and Senate. He stated that in the long term it has to be codified in Congress. ► Chair Mercer noted that Congressman Auchincloss represents 34 communities in Massachusetts.

Chair Mercer called a two-minute recess.

HEARINGS: 7:00 p.m. ► *Alcoholic Beverages Licensees – Failure to Pass Compliance Check - Continued from 4/13/2022.* ► *TM1 Solutions, Inc. d/b/a 7-Eleven 37380 - 664 Union Street.* ► Chief of Police Thomas Lynch and Lt. Eric Zimmerman were in attendance. ► Chair Mercer stated this item is a continuation from the April 13, 2022, meeting. ► Mr. Mohamed Hijazi, owner/manager, stated that he was not in attendance at the last meeting as he did not receive the notice. ► Chief Lynch confirmed the notice was mailed via U.S. mail and not certified mail. He stated that after the last meeting, an officer took a notice to the establishment. ► Mr. Hellen noted that all the sent correspondence is provided in the Town Council's meeting packet. The letters were hand-delivered the second time and all the owners are here at tonight's meeting. ► Councilor Jones stated that miscommunications happen. Therefore, he recommended the normal protocol be issued. ► **MOTION to Recommend** that the normal protocol be followed of three days suspension with one day served on the same day of the week as the violation which was a Wednesday and the date served will be Wednesday, May 11, 2022, and two days held in abeyance for two years by **Jones**. **SECOND** by **Dellorco**. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-1, Absent-0.**

► ***Dharma Bhakti Corporation d/b/a Liquor World - 365 West Central Street.*** ► Mr. Cerel stated that the owner was represented by his attorney. He stated that he spoke with them prior to the meeting and they do not challenge the violation. ► Attorney on behalf of the licensee stated that there is no dispute of the facts of the incident as indicated on the incident report. ► Councilor Jones stated that miscommunications happen. Therefore, he recommended the normal protocol be issued of three days suspension with one day served on the same day of the week as the violation which was a Wednesday and the date served will be Wednesday, May 11, 2022, and two days held in abeyance for two years. ► Attorney on behalf of the licensee requested all three days be held in abeyance as Liquor World has been operating for five years and this is the first violation. ► **MOTION to Recommend** that the normal protocol be followed of three days suspension with one day served on the same day of the week as the violation which was a Wednesday and the date served will be Wednesday, May 11, 2022, and two days held in abeyance for two years by **Jones**. **SECOND** by **Dellorco**. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Cerel stated that it has always been the practice that in recognition of a first offense the businesses that have been in business for a long time that it is one day served as it has to be recognized the seriousness of the offense. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-1, Absent-0.** ► Chair Mercer confirmed with Chief Lynch and Mr. Hellen that going forward everything such as this will be mailed certified mail.

► ***Street Acceptances: ► Joseph Circle.*** ► Chair Mercer stated that he opened both the hearings. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed that this is part of the continued work of street acceptances in the town. The Planning Board voted unanimously at its April 25, 2022, meeting to recommend the street acceptances to the Town Council. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that the EDC did not talk about this. ► Town Engineer Michael Maglio confirmed that Joseph Circle extends into Bellingham; he does not know if Bellingham has accepted their portion of the road. ► Councilor Frongillo discussed how much this infrastructure build-out costs the Town; just building out this road costs the Town a loss of approximately \$6,000. ► Mr. Cerel reviewed the road acceptance procedure. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed that the Town's acceptance of a street as a public way is a legal requirement for the Town to perform maintenance and repair work. It is also necessary for the Town to qualify for receipt of Chapter 90 funds for these roads from the State. ► Mr. Cerel stated that what the Town Council is accepting is a layout and it varies from one project to another.

► *Susan's Way, and a portion of Lawrence Drive.* ► No discussion. ► Chair Mercer stated that he closed both the hearings.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: None.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS (continued): ► *Presentation: FY21 Annual Financial Audit - Melanson and Heath.* ► Mr. Hellen introduced Mr. Scott McIntire of Melanson and Heath. He congratulated Mr. McIntire and Melanson and Heath on completing the audit. ► Mr. McIntire narrated a slideshow presentation. He summarized the results of the audit. He stated that the audit went very well. The books and records were in good working order. He reported that there were no disagreements between the Town of Franklin and the firm on how to apply generally accepted accounting principles. He noted accounting estimates such as OPEB and Pension are determined by experts in the field, and they agree with the estimates. He discussed the Independent Auditors' Report on page 1. He stated that the report indicates that in their opinion based on their procedures and auditing standards, the Town's financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting principles. The results are a clean opinion on the financial statements. He reviewed page 14 of the document regarding Statement of Net Position: Liabilities. He reviewed the unfunded Net Pension Liability of \$38,824,538; it has gone down from the prior year when it was at \$44 million. He pointed out that the fund is using a discount rate of 7.75 percent. The oversight agency is a little concerned that the number is a little high. However, he thinks that Franklin can support it as the earnings exceeded that rate. He noted it is about 70 percent funded. He reviewed the Net OPEB Liability of \$68,668,848. That account balance is also down from a year ago when it was at \$71 million. He stated that the Town is about 12 percent funded. He stated that this is a lot compared to many peer communities. He reviewed page 19 regarding Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds to the Statement of Activities. He discussed page 16 regarding Governmental Funds Balance Sheet and pointed out the Unassigned Fund Balance of \$14,330,669. That represents about 11 percent of the FY21 expenditures. He noted that last year the balance was about \$11.2 million which was 9.1 percent. He reviewed the OPEB Trust Fund as detailed on page 24 of the report. He stated that the amount in the OPEB Trust Fund as of June 30, 2021, is \$9,805,609; that balance went up by \$3 million in the past year. ► Town Council members asked questions and made comments. ► In response, Mr. McIntire stated that infrastructure falls within page 13 of the document titled Statement of Net Position: Assets. He reviewed other capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation of \$206,198,852, which is where infrastructure is included. He stated that rating agencies like to see around 65 percent to 70 percent of long-term debt being paid off over the next 10 years; Franklin fits into that model. ► Mr. Hellen stated that at the end of the day, financial audits are a reflection on the fiscal year and accounting practices and ethics questions to validate from an independent third party that the Town of Franklin is doing a great job in terms of managing its money, reporting, etc. He stated that in getting the best bond rating the Town can, it creates the effect of allowing the Town to have the cash flow and fiscal strength to make the investments and be able to pay them off with a lot of confidence. This is not really related to taxes or our ability to spend/pay, those are indirectly connected. This is a review of our financial policies and effectiveness. ► Mr. McIntire stated that they did not find any material weaknesses in their audit. He stated that he believes the Norfolk County Retirement will be fully funded in 2032.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

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

- a. *Resolution 22-27: Order of Acceptance of Joseph Circle as a Public Way and Related Utility and Drainage Easements (Motion to Approve Resolution 22-27 - Two-thirds Majority Vote).*
 ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 22-27: Order of Acceptance of Joseph Circle as a Public Way and Related Utility and Drainage Easements by

Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion: ► Mr. Hellen stated that the next two resolutions regard the street acceptances that the Town Council just had the hearings about. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

- b. Resolution 22-28: Order of Acceptance of Susan's Way and a portion of Lawrence Drive as Public Ways and Related Utility and Drainage Easements (Motion to Approve Resolution 22-28 - Two-thirds Majority Vote).** ► **MOTION to Waive** the reading by **Cormier-Leger. SECOND by Dellorco. No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.** ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 22-28: Order of Acceptance of Susan's Way and a portion of Lawrence Drive as Public Ways and Related Utility and Drainage Easements by **Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**
- c. Bylaw Amendment 22-879: Chapter 170, Vehicles and Traffic, Appendix A, Fines, Parking Violations - First Reading (Motion to Move Bylaw Amendment 22-879 to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move** Bylaw Amendment 22-879: Chapter 170, Vehicles and Traffic, Appendix A, Fines, Parking Violations to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen reviewed his parking remedies memorandum to the Town Council dated April 29, 2022, which was provided in the Town Council's meeting packet. He reviewed that the following proposals are amendments to Town code and downtown parking regulations in order to fix some problems that have been voiced over the past several months, or years in the case of West Street. The EDC voted 3 to 1 to forward to the Town Council an updated Appendix in Town Code with traffic citations. He stated that the Town bylaw was last updated in 2002. This issue was brought to our attention by the residents on West Street who have voiced their concern over traffic violations of some Dean College students in the area who may be going into the dorm. He noted that the DPW will put striping down at two key intersections where cars are clearly being illegally parked, namely the corners of West Street and Church Street and Walnut Street/Nason Street. The most noted areas of where folks park are spaces between a lined space and the curb. Signage is present, but with a \$15 fine, if caught, as the only deterrent, most people take the risk. Some additional striping to alert folks they are not legal spaces will hopefully illuminate that these are not legal parking spaces. He noted the comparative research done by Chief Lynch and Lt. Reilly. The police received a dozen citation books from area departments. If this resolution is moved forward, these rates will hover in the middle of where other communities are in the area. It is believed that many other towns have not adopted any recent changes, like Franklin, because most towns around here do not have significant parking problems. The Town needs to be careful and balanced to also not create the unintended consequence of irritating people to the point they do not want to visit, or cut their visits short. He reviewed the proposed Parking Violations chart which included the recommended fines. ► Councilor Hamblen reiterated that the fines have not been updated in 20 years. She noted that the current \$15 fine does not discourage anyone. She recommended the proposed increases. ► Councilor Jones stated that he wants to keep the \$25 fine as is; if it does not work out, the Town Council can always increase the fines in the future. He noted that two hours is a very short window of time; three hours may be more reasonable. He does not want to deter people from visiting the downtown. ► Councilor Dellorco agreed and stated that if the fine is too high, it will deter people from the downtown. He stated that Dean College needs to do something about the problem. ► Mr. Hellen stated that there is a parking lot behind Dean Bank with so much parking that it is never filled. Eventually, they are looking for a new system to utilize the parking behind Dean Bank as there are not as many commuters as there used to be. The lot can be used for parking after 2 PM free of charge. The police and staff are going to look at putting in meters or some other system for that lot. ► Chief Lynch explained how the police officers go by the parking spaces and determine if a vehicle is over the two-hour limit; the police do the best they can. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked about the all-night parking fine. ► Mr. Hellen explained that there is not an all-night parking restriction at this time. He noted that these bylaws take effect town-wide. Right now,

there are no over-night parking restrictions in the Town code. ► Chair Mercer stated that he agreed with Councilor Jones and Councilor Dellorco. ► Ms. Lisa Piana, 6 Matthew Drive, Executive Director of the Franklin Downtown Partnership, stated that this is a very important issue for the downtown businesses. She noted that there are six new businesses in the downtown. She stated that she wants to make sure that they continue to have visitors coming to downtown who are not afraid of getting ticketed. She stated that she spoke to a few businesses. They really brought up the Town parking lots. She stated that there are no signs to these parking lots; they do not know where the free parking is. She recommended getting new signs up. She stated that two hours is not enough anymore. She stated that education is needed as well. She invited everyone who wants to talk about parking to attend the June 2, 2022, meeting of the Downtown Partnership. ► Mr. Gary Mackintosh, 24 East Street, agreed with Ms. Piana that the East Street/West Street residential parking concerns are separate from the downtown parking concerns. He stated that he is not sure that \$25 is going to fix the problem with the Dean College students. They would need 14 tickets to match what it would cost them to park in the Dean College parking lot. He noted that Franklin is different than other towns as Franklin has a college and an MBTA station downtown. He would like to have the \$35 stay for the residential areas. ► Ms. April Rock, new business owner representing 12 Main Street, stated that the two-hour minimum will be an issue for businesses. She recommended opening up the lot behind Dean Bank in the morning. ► Mr. Stephen Pisini on behalf of Pisini Shoe Store, 22 Main Street, stated that Ms. Piana did a great job of expressing the concerns of the merchants. He thinks that some people may feel the overtime fines are punitive and it may deter some people. ► Mr. Scott Martin, 18 Arlington Street, President of Downtown Partnership, stated that he has been a business owner on Main Street. He is encouraged about discussions about a three-hour time limit; two hours is not enough time. He stated that he hopes they can make parking available before 2 PM. ► Ms. Eileen Mason, 62 Beaver Street, stated that in bringing businesses to downtown, there is not enough convenient parking for customers. The employees do not have enough places to park. She discussed options for employee parking. She stated that fines are being proposed, but there is no parking plan in place. She requested they hold off on the fines until everyone has had discussions about what to do about the parking. ► Ms. Jane Curran, 18 Park Road, a founder of the Franklin Downtown Partnership and former downtown business owner, asked if all feeder streets would be getting the same fines. She stated that two-hours is not enough to shop downtown. ► Ms. Roberta Trahan, 1 Green Street, member of the Downtown Partnership, stated that she agrees with everything the speakers have said. She stressed the point of education. People do not know where to park; we really need signage. She suggested that more discussion is needed before this item is voted on. ► Mr. Hellen stated that there are 24 spaces dedicated to merchant parking; they are clearly signed in the spaces. Two years have passed and they have not sold one space to a merchant. He reviewed the changed bylaw in 2016 based on the request for more merchant parking. He stated that there has been a parking map for downtown which is included in the meeting packet. He does not think those are the issues. There is merchant parking and there are no takers. He noted that back then, the Town Council determined to charge the same amount for parking for both commuters and merchants in the lots. He stated that some hard policy decisions still have to be made. ► Councilor Frongillo reviewed signage, parking spaces, fines, and length of time in the spaces. ► Chair Mercer stated that in looking around the Town Council and listening to the people, he is not sure the Town Council is ready to make the decisions right now. He stated that he thinks more information needs to be gathered and adjustments need to be made to get a positive vote from the Town Council. ► Councilor Frongillo stated concern about pushing it off too long. ► Chair Mercer stated that there is a June 2, 2022, meeting of the Downtown Partnership; the Town Council and Town Administrator were invited. He is not looking to push this item off too far. ► Mr. Hellen stated that there is another event on June 2, 2022; it is a tough date. ► Mr. Cerel stated that the item can be tabled generally or to a specific date and time.

► **MOTION to Withdraw** the Motion for Bylaw Amendment 22-879: Chapter 170, Vehicles and Traffic, Appendix A, Fines, Parking Violations to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. No discussion.** ► **MOTION to Table** Bylaw Amendment 22-879: Chapter 170, Vehicles

and Traffic, Appendix A, Fines, Parking Violations to the Town Council meeting on June 22, 2022, by **Jones. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger requested a subcommittee on this item. ► Chair Mercer stated that he is not sure a subcommittee is necessary. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

- d. **Bylaw Amendment 22-880: Chapter 170, Vehicles and Traffic, Article IV, Stopping, Standing and Parking, §170-15 Parking Prohibitions and Limitations, D. Parking Prohibited, Downtown Parking Map - First Reading (Motion to Move Bylaw Amendment 22-880 to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move** Bylaw Amendment 22-880: Chapter 170, Vehicles and Traffic, Article IV, Stopping, Standing and Parking, §170-15 Parking Prohibitions and Limitations, D. Parking Prohibited, Downtown Parking Map to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this item is mutually exclusive from the previous item. He reviewed the provided map. This would be considered the Downtown Business Corridor. He reviewed that many folks have commented to staff recently about the overnight parking and the appetite for a more restrictive bylaw for the main commercial stretch on Main Street and East Central Street. Many have commented that the parking restrictions do not encourage greater rotation of cars in the afternoon and evening, in addition to overnight parking in front of the businesses for extended periods of time, including overnight. These occupied spaces prevent more customers from coming into those restaurants or businesses. The staff have provided a revised map of downtown parking with minor tweaks to those areas including no overnight parking. A modest tweak to the bylaw map is doable at this point to fix a small, concentrated problem. If people want to park for longer than two hours, the Town-owned lots are available. The main corridor should have a good rotation of traffic. He stated the EDC endorsed this proposal. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that Mr. Hellen described this well. ► Councilor Jones reiterated education and signage. ► Mr. Mike Rock, business owner at 12 Main Street, stated that signage is insufficient at this time. He stated that about 70 percent of their foot traffic is between 11 AM and 2 PM. He asked why the proposed restrictions were only Monday through Friday when they do over 50 percent of their business on the weekends. ► Mr. Hellen stated that it was just a starting point. It was a big step to propose no overnight parking on the weekdays. ► Ms. Lisa Piana, 6 Matthew Drive, Executive Director of the Franklin Downtown Partnership, stated that from the Franklin Downtown Partnership's view, this is part of the whole discussion. Businesses and residents want more time for this item. She stated that there should not be any overnight parking, and whether it is two hours or three hours is part of the whole discussion. It is hard to separate this. It is all about parking and solutions. ► Mr. Hellen stated that he does not think people are opposed to the three-hour parking; the question is where do you want the three-hour parking. ► Councilor Frongillo reiterated that signage is most important. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that she agrees with Councilor Frongillo that they can solve the issue today with no overnight parking. She thinks that these will go into effect on July 1, 2022, which gives them time to talk to and educate people. ► Chair Mercer reminded all that this is a first reading going to a second reading. ► **VOTE: Yes-7, No-1, Absent-1.** (Councilor Dellorco voted No.)
- e. **Resolution 22-29: Gift Acceptance - Fire Dept. (\$275), Veterans' Services Dept. (\$100) (Motion to Approve Resolution 22-29 - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 22-29: Gift Acceptance - Fire Dept. (\$275), Veterans' Services Dept. (\$100) by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen thanked everyone for their generous contributions. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: ► **Davis-Thayer Update.** ► Mr. Hellen stated that the Town budget was put out two weeks ago; it is available online. Finance Committee budget hearings are on May 9th, May 11th, and May 12th. Regarding Davis-Thayer, the main reason it has taken a little longer is that there is a MSBA regulation that if you close a school within 10 years it has to be reported to the MSBA

because if you ever contemplate building another school in the future within a certain timeframe, you can be penalized. That is critically important. He stated that he and other staff have been trying to get in touch with the MSBA. He had a meeting with them about a month ago. They understand why the School Committee decided to close the building which is huge progress. He received a follow-up email today from the MSBA laying out the rules of the road; unfortunately, the one caveat is that the School Committee will have to wait six more months to declare the property surplus to ensure that the Town does not get penalized in the next decade if there was for some reason another proposal for another school. He stated that he got the okay from the superintendent to see if we can continue to honor the commitment for many of the citizens who wanted to go into the building for nostalgia purposes. He stated that they are anticipating in the fall that the School Committee will declare Davis-Thayer surplus property. He stated that they are looking for a date to have a community event there. ► Councilor Pellegrini asked why this was not known six months ago. ► Mr. Hellen stated that it is not the easiest state agency to get in touch with. He stated the future of the school is going to have to be decided by some kind of committee; there will be ample time for public input. ► Chair Mercer reviewed the email from the MSBA. He stated that the email says that the Town satisfied the six-month notification requirement. He asked for clarity on this statement. ► Mr. Hellen stated that the Town Council has to be respectful of the School Committee on this; he will reach out to the superintendent tomorrow regarding this item. ► Mr. Cerel stated that he has no better way to deal with the MSBA. ► Mr. Richard Ciccone, 185 Chestnut Street, confirmed that Chair Mercer believes that the email indicates that the six-month period has been satisfied. ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is a School Committee policy decision; we should be aiming our energies to the School Committee. He stated that he is trying to respect their jurisdiction and their process. ► Mr. Richard Ciccone, 185 Chestnut Street stated that he has not heard the School Committee discuss this in open meeting. He stated that this is all for the superintendent.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- b. **Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- c. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Hamblen stated that the EDC plus Steering Committee met tonight. They discussed how the process for Franklin for All was going and some of the ideas that they want to focus on. She stated that the next public forum for Franklin for All will be at The Black Box on May 16th at 6:30 PM. It will be a hybrid meeting.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: ► Councilor Sheridan noted parking. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked that the climate crisis be put on a future agenda. He asked for a future agenda item about a parking garage at the MBTA site. He stated that if there are 24 leased parking spaces available to merchants and no one is leasing them, then the Town Council should review that and come up with a different use for them. ► Chair Mercer suggested that it may be a good time to bring in Ben Franklin and talk about what they have been doing and give the community some knowledge about what is going on.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: ► Councilor Cormier-Leger congratulated Mr. Lucas Giguere on being appointed new Superintendent of Schools. He stated that the Davis-Thayer School conversation has been going on too long; the school closed months ago. ► Councilor Pellegrini stated that she agreed with everything Councilor Cormier-Leger said. ► Councilor Frongillo gave a review of upcoming events and activities. ► Councilor Hamblen thanked everyone who helped get the Town to the ISO #1 rating. She thanked tonight's presenters. She thanked her fellow council members and the community for the condolences for her father. She stated that everyone can help build the bridges and create community unity. ► Chair Mercer thanked the presenter's for attending the meeting tonight. He congratulated Mr. Lucas Giguere as the new Superintendent of Schools. He congratulated Ms. Harriet DiMartino on her 100th birthday. He offered his condolences to the Hamblen family. He offered condolences to the Narducci family.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

**ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Dellorco. SECOND by Jones. No Discussion. ► VOTE:
► VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary