

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
September 28, 2022**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, September 28, 2022, 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 Pellegrini, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: None. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; 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; this meeting may be recorded by others.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** ► Ms. Carol Oneil, 11 Colt Road, stated that she is hoping we get a new state flag because while it may have been their truth at the time, it is not our truth now. She stated that a flag is something you want to wave and be proud of. She stated that we are talking about native peoples who we actually took our land from them and she hears that they are not too happy with our flag. She stated that to her is enough to change it; it needs to be something that we are proud of. She asked that the Town Council please consider this. ► Ms. Rachel Plukas, 37 Anchorage Road, stated that she echoed what was just said. She stated that this subject regarding the changing of the Massachusetts flag and state seal is something that the Town of Franklin is in fact talking about; children as well as the adults are reaching out about this. She stated that she is glad this is on the Town Council's mind. She stated that there are a number of different reasons why this energy is here and the Franklin residents are calling for it. She quoted a message delivered by King Philip following a speech.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** ► *August 17, 2022 and September 7, 2022.* ► **MOTION** to Approve the August 17, 2022 meeting minutes by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Hamblen. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► **MOTION** to Approve the September 7, 2022 meeting minutes by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Hamblen. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS:** None.

**APPOINTMENTS:** ► *Agricultural Commission - Daniel Morse.* ► Councilor Jones read the appointment. ► **MOTION** to Ratify the appointment by the Town Administrator of Daniel Morse to serve as an associate member of the Agricultural Commission with a term to expire on June 30, 2023, by Jones. **SECOND** by Dellorco. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that he thinks Dan is qualified, he is here tonight, and we thank him for volunteering. He stated that Mr. Morse owns Wadsworth Farm and is a Stockbridge graduate. ► Mr. Morse provided his background and stated that he wanted to be a volunteer. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

► *Conservation Commission - Meghann Hagen.* ► Councilor Jones read the appointment. ► **MOTION** to Ratify the appointment by the Town Administrator of Meghann Hagen to serve as a member of the Conservation Commission with a term to expire on June 30, 2025, by Jones. **SECOND** by Dellorco. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is Ms. Hagen's first volunteer opportunity in the community. He stated that she is very qualified because she is a teacher. He stated that she cares very much for protecting the

environment and conservation. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger stated that he added his support for this volunteer. ► Councilor Jones thanked the volunteers who step up for these volunteer positions in the community. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

► **Council on Aging - Kimberly Mu-Chow.** ► Councilor Jones read the appointment. ► **MOTION to Ratify** the appointment by the Town Administrator of Kimberly Mu-Chow to serve as a member of the Council on Aging with a term to expire on June 30, 2023, by **Jones. SECOND** by **Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that hopefully we all know Kimberly well. He stated that she is incredibly dedicated and the Council on Aging recommended her appointment. He stated that she is filling out a term that someone resigned from. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

► **Finance Committee - Michael Hamilton.** ► Councilor Jones read the appointment. ► **MOTION to Ratify** the appointment by the Town Administrator of Michael Hamilton to serve as a member of the Finance Committee with a term to expire on June 30, 2025, by **Jones. SECOND** by **Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this appointment was brought through the Finance Committee and they endorse this appointment. He stated that Mr. Hamilton is present at the meeting tonight. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**HEARINGS: None.**

**LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: None.**

**PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: None.**

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

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

- a. **Resolution 22-61: Direction for Issuance of Request for Proposals for Town Property Containing "South Franklin Congregational Meeting House" Located at 762 Washington Street (Motion to Approve Resolution 22-61 - Majority Vote).** ► **MOTION to Waive** the reading by **Hamblin. SECOND** by **Dellorco. No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-1, Absent-0.** ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 22-61: Direction for Issuance of Request for Proposals for Town Property Containing "South Franklin Congregational Meeting House" Located at 762 Washington Street by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that tonight's vote will direct him and the purchasing agent and the staff the ability to put out the request for proposals on the South Franklin Congregational Meeting House. He stated that he thinks the Town Council has talked about this for many years. He stated that Director of Planning and Community Development Bryan Taberner, who drafted the RFP with the attorney, is present at the meeting. He noted that the main issue that the Town Council was concerned about is a preservation restriction on the façade of the building; he stated that is clearly a condition of this. He reviewed the displayed map and noted that the section where the dotted lines are would remain Town property for the water pump station that is back there. He stated that it is a 17-page RFP and the deadline is November 3, 2022, for bids; there will be an onsite visit on October 19, 2022. ► Chair Mercer confirmed that the square footage for the property that is going to be sold is 28,550 sq. ft. He confirmed that the lot would not be non-conforming. ► Mr. Taberner explained that the way the RFP is written is that the back portion would be retained as a permanent easement. ► Town Council members asked questions, made comments, and thanked those who worked on this. ► Mr. Hellen explained that the down payment of \$25,000 is a commitment to be put in escrow. He reviewed the restrictions which include that it is deeded to affordability and maintaining the facade; he read aloud some of the language. He stated that he hopes the Habitat for Humanity would bid since they showed interest; it is an open bid that anyone can bid on that meets the minimum criteria. He stated that they would have to make progress and finish things in five years as it is in the RFP. He stated that it is deeded affordable; they cannot flip it around and sell it at market rate. He discussed the purchase and sale process and that details and specifics

can be worked out at that time. He discussed why it is to be a single-family; he stated that single family is the zoning for the area and that will make it a conforming lot. He discussed that due to the building shape and internal heights, it would be difficult to make this anything other than a single-family home.

► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: ► *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.***

► Mr. Hellen stated that for the bylaw amendment he is going to discuss, there is no action required. He stated that the town attorney advised him that in lieu of the vote last week at the EDC on the new parking district, this was the path of least resistance to convey to the public that the Zoning Bylaw 22-880 which was approved at a first reading by the Town Council, that we could either bring it back and debate it and keep on going, but he advised that during the Town Administrator's report for Mr. Hellen to convey that this bylaw will essentially be tabled because in the bylaw that the EDC is going to bring to the Town Council with their recommendation next week on October 5, 2022, it will have a revised section of that bylaw in the new one that is coming next week. He stated that this essentially clears the deck from an earlier proposal of this year; he stated that the EDC did vote unanimously on the new parking regulations last week so that will come up on October 5, 2022. ► Mr. Hellen stated that most residents in town have heard the news about a huge electricity rate increase by National Grid and Eversource in November, but the good news for Franklin residents is that the \$0.105 rate that the Town got through the municipal aggregation program two years ago will stay in effect for the residents in that program through the winter. He stated that all but 600 residents are opted in the program. He stated that he is going to make a talk on this at the Senior Center in a few weeks. He stated that residents should call his office if they have any questions or concerns on this issue. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed the DPW's Touch a Truck event on October 15, 2022. ► Mr. Hellen discussed that the Red Brick School's exterior is currently being renovated. ► Chair Mercer confirmed that 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, would have to be voted to be tabled. ► Councilor Dellorco confirmed that if a resident did nothing, they were enrolled in the municipal aggregation program. ► Mr. Hellen explained that residents who may have opted out, may opt back into the program; this can be done from the Town's website or residents can call the Town Administrator's office for help.

**LEGISLATION FOR ACTION (as requested by Chair Mercer):**

- b. *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.*** ► **MOTION to Table** 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, by **Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. No discussion.** ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Chandler-YES; Cormier-Leger-YES; Dellorco-YES; Frongillo-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegri-YES; Sheridan-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- b. **Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- c. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Hamblen stated that they discussed the bylaw amendment that was just tabled. She stated that before the EDC meeting, they had an EDC Plus meeting with the Franklin for All steering group. She stated that they talked about the project timeline and will discuss downtown housing zone density and inclusionary zoning and things like that in November. She stated that they have a long list of things to cover. She stated that she thinks they came up with a really great plan for downtown parking and people will be happy about it. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that the GATRA Advisory Board met and he has nothing to report yet. He stated that GATRA would be coming to the Senior Center office hours in the future.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** ► Councilor Sheridan requested the state flag. ► Councilor Frongillo noted the state flag. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger stated that they had talked about reviewing zoning density and asked if it was on a future agenda. ► Mr. Hellen stated that it would be handled at the EDC first and they would then recommend it to the full Town Council; it will probably be on one of the November EDC meetings. ► Councilor Chandler asked for an update on the Beaver Street Interceptor project.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger echoed putting the state flag discussion on an upcoming agenda. He noted a meeting on October 23, 2022, regarding the proposed apartment building at 237 Pleasant Street to be held at St. John's Episcopal Church; it is a community meeting. ► Councilor Pellegrini stated that she is happy about the Red Brick School. ► Mr. Hellen stated that the robotics club still has a lease for the building; however, they are not using it during the renovations. ► Councilor Frongillo noted the Harvest Festival on Saturday. ► Councilor Hamblen noted the Harvest Festival on Saturday. She noted the Touch a Truck event at DPW. She noted the upcoming DelCorte event. ► Councilor Jones hoped everyone stays safe during Hurricane Ian. He stated that he is looking forward to the Harvest Festival. ► Councilor Dellorco stated that he is worried about the people in Florida. ► Chair Mercer stated that regarding the state flag, the state legislators will be at the Town Council meeting on October 19, 2022, and that will be the perfect opportunity for each Town Councilor to express their views to the legislative body and any resident who would like to come that night and make a comment. He stated that ultimately, it is the state legislators' decision.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** ► *Considering the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Public Body: Schmidt's Farm, Prospect Street.* ► Chair Mercer stated there is a need for an executive session. He stated that he needs to recuse himself from this executive session because of the content; he stated that he will turn the gavel over to Councilor Dellorco. Vice Chair Dellorco stated: This is a Motion to Enter executive session for the purpose of Considering the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Public Body: Schmidt's Farm, Prospect Street, and we will not come back into open session. ► **MOTION to Enter** executive session for the purpose of Considering the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Public Body: Schmidt's Farm, Prospect Street, by **Jones. SECOND by Hamblen. No Discussion.** ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Chandler-YES; Cormier-Leger-YES; Dellorco-YES; Frongillo-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Pellegrini-YES; Sheridan-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0.**

*Open Session ended at 7:58 PM.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary