

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
May 20, 2020**

*As stated on the agenda, due to the growing concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this meeting will be conducted as a Remote/Virtual Town Council meeting. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement and comply with open meeting law regulations, citizens will be able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number, or citizens can participate by using the Zoom link provided on the agenda.*

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 as a **Remote Access Virtual Zoom Meeting**. Councilors present: Andrew Bissanti, Brian Chandler, Eamon McCarthy Earls, Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Matthew Kelly, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegri. Councilors absent: Robert Dellorco. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney; Chrissy Whelton, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

**CALL TO ORDER:** ► Chair Mercer called the **Remote Access Virtual Zoom Meeting** to order at 7:00 PM.  
► Chair Mercer called for a moment of silence.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** ► Chair Mercer stated this meeting is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's executive order of March 12, 2020, regarding the current state of emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus. In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, we have been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings and as such the governor's order suspends the requirements of the open meeting law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. He stated that this meeting will feature public comment. He noted the availability of the posted call-in number and Zoom meeting link provided on the agenda for the public to join and participate in the meeting. He reviewed that all supporting meeting materials that have been provided to the Town Council are available on the Town's website unless otherwise noted. He reviewed the remote meeting ground rules. He announced this **Remote Access Virtual Zoom Meeting** is being recorded by *Franklin TV* and available for viewing on Comcast Channel 11 and Verizon Channel 29; this meeting may also be recorded by others.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** ► Mr. Dale Kurtz, Veterans' Services Officer, stated that there will be no Memorial Day breakfast, parade, or ceremony events this year. However, there will be a Memorial Day program broadcast by Franklin TV reflecting on how much Memorial Day means to the citizens of Franklin. He thanked Mr. Peter Fasciano and Mr. Chris Flynn of Franklin TV for their work and effort putting together this program. He stated the Memorial Walkway brick installation has been delayed. They are working with the engraver and mason and targeting mid to late June for completion. He noted that the cemetery will be open this weekend; visitors can bring flowers and flags. He recommended consulting the website for visiting times. He thanked the DPW and Garden Club for their work on the war memorials.

Mr. Brendon Boragine, 1 Dwight Street, stated that the Dacey Field parking lot has been closed, but the area is still being used as the walking trails are open, and vehicles are parking on Lincoln Street. He asked for consideration in opening the parking lot as having the cars parked on the road is creating difficulties.

Ms. Jacqueline Maciel, 95 Elm Street, provided an update of the COVID-19 case numbers that she has collected. She stated that 80 percent of Massachusetts towns have less than 50 cases of COVID-19, 52 percent of towns have 10 or fewer cases, 19 towns have zero cases, and 223 towns have case numbers below what they were when case numbers were first provided. She stated that the numbers received from the State are grossly distorted.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** ► *April 15, 2020.* ► **MOTION to Approve the April 15, 2020 meeting minutes by Kelly. SECOND by Hamblen. No Discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegri-YES. ► VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS:** ► **Designating the Town of Franklin as a Purple Heart Community.** ► Chair Mercer read the proclamation for the designation of the Town of Franklin as a Purple Heart Community. He stated this is a great honor and something to be very proud of.

► **American Legion.** ► Mr. Kelly thanked the veterans who were in attendance at this Zoom meeting. He read a proclamation honoring the American Legion Edward L. Grant Post 75. Town Council members thanked the American Legion for all the work they have done for the community.

► **Larry Bederian.** ► Mr. Bissanti read the proclamation honoring Mr. Lawrence Bederian. Town Council members thanked Mr. Bederian for all he has done for the community.

**APPOINTMENTS: None.**

**HEARINGS: None.**

**LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: None.**

**PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS:** ► ***Animal Control Department.*** ► Mr. Hellen stated that after two decades of work, Ms. Cindy Souza retired as the animal control officer; he wished her well in her retirement. Ms. Tracey Taddeo has assumed the role as Department Head. He explained that Franklin is in a regional agreement with Bellingham regarding animal control. ► Ms. Taddeo introduce herself, provided her background, and discussed the role of animal control officer. She stated she has been working for animal control for 15 years. She explained that Mr. Patrick Kelleher was working part time and applied to take over her previous position; he does animal control for Franklin. ► Mr. Kelleher reviewed his background and experience. He looks forward to this new opportunity. ► Town Council members thanked Ms. Taddeo and Mr. Kelleher for the great work they do. ► Mr. Bissanti asked about dogs that will not stay in their yards. ► Ms. Taddeo explained the process for animal control when dogs get away from their owners/yards. She stated the first time the dog is picked up the owner receives a verbal warning, the second time is a written warning, the third time is a fine; the fines go up for each consecutive occurrence to \$300. If the dog owner does not pay, the case will be brought to the Wrentham District Court. She stated that when dogs are found, they are picked up for the public's safety. She recommended citizens call the Animal Control Department if they find a loose dog.

► ***Franklin Food Pantry.*** ► Mr. Hellen stated the Franklin Food Pantry has purchased property in Franklin and will be moving to this new location in the future. This is a needed resource in the community. ► Ms. Lynn Calling, Executive Director, and Ms. Tina Powderly, Chair Board of Directors, addressed the Town Council. Ms. Powderly thanked the Town Council for giving them the opportunity to present an update about the Franklin Food Pantry. She stated they have been busier than usual responding to COVID-19. They continue to serve the community in the safest way they can. They have been able to respond to the increased need due to the response and generosity of the community; they appreciate the community's support. ► Ms. Calling stated the community has been very supportive and generous during this time to purchase more food. She stated that prior to COVID-19, approximately nine new individuals/families would come to the Pantry to sign up for services in one month. From March 18 to May 18, they have seen 82 new individuals/families come to the Pantry of which 60 percent have shopped with the Pantry more than once. They expect to see the need for their

services to grow. She reviewed the new drive-through procedures for the Pantry and the days/times for this service. She thanked the police officers for their help with traffic and deliveries. On an average week, they hand out about 5,000 pounds of food. She thanked Health Director Cathleen Liberty for her help in putting together new operating procedures for the Pantry as they respond to the growing needs in the community. She reviewed the new building and location which they hope to open in summer 2021. They will be launching a capital campaign in a few months, and they are looking for volunteers. She reviewed some upcoming events. She stated that they are having conversations about participating in the community gardens this year. ► Town Council members thanked the presenters for all the work they do for the community and asked questions. ► The presenters responded to questions and stated the Greater Boston Food Bank is their greatest supporter of food. They discussed the need for hygiene supplies and the items they are able to provide in their bags. Ms. Amy Cataldo was recognized as critical member of the team.

► **SAFE Coalition.** ► Ms. Jennifer Knight-Levine, Executive Director, and Mr. James Derick, President, addressed the Town Council and provided an update of the SAFE Coalition. Mr. Knight-Levine narrated a slideshow presentation. She stated that the Coalition started in 2015. They cover nine towns and focus on providing support to those impacted by substance abuse disorder. She reviewed the history of the Coalition and stated that it came together as a result of the number of lives lost from the opioid epidemic. They determined this was more than just as a focus on opioids. Now they provide support to those who are actively using and those who are impacted by all substances. She discussed the physical office space in Norfolk and their open house. She discussed the offerings and services provided by the Coalition including benefits and employment help, Section 35 care information and guidance, grief counselor and chaplain, Narcan training, counseling, education resources, support line, support group meetings, adolescent smoking/vaping cessation program, and professional development. She reviewed the Coalition's partnership with Fire and Police. She noted that on average per month they receive 35 new requests for services. She reviewed the Coalition's upcoming events and programs; they are using online, phone, and Zoom platforms due to COVID-19. She stated funding is by donations and grants; the SAFE Coalition currently does not have any paid staff. ► Mr. Derick discussed that his family was impacted with substance abuse disorder. He thanked the work of the Coalition's staff, the Coalition's partners, and the Franklin community. He stated connection is the root of what people need when they are in crisis. ► Town Council members thanked the presenters for the great work they do in the community.

► **Metacomet Emergency Communication Center (MECC).** ► Mr. Hellen stated Mr. Chandler had asked for this presentation. Last week the regional dispatch center had its one-year anniversary. The staff have done a great job; this is a separate entity unto itself. The four MECC communities are Franklin, Norfolk, Plainville and Wrentham. He noted that the Mendon/Millville regional dispatch center is going to be merged with the MECC which will produce savings to the taxpayers of Franklin. ► Executive Director Gary Primo, Deputy Director Darrell True, and Acting Communications Manager Nicole Connor, were in attendance at the Zoom meeting. ► Mr. Primo narrated a slideshow presentation. He reviewed the history of the MECC and stated they broke ground in 2017 after approximately 10 years of planning. He showed and described pictures of the development of the state-of-the-art facility. On May 6, 2019, the MECC went live. Over 38,000 Franklin Police calls have been logged, and over 4,500 Franklin Fire calls have been logged. He reviewed statistics of the calls logged for Norfolk, Plainville, and Wrentham. He stated the MECC processed over 24,000 911 calls, 60,000 business calls, and over 24,000 other calls. He stated they have had meetings with Millville and Mendon to merge the dispatch centers. ► Town Council members thanked the presenters for the great job they do, asked questions, and agreed the professionalism of the staff at the facility is outstanding. ► Mr. Primo stated that the police call volume for Franklin seems to be about the same, although the fire calls seem to be increasing. ► Mr. Ture recognized the other departments that make this a successful project including the staff of DPW, IT, Animal Control, Facilities and others that make this a success. ► Mr. Hellen thanked the other departments for the support they provide to the MECC and noted the large commitment Franklin makes to the

MECC. He thanked Mr. Primo and Mr. True for their hard work. ► Chair Mercer reviewed the money saved for Franklin by this regionalization. He thanked everyone for their time and effort put into this project.

#### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- b. **Budget Subcommittee.** ► Mr. Kelly stated that it was discussed at the meeting that budgets are going to be even tighter than expected; state revenue, sales tax, and local receipts are down due to COVID-19. Every department should be prepared to cut their budgets as much as they can. The budget that is approved in the upcoming weeks will be a temporary budget; the budget will be looked at again around September/October. At this time, the budget is based on the numbers they have available.
- c. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► None.

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

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

- a. **Resolution 20-27: Cell Tower Easement (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-27 – 2/3 Majority Roll Call Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 20-27: Cell Tower Easement by Kelly. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** Mr. Hellen stated this is a housekeeping item. The Town has been working to get all public safety equipment off of private property; the COVID crisis delayed that process. Eventually, access to this tower will not be needed. However, the easement continues to allow public access for public safety in perpetuity. The subordination is required in order for the estate of Shirley French to open the tower up for additional commercial use. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

*Mr. Bissanti recused himself.*

- b. **Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-853: Zoning Map Changes on or Near Pleasant, Chestnut, and Brook Streets - Second Reading (Motion to Adopt Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-853 - Majority Roll Call Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Adopt Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-853: Zoning Map Changes on or Near Pleasant, Chestnut, and Brook Streets by Kelly. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** Mr. Hellen stated this is the final vote on this lot line clean up. It was approved unanimously at the EDC, Planning Board, and the previous Town Council meeting. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Chandler-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-7, No-0, Absent-1.**

*Mr. Bissanti re-entered the meeting.*

- c. **Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-854: Changes to §185-40. Water Resource District - Second Reading (Motion to Adopt Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-854 - Majority Roll Call Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Adopt Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-854: Changes to §185-40. Water Resource District by Kelly. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** Mr. Hellen stated this is the same as the previous resolution. This is required by MassDEP. It was approved unanimously at the EDC, Planning Board, and the previous Town Council meeting. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**
- d. **Resolution 20-28: Ratification of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Franklin Police Sergeants Union employees and the Town of Franklin (Motion to approve Resolution 20-28 - Majority**

**Roll Call Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 20-28: Ratification of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Franklin Police Sergeants Union employees and the Town of Franklin by **Kelly. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** Mr. Hellen stated this is a follow up from an executive session a few weeks ago. This vote is to ratify the agreement. ► Sergeant Brian Johnson reviewed his tenure with the Franklin Police Department since 1993 including his union negotiations experience. He stated the past union negotiations were very professional and he thanked Human Resources Director Karen Bratt for her work. He stated this is a fair and responsible agreement. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that tomorrow at 8:30 AM the Senior Center coffees will restart virtually. Information is available on the website regarding the agenda and Zoom access. ► **Coronavirus Update.** ► Mr. Hellen stated that the governor has allowed cities and towns to reopen certain portions of athletic fields. In Franklin, they will be reopened as soon as they can be next week. Dacey, DelCarte, King Street, and all town forest parking lots will be open on Monday. He noted the playground facilities are an exception; they are working with administration and Board of Health for those reopening dates. The dog park will reopen on Monday. Required signage will be installed. Citizens should wear masks and stay 6 ft. apart. He thanked the Chief of Police, Board of Health Director, Ryan Jettte, Brutus Cantoreggi, and Carlos Rebelo for the preparations and work done for these reopenings. He stated information/resources about the governor’s reopening plan are on the Town website. He stated that Chair Board of Health Bridget Sweet is holding an informational meeting this week; details are available on the website. He stated he is in process of getting the Board of Health members public email accounts. He discussed the reopening of the Library and the Town departments and services. He noted that some staff will continue remote access. The municipal building will be adhering to the 25 percent of occupancy rule. He stated that the 10-person gathering limit is still in effect. Phase II of the reopening includes a 25-person gathering limit. They are working towards holding meetings in the Council Chambers. ► **FY21 Budget Update.** ► Mr. Hellen stated the budget will be released tomorrow. He thanked the finance team and staff for putting together the FY21 budget. Finance Committee hearings start next week. All the agendas will be posted on the budget site. He encouraged all citizens to be engaged in the budget process.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** None.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:** ► Mr. Chandler thanked the veterans for attending the Zoom meeting tonight and for their work in the community. He expressed disappointment in not having the Memorial Day Parade this year. ► Mr. Earls expressed his condolences to the Dellorco family for the loss of their loved one. ► Ms. Hamblen expressed condolences to the Dellorco family. She thanked all those who gave presentations tonight. She thanked the Downtown Partnership and volunteers who planted flowers in the downtown area last week; it looks great. She reminded the community that fires are not allowed on Town property. She thanked the Franklin Police Department for addressing a very tense situation. ► Ms. Pellegrini stated tonight’s presentations were wonderful. She thanked everyone for the well wishes she received when she was in the hospital. ► Mr. Kelly gave condolences to the Arcaro, Dellorco, and Colella families for their losses. He expressed appreciation and honor for Franklin being a Purple Heart Community. He noted that it is sad there will be no Memorial Day Parade this year. He discussed the Memorial Day recorded program that is being put together to be shown on Franklin TV; he thanked all those involved in putting together this great tribute to veterans. He thanked all veterans for their service to this country. ► Mr. Jones stated agreement with all that Mr. Kelly said. He gave condolences to the Dellorco family. He thanked those who gave presentations tonight. He congratulated his wife who is a nurse for being noted in the Boston Globe as a salute to nurses; he thanked all nurses for helping citizens during COVID-19. ► Chair Mercer stated that he echoed all Town Council members’ comments and thanked all those who provided presentations tonight. He will look forward to getting

back to the Council Chambers. He gave condolences to the Arcaro, Dellorco, and Colella families. He gave appreciation for all veterans and those currently in service.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.**

**ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Kelly. SECOND by Hamblen. No Discussion. ► ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES. ► VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1. ► Meeting adjourned at 9:46 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary