

Town of Franklin 250th Anniversary Budget Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2026
7:30 PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 PM.

2. Attendance

Members Present: Belcher, Brennan, Brunelli, Keras, Joyce

3. Announcements

The Chair reported no announcements.

4. Approval of Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes from January 18, 2026.

- Motion to approve by Keras
- Seconded by Joyce
- Vote: Unanimous approval

CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS

5. Business Outreach & Tracking

- Proposal to create a spreadsheet to track business outreach, including business name, mailing address, and phone number.
- Discussion included outreach to businesses in the industrial park.
- Recommendation to notify subcommittee members of meetings with businesses; suggested inclusion under “Announcements from the Chair.”
- Recommendation to organize spreadsheet with two tabs:
 - Pledges from large companies
 - Donations from small businesses
- Brunelli will initiate the spreadsheet.

6. Fundraising Materials

- A fundraising letter needs to be developed.
- Existing pledge agreement form reviewed.
- Brennan will draft a fundraising letter template for committee review.
- Suggestions for fundraising materials include:
 - Listing planned events through 2028 with general descriptions
 - Including a statement that primary funding will come from private donations
 - Providing a basic budget and target goal to inform donors how funds will be used
 - Developing sponsorship tiers (e.g., Gold, Silver levels)

- Offering advertising opportunities for donating companies

7. Pledge Form Discussion

- Brennan reviewed the pledge sheet, including breakdown of pledge amounts, payment months, and multi-year contributions.
- Discussion of tax contribution notifications.
- Question raised regarding fiscal year timing, including potential July 15 start for next fiscal year; supported by subcommittee.
- Approval granted to present revised pledge sheet (with updated dates) to the full committee.

8. Budget Discussion – Fireworks vs. Drone Show

The Committee discussed comparative costs and benefits:

Cost Considerations:

- Fireworks are generally less expensive for a single mid-sized (20–25 minute) community event.
- Estimated fireworks cost range: \$50,000–\$80,000.
- Drone shows have higher upfront costs but offer reusable equipment and environmental advantages.

Value Considerations:

- Drone shows allow for logos, text, and choreographed displays not possible with fireworks.
- Fireworks costs may fluctuate due to materials pricing and supply factors.
- Drone shows may become more cost-effective if used for multiple annual events.

Recommendation:

- Fireworks remain a pragmatic option for traditional, large-scale spectacle.
- Drone shows may be preferable if innovation and branding are prioritized.

Joyce will conduct additional research regarding comparative costs.

Future Agenda Items

- Development of detailed budget line items, including:
 - Parade
 - Gala
 - Drone show
 - Light shows
- Gala planning:
 - Target attendance: 400–600 guests (subject to venue capacity)
 - Coordination with Events Committee required
 - Further discussion to follow at full committee meeting

Next Meeting

- March 1, 2026
- Agenda: Formulate gala budget line items based on venue input and finalize/approve fundraising letters.