

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
June 12, 2019**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at the Franklin Municipal Building, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, Massachusetts. Councilors present: Patrick Casey, Robert Dellorco, Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Matthew Kelly, Eamon McCarthy Earls, Thomas Mercer, Peter Padula, Deborah Pellegrini. Councilors absent: None. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Chrissy Whelton, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

**CALL TO ORDER:** ► Chairman Mercer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** ► Chairman Mercer announced the 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:** *None.*

**APPOINTMENTS:** ► *Ratify the Town Administrator's Appointment of James G. McLaughlin as Fire Chief.* ► Mr. Jones read the appointment. ► **MOTION to Ratify** the Town Administrator's Appointment of James G. McLaughlin as Fire Chief by **Padula. SECOND** by **Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated per Town Charter, he is asking the Town Council to ratify his appointment of James G. McLaughlin as Fire Chief. He stated with the ratification of his appointment, he believes Franklin is hiring the best candidate to help the Fire Department recalibrate and develop a fresh vision for the future. He stated he wrote a very long memo on this appointment. He said he has spoken to many members of the departments, citizens, town officials, and members of the community. He said he felt he wanted, as the new town administrator, to put out a set of principles and positions on this appointment, where he saw the future of the department going, and what he thought were some of the most important criteria. He also thought it was important to talk about the hiring process and where he was coming from in making his nomination. He talked about his many discussions with many people regarding where this department needs to go. He noted all this information is in his memo to the Town Council dated June 10, 2019. He noted his predecessor never had to make this appointment as Chief McCarraher was already here before Mr. Nutting got here. He stated the fire department has never had a refreshed vision in over 20 years as Chief McCarraher was appointed in 1999. A lot has changed in the world in 20 years. He summarized the hiring process as outlined in his memo. ► Chairman Mercer asked Mr. McLaughlin to review his background. ► Mr. McLaughlin addressed the Town Council and reviewed his background. He said he has had a thirty-year career in fire services. He has a combination of training and experience. He reviewed his plan for meeting people and the business community and establishing good communication and relationships with all stakeholders. He wants to see how the department operates now in order to make the department more effective in the future. He looks forward to this opportunity. ► Mr. Padula asked about Mr. McLaughlin's background and Bachelor of Science degree in Fire Administration and his other degrees, certifications, and trainings. ► Mr. McLaughlin explained the courses involved in his bachelor's degree, his online degree from Harvard University, and certifications and trainings. ► Ms. Pellegrini noted he worked 30 plus years in RI, and she asked if it would be difficult to come to MA. She asked if all the certifications would carry over to MA. ► Mr. McLaughlin said most of the certifications would carry over to MA. He considers himself a very open person and would look forward to this opportunity to reach out proactively to the community. ► Mr. Casey asked how often Mr. McLaughlin was able to obtain grants and funding. ► Mr. McLaughlin said he was proactive in getting grants and funding. He explained the process on how his group obtained grants. He would like to pursue that here. There is always funding available and being proactive is necessary to get those grants. ► Mr. Jones asked about Mr. McLaughlin's 30 years as a fire professional and why he only spent two years at his last position. He asked Mr. McLaughlin if he feels comfortable being from out-of-state and working in Franklin ► Mr. McLaughlin explained his last two years of work experience. He stated he is aware that he is from out-

of-town and will work hard at this challenge. ► Mr. Dellorco said he was very impressed with Mr. McLaughlin's resume. He stated he was concerned that Mr. McLaughlin is very far away in Warwick if there is a major issue in the town. How would he handle that? He asked if Mr. McLaughlin would get a take-home car. ► Mr. McLaughlin stated that for any event, he would be here. He will be on call 24/7/365. For any weather event he would be here in the town. ► Mr. Hellen said Mr. McLaughlin would not get a take-home car. It will be like the rest of the staff. He said he has talked to Mr. McLaughlin about using the car for the summer as he gets his team in place. ► Mr. Dellorco stated he does not have a problem with a take-home car but does not know if it would be covered insurance-wise if he left the state. ► Mr. Kelly asked who was on the hiring committee. He said as Mr. McLaughlin would be coming to the Franklin family, he thinks it is important that Mr. McLaughlin talks about his family. He suggested Mr. McLaughlin talk to others about Franklin such as Police Chief Lynch. ► Mr. Hellen stated the hiring committee consisted of him, Chairman Mercer, Police Chief Lynch, Human Resources Director Karen Bratt, and Assistant to the Town Administrator Chrissy Whelton. ► Mr. McLaughlin gave information about his family. He reiterated that if ratified, he thinks listening and making strong relationships is important for the benefit of this position. ► Mr. Padula commented on Chief Lynch's background and the good job he has done. He asked about the hiring process. ► Chairman Mercer said the administration and Karen Bratt had the hiring committee very well prepared for the hiring process. He noted all the candidates were asked the same questions. He discussed the interviews process. He said he felt that he knew each candidate quite well by the end of the interview process. He stated that by the end of the process, all the committee members were on the same page with the selected candidate. It was a great process. ► Mr. Padula said it was good that there is now representation of the Town Council on the committee. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Casey-YES; Dellorco-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Earls-YES; Mercer-YES; Padula-YES; Pellegri-YES. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

**ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Jones. SECOND by Kelly. No Discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary