

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 24, 2017**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, May 24, 2017 at the Franklin Municipal Building, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, Massachusetts. Councilors present: Andrew Bissanti, Robert Dellorco, Glenn Jones, Matthew Kelly, Thomas Mercer, Peter Padula, Deborah Pellegrini, Judith Pond Pfeffer, Robert Vallee. Councilors absent: None. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jeffrey Nutting, Town Administrator; Jamie Hellen, Deputy Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney.

CALL TO ORDER: ► Chairman Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. ► Chairman Kelly, on behalf of the Town Council, thanked the first responders, Franklin Fire Department, Franklin Police Department, and Federal and State First Responding Agencies for their hard work and dedication this past week. In addition, he thanked the townspeople and community members who offered prayers and aided in the search. He stated that this moment of silence will be for the Doherty family; our thoughts and prayers go to the Doherty family for the passing of their son, Michael. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *None.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Kelly 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.

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: ► *Swearing In - Police Department – Nick Palmieri.* Police Chief Lynch introduced the newest member of the Police Department, Patrol Officer Nicholas Palmieri, and gave a summary of his background, career, and education. He stated that Officer Palmieri is a resident of Franklin. Ms. Teresa Burr, Town Clerk, officiated the swearing in.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: *None.*

APPOINTMENTS: *None.*

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: ► *Veteran's Agent – Dale Kurtz.* Mr. Dale Kurtz, Veteran's Agent, addressed the Town Council about the Municipal Veterans' Fund established last November. To date, \$3,025 has been collected; \$250 has been expended on a veteran in need of car repair. This program has been very successful and much appreciated. In addition, many veterans in town are served with Chapter 115 benefits and VA benefits. He stated he is thankful for the opportunity to serve the town. The Veteran's Memorial Day breakfast honoring Korean War veterans will be held on Friday at 9:00 AM at the Senior Center where he will present six Ambassador of Peace medals to six Korean War veterans. The Memorial Day Parade will be on Monday, with kickoff at 10:30 AM.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: ► *Sreefarminghamma Inc.: New All Alcoholic Beverages Restaurant License.* Ms. Pfeffer read the license transaction. ► **MOTION to Approve** the request by Sreefarminghamma d/b/a Dharani Grill for a new all alcoholic beverages restaurant license and approve the Manager, Bhaskar Rednam; license to be held until all Departments have signed off on the application by **Pfeffer. SECOND by Mercer. Discussion.** ► Mr. Craig Ciechanowski, attorney representing the applicant, along with Mr. Bhaskar Rednam, manager under the license, addressed the Town Council. Mr. Ciechanowski stated the Dharani Grill is now open on East Central Street, the former location of Artistry Kitchen. The restaurant will be open to the public in the upstairs portion. He provided a summary of the previous work and experience of the applicant. ► Mr. Padula noted that it was indicated on the application that the Manager will be on the premises approximately 30 hours per week; he asked what

happens during the times he is not on the premises. ► Mr. Rednam stated he hired a chief executive chef who would be representing him in his absence. He stated they would be using the downstairs/basement level as a testing kitchen; it would not be open to the public. ► Mr. Bissanti and Mr. Jones applauded the applicant for bringing a new face to Main Street and welcomed him to Franklin. ► Mr. Nutting stated that missing from the application is that they plan to use the outside patio; so, they do need a floor plan, by law, before the license is issued. ► Mr. Ciechanowski stated that would be given to the Town Administrator. ► Mr. Cerel stated it is a requirement of the ABCC and license cannot be processed until it is received. ► **Chairman Kelly stated the approval is conditioned on the outside patio and seating diagram being received.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

HEARINGS: ► ***FY 2018 Budget Hearing.*** ► **MOTION to Open** the FY 2018 Budget Hearing by **Mercer. SECOND** by **Dellorco. No Discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► Mr. Nutting provided a brief overview of the budget. He thanked all the people involved in getting the document together with special thanks to Susan, Jim, and Stephanie as it is their last budget. The FY 2018 proposed budget is balanced, but the schools will use about \$2.8 million of funds that will not be available next year which will put stress on the FY 2019 budget. Discussions will have to start early next year to figure out a game plan to address the issue. As Franklin continues to grow, will have to increase staff to maintain services, including funds for public safety people, schools, and DPW. He noted that even with the added two positions, the DPW is still down from the turn of the century. They could use some snow and roads money, and funds will be needed to fund stormwater.

► Ms. Pfeffer read each ***Operating Budget Town of Franklin FY 2018*** Line Item and Dollar Amount as listed under ***FY 2018 Town Council to Vote*** column.

► Mr. Mercer requested a Hold on Line Item 152: Human Resources – Salaries. ■ He asked if the reduction in salary was due to reducing staff. ■ Mr. Nutting stated Stephanie Lutz is retiring. Her replacement has been chosen and is working for less funds and adding a part-time clerk to fill in.

► Mr. Mercer requested a Hold on Line Item 155: Information Technology - Expenses. ■ He asked why there was a 25 percent increase. ■ Mr. Nutting stated the \$40,000 increase is for all hardware and licensing fees. Part of that is the new software, e-permitting, and the Town Clerk's software. ■ Mr. Hellen stated the Town Council had voted for Gmail for the staff. ■ Mr. Jones asked if there were any salaries for this. ■ Mr. Nutting stated the schools pay for all technology salaries and we pay for all facilities.

► Mr. Dellorco requested a Hold on Line Item 192: Public Property & Buildings - Expenses. ■ Mr. Mercer stated it has stayed the same for the last three years. ■ Mr. Nutting stated it went up \$150,000. ■ Mr. Michael D'Angelo, Director of Public Facilities, stated the increases were in a few categories; water and sewer brought it up about \$52,000. Had overspent water budget in the fall, mainly watering town fields. The other item is electricity for about \$60,000. There are also some smaller increases.

► Chairman Kelly requested a Hold on Line Item 210: Police – Expenses. ■ He asked if Police Chief Lynch had everything he needed. ■ Police Chief Lynch stated, that as Mr. Nutting had stated, as the Town continues to grow he is still four officers short of where the department was in 2000, and with anticipated 850 new dwelling units, he needs more police officers. Regarding equipment, he stated they are making due; if they put several people on at the same time, he may need to up the requests for equipment. He is looking for four or five more officers. ■ Mr. Nutting stated that FY 2019 needs a game plan due to increased demands and housing coming up; more revenue is needed. ■ Mr. Padula stated the Town Council is aware that more bodies are needed. He stated the Town is lucky they have such a talented force. We need to get back to where we were; now have 34,000 people. ■ Ms. Pellegrini asked why Chief Lynch did not put in for any new officers this year. ■ Chief Lynch stated he did; he is looking for four

over the next five years. He would put the officers on patrol. He realizes the cost financially for the Town. He did get the overtime necessary to fill the shifts.

► Chairman Kelly requested a Hold on Line Item 220: Fire – Expenses. ■ He asked about ambulances. ■ Fire Chief McCarraher stated the ambulance rate is up about 15 percent this year. Next week he will beat the busiest call volume for the history of the department. Multiple simultaneous calls continue to grow; they are busy. Two to three times per day he is out of resources for two to three hours at a time. In addition to another ambulance, he needs another layer of supervision. He stated his people are outstanding. It is the complexity of the world; who would ever think there would be a meth lab in Franklin. Stretching people thin. ■ Mr. Mercer asked if headway was being made in privatizing any assisted living communities. ■ Chief McCarraher stated some are down, some are the same, and some need to be dealt with. ■ Mr. Vallee asked where they were with central dispatching. ■ Mr. Nutting stated he signed the contract today for the building. The building will be constructed in Norfolk; it will take about 14 months. ■ Chief McCarraher stated there is an agreement with the four communities; they have gone out to bid for a contractor. It is moving along. They have an executive director, Gary Primo. He noted that when 911 is called on a cell phone, the State Police is received. Once regional dispatch is open, it should go to the regional dispatch. ■ Mr. Dellorco asked if any engines need to be replaced. ■ Chief McCarraher stated he had an engine funded this capital cycle. The next engine is scheduled for five years for replacement. ■ Mr. Nutting stated it is EMS appreciation week; he thanked Chief McCarraher and his entire staff.

► Mr. Padula requested a Hold on Line Item 225: Regional Dispatch - Expenses. ■ Mr. Padula asked what is the extra \$50,000 for. ■ Mr. Nutting stated it was for startup costs for training; have to pre-train people prior to opening the regional dispatch. Franklin is about 47 percent of the volume; the cost is a proration based on the agreement. ■ Mr. Jones asked about the staffing plan when regional dispatch is operational. ■ Mr. Nutting stated the staffing plan would be for the next budget cycle as regional dispatch is not yet operational. ■ Chief McCarraher stated they are working on it.

► Mr. Mercer requested a Hold on Line Item 300: Town Schools. ■ Ms. Maureen Sabolinski, Superintendent of Schools, introduced Ms. Sara Ahern who would be taking her place. ■ Mr. Mercer stated that the Town Council does not have control of the School Committee or school budget line items. The Town Council votes the bottom line and it is up to the School Committee to work within the budget. He asked for an overview of some of the issues the schools are dealing with and will continue to deal with. He asked about the money being used from the Reserve Funds to provide services. ■ Ms. Sabolinski stated they are using about \$2.8 million in funds set aside in revolving funds. She stated there is an extensive budget presentation on the website. This budget represents just keeping the same level staff. There is no fat in the budget; no additional positions. Keeping same staff as in classrooms and schools today. ■ Ms. Miriam Goodman, Finance Director, stated they are using \$6.3 million from revolving accounts where they collect fees to offset this budget. Of that, \$2.8 million is non-recurring. ■ Mr. Mercer asked for a summary of special education concerns they deal with. ■ Ms. Sabolinski stated it is a large driver of the budget. Currently, special education enrollment is about 15 percent which is lower than the state and national average. It is not about the numbers; it is about the intensity of the needs students are coming to school with as young as three and four years old. More extensive disabilities require more expensive services. Currently, have 79 students that cannot be educated in Franklin Public Schools. They want to keep students with disabilities in Franklin schools, but there are some students for whom they are not able to provide educational services. They are spending about \$5 million this year on those 79 students; next year it will be \$6.8 million. She stated they get some reimbursement from the state; that is funded year-to-year. They also get about \$1 million from a grant funding. She discussed reductions in some funding based on the state budget. Regarding enrollment, she stated for the high school it continues to grow. Right now, the high school is at about 1,800; the high school was built for 1,675. They had declining enrollment in the elementary school; middle school is beginning to grow. Watching on the

horizon the building developments near Garelick Farms; will have to assess the impact. They have done data collection on some of the other apartment complexes. She stated that in many of the apartments 34 to 48 percent of the students living there get free or reduced lunch. ■Ms. Pfeffer asked how they got \$6.3 million in a revolving account in the first place. ■Ms. Goodman stated they collect revenue from fees, such as transportation fees, on an annual basis and if there is not a need to use that revenue in that year, then they will not use it. ■Ms. Sabolinski stated that with the School Choice Revolving Fund the money and funds were kept as a rainy-day fund. ■Mr. Padula asked about the \$6.8 million to educate 79 students. ■Ms. Sabolinski stated her teams make the best decisions for students; the tuition rates are set by the state. Special education transportation is also very costly. ■Mr. Jones asked about possible needs for redistricting due to new housing in town. ■Ms. Sabolinski stated that it is best to wait to see where the enrollment trends are and where students are living; redistricting is complex and politically challenging. ■Mr. Bissanti asked for clarification on the declining enrollment in the elementary school. ■Ms. Sabolinski stated there has been a declining birth rate. Elementary enrollment is down about 750. ■Mr. Nutting stated they are receiving less state aid than in 2010.

► Chairman Kelly requested a Hold on Line Item 390: Regional School. ■Mr. Jones stated he would be recusing himself from voting/abstaining from voting on Line Item 390 for the purposes that he is currently employed at Regional School and will be refraining from any discussion on that line item.

► Chairman Kelly requested a Hold on Line Item 610: Library – Salaries. ■He said with the opening of the new library, he noticed salaries went up. Will she be able to staff the library and stay accredited? ■Mr. Nutting stated they are still not accredited. He stated there are over 300 libraries in the Commonwealth and 31 needed a waiver this year; Franklin was one of them. There is a goal to staff it up. He noted the library will not reopen until October, so staff is not needed for the full year. He thinks this is a positive budget for the library. ■Ms. Felicia Oti, Library Director, stated she had 11 staff members and planning to add three part-time staff.

► Chairman Kelly, Mr. Mercer, and Mr. Dellorco requested a Hold on Line Item 610: Library – Expenses. ■Mr. Mercer stated that with 10 percent increase in expenses, are there any expenses that could have been incorporated into the library project. ■Mr. Nutting stated the biggest increase is in materials, such as books, DVDs, CDs, and all things that go in and out of the library. The other increase is in contractual services with the Minuteman; it goes up every year. They are all operational costs. ■Ms. Pfeffer stated the capital requests for the library this year were not part of the Town's capital budget; they are part of the budget for the library new construction.

► Mr. Mercer requested a Hold on Line Item 630: Recreation – Expenses. ■He asked that with a 10 percent increase in expenses, are not most of the Recreation programs funded through fees? ■Mr. Nutting stated 100 percent are self-funded. More programs, more expenses, more revenue. So, going up 10 percent, but will collect all that through more participation.

► Mr. Nutting asked if any Town Council members were going to have any questions tomorrow as many of the people present at tonight's meeting would not be around tomorrow. ■Town Council members indicated they were all set. ► **MOTION to Close the FY 2018 Budget Hearing by Jones. SECOND by Dellorco. No Discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

Chairman Kelly declared a three-minute recess.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

1. **Resolution 17-32: Salary Schedule, Full-Time Elected Official (Motion to Move Resolution 17-32 – Majority Vote (5)).** Ms. Pfeffer read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Move Resolution 17-32: Salary Schedule, Full-Time Elected Official, Town Clerk to \$81,000 by Mercer. SECOND by Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Nutting stated that when the new Town Clerk was elected this was the plan to bring her back to the prior clerk’s salary once she was certified over three years. This is the second year. ► Ms. Pellegrini asked if this should wait for the second budget hearing to be voted on. ► Mr. Nutting stated this will vote the money into the budget. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
2. **Resolution 17-34: Request for Special Legislation Re: Authorization for Town to Establish a Local Agricultural Commission with Limited Authority (Motion to Move Resolution 17-34 – Majority Vote (5)).** Ms. Pfeffer read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Move Resolution 17-34: Request for Special Legislation Re: Authorization for Town to Establish a Local Agricultural Commission with Limited Authority by Mercer. SECOND by Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated the proposed commission comes from citizen request. Hopefully, the charge in exhibit one speaks for itself; it is to help educate the community as well as provide support for farmers and farm interests. ► Mr. Jones stated he fully supports this. ► Mr. Bissanti thanked Mr. Nutting and Mr. Hellen for this. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
3. **Resolution 17-36: Upgrading Street Lighting System (Motion to Move Resolution 17-36).** Ms. Pfeffer read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Move Resolution 17-36: Upgrading Street Lighting System to LED Lighting by Mercer. SECOND by Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Nutting stated as they move to have every building in Franklin have LED lights in the next year, the next step is the street lights. He stated that Mr. Hellen has done much research to develop a plan to do this with very short payback both in savings on electric costs of about \$70,000 per year and a couple of grants that we will be eligible for. Game plan is to get this done over the next year. It is a great opportunity to have long-term savings. ► Mr. Hellen stated the governor put a grant program out which gives a 30 percent reduction in all labor and material costs. In addition, with all LED street lighting, National Grid gives about \$100,000 payback as well. The life of a LED street light is 15 years. ► Mr. Jones stated he is in favor of this project. In the long run, it will save money. ► Mr. Bissanti questioned the savings that Mr. Hellen mentioned. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed the payback plan. ► Mr. Padula asked what is the replacement cost to change the street lights the town has currently compared to having to change a new one. ► Mr. Hellen described the current maintenance contract to change the lights. He thinks the costs would be comparable. ► Mr. Nutting stated that about 20 percent of the lights are replaced every year. ► Chairman Kelly confirmed that the Planning Board is aware that all new subdivisions will need to be done with LED lighting. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Dellorco-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Padula-YES; Pellegrini-YES; Pfeffer-YES; Vallee-YES. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
4. **Resolution 17-37: Appropriation: Town Administration – Water BAN Interest (Motion to Move Resolution 17-37 – Majority Vote (5)).** Ms. Pfeffer read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Move Resolution 17-37: Appropriation: Town Administration – Water BAN Interest for \$40,000 by Mercer. SECOND by Padula. Discussion:** ► Mr. Nutting stated the money was borrowed after last year’s budget. So, the first interest payment is due and need to transfer the funds. It is in next year’s budget already. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
5. **Bylaw Amendment 17-793: Amendment to Water System Map – 1st Reading (Motion to Move Bylaw Amendment 17-793 to a 2nd Reading – Majority Vote – (5)).** Ms. Pfeffer read the bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move Bylaw Amendment 17-793: Amendment to Water System Map to a 2nd Reading by Mercer. SECOND by Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Nutting stated this is an

approved subdivision for four lots. The water line already goes down the street; this just pops into the subdivision. ► Mr. Vallee confirmed this was Mr. Nutting's recommendation. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

► Mr. Nutting stated, in response to a Town Council member's question, there are a few resolutions out of sequence as additional information was being obtained; they will be on the next agenda.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: *None.*

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: ► Ms. Pfeffer stated she thought a person from the SAFE initiative was supposed to come before the Town Council. ► Mr. Nutting stated the person had a family issue and will be back before the end of the fiscal year.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: ► Town Council members expressed condolences to the Doherty family. They also gave thanks to all those that provided help and support.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *None.*

ADJOURN: MOTION to Adjourn by Mercer. SECOND by Dellorco. No Discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary