

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 16, 2023**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, August 16, 2023, 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, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegrini, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: Glenn Jones. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney.

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. He announced that Councilor Jones will not be attending this meeting; Councilor Hamblen will act as clerk for this meeting.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: ► Ms. Jane Callaway-Tripp, 607 Maple Street, stated that she came before the Town Council in 2018 and complained about the street drains and the culvert on Maple Street that had not been maintained for close to 10 years on the culvert and seven years on the drain; it was then taken care of and was cleared. She stated that she had no flooding issues until recently. She stated that her entire basement was flooded as the drains could not take the water and the culvert is overgrown. She stated that her floors have to be replaced, furniture, clothes, shoes, electrical equipment, etc. is lost. She stated that she is angry because she was told in 2018 that there is a maintenance program for the culverts and the drains, and five years later they have not been done. She said that either she was lied to or it was not important enough to take care of. She said neighbors down the street from her got two feet of water in their basements. This is not okay. She lost a van and another car was damaged by trees that were not maintained properly. She said that whatever her insurance does not cover, she has to pay. She is done paying out of pocket to fix, repair, and replace things that should not be getting damaged if things in the town are maintained. She said she does not care if there are flowers downtown, if there are bike paths, or if the zoning laws are changed. She said what matters are the things in place to make sure the people who pay taxes in this town can live comfortably, and these things are being neglected. She stated that what her insurance does not cover, she expects to be reimbursed by the Town because had they done the drains and the culvert, and she has pictures, she would not have flooded. She flooded because the water was flooding in at such a fast rate, even her sump pump could not handle it. She said if the culvert and drains are cleared, she would not flood from the street. She is back here now for the same reason she was here before; she wants the drains and culvert cleaned, and she is not the only person on Maple Street. She said that her specific reason for flooding is the Town's drain and culvert not being cleaned. She should not have to redo her bottom level; it is a mess, and all of it has to go because it is damaged and filled with bacteria. ► Town Clerk Nancy Danello discussed the November 7, 2023, election. She stated that nomination papers are now available. She stated that she would review the boards and committees that they do not have a full slate for. She stated that information is available on her website which is updated regularly; see her if there are any questions. She stated that she has no information on the Tri-County election yet; she will update when she gets information. ► Mr. Ken Elmore, 29 School Street, stated that he has had the pleasure of serving as president of Dean College over the last year. He stated that he hopes he can come back to the Town Council to give an update of the past year including how they have been stewards of the town and have worked with community organizations and agencies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None.

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: None.

APPOINTMENTS: ► *Agricultural Commission: Daniel Morse.* ► Councilor Hamblen read the appointment. ► **MOTION to Ratify** the appointment by the Town Administrator of Daniel Morse to serve as a member of the Agricultural Commission with term expiration June 30, 2026 by **Hamblen. SECOND** by **Dellorco. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that Mr. Morse has been doing a great job; he has been an associate for two years. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

HEARINGS: 7:00 PM. ► *Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-898: A Zoning Bylaw to Amend the Franklin Town Code at Chapter 185, Attachment 9, Schedule of Lot, Area, Frontage, Yard and Height Requirements (Legislation for Action Item #9a).* ► *Chair Mercer declared the public hearing open.* ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is a bylaw amendment exclusive to General Residential V zoning district which are the areas around the downtown commercial area. He stated that this does not propose to change any zoning lines. He mentioned that this went before the EDC, and this is the proposal unanimously endorsed by the EDC. The Planning Board returned the recommendation to the Town Council with a small reduction in the percentages of impervious surface. So, the decision before the Town Council tonight is to go back to the Planning Board recommendation or stand with the EDC subcommittee recommendation. He stated there is a chart provided in the meeting packet which clearly explains the percentages and where they are going. It mainly has to do with coverage of impervious surface on a lot; it deals with ratios of how much can be covered on a lot. He said it is very small changes to the percentages. ► Director of Planning and Community Development Bryan Taberner stated that what is being proposed is two very small changes to the regulations. He discussed that they are proposing to increase the amount of impervious area allowed on a lot. He stated that right now they can cover 30 percent of the lot with structure and additional 5 percent with paving, etc., for a total of 35 percent. He stated that they are right now at 45 percent which is an additional 5 percent on structures and additional 10 percent on paving which is up to 45 percent. He stated that almost half the lot can be impervious. He stated that the other change taking place is that they are proposing a change to note #7 which he read aloud and discussed. He said they are proposing a three-family to be exempt from this. He stated that if anything, this will increase three-unit housing in the General Residential V area. He stated that this was before the Planning Board. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that she thanked Mr. Taberner and the staff for their work on this. She stated that the wording in note #7 and the attachment #9 is perfect and the Planning Board and we all agreed on it. She reminded people that they are doing all these zoning changes to allow changes to density to increase housing stock, fit for what people want to see, create a vibrant downtown, to meet and exceed MBTA requirements, and that downtown holds the greatest potential for growth and boost local receipts. She stated that there was a disagreement about the impervious coverage. She explained why they picked 55 percent impervious coverage. She stated that she has not heard a good argument why they should not go with at least 50 percent and follow what the MAPC has said to them. ► Mr. Taberner discussed going 45 percent, 50 percent, or 55 percent is not a big deal. He stated that we need to increase the percent without a doubt. He discussed parking spaces needed for each apartment or housing unit. He said that if you do not increase from the existing 35 percent, you are not going to get enough parking spaces to cover the housing units. He stated that he does not have a problem changing to 50 percent or whatever the Town Council comes up with. ► Councilor Chandler stated that it looks like the Town Council subcommittee voted unanimously for the 45 percent, and the Planning Board voted unanimously to put it to 35 percent. He stated that it seems like whatever they send to the Planning Board, the Planning Board comes back with their own idea, and he sees how hard the Town Council subcommittee works on this, so he is inclined to agree with their subcommittee, and he sees nothing wrong with the 45/55. He stated that he heard that the higher number could help with the housing stock. He asked how many floors a building can be. ► Mr. Taberner stated that in most districts without a special permit there are three floors by right. ► Mr. Maxwell Morrongiello, 127 Central Park Terrace, stated that he is in support of multi-family housing. He asked about the environmental impacts of more impervious surface and the impact of run off and flooding. ► Mr. Hellen stated that areas that people are having flooding with in Town were built before the Stormwater Bylaw; any development going forward now would be susceptible to utility costs which are reinvested into infrastructure. He

discussed the percentage flexibility to customize the lot. He stated that at some point it just becomes flipping a coin and semantics. He said he thinks what they heard from people who want to develop property and get that additional unit, you need that flexibility of that additional space to meet all the other setback requirements. ► Ms. Jane Callaway-Tripp, 607 Maple Street, asked if this regards apartment buildings. ► Mr. Hellen replied that this is for GRV and reviewed the actual location and discussed the parcels in this zoning district. He confirmed this is like a multi-family where someone could rent out a floor as a legal unit. ► **Chair Mercer declared the public hearing closed.**

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

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

- a. Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-898: A Zoning Bylaw to Amend the Franklin Town Code at Chapter 185, Attachment 9, Schedule of Lot, Area, Frontage, Yard and Height Requirements - First Reading (Motion to Move Bylaw Amendment 23-898 to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Hamblen read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-898: A Zoning Bylaw to Amend the Franklin Town Code at Chapter 185, Attachment 9, Schedule of Lot, Area, Frontage, Yard and Height Requirements to a Second Reading by Dellorco.** Motion was **SECONDED.** (Speaker inaudible on recording. It was not clear which Councilor seconded the motion). **Discussion:** ► Councilor Pellegrini confirmed the percentages being voted on. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

HEARINGS: 7:00 PM (continued). ► **Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-899: Marijuana Use Overlay District, A Zoning Bylaw Amendment to the Code of the Town of Franklin at Chapter 185, Section 5, Zoning Map (Legislation for Action #9b).** ► **Chair Mercer declared the public hearing open.** ► Mr. Hellen showed and discussed the marijuana overlay district map. He stated that the overlay is in the industrial park. He stated that this is a housecleaning item of the marijuana overlay district which he explained as noted in his letter to the Town Council dated August 4, 2023, which indicated for detailed information regarding Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-898, please see the June 14, 2023, memo from Bryan Taberner in the meeting packet. ► Mr. Taberner discussed the requirements of the marijuana overlay district. He discussed the provided map and how it was updated. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked why some areas were added, if it is required to have a certain percentage, and if there is a restriction on the number of marijuana facilities that can be in town. ► Mr. Taberner stated that there are no requirements on size, and there are no restrictions on how many. He stated that it is a zoning issue and a special permit can be applied for. ► Mr. Hellen stated that there is no quota in Franklin for the number of licenses. He stated that licenses are done through the state; the Town does the permitting. He said the Town could put in a quota, but we have never seen the need because we have never seen more than three proposed locations; two of those have been successful businesses. He discussed NETA and Botera are good businesses in the Town and great community partners. He stated that there was a third permitted on Grove Street, but it has not come to fruition. ► Councilor Sheridan asked if a church goes in next to a marijuana establishment, does the marijuana establishment have to move. ► Mr. Hellen stated no. ► **Chair Mercer declared the public hearing closed.**

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION (continued):

- b. Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-899: Marijuana Use Overlay District, A Zoning Bylaw Amendment to the Code of the Town of Franklin at Chapter 185, Section 5, Zoning Map - First Reading (Motion to Move Bylaw Amendment 23-899 to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).** ► **MOTION to Waive the reading by Frongillo.** **SECOND** by Cormier-Leger. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.** ► **MOTION to Move Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-899: Marijuana Use Overlay District, A Zoning Bylaw Amendment to the Code of the Town of Franklin at Chapter 185, Section 5, Zoning Map to a Second Reading by Dellorco.** **SECOND** by Hamblen. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: None.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: ► **Presentation: DPW Project Updates - Brutus Cantoreggi, DPW Director.** ► DPW Director Brutus Cantoreggi, Town Engineer Michael Maglio, Water and Sewer Superintendent Doug Martin, Highway and Grounds Superintendent Carlos Rebelo, Assistant Highway and Grounds Superintendent Tony Brunetta, Stormwater and Environmental Affairs Superintendent Derek Adams, and Director of GIS Kate Sjoberg addressed the Town Council. ► Mr. Cantoreggi narrated a slideshow presentation and reviewed current project updates including Janie Avenue neighborhood off Pond Street water main replacement, Grove Street Phase 1 traffic signal, Arlington Road neighborhood roadway reconstruction project, Grove Street Phase 2 multi-use path to SNETT and drainage and road paving, Chilson Park new fields/playground, Nason Street new playground, Complete Streets grant for two flashing pedestrian beacons and bike racks at four locations, and rededication to the Sculpture Park. He discussed the Beaver Street Interceptor project and said they were issued their notice to proceed on August 9, 2023. He said this is a really big infrastructure project, and it will affect everyone in Franklin. There will be traffic and businesses impacted. He discussed the Keep Franklin Flowing marketing and said information will be available on the website. He discussed the Stormwater MS4 and the phosphorus control plan. He stated that the EPA is requiring them to do this over the next five years, and the estimated cost is \$30 million. He discussed that he does not know how this will be funded. He discussed that the stormwater utility just went into effect at \$56.00 which is a little low, but if we have to do this over the next five years, the average would go to \$350.00. He discussed the Pavement Management Program & Sidewalk Plan. He stated this plan is done about every five years. He discussed that the roads have gotten worse. He discussed improvement money and the funds used for roadway improvement since 2018 including Chapter 90, water funding, Town capital appropriations, water capital appropriations, grants and the operating fund which is approximately \$19 million. He stated that is a pretty good investment in roads. He discussed the new roads forecast going forward. ► Mr. Adams reviewed water storage tanks including that there are six tanks for 12 million gallons for fire protection, pressure, and equalization. He reviewed projects at \$13.5 million including Hillside tank replacement, Pleasant Street tank service area for energy efficiency, and Bald Hill and Forge Park tank improvements. He noted, as shown on the slides, water capital projects including Well 7/7A PFAS, Fisher Street WTP, Water Main replacement/Road Improvement Program, additional PFAS treatment. ► Mr. Cantoreggi discussed potential infrastructure costs for the next five years including for highway at \$30-\$35 million, stormwater at \$15-\$30 million, water at \$42-\$92 million, and sewer at \$33-\$38 million, for a total of \$120-\$195 million. ► Chair Mercer stated that it was good for the Town Council and the community to be aware of the numbers. ► Councilor Chandler gave a shout out to Mr. Maglio regarding the Union Street project. He discussed the experience of the businesses during the Beaver Street interceptor project. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated they will have meetings and do marketing so everyone knows about the project. He discussed that it is difficult when they have to do detours; they are going to try to stay on top of it. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that this is what he has been waiting to see. He stated he wants to talk about how this connects to other pieces. He stated that one of the reasons why these numbers are so out of hand is because for a very long time we built out in a way that ignored the long-term maintenance costs. He stated that increased revenue we were getting did not pay for this is one reason we are struggling every year to keep up with the budget. He stated that to add revenue we have two options which are to increase taxes through an override and the other is to allow for new growth. He stated that he will be pouring through the pavement plan. ► Councilor Dellorco thanked the presenters and said they do a really good job. He asked for the price of the interceptor. He stated that when the interceptor project happens, please be patient. ► Mr. Adams stated that the bid by the contractor is \$26.7 million and the total loan amount is \$33 million which includes contingencies. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger thanked the presenters and asked about the sidewalk plan. He stated he would like a sidewalk plan to show folks a little bit of progress. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that the sidewalks will be evaluated, but it has not been completed yet. He stated that it will be millions to update the sidewalks. He discussed where most sidewalks are used in town which is where they will look to do improvements. He stated that he is fixing a lot of handicapped access and trip hazards regarding sidewalks. ► Councilor Pellegri thanked all for attending tonight and for bringing this to the Town Council's attention. ► Councilor Sheridan asked that if a street is going to be fixed, is the sidewalk also fixed. ► Mr. Cantoreggi

explained that if they are going to get a new waterline, they fix the area curb to curb. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that these numbers are huge, but it is important for people to understand what is needed to pay for these things. She stated that Union Street is awesome. She asked about the Fisher Street water treatment and noted it was hit by lightning and there was a fire. ► Mr. Adams stated the filters were replaced, but they are coming up to their five-year replacement. ► Councilor Frongillo asked about allocation of some money to extend the sidewalk on Washington Street. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that the Town Council authorized them to borrow for this. ► Mr. Hellen explained that \$2 million was authorized to borrow for that stretch; he built into the FY26 budget for \$3 million. He stated that they are anticipating a re-authorization for a higher number; they are trying to piecemeal this together for borrowing for a few items. He requested a list of improvements made to sidewalks already. ► Mr. Maxwell Morrongiello, 127 Central Park Terrace, stated that he had three questions: how much can be financed through the water/sewer bill, whether there can be a fee or surcharge specifically when there is a drought to ration water so people will use less during times of drought, and when the analysis for the roads and sidewalks is done, do you take into account the equity of the neighborhoods. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed the slide titled Potential Infrastructure Costs Next Five Years and stated that stormwater, water, and sewer do not come out of the General Fund; those are utility enterprise accounts that are borne by the rate payers. He stated that there are different pots to finance this to pay for the actual project. He stated that in terms of the equity issue, it is not a part of the scoring analysis, that is simply road conditions, but in terms of where we do the work, if you look at a bigger map, we try to hit all areas of town. He stated that they really balance it out well year to year. He stated that everywhere they are getting some sort of investment. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that stormwater is mandated; the federal government is making us spend the money. ► Ms. Kathleen Pennell, 118 Forest Street, stated that sidewalks are huge with her right now. She stated that Forest Street is a treacherous street. She stated that she lives in the middle of two horrible curves. She stated that she takes her life in her hands every time she tries to run to her mailbox. She stated that they speed on that road. She stated that she has two young neighbors on either side of her with young children. She stated that she literally said to them go through her backyard, but she does not want those kids going across in the front of her house. She stated that she has no privacy left now. She stated that they really need a sidewalk at least on that side because of the Jefferson School. She said that these parents do not want to bus or drive their kids. She discussed that it is dangerous. She stated that you cannot walk down the street to the park. She stated that she feels it is a necessity. ► Chair Mercer stated that they are talking dollars and cents; this is part of what we are looking at now. ► Ms. Jane Callaway-Tripp, 607 Maple Street, asked about stormwater. She stated that in the presentation the fee could go from \$56 to \$350 per resident. She stated that the idea with the fee was all the businesses that were exempt from taxes like Dean College and others, would also be paying into the stormwater, so what would their average costs be. She asked about water pressure; she stated that she had to put a regulator at her house because the water pressure is extremely high that goes into homes in Franklin. ► Mr. Hellen stated that Dean College and religious institutions get charged the stormwater fee. He discussed that the Town also pays for the Town and the schools impervious coverage. He stated that everyone pays the same rate of \$18.66 per 1,000 sq. ft. of impervious coverage. He stated that the \$350 is if we want to meet the federal obligation; but we do not have to at this time. He stated that in the future, the Town Council will probably have to raise the rate, but not from \$56 to \$350; it will be over decades. ► Mr. Adams stated that the tanks set the water pressure for the highest elevations in town. He said that with that said, there are low-lying areas that when houses were built, they had to put in a pressure-reducing valve; that is an item that fails over time. ► Ms. Jane Callaway-Tripp stated that is something that residents of older houses should be notified of. ► Mr. Steve Sherlock, 10 Lawrence Drive and Franklin Matters, thanked the presenters for their information. He stated that if citizens want to know more, there is additional information on the website from past meetings. ► Councilor Hamblen asked about the Pleasant Street/Chestnut Street redesign of the intersection. ► Mr. Hellen stated that it is not the worst intersection in town, but it is doable. He stated that Representative Roy got a \$10 million earmark and a bond authorization, and we are going to start laying the groundwork with the Commonwealth to see if we can get the money. ► Chair Mercer thanked the presenters for the information.

► **Discussion: Proposition 2 ½ Operating Override.** ► Mr. Hellen narrated a slideshow presentation. He reviewed his slide title Override 101 and explained the four steps to an override. He stated that the School

Committee begins the process of an override unless Schools are not asking for any additional levy capacity as was in 2014. He explained that the Town Council coordinates with the Town Clerk on an election schedule. He explained that the Town Administrator, Superintendent of Schools, and paid staff cannot advocate for or against an override with Town resources; we are significantly limited in our ability to assist. He discussed the Franklin Override History Summary slide. He noted that since 1990, Franklin has attempted 11 operational Proposition 2 ½ overrides, and all but one in 2008 have failed. He noted future debt exclusions include Tri-County School, Franklin Police Station, Davis-Thayer renovation, and a new school. He noted that there is additional information provided in the meeting packet. ► Town Attorney Mark Cerel reviewed his letter to the Town Council dated August 4, 2023, regarding Public Expenditures and Public Officials’/Employees’ Activities to Influence a Ballot Question that is provided in the meeting packet. He reviewed that Proposition 2 ½ requires that a question be placed on the ballot for determination by voters. State law governs public expenditures and public officials’/employees’ activities intended to influence a local ballot question; this includes a Proposition 2 ½ override. The state law is contained in two separate statutory schemes: 1. G.L. Chapter 55 (Political) Expenditures and Contributions, as interpreted by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in the 1978 case of *Anderson v. City of Boston*, administered and enforced by the Office of Campaign and Political Finance (OCPF), and 2. G. L. Chapter 268A, the State Ethics Law, administered and enforced by the State Ethics Commission. He discussed punishment for violating these regulations. He discussed that if municipal resources are improbably utilized, the funds must be paid back. He further explained court cases, regulations, and penalties. He suggested reading the documents provided in the meeting packet titled *Interpretative Bulletin dated October 31, 1991, The Use of Governmental Resources for Political Purposes*, and *State Ethics Commission Advisory 11-1: Public Employees Political Activity*. ► Chair Mercer stated that as elected officials, if they were asked to go to, for instance to the Rotary Club, and speak about a ballot question, they could do it. He asked could the Town Administrator and/or Superintendent of Schools go to for instance the Rotary Club to provide additional information. ► Mr. Cerel stated yes; however, he provided a detailed example of what can and cannot be done. He noted that the Town Council can take a vote to support the ballot question as elected officials. ► Town Council members asked questions. ► In response to questions, Mr. Cerel noted nuances in the public memos, and said they may appear to have some inconsistencies, so it is best to act conservatively. He stated that you can make contact with the state government to ask questions. ► Chair Mercer explained that they have some latitude to provide information to the public. ► In response to questions, Mr. Cerel stated that if you are going to use public facilities, people with opposing views have the right to be there. He stated that the Town Council members could not use their Town emails to initiate something, but they can respond to it if the inquiry is made to them. ► Mr. Hellen responded to a question about the timeline if something were to be on the ballot and approved, when would the tax actually be raised. He stated that the Town Council will review the timeline and be forthright with folks about when the tax would hit. He responded to a question from Councilor Cormier-Leger about a tier program regarding taxes. He stated that he thinks there is an appetite to analyze that; however, he does not believe you can do that. He gave an example of raising the tax rate. He stated that he does not think for instance you can say seniors are exempt or income eligibility requirements. He stated that there is an interest in looking at this. ► Mr. Cerel stated that as a general proposition, municipalities have no authority or little authority to vary the tax law as the legislators establish it. That being said, he is aware of some municipalities enacting special legislation that allows them to do more creative things than the tax law allows. ► Mr. Hellen stated that he does not think it is possible. He stated that he wants to be clear that to go down that path is a lot of time and work to go down a rabbit hole to find out it cannot be done. He stated that if it could be possible, we would see it all the time and have some information on how to do it. He stated that we would all know that is how to do it. He said he would encourage everyone to not think this is possible. ► Councilor Dellorco stated that he is concerned for the seniors with all the fees they have been hit with so far. ► Mr. Maxwell Morrongiello, 127 Central Park Terrace, stated that he is confused because every December there has been a property tax exemption that the Town Council could have voted on to give everyone a blanket exemption and make property taxes more progressive and help people who are poor. He stated that he does not understand why that cannot be coupled with an override. He said that you can vote for that in December to give poor people a tax break or even put it on the ballot with an override. He stated that he does see why that cannot be done and hopes it can be reconsidered this December and help people who

need relief. He stated that if you help people with low income, you have less crime. ► Mr. Hellen stated that he thinks Mr. Morrongiello's values are shared by a lot of people including himself. He stated that is a Board of Assessor's project, and he can assure that there will be some people who will not like the answer, but a project of shifting tax burden is just as difficult as an override. He discussed that there would be implications on such a shift. ► A resident who did not identify herself stated that she thinks it is Cambridge that just passed the progressive tax. She stated that she wanted to mention that she just pulled papers to run for School Committee. She stated that she called the Office of Campaign Finance and verified that there is no conflict. ► Mr. Cerel stated that she needed to check with the Ethics Commission as well. ► The resident continued that her feedback was that if you were running a PAC, no, if you were running a ballot question committee, yes. She stated that she wanted to be clear that they talked a lot about what people cannot do. She said there are people who are gun-shy. She stated that she calls the OCPF every day and is on a first name basis with people over there. She stated that teachers especially are gun-shy about this. She stated that the teacher could put a sticker on her private vehicle. She stated some of the things that you can do, especially the teachers. She stated that fundraising is a big no-no. ► Mr. Hellen stated that resident Ruth Anne brings up a good point. He stated that employees on their own personal time on the weekends can hold signs, handout stickers, go to meetings, advocate, etc. ► Ms. Jane Callaway-Tripp stated that for a lot of people who do not know, she wanted to know that if we had an override for schools for instance, and it passed, the increase in tax money only goes to the school for that fiscal year that it is allocated for, and after that fiscal year they are not guaranteed to get that money every year going forward. ► Chair Mercer stated that it depends on how it is written. ► Mr. Cerel explained the way it would be written. ► Mr. Hellen stated that in the past it has been written very specifically. ► Ms. Jane Callaway-Tripp stated that you should be scared if you are about to retire or in retirement as there are so many fees and things that keep going up; the schools may need the money, but people cannot afford it. She stated that people on a fixed income, their income does not increase. ► Resident who did not identify herself stated that she wanted to reiterate that One Franklin is trying to put this together for the whole town, she wants to make sure this is not just for schools. She said to see the other departments sacrificing for the schools is not what we are hoping for either. She stated that she does not want to leave with the feeling of be scared. She gave a possible number for the override of \$5 million and stated the average household impact of roughly \$300 per year on taxes. ► Mr. Hellen stated that he would be very cautious about throwing numbers around. He stated that he will say that for a \$5 million override, the number the resident provided is way off as it is definitely too low. He noted that the Tri-County vote is different. ► Chair Mercer stated that we may be getting a little ahead of where we need to be. He stated that tonight was supposed to be about the dos and don'ts as elected officials and employees; if and when we get to that point, there will be many more meetings. He stated that it is very important to know that we can go out there and provide information to people and groups about what our needs are. He stated that this is the beginning stages. He stated that they will continue to move forward and forge ahead. ► Mr. Robert Vacca, 17 Russell Street, stated that he was a proud educator in Franklin. He stated that he wanted to reiterate that as an educator in Franklin, he does not want, nor does he expect, other departments to sacrifice for him; he stated that we are all in this together and we need to go forward together. He stated let's not be scared, let's be bold and creative. ► Chair Mercer stated that we are one Franklin and we need to look at this together as one community. He thanked everyone for coming out and sitting through a lengthy meeting.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION (continued):

- c. Resolution 23-48: Appropriation of \$35,000 from Statewide Opioid Settlement Fund (Motion to approve Resolution 23-48 - 2/3 Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Hamblen read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 23-48: Appropriation of \$35,000 from Statewide Opioid Settlement Fund by Dellorco. SECOND by Sheridan. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen said this is a required two-thirds vote as it is a stabilization fund transfer. He stated that they continue to work through the year to find creative outside-the-box ways to increase the schools' bottom line. This is an eligible expense and it is for one year. He stated the William James Institute has been embedded in the School Department for a long time. He stated that it has no tax impact as it is opioid settlement money. He stated that at some time in the fall, they will get together regarding human services in the town and try to do a better job for the community's

response to human services related issues. ► Mr. Maxwell Morrongiello, 127 Central Park Terrace, stated that he has used Interface and they are a very good service and more people should use them if they are looking for someone in the mental health field. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT: None.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee. None.**
- b. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Hamblen stated the EDC met tonight and Mr. Cantoreggi came in and he had worked up a sidewalk map to talk about regarding if we should enforce a sidewalk cleaning with a snow cleaning bylaw. She stated that they will talk about it again, and the Town Administrator is going to add a few more streets to it where a lot of people walk.
- c. **Budget Subcommittee.** ► Chair Mercer stated there was a joint Budget Subcommittee meeting and it was very well attended. He stated that we talked about many different things, mostly getting the first conversations about the process for an override and what the next three to five years lookout might be. He stated that the hope is to bring the group back together again and talk more about the process. They will meet again late September/early October. He applauded everyone who came to the meeting and said it was a great informational meeting; he hopes this will help spread the word to the community about the needs for the next three to five years.
- d. **Master Plan Update Committee.** ► Councilor Frongillo stated the committee has been meeting. He stated that each subcommittee is really doing deep dives into a whole bunch of different areas. He stated there are going to be a whole bunch of meetings for the next year and a half so keep up to date with what you are interested in. He stated the next full Master Plan meeting is August 23, 2023, at 6:30 PM.
- e. **Davis-Thayer Building Reuse Advisory Committee.** ► Councilor Pellegri stated they met this week and they had some very good ideas from people on the committee as to the uses for the school; nothing was decided. She said they are going to have another meeting and invite some of the people from some of the committees that were mentioned to do something with the school. She stated that Mr. Hellen is going to get in touch with those people. She stated that for a second meeting they are moving right along.
- f. **Police Station Building Committee.** ► Chair Mercer said the first meeting is next week.
- g. **GATRA Advisory Board.** ► Councilor Frongillo stated they did not meet, but they did another report. He stated that the stated budget increased Regional Transit Authority funding a good amount, and we do not know how much GATRA will get. He stated that one of his requests is happening and is doing calculations of how much it costs per mile to run the different services.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked for a Dean update. ► Chair Mercer stated that it will be on the September 6 agenda.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: ► Councilor Sheridan said his neighbors said they were very happy with the playground. He noted a fundraiser on the Town Common from 11 AM to 1 PM on Sunday. ► Councilor Frongillo stated there are office hours at the Senior Center tomorrow at 8:30 AM. He noted the Farmers Market is a blast; it gets better every time. He stated that this is his third year to put up a story walk in the downtown businesses’ windows regarding helping the planet; it starts at FSPA. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger asked Mr. Hellen to look into Ms. Callaway Tripp’s concerns about Maple Street. He stated that they do final water reading and inspections of homes of a certain age, and he asked if the DPW could check water pressure before the home changes hands. He thanked Ms. Jen Levine from the SAFE Coalition and said they got \$40,000 to help LGBTQ youth in particular in town that are struggling with depression that could lead to substance abuse and other challenges. He commended Ms. Levine and her team for the great work they are doing. ► Councilor Chandler thanked One Franklin for showing up and bringing people and it was good to hear the other side too. He stated he got an email and asked if we paid for the six new vehicle chargers at the high school. ► Mr. Hellen stated no. He stated that he had to check if it was grant money through DOER or another source. He stated that we cannot charge for them; it did not come out of the school budget. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that at the Farmers Market they will have their annual zucchini races. She stated

it is a blast and thanked the Agricultural Commission for putting it on. She said what the SAFE Coalition does is amazing. ► Councilor Dellorco stated that there is a SAFE event on August 31. He asked if Mr. Hellen would check on 48 King Street and 50 King Street regarding a manhole in front of those locations; he said the tractor trailers hit it and it bangs and wakes them up at night. He discussed what they do in the SAFE Coalition. He stated they are doing a great job. He stated that he did a tour and walked around Mass and Cass and saw people with needles in their arms. He stated that they are doing everything they can, but it is bad and it is not going away. He noted a lot of this has to do with mental illness. He stated they need to do something different. He encouraged reaching out to the SAFE Coalition for anyone struggling with addiction. ► Chair Mercer thanked everyone for coming out this evening and for taking part in the information that we need to get out to the community. He stated that he encourages everyone to get involved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. No discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary