

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
March 1, 2023**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, March 1, 2023, at the Municipal Building, 2nd Floor, Council Chambers, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA. Councilors present: Brian Chandler, Theodore Cormier-Leger, Robert Dellorco, Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegrini, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: Cobi Frongillo. 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.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** ► *February 15, 2023.* ► **MOTION** to **Approve** the February 15, 2023 meeting minutes by **Dellorco**. **SECOND** by **Jones**. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS:** None.

**APPOINTMENTS:** None.

**HEARINGS: 7:00 PM.** ► *Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-887: Zoning Map Changes from Rural Residential II and Single Family Residential III to Rural Residential II or Single Family Residential III an Area On or Near Lincoln Street and Lincolnwood Drive (Legislation for Action #9a).* ► Chair Mercer declared the public hearing open. ► Mr. Hellen stated that the public hearing is the first step; the legislation for action is forthcoming. He stated that both proposals for the public hearings are lot line clean ups; this one is off Lincoln Street. He stated that the Planning Board had their hearing this week and unanimously endorsed the changes. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that this came to the EDC first and is pretty straightforward. She stated that this cleans up things and makes it easier for people who live in these parcels and it does not change how much the parcel is worth. ► 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 23-887 (Formerly 22-887): Zoning Map Changes from Rural Residential II and Single Family Residential III to Rural Residential II or Single Family Residential III an Area On or Near Lincoln Street and Lincolnwood Drive - First Reading (Motion to Move Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-887 (Formerly 22-887) to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).* ► Councilor Jones read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION** to **Move** Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-887 (Formerly 22-887): Zoning Map Changes from Rural Residential II and Single Family Residential III to Rural Residential II or Single Family Residential III an Area On or Near Lincoln Street and Lincolnwood Drive to a Second Reading by **Dellorco**. **SECOND** by **Hamblen**. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**HEARINGS: 7:00 PM (continued).** ► **Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-891: Zoning Map Changes from Rural Residential II and Single Family Residential III to Rural Residential II or Single Family Residential III an Area On or Near Lincoln Street (Legislation for Action #9b).** ► Chair Mercer declared the public hearing open. ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is the same as before; it is a couple of dozen parcels. He stated that the Planning Board voted unanimously at their meeting on Monday to endorse the bylaw change. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that this is almost the same as the last map, it is just down a little further on Lincoln Street. She stated that it is the same reasoning; it is making it easier for people and cleaning it up. She stated that this is probably the last multiple lot clean up in front of the Town Council. ► Director of Planning and Community Development Bryan Taberner stated that this clean up started about 15 years ago. He stated that little by little they have gotten them done. He stated that after this, there are only about 40 parcels in town that will be split parcels. ► Councilor Jones stated that there have not been too many contentions about these. He thanked Mr. Taberner and his staff for the hard work that has gone into getting these changes completed. ► Chair Mercer declared the public hearing closed.

**LEGISLATION FOR ACTION (continued):**

- b. Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-891: Zoning Map Changes from Rural Residential II and Single Family Residential III to Rural Residential II or Single Family Residential III an Area On or Near Lincoln Street - First Reading (Motion to Move Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-891 to a Second Reading - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the zoning bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Move** Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-891: Zoning Map Changes from Rural Residential II and Single Family Residential III to Rural Residential II or Single Family Residential III an Area On or Near Lincoln Street to a Second Reading by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Councilor Pellegri asked for the location of one of the listed streets. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed the location and stated it is a private way off Lincoln Street. ► Mr. Cerel explained that assuming it was a relatively new approved small lot subdivision, the Planning Board would have waived construction; it would still provide frontage and the streets would be named and emergency people would have the identification, but it could look just like a driveway. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**
- c. Bylaw Amendment 23-892: A Bylaw to Amend the Code of the Town of Franklin at Chapter 82, Fees, Municipal Service - Second Reading (Motion to Approve Bylaw Amendment 23-892 - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Approve** Bylaw Amendment 23-892: A Bylaw to Amend the Code of the Town of Franklin at Chapter 82, Fees, Municipal Service by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is the second and final reading of the updated BLS and mileage rates in the Town's fees bylaw. He stated that every year or two we look at the rates to make sure we are in the middle of the pack in the market in our region; these are small tweaks to get us to that point. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Chandler-YES; Cormier-Leger-YES; Dellorco-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegri-YES; Sheridan-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**
- d. Resolution 23-22: Cable Funds in Support of PEG Service and Programming per MGL Ch. 44, §53F3/4 (Motion to Approve Resolution 23-22 - Majority Vote).** ► **MOTION to Waive** the reading by **Cormier-Leger. SECOND** by **Dellorco. No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.** ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 23-22: Cable Funds in Support of PEG Service and Programming per MGL Ch. 44, §53F3/4 by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Cerel stated that there has been remedial legislation pending for some time which would eliminate this requirement for the appropriations. ► Town Council members asked questions. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed that everyone in the industry knows that with streaming services, cable subscriptions have dwindled. He stated that there has been a lot of legislation filed regarding this issue and how to fund local cable access. He stated that this is a statewide, regional, and national issue. ► Mr. Steven Sherlock, Board Member of Franklin Cable organization, stated that we are concerned. He explained that a topic at their next board meeting is providing future revenue sources. He stated that at some point in time the cable fees are going to go away

and what will happen. He stated they will probably look for sponsors. He stated that it starts at the federal level as the state cannot do much. He explained that Comcast and Verizon subscribers pay a fee as a line item on the bill for this. ► Mr. Cerel explained the fee assessment that is shown on a subscriber's bill. ► Councilor Jones stated that he thinks that to continue PEG funding that the legislation should potentially shift the fee to internet provider instead of just cable so we do not lose the revenue stream. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: None.**

**PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: None.**

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: ► *Personnel Update.*** ► Mr. Hellen stated that the Senior Center café is back open this week and progress is moving faster than they thought. He stated that he hopes the rest of the building will be open in the next few weeks. He thanked the Senior Center staff and the Friends for their creative thinking regarding the Senior Center. He stated that there are many transitions and staffing changes. He congratulated Ms. Julie McCann in his office. He stated that she has been doing a great job and she is being promoted to Alecia's former position as the Operations Assistant to the Town Administrator. He stated that Ms. Julie Jacobson will be working part time for us and will be filling in while he is on vacation. He stated that she will also be doing some economic development projects for us for the next four months and she will pick up some of the projects that were on Alecia's plate and carry them forward for four or five months until the full Deputy Town Administrator gets appointed, hopefully early this summer. He noted that Ms. Jacobson just retired having spent 12 years in Auburn as their first town manager and almost 20 years in the City of Worcester. He stated that she would be working on the town branding project as well. He stated that in the Facilities Department they recently hired a Deputy Director of Engineering. He stated that Stephen O'Neill is being promoted to the Deputy Director of Maintenance and Trades in the Facilities Department; Mr. O'Neill previously worked as the local inspector in the Building Department. He stated that in a few weeks the posting will go up for the open inspector position in the Building Department. He reviewed the following new hires and transitions: Ms. Maureen Canesi, administrative assistant for the Board of Health; Ms. Raeleen Gallivan, social services coordinator for the Senior Center; Ms. Sarah Amaral, deputy director for the Senior Center; Ms. Ariel Doggett, program coordinator for the Senior Center; and Ms. Kathleen Laughran, head of the supportive day program for the Senior Center. He noted that at the next Town Council meeting he may make more new hire/transition announcements.

► ***Joint Budget Subcommittee March 8th, 2023 7:00 PM.*** ► Mr. Hellen stated that the meeting packet was sent out. He clarified that the meeting time is 7 PM, although the agenda indicates 6:30 PM. He stated that the meeting will be reposted. He stated that there will be a draft preliminary budget in the meeting packet and a six-page memo describing the assumptions. He noted that it is a \$150 million budget. ► Chair Mercer stated that this is the beginning of our process of the budget; it starts with the Joint Budget Subcommittee. He stated that if people out there are interested in where their tax dollars are going and why they are going there, this is the time to start to tune in and get your questions answered. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger stated that the Franklin Police issued a leadership flyer for July 10-14, 2023, for kids in town for \$175. He stated that it indicates that the payments go to the Police Department and not the Town; he asked why that is. ► Mr. Hellen stated it is for administrative transactions; the funds will be collected by the Police and when processed will go into the general fund. ► In response to Councilor Pellegri's question, Mr. Hellen stated that all the personnel positions that he mentioned are already in the budget.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** None.
- b. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Hamblen stated that they met twice since the last meeting. She stated that they met last week and discussed Chapter 40B and the processes in town. She stated that they put together an informational meeting about what was happening. She stated that before

the meeting tonight they had an EDC+ meeting where we started our discussion on accessory dwelling unit bylaw, and we will discuss it again sometime soon.

c. **Budget Subcommittee.** None.

d. **GATRA Advisory Board.** None.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: None.**

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger noted the Police leadership application is available online and is happening July 10-14 at \$175 for kids. He stated that the Franklin Recreation summer camp is now open and online. He stated thanks to the Building Department and all the folks at the Senior Center staff and Town departments for everything they have done to get the Senior Center partially reopened during some strenuous and difficult times on top of bad weather. He stated thanks to Director of Public Works Brutus Cantoreggi and the entire DPW staff for handling the last snowstorm incredibly. He thanked everyone who came out to the Franklin Art Association gallery opening last week. ► Councilor Chandler wondered when the Police's new therapy dog Frankie will be coming here for a visit. He noted that people can pull papers in five and one-half months for the Town Council race. ► Mr. Hellen stated that the Chief of Police will be here on the March 15<sup>th</sup> and maybe Frankie can come at that time. ► Councilor Pellegrini stated thanks to the Senior Center staff for all that they are doing up there. She stated thanks to the DPW for taking good care of the roads. She confirmed that volunteers are still coming in for all the committees. She stated that March 2<sup>nd</sup> is Franklin's birthday of 245 years. She stated that she hopes the School Department will honor Franklin tomorrow. ► Councilor Sheridan stated agreement with what has been said about the Senior Center. ► Councilor Hamblen noted that the Arts & Culture listening tour starts next week; the first one is on Tuesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 5 PM to 7 PM at Dean College. She stated that the Open Space survey is out there. She noted past and upcoming Open Space meetings. ► Councilor Jones encouraged everyone to take the Open Space survey. He noted that many of the committee openings that were posted have March 5<sup>th</sup> as the last day to apply. ► Chair Mercer reviewed the process for the committee openings. He stated that Mr. Hellen will review the applications and make recommendations to the full Town Council to ratify the appointments. ► Councilor Dellorco stated that he agrees with what everyone said. ► Chair Mercer stated that he spent a few hours at the Senior Center this week with the building inspector and the facilities director and his new assistant. He stated that they looked through the entire thing. He stated that two weeks is an aggressive wish as there is still a lot of work that has to be done. He stated that he applauded the efforts of the staff and the Senior Center people who have done a great job trying to keep the seniors as active as they can with programs.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.**

**ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Dellorco. SECOND by Jones. No Discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary