

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 18, 2023**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, January 18, 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, Glenn Jones, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegrini, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: None. 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: ► Mr. Stephen Sherlock, 10 Lawrence Drive, Franklin Matters and Franklin Public Radio, stated that he was giving a friendly reminder that the council chambers are a high-tech TV studio. He discussed that this is a recording studio and the microphones need to be used properly so when the recording is made it can be heard properly during playback and during the meeting session. ► Ms. Pamela Young, 59 West Street, stated that she was seeking the Town Council's help in making her neighborhood safe. She described the location of two parking spaces on Mason Street which she said were in question. She stated that the spaces are mostly occupied 24/7. She stated that the current parking obstructs the view of the crosswalk. She discussed that an emergency vehicle may not be able to make the turn onto Mason Street with both sides of the street occupied by cars. She stated that she is asking to have the two parking spaces removed in front of her home on Mason Street. She stated that this will give pedestrians a better view of the road.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: ► *January 4, 2023.* ► **MOTION** to **Approve** the January 4, 2023 meeting minutes by **Dellorco**. **SECOND** by **Jones**. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: **None.**

APPOINTMENTS: **None.**

HEARINGS: **None.**

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: ► *License Modification - Change of Manager: NEP OPS-T, LLC d/b/a Residence Inn Boston Franklin, Located at 4 Forge Parkway, Franklin, MA 02038.* ► Councilor Jones read the license transaction. ► **MOTION** to **Approve** the request by NEP OPS-T, LLC, d/ b/a Residence Inn Boston Franklin, for a Change of Manager to Samantha Wood by **Jones**. **SECOND** by **Dellorco**. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is a standard procedure for a change of manager. ► Ms. Samantha Wood (via Zoom) stated that she is the general manager of the Residence Inn in Franklin, she has been there for about one year, and she has 10 years of experience in hotels and hospitality. **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: ►Presentation: One Year Update of the Franklin Senior Center - Danielle Hopkins, Senior Center.

► Senior Center Director Danielle Hopkins and Deputy Director Christina LaRose addressed the Town Council. ► Ms. Hopkins narrated a slideshow presentation which was provided in the Town Council's meeting packet reviewing 2022 accomplishments and the future. She thanked the Town Council, Senior Center staff, community, and Town staff. Ms. LaRose thanked the Friends of Franklin Elders group and COA Board. Ms. Hopkins reviewed the main program accomplishments that happened in 2022 including Eat Around the World Program, Pizza and Movie Nights, Rainbow Café, and Winter Wonderland. Ms. LaRose showed the old calendar and the new calendar that she said looks like a Monday through Friday calendar. She stated that they have also added some evening programs and an in-color newsletter. She reviewed additional accomplishments for 2022 including but not limited to that they re-opened the Common Grounds Café, hired a new full-time chef and kitchen manager, hired two part-time line cooks, worked with Dean College and Tri-Country School to host students for internships, established a community intervention team, obtained a credit card processing system. Ms. Hopkins reviewed that a person is a senior at 55 years old; there is something for everyone at the Senior Center. She stated that they want to start thinking about how to market themselves so people know about all they have. Ms. LaRose stated that they are very lucky for the building and programs that they have. She stated that it is great to have veterans' services in their building. She stated that they are lucky to have the public health department to go to. Ms. Hopkins shared some facts from the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report. Ms. LaRose reviewed data from people who signed into the Senior Center from January 2022 to December 2022. She stated that they had over 600 new members last year. She stated that they are open to community members outside of Franklin. Ms. Hopkins reviewed their vision for the Franklin Senior Center. She stated that in April they sent out a strategic planning survey, and they had office hours and talked to the community as well. She stated that they had a lot of good feedback. She stated that attached to the Town Council's meeting packet is the 13-page document Franklin Senior Center: 7 Year Vision Action Plan outlining the more specific vision. Ms. Hopkins and Ms. LaRose reviewed the main points as listed on their slideshow presentation slides. They discussed staffing, administration, and volunteers; programming and amenities; social services; Common Grounds Café and nutrition; health and wellness; supportive day programming and dementia/Alzheimer's; fiscal/budget; facility and space; transportation; marketing; and outreach and advocacy. ► Chair Mercer thanked the presenters. ► Mr. Hellen stated that this has only been one year and he could not have imagined that this could have worked out better. He congratulated everyone for an incredible year. ► Town Council members asked questions, made comments, and thanked the presenters. ► In response to a question, Ms. LaRose stated that the Senior Center is not just a place that people come and sit around and not do anything. She reviewed that the mission and education piece is to let it be known that people are engaged and there is value in the Senior Center such as education and resources. ► Councilor Chandler asked if there is a full-time or part-time custodian at the Senior Center. ► Ms. Hopkins stated that there are two part-time custodians. ► In response to a question, Ms. Hopkins reviewed the previous companion caregiver program and said that some of the liability is a red flag. She said that she received advice to put the program on pause right now. ► Chair Mercer stated this was a great presentation. He stated that the Senior Center is one of the Town's gems.

► **Discussion: Stormwater Utility Update.** ► Mr. Hellen reviewed that the presentation will be an update from the stormwater staff team on the progress at implementing the stormwater utility, as required by the Federal EPA. The presentation will include a tutorial from Director of GIS Kate Sjoberg on how to use the impervious surface website so everyone can check their personal property at home, an update on the utility set up in the financial software and when residents can expect to see their first bill, an overview of the draft credits manual and receive feedback from the Town Council, and answer any questions folks may have about stormwater. ► Director of Public Works Brutus Cantoreggi, Stormwater & Environmental Affairs Superintendent Derek Adams, and Director of GIS Kate Sjoberg addressed the Town Council. ► Ms. Sjoberg reviewed the Stormwater Division website and explained the process to find how much impervious area is on a property by searching any Franklin address. She stated that if a

homeowner sees something that is incorrect, they should call the Stormwater Division; staff will go on a site visit to determine if there is an error. She discussed that it is easier to check any errors now before the bills go out. She noted that the imagery is based on 2019, so there are going to be errors. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that they have had many telephone calls so far. He stated that they explain the stormwater utility to people; if anyone has any questions, he asked them to call. ► Town Council members asked questions. ► Chair Mercer asked about the chart on the website and confirmed that it is on the principle of natural rounding for the square footage amount billed. ► Councilor Chandler asked about condominiums. ► Ms. Sjoberg explained how condominiums are calculated and that the billing will go to the condominium association. ► Mr. Bill Roche, Chair Board of Trustees at the Village at Cook's Farm, on behalf of the 55 homeowners that reside in the Village, stated that the Village is a condominium from a land perspective, but the homes are all single-family homes which get their own tax bill, water bill, and electric bill. So, treating it as a condo would not be appropriate. He stated that he thinks the total area was taken and divided by 55 units. He stated that he would like clarification. ► Town Attorney Mark Cerel discussed the legal principle and that it is ownership of space and there is an entity, generally a condo association, that owns all the common area. He explained the distinction between individual and common ownership. ► Mr. Roche stated that it is an important question for the trustees of the association to understand how it is being done. He stated that we prefer it be billed to the individual homeowner as they own their individual home. He stated that understanding the credits is important. He stated that the Village has a state-of-the-art stormwater collection system. He stated that they believe they should get some credit as they clean their own catch basins, sweep their own streets, clean out the outlets and culverts, and monitor and clean the infiltrators. He stated that they do not contribute anything to the Town system. He asked how they can be treated as a single-family home and he wanted to know how the credits are applied. ► Mr. Hellen explained that this is not going to be perfect on day one. It will take property owners some time. They need to call and meet with the staff if there are any questions. He stated that this program will evolve over a long time. ► Mr. Lester Chow, 4 Briarwood Road, stated that he built an addition and put in a recharge system. He asked if that would be considered as a credit. ► Ms. Sjoberg stated yes. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that if a property owner gets a bill and they think something is wrong, they can file for abatement and the proper adjustments will be made. He stated that in regard to the credit manual, a property owner can get up to 50 percent off the fee. ► Mr. Adams summarized the 14-page credit manual. He stated that there are two categories for applying for a credit: there is a small user credit for parcels with five or less billable units and every residential property, and the standard credit is for six-plus billable units. He reviewed that one category is stormwater quantity and the other is stormwater quality. ► Town Council members asked questions. ► In response, Mr. Adams explained how a homeowner with a rain barrel would be able to get a credit; the owner would apply for the credit via an application process. ► Councilor Dellorco asked about a dry well. ► Ms. Sjoberg explained that in the user manual there is a list of what applies. She stated that the credit manual is not yet posted to the website as it is still a draft. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that his fear is the over-giving of credits and end up short of the goal. He asked if the presenters had thought through the math of the credits. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that they looked through their budget and the overall money we need to raise to meet the requirements. He stated that 543 rain barrels have been bought. He stated that there will not be 543 people coming in to get the credit; they bought the rain barrels for other reasons. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that they need to get the credit manual out to the people. She confirmed that the credit is a yearly thing that has to be applied for; however, an abatement is for if something is wrong and it will get fixed and not have to be addressed again. She asked about rain gardens. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that there were rain garden classes. ► Councilor Jones noted that regarding his field, many neighbors' stormwater flows into his field; his field is like a natural retention. He stated that they will get many questions from people who have similar situations and who are only getting a 50 percent credit. He asked how we ultimately go around and assess and say that this property retains the water and this property is a contributor. He asked should there be some properties that pay more and some that pay less based on their topography. ► Mr. Adams stated that they viewed this as a community problem and the way to address that was to provide funding to provide for the services that need to be provided by the Town. He stated that with that, we do

not consider the topography of the individual parcel; we are concerned with quality and quantity of the discharge coming off the property. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that the Town is not choosing to do this; it is what the EPA and the Feds have put on us. He stated that this is the most fair and equitable way and the best we possibly can do. He stated that every community is dealing with this and ways to fund it. ► Ms. Denise Spencer, 59 Milliken Avenue, (via Zoom) stated that she has a neighbor who has questions and she asked if was okay to send him to the DPW. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that he would encourage it. ► Ms. Paula Lombardi, 757 Washington Street, asked if the Town is being billed for their properties. ► Chair Mercer stated yes. ► Mr. Cantoreggi explained that even the schools are being billed for their impervious area. ► Mr. Stephen Sherlock, 10 Lawrence Drive, asked about impervious/pervious pavers and if a property owner should check with the DPW to confirm which pavers are good ones before doing the installation. ► Ms. Sjoberg stated that if anyone has questions, they should run it by the DPW before doing anything. ► Chair Mercer stated that when this started it was when Covid hit and there were some public presentations on stormwater. He asked that now that we have more information and a draft of the credit manual, could we put together a presentation on Franklin TV that can be broadcast so the information can get to the audiences. ► Mr. Hellen stated that this will be done. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that it is a great idea and they will do it. ► Chair Mercer thanked the presenters.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

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

- a. ***Resolution 23-11: Home Rule Petition on Newspaper Legal Ads (Motion to Approve Resolution 23-11 - Majority Vote).*** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 23-11: Home Rule Petition on Newspaper Legal Ads by Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen reviewed that this proposed resolution will petition the state legislature to amend the law to carve out an exemption in state law for alternative methods for notice of legally required public hearings such as for zoning amendments, liquor licenses, and other business that requires a public hearing as outlined in state law. He stated that this would give the Town a choice about where to post legal advertisements. He stated that this came up because some towns do not have a newspaper to have legal ads published and they got a home rule petition passed to give them an out because there was no newspaper. He reviewed that the Town has spent over \$200,000 in legal ads to the print newspaper, Milford Daily News, over the past five years. He reviewed that if the Town Council endorsed the proposal, it would get filed by Representative Jeff Roy, it would be referenced to a committee, and it would have a public hearing; he stated that he would not expect a rapid response. He explained that the Town of Franklin has a dedicated website page and a free email subscription list for people to get all legal ads. There are currently nearly 2,000 subscribers to the list. He stated that this proposal would allow Franklin the choice to post legal ads in print, on the Town Clerk's bulletin board, and/or via email the town website. He discussed the decline in newspapers. ► Councilor Jones said that he was in support of this. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that if we move this forward, he would like to use some of the saved money to get the word out about the online option. He stated that he does not know how many people still rely on newspapers, but it is not zero and he wants to make sure we are still capturing them. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- b. ***Resolution 23-12: Acceptance of New (Re-located) Sewer Easement and Abandonment of Active Use of Existing Sewer Easement at 259 Cottage Street (Motion to Approve Resolution 23-12 - Majority Vote).*** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 23-12: Acceptance of New (Re-located) Sewer Easement and Abandonment of Active Use of Existing Sewer Easement at 259 Cottage Street by Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Director of Public Works Brutus Cantoreggi reviewed that an existing piece of the Beaver Street Interceptor runs under the Franklin Paint Company's buildings. With the new sewer project, the Town is going to

relocate the existing piece of the Beaver Street Interceptor to outside their building. He stated that it is good for them and it is good for the Town. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

- c. **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 (Motion to Refer Zoning Bylaw Amendment 23-891 to the Planning Board - Majority Vote).** ► **MOTION** to Waive the reading by **Frongillo**. **SECOND** by **Dellorco**. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► **MOTION** to Refer 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 the Planning Board by **Dellorco**. **SECOND** by **Cormier-Leger**. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is part of the lot line cleanup. The EDC passed this unanimously; this is the referral to the Planning Board. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that this is one of the last changes that will come before the Town Council; they are almost done with the cleanup. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- d. **Resolution 23-13: Gift Acceptance - Veterans' Services Dept. (\$2,350) & Fire Dept. (\$100) (Motion to Approve Resolution 23-13 - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION** to **Approve** Resolution 23-13: Gift Acceptance - Veterans' Services Dept. (\$2,350) & Fire Dept. (\$100) by **Dellorco**. **SECOND** by **Hamblen**. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen thanked the donors for their generous donations. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: ► **OPEB Actuarial.** ► Mr. Hellen said that they will not have a presentation by Mr. Sherman this year. He stated that the liability is around \$74 million. He noted that the Town is still above 90 percent to 95 percent of the Commonwealth on this. He stated that they are slow and steady. He thanked the Town Council and others for their support in the passing of his grandmother.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Pellegri stated that they met tonight and they went through five departments. She stated that they will meet again to go through the rest and bring it before the Town Council.
- b. **Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- c. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Hamblen stated that they will meet next week on January 25, 2023, at 6 PM.
- d. **GATRA Advisory Board.** ► Councilor Frongillo stated that the GATRA Advisory Board met today. He stated that they have new dispatching and management services. He stated that starting at the end of this month National Express will be taking over the services.

COMMENTS: ► Chair Mercer stated that at the last meeting, the Town Council identified four new subcommittees that they were putting together and identified the makeup of those committees. He stated that tonight he wanted to make note that he assigned the Town Council members to each of the committees. He explained that these committees are going to get going over the next several months. There are a couple of committees that need to get going right away for one reason or another. He stated that for some of the committees it will take time to build the committee. He stated that Mr. Hellen will bring forward recommendations that the Town Council will ratify.

► **Ad Hoc Subcommittee for Arts and Culture:** Councilor Frongillo, Chair; Councilor Cormier-Leger, Vice Chair; Councilor Hamblen, Clerk.

► **Master Plan Committee:** Councilor Jones, Chair; Councilor Frongillo, Vice Chair; Councilor Hamblen, Clerk.

► ***Davis Thayer Reuse Committee:*** Councilor Pellegri, Chair; Councilor Sheridan, Vice Chair; Councilor Cormier-Leger, Clerk. ► Chair Mercer stated that this committee has a timeframe and a report is to come back from the committee by the end of the year.

► ***Police Station Building Committee:*** Chair Mercer, Chair; Councilor Chandler, Vice Chair; Councilor Dellorco, Clerk.

► Chair Mercer stated that for the Town Council members on the Arts and Culture Subcommittee and the Davis Thayer Reuse Committee, he would like to meet with them and Mr. Hellen in the next week to 10 days to get those two committees off the ground.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: ► Councilor Cormier-Leger stated that he wanted to throw his support behind the Town or the police looking into the complaint on Mason Street. ► Councilor Pellegri stated her agreement with Councilor Cormier-Leger. She stated that she would like to look into the parking problem.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: ► Councilor Sheridan thanked the presenters of tonight's presentations. ► Councilor Frongillo noted that the office hours at the Senior Center are tomorrow. He stated that the Franklin Cultural District Committee is looking for local artists to put some color and history on the utility boxes. ► Councilor Hamblen stated that she wanted to reiterate what Councilor Sheridan said. She thanked Mr. Cantoreggi and the team for their work on stormwater. She thanked Ms. Hopkins and Ms. LaRose for their presentation. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger thanked all tonight's presenters. ► Councilor Chandler thanked the Senior Center presenters and staff. ► Councilor Pellegri invited everyone to the museum. She stated that there is a beautiful display on Franklin railroads. She thanked the Senior Center staff for their presentation. She stated that Mr. Jack Daddario passed away; he did a great deal for the town and served on committees and donated to the town. She offered her deepest sympathy. ► Councilor Jones stated that he feels the pain of the people on West Street. He reviewed that sometimes he parks in specific spaces on the street intentionally in order to slow people down on the street. He thanked the presenters for their presentation on the Senior Center. ► Councilor Dellorco thanked the presenters for their presentations. He wished his brother a happy birthday. ► Chair Mercer stated that the Senior Center presentation was magnificent. He thanked the stormwater presenters. He stated that the presentation on stormwater on Franklin TV will help get the information to all citizens. He offered his condolences to Mr. Hellen and his family and to the Daddario family.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURN: ► **MOTION** to Adjourn by Dellorco. **SECOND** by Jones. **No Discussion.** ► **VOTE:** Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary

This is how Nason Street looks

These are the two spaces
I would like removed

Dual
is played
out

Vehicle coming from west st

Vehicle coming from west st.



Removal of these two spaces
would make this area safer



