

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

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, October 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 (via Zoom), Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegrini, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: None. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Amy Frigulietti, Deputy 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. ► Chair Mercer stated that the Fire Chief asked him to remind everyone the Firefighters Memorial Service will be held at the fire station on Sunday at 9 AM. ► Chair Mercer stated that Councilor Frongillo will be attending the meeting remotely.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: ► Town Clerk Nancy Danello reminded all that the Tri-County election will be held on October 24 from 12 PM to 8 PM at the high school. She reviewed the voting times at the Town Clerk's office. She noted more information is available on the Town's website. She reviewed the local Franklin election will be held on November 7 from 6 AM to 8 PM at the high school. She reviewed other options for voting; the last day to register to vote for this election is October 28. ► Mr. Steve Sherlock, 10 Lawrence Drive, Franklin Matters, Franklin Public Radio, stated that additional information regarding the elections can be obtained from radio and podcasts. He reviewed that videos of the election candidates are available; his goal is to have video, audio, and transcript for as many of the candidate interviews as possible.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None.

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: ► *Police Department – Swearing In of New Patrol Officers: Officer Parker Luther, Officer Joseph Medina, Officer Robert Young, Officer Martin Zimei.* ► *Police Department – Introductions: Kallie Montagano, Co-Response Program Manager, Frankie, Therapy Dog.* ► Chief of Police Thomas Lynch addressed the Town Council and stated that they have been hiring. He reviewed the education, background, and career of Officer Parker Luther, Officer Joseph Medina, Officer Robert Young, and Officer Martin Zimei, and he reviewed the names of family members present who would be pinning the badge of each patrol officer. ► Town Clerk Nancy Danello performed the swearing in for each officer. ► Chief of Police Thomas Lynch explained the goal of the Co-Response Program to deliver mental health services, and he introduced Kallie Montagano, Co-Response Program Manager. He reviewed Ms. Montagano's background and career. He stated that he wanted to introduce the newest member of the Police's Department's Community Service Unit, Officer Frankie, Therapy Dog. He introduced Service Officer David Gove who also acts as the school resource officer at the Franklin schools. He reviewed the background of therapy dog Frankie.

Chair Mercer called a two-minute recess.

APPOINTMENTS: None.

HEARINGS – 7:00 PM: ► *New Section 19B(n) Farmer-Winery Pouring Permit and Approval of Robert Vozzella as the Manager - La Cantina Winery Company, Located at 341 Union Street (License Transaction #7a).* ► *New Section 19C(n) Farmer-Brewery Pouring Permit and Approval of Robert Vozzella as the Manager - La Cantina Winery Company, Located at 341 Union Street (License Transaction #7b).* ► *License Modification: Alteration of Premises to combine Section 19B(n) Farmer-Winery Pouring Permit and Section 19C(n) Farmer-Brewery Pouring Permit to create a Section 19H Farmer-Winery / Farmer-Brewery Pouring Permit and Approval of Robert Vozzella as the Manager - La Cantina Winery Company, Located at 341 Union Street (License Transaction #7c).*
 ► Chair Mercer stated that there are three public hearings, but they will combine them all into one.
 ► *Chair Mercer declared the three public hearings open.* ► Mr. Cerel explained that the Farmer Series of licenses is a relatively new creation that Mr. Robert Vozzella has taken advantage of. He said Mr. Vozzella started with a winery, added a brewery, and is also changing locations. He explained that the state bureaucracy is not simple, so there are multiple licenses. He said that generally, you cannot have more than one alcohol license on a premises. So, the legislature created a remediation for that. He said that with guidance from the ABCC, they are doing this with two separate transactions then combining into a third transaction. He said this will all allow Mr. Vozzella to transfer an existing business from one location to another. ► Town Council members congratulated Mr. Vozzella. ► Mr. Hellen stated that department heads affiliated with the liquor licensing have approved the application. ► Chair Mercer said congratulations to Mr. Vozzella. ► *Chair Mercer declared the three public hearings closed.*

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: ► *New Section 19B(n) Farmer-Winery Pouring Permit and Approval of Robert Vozzella as the Manager - La Cantina Winery Company, Located at 341 Union Street.*

► Councilor Jones read the license transaction. ► **MOTION to Approve** the request by La Cantina Winery Company for a New Section 19B(n) Farmer-Winery Pouring Permit and to approve Robert Vozzella as the manager by **Jones. SECOND by Dellorco. No discussion.** ► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Chandler-YES; Cormier-Leger-YES; Dellorco-YES; Frongillo-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegri-YES; Sheridan-YES. ► **VOTE:** Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.

► *New Section 19C(n) Farmer-Brewery Pouring Permit and Approval of Robert Vozzella as the Manager - La Cantina Winery Company, Located at 341 Union Street.* ► Councilor Jones read the license transaction. ► **MOTION to Approve** the request by La Cantina Winery Company for a New Section 19C(n) Farmer-Brewery Pouring Permit and to approve Robert Vozzella as the manager by **Jones. SECOND by Dellorco. No discussion.** ► **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Chandler-YES; Cormier-Leger-YES; Dellorco-YES; Frongillo-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegri-YES; Sheridan-YES. ► **VOTE:** Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.

► *License Modification: Alteration of Premises to combine Section 19B(n) Farmer-Winery Pouring Permit and Section 19C(n) Farmer-Brewery Pouring Permit to create a Section 19H Farmer-Winery / Farmer-Brewery Pouring Permit and Approval of Robert Vozzella as the Manager - La Cantina Winery Company, Located at 341 Union Street.* ► Councilor Jones read the license transaction.

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PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: ► *Discussion: SAFE Coalition - Jennifer Knight-Levine, SAFE Coalition CEO & Co-Founder.* ► Mr. Hellen noted that he would speak to the SAFE Coalition's efforts

relative to the migrant housing issues. ► Ms. Knight-Levine shared what the SAFE Coalition has done since the last time she presented to the Town Council. She discussed funding resources. She said the Town Council's decision to provide funding to the folks in this community has allowed countless individuals, children, and families to get resources that they would have not had otherwise. She said their organization has grown and developed and applied for other grants that would have not been an option for them. She said the SAFE Coalition used to be in Norfolk, but they wanted to get back to Franklin. She said that in March, they opened their new space in Franklin. She said there are lots of kids coming to after school programming. She discussed the new programming available. She discussed their three divisions: adolescent wellness, family recovery, and collaborative care. She provided descriptions of the various programs offered. She discussed that they work with three court systems, and they try to meet the needs of the community. She explained some of the needs addressed such as diapers, care seats, and Narcan. She discussed the programs that allow wellness of the whole family. She provided statistics of the Up in Smoke substance use diversion program. She explained that they have good relationships with the Franklin Public Schools. She shared statistics regarding the overall programming that they have done in Franklin. She said they are thankful for all the support and guidance given to them. She said the mission of SAFE has always been to listen to the needs of the community and develop resources from there. She said that while SAFE started as a substance use and mental health organization, the background of many of the people at SAFE has professionally been working on the border and working with migrant populations. She said that so when we found out that there were new folks coming to the community, one of our first calls was to Mr. Hellen to say it is really early and we are sure no one knows what is going on, but we are here to help. She said it has been unbelievable. She explained how the staff is working with those at the hotel and meeting with families and assessing needs and trying to meet those needs. She provided a story of a migrant family's experience. She said she is hoping that we do not lose the humanity that is within all of us. She said she hopes we can honor those who are here in a dignified and respectful way even though there are unbelievable challenges ahead of us. She said she is thankful to live in this town. She said this is not beyond any of us to figure this out. ► Chair Mercer said it is great what the SAFE Coalition has been able to do since its inception to now. ► Town Council members asked questions and made comments. ► Councilor Dellorco noted he was a co-founder of SAFE and noted how it has grown. He shared an example of how tremendous the SAFE Coalition is and how they provide services to help people. ► Town Council members thanked Ms. Knight-Levine and the SAFE Coalition for all they do. ► Ms. Knight-Levine discussed the use of cannabis and the new higher levels of potency in cannabis. She thanked the Town Council members for their support. ► Chair Mercer said the statistics Ms. Knight-Levine alluded to earlier in the presentation are mind-boggling. He said they are lucky to have SAFE in the community. He thanked Ms. Knight-Levine and SAFE for all they do.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

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

- a. **Resolution 23-57: Gift Acceptance - Veterans' Services Department (\$3,205) (Motion to Approve Resolution 23-57 - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 23-57: Gift Acceptance - Veterans' Services Department (\$3,205) by Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen thanked the donors for their generosity. ► Chair Mercer confirmed the total contribution is \$3,205. He thanked the donors for their generous contributions. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Chandler-YES; Cormier-Leger-YES; Dellorco-YES; Frongillo-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES; Sheridan-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: ► **Migrant Housing Update.** ► Mr. Hellen said that Friday, October 20, from 2 PM to 5 PM, there will be an open house at Davis-Thayer. There will be a second open house on Saturday from 10 AM to 2 PM. He said there is an opportunity to obtain one of the last

remaining desks and chairs from the school. He said there will be many people staffing the open house including Town Council members and a police officer. He said that regarding the migrant housing update, 89 of the 100 rooms are filled. He said there are just under 300 people living there now and of that about 60 school-age children. He said the school superintendent and others have been working to deal with the vaccination requirements, background checks, and whatever else they have to do to enroll children. He said he often receives the question as to whether the children of migrant families are susceptible to the same requirements as all other children. He said the short answer is yes. He said he expects by the end of the month the hotel will be full. He noted the DPH arrived and are onsite. He said they have been in touch with the Board of Health. He said they are working with infectious disease issues and other issues. He praised the community for their support and generosity. He explained that some other communities are doing nothing. He noted and thanked organizations in this community helping out as well as Town departments that are working to help out. He thanked the community for not overreacting. He noted the great contribution of Ms. Knight-Levine. He discussed the importance of assessing the needs of the individuals living there. He said that regarding public safety, the vast majority of call are hang-ups. Only about a half dozen calls have been emergencies where folks have been transported to the hospital. He said those who went to the hospital are doing well. He addressed Facebook. He said he is getting text messages and screenshots from members of the community. He said Facebook is batting 0 for 75. He said no hits. He said what we are reading on that is not true. He said that he is asking the Chief of Police to respond to those screenshots and calls that he is getting. He said that he cannot live with himself if he knows of something and did not tell anyone, but our public safety personnel are going over and doing routing checking and he has yet to find one comment on Facebook that he has found to be true. He said we have to be cautious and careful as a community to not take the bait quick and think that something there is true. He said that if people feel there is an emergency, people need to call the Police Department or 911. He conveyed to the community that they have to be very careful what they are reading on Facebook.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee. None.**
- b. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► Councilor Hamblen said they met before this meeting tonight. She said they discussed home occupation bylaw and doing a review of that. She said they discussed 40R zoning bylaw and possible district overlays. She said they will meet again on November 1 before the next Town Council meeting.
- c. **Budget Subcommittee. None.**
- d. **Master Plan Update Committee.** ► Councilor Jones said the next scheduled meeting is October 25 at 6:30 PM; they have a busy schedule.
- e. **Davis-Thayer Building Reuse Advisory Committee.** ► Councilor Pellegri stated that on Friday and Saturday they will have the open houses at the Davis-Thayer. She said everyone is invited to the open houses. She noted the Fire Station open house on Saturday. She said she thinks the committee came up with some good ideas. She said that they are going to put out an expression of interest for the school; she said that would be anyone who has an interest for a use for the school. She said that people on the committee will be wearing name tags at the open houses.
- f. **Police Station Building Committee. None.**
- g. **GATRA Advisory Board. None.**

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: ► Councilor Chandler said the custodian works very hard, but his cart is very loud. He asked if new wheels could be obtained.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: ► Councilor Sheridan said that he wanted to second everything Mr. Hellen said about the migrant situation. ► Councilor Hamblen thanked Mr. Alan Earls and Mr. Jeff Livingstone for organizing the candidates' nights. She thanked everyone who showed up. She said to remember that Friday if it is not raining is the second to last Farmers Market. She noted office hours tomorrow morning

at the Senior Center at 8:30 AM. She said have a safe Halloween. ► Councilor Pellegri said she went to Senator Rausch's event the other night, and there were some things that were very interesting and a couple of things that she did not agree with. She said one being that it was asked about work permits for the migrants and it was just they are working on it and they cannot do anything. She said she thinks that is a shame as there are people who are looking for jobs. She said what are we showing them here in America that we do not care if you work or not; that does not make sense. She said she thinks they would be very happy to do some work. She said she is curious to know how they get spending money and asked if that is the money that is given to them from the State. ► Mr. Hellen said that when you go through a welcoming center, which there is one in Quincy, they give a stipend for basic needs and money. He said people have to understand that the federal government is not doing anything about this. He said there is no money coming in from the federal government, and there is a bottleneck of worker permit applications that could be months or years. He said he does not think Congress is doing anything about this soon. He said that Governor Healy has made an announcement that they have run out of money and space. He said that the State is trying to develop their own worker training program. ► Councilor Pellegri asked if the migrants will be at the Best Western for another year. ► Mr. Hellen said the lease goes through June 30, 2024. He said the migrants can move about wherever they want to go. He explained that this is temporary housing. ► Councilor Pellegri said she thinks the State is very behind and they have to step up as to what is happening. She said that regarding the people at the hotel, perhaps they may be able to start some type of buddy system; there may be people in the community who would like to take them out for the day, invite them over for dinner. She said that whether they speak English very well or not at all, we are going to be able to converse with them just by our tone, our movements, and whatever, but she thinks it would be something good to do. She said we need to work with Representative Roy. She said think about it people. She said also if there are lists of items that they need, you know they should send it out to us. She said maybe adopt a family and see what they need. She said to get in touch with the Board of Health or Town Administrator's office. ► Councilor Frongillo said the office hours tomorrow were already mentioned. He said he just got back from travel and he never turns off his Town Council member brain. He said he was around Denmark and Sweden and they were actively making choices to prioritize the walkability and bike-ability of communities and it enabled more people and he thinks we have the opportunity to promote it. He said it was refreshing to see that cold winters are not an impediment to accessible mobility around even a small town. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger said it was an honor to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Red Brick Schoolhouse; he thanked everyone and the CPA for the opportunity. He said he is happy the haunted house tradition is continuing in the community; he said he thinks there are about 40 participating homes. He said Trunk-or-Treat is happening on October 29 from 4 PM to 7 PM at the high school and is sponsored by the Lions. He said that they still have a missing teenager in Franklin: Jazlyn Rodrigues age 15. He asked that if anyone has information, contact the Police Department. ► Councilor Chandler thanked Mr. Hellen for his great update. He said he received an email about a sign. He said that his role is not to order the Town Administrator to do anything. He said that if you have an issue, the Town Council members can encourage that the administration provide a call back to get things resolved. He said the Town Council does not order the administration to do something; he said they have faith in what the Town administration does. He said residents should get a call back. He said Mr. Hellen always says his door is open. ► Councilor Jones said he is happy to be here tonight; he had Covid last week and has now tested negative. He told everyone to be careful. ► Councilor Dellorco thanked the DPW for the Touch-a-Truck event. He said he agreed with Mr. Hellen about some of the incorrect reports about the migrant housing. ► Chair Mercer thanked the Chief of Police regarding the new patrol officers, meeting Ms. Kallie Montagano, and bringing in Therapy Dog Frankie. He said they are all good additions to the department. He thanked Ms. Knight-Levine and the SAFE team. He asked the community that if they see people from the SAFE Coalition to say thanks. He said Touch-a-Truck was great. He apologized to the FISH organization as they had their dinner tonight and he was not able to attend; he said that a proclamation was provided to the organization.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Dellorco. SECOND by Hamblen. No discussion. ► ROLL CALL VOTE: Chandler-YES; Cormier-Leger-YES; Dellorco-YES; Frongillo-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES; Sheridan-YES. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary