

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 29, 2020**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, July 29, 2020, at the Municipal Building, 2nd Floor, Council Chambers, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA; residents could attend and participate via the Zoom Platform. Councilors present: Andrew Bissanti, Brian Chandler, Robert Dellorco, Eamon McCarthy Earls, Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Matthew Kelly, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegrini. Councilors absent: None. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney; Chrissy Whelton, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

CALL TO ORDER: ► Chair Mercer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He called for a moment of silence and all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: ► Chair Mercer stated, as posted on the agenda, the public will not be permitted to enter the building or participate in person. Only pre-approved participants on the meeting agenda will be allowed to enter the building and participate in person. Residents can attend and participate via the “ZOOM” Platform. Due to the continued concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus and Governor Baker’s declared State of Emergency, we will be conducting a remote/virtual Town Council meeting for all public access and participation. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement and comply with open meeting law regulations, citizens will be able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number or citizens can participate by clicking on the link provided on the agenda. The provided link and phone number will be active for the duration of the meeting for citizens to ask questions/voice concerns. If residents are just interested in watching the meeting, it will also be live-streamed by Franklin TV and shown on Comcast Channel 11 and Verizon Channel 29. This meeting is being recorded by *Franklin TV* and may also be recorded by others.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *May 6, 2020; May 20, 2020; June 3, 2020; and June 17, 2020.*

► *May 6, 2020.* ► **MOTION to Approve the May 6, 2020 meeting minutes by Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. No Discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0, Abstain-1.** (Ms. Pellegrini abstained.) ► *May 20, 2020.* ► **MOTION to Approve the May 20, 2020 meeting minutes by Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. No Discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► *June 3, 2020.* ► **MOTION to Approve the June 3, 2020 meeting minutes by Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. No Discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► *June 17, 2020.* ► **MOTION to Approve the June 17, 2020 meeting minutes by Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. No Discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: None.

APPOINTMENTS: ► *Board & Committee Appointments - Agricultural Commission: Charles J. (CJ) Koshivas; Conservation Commission: Patrick Gallagher; Cultural Council: Joni Magee; and Cultural Council: Pushpa Jangareddi.* ► Mr. Jones read the appointments. ► **MOTION to Ratify the appointment by the Town Administrator of Charles J. (CJ) Koshivas to serve as an associate member of the Franklin Agricultural Commission by Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen reviewed Mr. Koshivas’ background. ► Ms. Hamblen noted that Fairmount Fruit Farm is 100 years old. ► Ms. Hamblen and Mr. Earls stated Mr. Koshivas will be a great addition to the Agricultural Commission. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► **MOTION to Ratify the appointment by the Town Administrator of Patrick Gallagher to serve as a member of the Franklin Conservation Commission by**

Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. Discussion: ► Mr. Hellen reviewed Mr. Gallagher’s interest in this position. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► **MOTION to Ratify** the appointment by the Town Administrator of Joni Magee to serve as member of the Franklin Cultural Council by **Jones. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that with tonight’s two appointments to the Cultural Council, two vacant seats will still remain. ► Mr. Bissanti and Mr. Jones applauded the quality of the candidates being appointed tonight and thanked them for their participation. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► **MOTION to Ratify** the appointment by the Town Administrator of Pushpa Jangareddi to serve as a member of the Franklin Cultural Council by **Jones. SECOND by Hamblen. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen thanked Ms. Jangareddi. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

HEARINGS: None.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: None.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: ► *Town of Franklin Market Study & Economic Profile.* ► Mr. Hellen stated Mr. Bryan Taberner, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Mr. Raul Gonzalez, Senior Planner of Metropolitan Area Planning Council, will provide a presentation on this study which was grant funded. This report is a profile of the Town and reviews some of the strengths and weaknesses of the community. The goal is to move this back to the EDC to look at recommendations in the report. He noted that staff believes there are some items they already do and some they believe would be good to initiate. ► Mr. Taberner thanked Mr. Gonzalez as well as Pandora Carlucci, Lisa Piana, Dean College, and Nancy Schoen, for their work and assistance on the project. ► Mr. Gonzalez narrated a slideshow presentation of the Market Analysis and Market Position Summary. He stated that MAPC is the regional planning agency serving the people who live and work in the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston. He stated the deliverables for this study included the development of a market analysis of the Town of Franklin, development of a market position summary for the Town and for the three key commercial districts, and development of a business recruitment and retention strategy for use by Franklin’s DPCD, FCD, and FDP. He noted that it is possible that many of the assumptions and recommendations in the study will not reflect the aftermath of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. He reviewed the Franklin market analysis study activities done such as community engagement, a survey, and research to gather data for the report. He discussed the largest and smallest employers, number of businesses, and highest and lowest paying firms in Franklin. The biggest employer in 2018 is the Town of Franklin and next being Dell/EMC and Garelick Farms before filing for bankruptcy in 2019. He reviewed the commuter destination analysis and stated people who work in Franklin come from various places; people who live in Franklin generally work outside of Town. He reviewed some of the questions asked during the roundtable discussions and the results of the economic development survey. He stated that through this process, a list of eleven recommendations was created. The top three included create guidelines for business attraction and expansion; update the Town’s website and digital marketing; and promote existing cultural, open space, and recreation amenities. He reviewed the Economic Development Administration available funding opportunities and stated that MAPC will work with the Town on these applications. ► Town Council members asked questions and commented on the study; they thanked Mr. Taberner and Mr. Gonzalez for their hard work on the project. ► Mr. Gonzalez stated that one of the goals is to do outreach to the industrial parks to encourage workers to spend money on the many amenities offered in the Town. He discussed upcoming webinars regarding furthering racial equity in municipalities. ► Mr. Hellen stated the market study document is available on the Town’s website. ► Chair Mercer asked if any funding is available to go back into the study and add in the COVID-19 information. ► Mr. Gonzalez stated he would provide contact information regarding possible technical assistance funding opportunities to add the COVID-19 piece. ► Chair Mercer encouraged the public to attend the upcoming EDC meetings for discussion and comment on the report. ► Mr. Steve Sherlock, Franklin Matters, stated

there is an EDC meeting tomorrow night at 6 PM. ► Mr. Hellen noted the EDC meetings are for discussion purposes.

► ***PACE Program Presentation: MassDevelopment.*** ► Mr. Hellen stated this is the first time MassDevelopment has come to a Franklin Town Council meeting. He noted PACE is a program that MassDevelopment offers everyone in the community for clean energy. He noted the first Legislation for Action item on tonight’s agenda regards authorization to participate in the Massachusetts Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program. ► Mr. Taberner noted that in April, representatives from MassDevelopment met with Town staff to introduce the PACE Program. He said that PACE is an important economic development tool. Energy costs are substantial in New England states, and there are not many incentives that MA towns can use to bring businesses to town. He recommended the Town participate in the PACE Program. ► Ms. Wendy O’Malley, PACE Program Manager, narrated a slideshow presentation. She provided an overview of the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program which will stimulate economic growth. It will allow business owners to finance energy improvements for longer terms and allow them to invest in their buildings to include more comprehensive improvements. PACE financing is repaid via a betterment assessment on a property’s tax bill. Twenty-two other states have already adopted PACE programs. She stated that existing commercial/industrial, not-for-profit, and multifamily (5 units or more) buildings are eligible properties for this program. She reviewed the key elements required by the property owner for PACE Massachusetts. She stated there is no maximum financing cost. She highlighted the financing steps regarding the application, review process, and financing documents. She noted the lien placed on the property is assigned to MassDevelopment who will give it to the appropriate Capital Provider; the lien is not given to the municipality. ► Town Council members asked questions about the program and thanked Ms. O’Malley for her presentation. ► Ms. O’Malley stated she believes the structure created does not put any risk on the municipalities; it is financing between the property owner and a third-party. It will encourage investment and promote clean energy initiatives. She confirmed the Town is not charged a fee to participate in the program.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- b. **Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- c. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► EDC will be meeting tomorrow night.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

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

- a. ***Resolution 20-42: Authorization to Participate in the Massachusetts Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE Massachusetts) (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-42-Majority Vote).*** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 20-42: Authorization to Participate in the Massachusetts Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE Massachusetts) by Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated he hopes this is approved. ► Ms. Pellegri stated it will be more work for the Treasurer/Collector’s department to do the betterment charges and follow up on these properties if they do not pay it; she asked what the benefit to the Town is. ► Mr. Hellen stated that with 12,000 properties in Town, he does not believe this will be a huge burden to the department; for example, if 10 properties took advantage of this and only one was in default. A lot of businesses would take advantage of clean energy. It is a benefit to businesses, so it is a benefit to the Town. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

- b. Resolution 20-43: Gift Acceptance - Franklin Police Department, \$250 (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-43 - Majority Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 20-43: Gift Acceptance - Franklin Police Department, \$250 by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen thanked everyone for their donations and continued commitment. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- c. Resolution 20-44: Gift Acceptance - Franklin Historical Museum (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-44 - Majority Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 20-44: Gift Acceptance - Franklin Historical Museum by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen and Town Council members thanked Mr. Johnson for his generous donations. ► Ms. Pellegrini stated this donation is so valuable that there will have to be a security system and alarm installed in the Historical Museum, and there will have to be a glass enclosure to look into the room ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- d. Resolution 20-45: Easement - Overhead System (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-45 - Two Thirds Majority Roll Call Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 20-45: Easement - Overhead System by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated Legislation for Action items d. and e. are both related to the water treatment plant off Grove Street. These easements are required to be filed with National Grid to connect the electricity to the water treatment plan. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Dellorco-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- e. Resolution 20-46: Easement - Underground Electrical Distribution System (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-46 – Two-Thirds Majority Roll Call Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 20-46: Easement - Underground Electrical Distribution System by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated this is the same discussion as for the previous item. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Dellorco-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- f. Resolution 20-47: Solid Waste Prior Year Bill (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-47 - Two Thirds Majority Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 20-47: Solid Waste Prior Year Bill by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated this is a bill for the solid waste enterprise fund that came in after the end of the fiscal year; this is the final bill to close out FY20. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- g. Resolution 20-48: Gift Acceptance - Franklin Fire Department, \$50 (Motion to Approve Resolution 20-48 - Majority Vote).** ► Mr. Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve** Resolution 20-48: Gift Acceptance - Franklin Fire Department, \$50 by **Dellorco. SECOND** by **Kelly. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen thanked the Franklin Mom’s Club for their continued support. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**
- h. Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-858: Zoning Map Changes on or Near Beaver and Oak Streets - Referral to the Planning Board (Motion to Refer Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-853 to the Planning Board - Majority Vote).** ► **MOTION to Waive** the reading by **Kelly. SECOND** by **Dellorco. No Discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.** ► **MOTION to Refer** Zoning Bylaw Amendment 20-858: Zoning Map Changes on or Near Beaver and Oak Streets to the Planning Board

by **Dellorco**. **SECOND** by **Kelly**. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated this is long-standing project regarding lot line changes. ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

- i. Bylaw Amendment 20-855: Chapter 82, Water Fee Increase - Second Reading (Motion to Adopt Bylaw Amendment 20-855 - Majority Roll Call Vote).* ► Mr. Jones read the bylaw amendment. ► **MOTION to Adopt** Bylaw Amendment 20-855: Chapter 82, Water Fee Increase by **Dellorco**. **SECOND** by **Kelly**. **Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated this is the second and final vote required on the water service fees. The main reason for this fee increase is the water treatment plant and the reconstruction of two wells. He stated that consideration of a sewer rate increase as proposed earlier this year has been removed. This will save residents three percent on their sewer bills in FY21. The reason is the Charles River Pollution Control District (CRPCD) was able to lower Franklin's assessment significantly. ► Mr. Jones asked about current water usage in Franklin. ► Mr. Brutus Cantoreggi, Director of Public Works, stated residents responded well to the water ban. He noted he would be meeting with the consulting engineer of the Beaver Street Interceptor and anticipating bring options to the Town Council in September/October. ► Mr. Kelly stated that although he sees the need, he does not see raising water rates for residents during a pandemic. He is against this at this time and would be willing to explore it again in September. ► Mr. Bissanti confirmed that the wells are regulated by the State and the water conservation is mandated by the State. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated the State has restrictions on how much water can be taken from the wells per day. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed the reasons for the proposed rate increase as outlined in his memo to the Town Council. The increase in the water rates is an investment in the Town's infrastructure. He noted the reconstruction of the two wells will increase capacity of the wells. ► Chair Mercer confirmed that if the water rates are not raised, the Town does not have the funding to finish the project. ► Town Council members asked questions and provided comments. ► Mr. Hellen noted that the increase would add approximately \$40 annually to residents' bills and generate approximately \$500,000. ► Mr. Cantoreggi explained that water is a use and citizens can regulate their use. He noted that outdoor watering greatly increases use. ► Chair Mercer reiterated that no one wants to raise any fee or tax; however, reality is that if the fee is not raised, the Town will be in default and cannot finish the project. ► **ROLL CALL VOTE: Bissanti-YES; Chandler-YES; Dellorco-YES; Earls-YES; Hamblen-YES; Jones-YES; Kelly-YES; Mercer-YES; Pellegrini-YES.** ► **VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0.**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: ► **COVID-19 Update.** ► Mr. Hellen stated there are three active cases in Franklin; for the last seven weeks there have been less than 10 active cases in the community. He stated this community has done a great job. ► He reviewed that all inspectional services have been fully opened. The Building Department has collected approximately \$65,000 in revenue. The Assessor's Department and Board of Health have also returned fully to inspections. Recreational basketball started a few weeks ago. Concerts on the Common started last Friday. He announced that Franklin was part of a six-town consortium that was awarded \$680,000 which will give the Town for Franklin almost \$100,000 for small businesses that have fewer than five employees to apply for grants. By joining together with other towns, Franklin was able to get more resources. ► He stated that FY20 revenues came in at 102 percent of budgeted. He congratulated Ms. Erin Rogers, future Senior Center Director, for graduating from leadership training. He thanked the Franklin Fire Department on their wonderful pinning ceremony. He thanked Franklin TV for all the work they have done with the Zoom, outdoor, and in-person meetings.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: ► Mr. Jones asked about the Town's maintenance and obligations regarding private ways in Town. ► Mr. Hellen said the next round of street acceptances is upcoming. He has talked to the residents of Farrington.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: ► Mr. Chandler said people are happy with the nets at the high school. He thanked Franklin TV for their work. ► Ms. Hamblen thanked everyone at the Fire Department for the ceremony. She thanked Franklin TV for this hybrid meeting with both in-person and Zoom. ► Ms. Pellegrini stated the Fire Department pinning ceremony was great. She encouraged everyone to continue to wear masks. She thanked Franklin TV. ► Mr. Bissanti thanked the citizens for all they have done. ► Mr. Kelly stated the Fire Department ceremony was great. He thanked Franklin TV for their hard work. He stated that he hopes the Zoom access part of the meetings will continue as it gives citizens the opportunity to comment and be involved. ► Mr. Jones gave congratulations to all in the Fire Department and the Police Department for doing a great job. He thanked the School Committee and School Department for the hard work they have been putting in to figure out how to get the children back to school. He thanked Franklin TV. ► Mr. Dellorco thanked the Fire Department and said that the Town Council picked a great Fire Chief. He thanked Franklin TV. ► Chair Mercer apologized to the Town for last week's non-meeting as there were technical difficulties. He thanked Franklin TV for solving the issues. He noted that possibly the Zoom calls during meetings can be continued to allow citizen engagement. He thanked Franklin citizens for maintaining low COVID-19 numbers. He stated the Franklin Fire Department pinning ceremony was a wonderful event. He thanked the Fire Department for their hard work in making the department better.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURN: ► MOTION to Adjourn by Dellorco. SECOND by Kelly. No Discussion. ► VOTE: Yes-9, No-0, Absent-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary