

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
January 19, 2022**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2022, at the Municipal Building, 2nd Floor, Council Chambers, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, MA. Councilors present: Brian Chandler, Theodore Cormier-Leger, Cobi Frongillo, Melanie Hamblen, Glenn Jones, Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegri, Patrick Sheridan. Councilors absent: Robert Dellorco. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Mark Cerel, Town Attorney; Julie McCann, Executive Assistant.

**CALL TO ORDER:** ► Chair Mercer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Chair Mercer called for a moment of silence dedicated to former Town Council member Andrew Bissanti. All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** ► Chair Mercer reviewed the following as posted on the agenda. A Note to Residents: All citizens are now welcome to attend public board and committee meetings in person. Additionally, in an effort to maximize citizen engagement opportunities, citizens will be able to continue to participate remotely via phone or Zoom. The meetings will also be live-streamed by Franklin TV and shown on Comcast Channel 11 and Verizon Channel 29. He stated that this meeting is being recorded by Franklin TV and may also be recorded by others. He stated that Councilor Dellorco will not be in attendance at tonight's meeting.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** ► *December 15, 2021 and January 5, 2022.* ► **MOTION to Approve** the December 15, 2021 meeting minutes by **Hamblen**. **SECOND** by **Jones**. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.** ► **MOTION to Approve** the January 5, 2022 meeting minutes by **Hamblen**. **SECOND** by **Jones**. **No discussion.** ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS:** ► *Police Department: Retirement – Sergeant Brian Johnson.* ► Police Chief Thomas Lynch recognized Sergeant Brian Johnson regarding his retirement in October 2021. He reviewed Sergeant Johnson's background and career. He thanked Sergeant Johnson for his dedicated service. He presented Sergeant Johnson with a commemorative plaque and flag box. ► Representative Jeff Roy read aloud a proclamation for Sergeant Johnson from the House of Representatives honoring Sergeant Johnson on his retirement. ► Councilor Pellegri on behalf of the Town Council read aloud a proclamation for Sergeant Johnson honoring Sergeant Johnson on his retirement. ► Sergeant Johnson thanked all for honoring him on his retirement.

► *Police Department: Retirement - Patrol Officer Rick Grover.* ► Police Chief Thomas Lynch recognized Patrol Officer Rick Grover regarding his retirement in December 2021. He reviewed Patrol Officer Grover's background and career. He thanked Patrol Officer Grover for his dedicated service. He presented Patrol Officer Grover with a commemorative plaque and flag box. ► Representative Jeff Roy read aloud a proclamation for Patrol Officer Grover from the House of Representatives honoring Patrol Officer Grover on his retirement. ► Councilor Chandler on behalf of the Town Council read aloud a proclamation for Patrol Officer Grover honoring Patrol Officer Grover on his retirement. ► Patrol Officer Grover thanked all for honoring him on his retirement.

► **Police Department: Moving On - Kallie Montagano, Clinical Social Worker.** ► Police Chief Thomas Lynch recognized Kallie Montagano, Clinical Social Worker, as she is moving on. He reviewed Ms. Montagano's background and career. He thanked Ms. Montagano for her dedicated service. He presented Ms. Montagano with a commemorative plaque. ► Ms. Montagano stated that it was a privilege to work for the Town of Franklin; she thanked all.

*Chair Mercer declared a two-minute recess.*

**APPOINTMENTS: None.**

**HEARINGS: None.**

**LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: None.**

**PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: ► FY23 Department of Public Works Budget & Enterprise Fund Preview - Brutus Cantoreggi, Director of Public Works.** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this presentation is the DPW's budget preview. ► Mr. Cantoreggi introduced his team members who were present at the meeting: Water and Sewer Superintendent Doug Martin; Highway & Grounds Superintendent Carlos Rebelo; Stormwater & Environmental Affairs Superintendent Derek Adams; Town Engineer Michael Maglio; Admin & Budget Manager Kathy Mooradd; Assistant Town Engineer Brooke Cotta; Assistant Highway & Grounds Superintendent Tony Brunetta; Assistant Admin & Budget Manager Roseanne Szczepanowski; GIS Coordinator Kate Sjoberg (via Zoom); and GIS Specialist Danica Cucchi. Mr. Cantoreggi stated that the numbers shown during tonight's presentation are proposed numbers; they have not yet been vetted by the FinCom. He reviewed his slideshow presentation which was provided in the Town Council's meeting packet. He reviewed Franklin statistics including 33,500 population, 290 lane-miles of roadway, and 27 sq. miles of land. He reviewed the Operating Budget which includes the General Fund of \$6,128,974 and Utilities of \$14,467,693 for a total of \$20,596,667. There are seven divisions with 60-plus employees. He stated that going forward, he projects a Capital Budget of approximately \$5 million. He highlighted the work of each division as listed on his slides. He reviewed the Administration Division's Operating Budget General Fund of \$442,139; Grounds Division Operating Budget General Fund of \$1,108,569; Highway Division Operating Budget General Fund of \$1,406,237; Central Motors Operating Budget General Fund of \$918,835; Snow and Ice Operating Budget General Fund of \$1,056,500; Stormwater Division/Utility Operating Budget General Fund of \$976,166; Solid Waste and Recycling Utility Operating Budget Utility of \$2,471,858.00 and General Fund of \$178,537; Wastewater Utility Operating Budget Utility of \$4,568,020; Drinking Water Utility Operating Budget Utility of \$6,675,054. He reviewed funding and cost concerns including expenses versus personnel costs which are approximately 60 percent of expenses; seven percent inflation; volatility in product costs such as salt and gas; new funding/grants such as ARPA, Building America, and Grove Street; procurement and bidding uncertainty; and availability of materials, products, and parts. He reviewed staffing and worker concerns including increased responsibilities, reduced staff, changing workforce, license requirements, and contractors/outsourcing. He noted that the collective bargaining contract ends June 30, 2022. He reviewed regulatory concerns including drinking water quality and the MS4 permit. He reviewed control plan cost impacts, forecasting, stabilization, and planning to meet permit requirements. He stated that in summary these issues are not going away. He reviewed that they have incorporated cost-effective measures which save money in the long run. ► Town Council members asked questions, thanked Mr. Cantoreggi for the presentation, and gave praise to the work done by the DPW Department. ► Councilor Frongillo noted the backlog in repairs and stated that expenses are growing faster than money available to pay for it. He reviewed his opinion of why and how the Town got to this point. ► In response to questions

and comments, Mr. Cantoreggi stated that urban sprawl costs money. He agreed that a developer meets the requirements when doing a subdivision, but there is no long-term maintenance for that. He noted that residents expect a lot. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger noted a resident who could not get out of her driveway because the road was flooded; he thanked the DPW for their incredible response to this situation. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that they were able to rectify the immediate road flooding problem; he will investigate the situation further. He discussed road repairs and stated that they were looking at the numbers to do sections of King Street and Jordan Road. He stated that it depends on Free Cash; there is nothing directly in the budget. ► Mr. Hellen explained that road construction was funded based on the hotel tax; however, starting two years ago that money does not come in near to what it used to. He stated that there may be an opportunity to use some of the federal money for this; he is looking into it. ► Councilor Chandler asked about the weeds on the sides of the roads. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that there is a specialized license required for a person to spray weeds. He stated that \$30,000 per year for road weeds was cut for stormwater. As well, there are environmental concerns regarding the use of weed killer. He stated that even if he sends someone out with a weed whacker, the weeds will grow back. ► Councilor Hamblen asked about the amount of impervious surface in Franklin. ► Mr. Cantoreggi confirmed impervious is about 20 percent. He reviewed the MS4 stormwater permit. He stated that during the first five years it requires investigation; then, they have to come up with a plan and start doing things to fix it. ► Mr. Hellen reviewed a court case regarding impact fees that Franklin was involved in but lost. Therefore, in Massachusetts, impact fees for developers are not an option. He mentioned that there was an override on the ballot in 2014 for \$1.5 million for roads only; however, it failed almost 2 to 1. He stated that funding is not easy. He stated that he appreciates the kind words and acknowledgement as the DPW does an incredible job. He stated that the residents are looking to the people in this room to solve the DPW's financial problems. ► Chair Mercer asked if the two water treatment plants can handle all the wells. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated probably for a short period of time, but for sustainability and long term, no. ► Chair Mercer asked about the waste/trash system and lack of drivers. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated people have to be a little more flexible. He explained that there is a driver and equipment shortage. ► Chair Mercer asked about grants and federal funding. He stated that there are a lot of opportunities out there. He asked if they have enough and right staff to be applying for the grants and additional funding options, and if not, they should be looking for that. ► Mr. Cantoreggi stated that it is in his budget for additional engineering for oversight.

#### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. **Capital Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- b. **Budget Subcommittee.** ► None.
- c. **Economic Development Subcommittee.** ► None.

#### **LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:**

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

- a. **Resolution 22-04: Adoption of 2022-2023 Town Council Goals (Motion to Approve Resolution 22-04 - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 22-04: Adoption of 2022-2023 Town Council Goals by Hamblen. SECOND by Chandler.**  
**Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen stated that this is the formal vote on the goals which were discussed at the last Town Council meeting on January 5, 2022. ► Councilor Pellegrini asked if the Brick School and Davis Thayer could be added to presentations/discussions. ► Mr. Hellen stated that both are already on the list. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that he was happy to see an investigation of a net zero emissions plan added to the goals. He requested discussion of a more equitable taxation system.

► Mr. Justin Bates, 8 Longfellow Drive, stated that he supports the draft language under General Government which makes Franklin accountable for becoming a net zero community. He stated that this is a chance for Franklin to step up and take the lead; this is a way to mitigate the climate disaster.

► Mr. Edward McIntyre, 34 Jefferson Road, stated that he supports the draft language under General Government in the Town Goal's document. This makes Franklin accountable for Franklin becoming a net zero community. He stated that getting to net zero usually comes from a combination of building efficiencies, improving building codes, local clean energy production, and the purchase of clean energy from other places. He discussed indoor air quality. He stated that we must make sure buildings are transformed from polluters to protectors of our health. ► Mr. Michael Rein, 120 Eric Drive, thanked Councilor Frongillo for emphasizing the net zero language; he stated that he is in full agreement and asks for the Town Council's full support. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

- b. Resolution 22-05: FY22 Transfer of MECC Appropriation (Motion to Approve Resolution 22-05 - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 22-05: FY22 Transfer of MECC Appropriation by Hamblen. SECOND by Cormier-Leger. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen reviewed that the state's 911 department has been awarding the MECC grants for a five-year cycle due to the merger with the regional district unit in Mendon. As a result, the Town created a stabilization fund in order to save funds to help fund the MECC assessment in FY25 when the Town will be due to pay the entire assessment charge again. This deposit will get the stabilization account to just under \$1,000,000 for that transition. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**
- c. Resolution 22-06: Gift Acceptance - Senior Center (\$1,700) (Motion to Approve Resolution 22-06 - Majority Vote).** ► Councilor Jones read the resolution. ► **MOTION to Approve Resolution 22-06: Gift Acceptance - Senior Center (\$1,700) by Hamblen. SECOND by Cormier-Leger. Discussion:** ► Mr. Hellen thanked the donators for their donations. ► **VOTE: Yes-8, No-0, Absent-1.**

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** ► Mr. Hellen introduced the new Senior Center Director, Danielle Hopkins; he reviewed her background and career. Mr. Hellen introduced the new Senior Center Deputy Director Christina LaRose; he reviewed her background and career. He reviewed the Town Council, Town Administration, and Representative Jeff Roy's office hours tomorrow from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM at the Senior Center.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** ► Councilor Cormier-Leger spoke about a video made by high school students documenting some of their struggles at the high school with bullying and name calling. He applauded their bravery for putting together the video. He stated that he spoke with School Committee Chair Denise Spencer. He stated that she and Dr. Ahern are addressing this issue. He stated that he would like to have on an upcoming agenda someone from the School Department come to the Town Council to discuss how the Town Council can help address that problem. He stated that he feels this is a public safety issue. ► Councilor Frongillo stated that he wants to make sure that the committee that is reviewing the rules and procedures includes language that affirms the values of the Town Council as well as the values of the Town and rejects hate and bullying of any sort. ► Councilor Jones and Councilor Hamblen agreed with the last two comments.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:** ► Councilor Hamblen stated that she wanted to reiterate the office hours at the Senior Center tomorrow are from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM. She stated that she wanted to let the Jewish community in Franklin know that she condemns the terrorist activity in Houston; she stated that she stands in support. She stated that she wanted the high school students who made the video know that we as a community stand up to hate. ► Councilor Pellegrini asked to invite Dean College President Paula

Rooney to the Town Council. ► Councilor Chandler stated appreciation for the moment of silence held for former Town Council member Andrew Bissanti. He stated agreement with Councilor Cormier-Leger's comments. ► Councilor Frongillo discussed antisemitism and stated that we support our Jewish neighbors. He discussed the high school video; he stated that he wants to set a culture that does not allow or condone bullying or hate. ► Councilor Cormier-Leger thanked the Franklin Democratic Committee for the vigil service they had on the Town Common on January 6<sup>th</sup>. He congratulated the new Eagle Scouts from Franklin's Troop 126. He congratulated Franklin's Cultural Council as they are awarding 23 grants totaling over \$23,000 to artists, singers, and performers who will enhance the community. ► Chair Mercer echoed the comments from Town Council members. He gave condolences to the family of Andrew Bissanti. ► Councilor Jones stated thanks for all the hard work by all the staff. He stated that he is in agreement with all comments made by Town Council members at tonight's meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.**

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

**Meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary