

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 5, 2023**

THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL held a regular meeting on Monday, June 5, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room located at 95 East Main Street Franklin, NC.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jack Horton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Vice Mayor Joe Collins, Council Members David Culpepper, Stacy Guffey, Adam Kimsey Mike Lewis and Rita Salain.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Mayor Joe Collins.

3. ADOPTION OF THE JUNE 5, 2023 TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA

Council Member Rita Salain made a motion, seconded by Council Member Stacy Guffey to adopt the Town Council Agenda for June 5, 2023 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.

4. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR JUNE 5, 2023

- A.) Approval of Minutes
 - a. April 17, 2023 Budget Work Session
 - b. May 1, 2023 Town Council Regular Meeting
 - c. May 15, 2023 Budget Work Session
- B.) Budget Amendment- General Fund- Police Department

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Adam Kimsey to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 6 – 0.

5. INTRODUCTION/RECOGNITIONS

- A.) Cody Cabe - Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator -Bill Deal, Public Works Director
- B.) Rusty Cortopassi - Utility Maintenance Worker -Bill Deal, Public Works Director
- C.) Kyle Pocquette – Promotion to Water Treatment Plant Supervisor -Bill Deal, Public Works Director
- D.) Bonnie Peggs and Danny Antoine - Franklin Public Safety Chaplains presented Officer of the Quarter Award to Master Officer II Eli Kirkland and Firefighter of the Quarter Award to Dave Rusch and Pete Haithcock.

6. PRESENTATION

- A.) Sowing the Seeds of the Future update- Marty Greeble, Mary Polanski and Claire Suminski-Women's History Trail Committee

Women's History Trail representatives took a trip to Bastrop, Texas to check on the sculpture's completion status. Ms. Greeble shared that the sculpture is now finished, but will remain in Texas until the site is ready. JR Sanders will provide the crane service and Richard Clark has presented a proposal for a landscape plan of the site. Ms. Polanski thanked Town Planner Justin Setser, Council Member Salain, Council Member Guffey, Town Manager Owens and other Council Members for all the help and support for this project.

B.) Bartram Trail Conservancy -Brent Martin, Executive Director

Brent Martin, Executive Director of The Bartram Trail Conservancy, provided an update related to their current activities. There are 72 miles of the Bartram Trail in Macon County. The Trail has now been routed through the Macon County Recreation Park and onto the Greenway. Mr. Martin commented that The Bartram Trail now runs through Downtown Franklin. Mr. Martin is proposing a request for installing stickers or other markers from the Big Bear Shelter to the Lazy Hiker Brewing Company identifying the Bartram Trail route on Main Street.

Mayor Jack Horton asked Council Members if anyone was opposed to markings for the Bartram Trail on Main Street, and no one was opposed.

Mayor Horton asked that Mr. Martin get with Town Manager Owens to coordinate the logistics of the markings for the trail on Main Street.

C.) Bullying, Youth Mental Health -Gracie Parker

Gracie Parker provided an update related to bullying and youth mental health. She requested that her rally be held annually. She thanked Mayor Horton for opening up the rally and Police Chief Holland for speaking. She also thanked Council Members for giving kids a voice.

There were no objections from the Board to make the Mental Health Rally an annual event. Town Manager Owens noted that proper application would still need to be filled out annually.

7. PUBLIC SESSION

David Rusch, Franklin Fire & Rescue Volunteer Firefighter and Town Resident, spoke on the need for new fire trucks. He stated that it is imperative for the Franklin Fire Department to have new trucks and in order for them to do a good efficient job they need new trucks. He hopes that Council agrees that the trucks are imperative and should take precedence.

8. CALL FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Call for Public Hearing to be held on Monday, July 3, 2023 at 6:05 p.m. or as closely thereafter as possible to consider public input on rezonings - Justin Setser, Town Planner

This rezoning was initiated (four) 4 months ago by the Town. This was the large rezoning to rezone areas around Town that were in need of updates to align with current uses. There are three-hundred fifty (350) parcels and approximately 500 acres. The areas were broken up into seven (7) areas and were reviewed by the Town Planning Board. The Planning Board is recommending the proposed rezoning changes.

Council Member Mike Lewis asked if there will be any mailers or notifications. Town Planner Setser stated that if a rezoning affects 50 or more property owners a ½ page ad can be run, twice, in the newspaper of record and mailers sent to those who do not live in the area.

Council Member Culpepper has a concern for the area out on HWY 64 near the quarry area.

Town Council requested that information be mailed out to all landowners about the public hearing on the proposed rezoning.

Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. noted that Council could rule on the rezoning or decide not to take action at the July 3, 2023 meeting.

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Adam Kimsey to set the public hearing for Monday July 3, 2023 at 6:05 p.m. or as closely thereafter as possible to consider public input on rezonings. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 6 – 0.

9. PUBLIC HEARING

A.) Public Hearing to receive public input on the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget-Amie Owens, Town Manager

Town Manager Owens gave an overview on how the 2023/2024 budget was developed. The tax rate used was \$0.33 with a 95% collection rate. Salary adjustments were included based on the recommendations of the salary study. The general fund balanced with a zero (\$0.00) fund balance appropriation. Water/Sewer has a proposed 3% rate increase for both water and sewer. Retained earnings will be used for Water Treatment Plant Improvements. \$838,506 is needed from Water/Sewer Fund Balance to balance the budget. Fire tax rate set by Macon County is \$0.524. Town Manager Owens and Chief Ormond met with Macon County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to increase that rate and are awaiting their decision. The Fire Department plans to use \$300,000 from Fund Balance as a down payment on fire trucks. The fire substation full payment of \$46,000 is due this Fiscal Year.

Mayor Jack Horton called the public hearing on input on the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget to order at 7 p.m.

No one signed up to speak at the public hearing.

Town Manager Owens added that the 2023/2024 Fiscal Budget cannot be approved at this meeting since the BOCC has not yet passed their budget. The Fire Tax rate is part of the Town's Budget and a Special Called Meeting will need to be set once the BOCC has set the Fire Tax rate for Franklin Fire District.

Mayor Jack Horton closed the public hearing on input on the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget at 7:02 p.m.

Discussion was had on funds for Fire Trucks. Town Manager Owens stated that the budget can be amended at any time for funds to purchase fire trucks. The ad valorem tax rate is the only budgetary item that cannot be changed once the budget has been passed.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A.) Request approval of budget amendment due to GASB 87 lease rules - Sarah Bishop, Finance Director

GASB 87 requires the lease payments be moved into a liability account. The debt service payment will then be paid out annually from that liability account. The budget amendment will establish the liability account for the two (2) pieces of equipment we just received.

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Joe Collins to approve the budget amendment due to GASB 87 lease rules. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 6 – 0.

- B.) Request approval of the revised Water Shortage Response Plan and adoption of the Resolution for submission to NC DEQ - Bill Deal, Public Works

The Town's Water Shortage Response Plan is required to be reviewed at least every five (5) years. Due to changes in staff, the plan has been revised to include the new names for Town Manager, Public Works Director and Water Treatment ORC. All of the other information remains the same.

Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Mike Lewis to approve he revised Water Shortage Response Plan and adoption of the Resolution for submission to NC DEQ. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 6 – 0.

- C.) Six (6) Appointments to Tourism Development Authority - ballot to be completed by Town

There were eleven (11) applicants for six (6) open positions on the Tourism Development Authority Board. Three (3) of the open positions will be a three-year term beginning June 5, 2023 until June 4, 2026 and three (3) positions will be a two-year term beginning June 5, 2023 until June 4, 2025. Council Members received copies of the eleven (11) applications along with ballots. Tim Crabtree, Josh Drake, Hannah Edwards, Guy Gooder, Angela Faye Martin, and Rob Reale were appointed to the TDA Board. Their terms will be discussed at a future TDA meeting.

Vice Mayor Joe Collins thanked all those who applied. Town Manager Owens stated the applications will remain on file for a year.

11. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

- A.) Human Resources- Nicole Bradley, HR Director, gave an update on the Town's Human Resources functions: CPR training, Benefits Open Enrollment, Executime, The Archer Company Evaluation Process, and Current Job Openings.
- B.) Tax Collections/Events- Sabrina Scruggs, Tax Collector, reviewed information she learned at her Tax Collector's Conference, gave an update on tax collections for the year and upcoming July 4th event.
- C.) Fire Department- Chief Ben Ormond gave an update on year-to-date calls, training hours for firefighters, and fire trucks information for Franklin Fire and Rescue.

12. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL

- A.) Councilman Stacy Guffey- update potential substance abuse facility
Council Members Stacy Guffey and Rita Salain attended a meeting with Pyramid Health Care who run a substance abuse and recovery facilities. They are interested in opening a facility in Western North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting was to gather a consensus to see if the people of Macon County/Franklin were open to having a facility in our region.
- B.) Choose date for special called meeting to vote on FY 2023/2024 budget

Town Council decided to hold the Special Called Meeting to adopt the FY 2023/2024 Budget on Thursday, June 15, 2023.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A.) Next Town Council Meeting is Monday, July 3, 2023
- B.) Town offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4, 2023 in observation of the Independence Day
- C.) holiday in accordance with the NC State Holiday Schedule

D.) July 4th celebration - downtown from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. with fireworks beginning at 9:30 p.m. from the Whitmire Property

15. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Stacy Guffey made a motion, seconded by Council Member David Culpepper to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6- 0.

C. Jack Horton, Mayor

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk