

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Council Chambers, City Hall
February 3, 2025

Members Present: Douglas Baker, Mayor
Donna Fletcher, Deputy Mayor (via phone conference)
James Johnson
Christian Marshall
Samuel Lyons
Ashley Smith
Todd Zahner

Members Excused: None

In Attendance: James Wetzel, City Manager
Cindi Power, City of Franklin
Kevin Saragian, Police Chief
T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary
Amanda Power, City of Franklin
Brian Spaid, Solicitor
Alex Spaid, Dale Woodard Gent McFate
Helen Fielding, The Derrick
Chris Simms, Franklin Moving Forward
Stephanie Felmlee, Franklin Retail
Terry Schultz, 620 Sibley Avenue
Bev Hart, 1333 Elk Street
Jennifer Taylor, 1526 Buffalo Street
Barbara Matthews, 1239 Liberty Street
Jodi Lewis, Franklin Area Chamber

Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Resolution No. 13

Mr. Johnson moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Marshall. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Resolution No. 14

Mr. Lyons motioned to approve the minutes of the regular City Council meeting of January 6, 2025, as presented. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PAY THE BILLS – Resolution No. 15

Mr. Johnson moved to pay the bills as presented. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

CITIZENS' INQUIRIES – None

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CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS – Resolution No. 16

The following requests came before HARB at its January 28, 2025 meeting:

- 313 13th Street – Signage
- 1269 Liberty Street – Signage

Mr. Marshall motioned and Ms. Smith seconded to approve both requests as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

2025 VENANGO COUNTY JOINT SEAL COAT BID PROGRAM RESOLUTION – Resolution No. 17

Mr. Wetzel reminded Council of the water and sewer line work that occurred in Miller Park and that only a base coat of asphalt had been applied when the work line work was completed. He added that the City agreed to enter into agreement with Sandycreek and Frenchcreek Townships to apply tar and chip seal coating on Old Mercer Road, which is slated to begin this year. If approved, all bidding would be done through the Oil Region Council of Governments (COG) and paid for using Liquid Fuels funds. The agreement would name Mr. Wetzel as the COG voting delegate and Mrs. Motter as the alternate delegate. The City's estimated cost is approximately \$35,000.

Mrs. Fletcher motioned and Ms. Smith seconded to approve the joint seal coating agreement among Sandycreek Township, Frenchcreek Township, and the City as presented, and to name Mr. Wetzel to serve as the City's voting delegate and Mrs. Motter as the alternate delegate. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL – EADS ENGINEERING RETAINER AGREEMENT – Resolution No. 18

Mr. Wetzel presented an engineering retainer agreement between the City and The EADS Group, as the City no longer has a staffed engineer or an engineer consultant since the retirement of Al Wodzianski.

Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the Engineering Services Retainer Agreement as presented. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PARK AND PARADE ASSEMBLY REQUESTS – Resolution No. 20

Mr. Wetzel introduced the following public assembly request:

- March 22, 2025 • 12th Street from Buffalo to Trails to Ales II property line • Franklin Moving Forward • Fly Fishing Film Tour

Mr. Lyons motioned to accept the public assembly request as presented, seconded by Mr. Marshall. The motion passed unanimously.

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REPORTS

Manager –

- PennDOT plans to replace railroad arms with pedestrian arms at the 13th Street railroad crossing. The project is to be completed by August 31, 2027.
- Mr. Wetzel drafted a Right-to-Know policy, but the draft was not included in Council packets for this month. It will be included in the March Council packets for consideration after Mr. Spaid reviews it.
- Messrs. Wetzel and Spaid will be in Hershey, Pennsylvania for the PELRAS conference February 26-28.
- Requested time in Executive Session for matters of potential litigation.

Solicitor – Once the General Authority’s PENNVEST paperwork is complete, Mr. Spaid will devote time to reviewing the Rotary Club’s proposed agreement for the dog park.

Mayor Appointments –

- **Resolution No. 21** – Mayor Baker motioned and Mr. Johnson seconded to reappoint Ashley Smith to serve an additional three (3) year term on the Historic and Architectural Review Board to expire on February 1, 2028. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 22** – Mayor Baker motioned and Mrs. Smith seconded to reappoint Charles Brehm to serve an additional four (4) year term on the Planning and Zoning Commission to expire on January 31, 2029. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 23** – Mayor Baker motioned and Mr. Lyons seconded to reappoint Dan Drayer to serve an additional five (5) year term on the Uniform Construction Code of Appeals Board to expire on January 1, 2030. The motion passed unanimously.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Baker – Reminded everyone of Franklin on Ice this weekend.

Mrs. Fletcher –

- Commented on the fresh paint and curtains in Council Chambers.
- Appreciated the post on Facebook portraying the new police officers being sworn in.

Mr. Johnson – Commented on a recent article portraying former pastor at St. John’s, Bishop Sean Rowe, and recalled his blessing of the homeless shelter.

Mr. Marshall –

- Reminded Mr. Spaid of Smoke Cantina’s request to amend the Sidewalk Café ordinance.
- Happy to see more use of the Rave Alert system.
- Asked that the General Authority’s A-108 project be publicized through social media, press releases, etc. to keep the public informed of the project’s progress and transparency.
 - Mr. Wetzel stated that he plans to give updates on a weekly to bi-weekly basis.
- Asked about the status of the Buffalo Street bus shelter.

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- Mr. Wetzel stated that the shelter is accessible, but the bus is not driving up to the shelter and is instead picking up passengers on the opposite side of Buffalo Street. There has been discussion about possibly relocating the shelter.
- Asked that property owners be more proactive about cleaning sidewalks in winter.

Mr. Lyons – Asked if there are any updates from the new owners of the Franklin Club as they restore the building. Mayor Baker noted that they are seeking out grant funds to assist with the remodel.

Mrs. Smith –

- Announced that the County permanently changed the Second District polling location from City Hall to the Knights of Columbus on Liberty Street.
- Venango County Heart and Soul will be holding an event at Trails to Ales II on Tuesday, February 25 from 5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. to discuss outdoor recreation.

Mr. Zahner –

- Received an inquiry if chickens are allowed in the City. Mr. Spaid said they are not and does not recommend allowing chickens in the City.
- Concerned about the condition of the pavement on Grant Street. Mr. Wetzel noted that it is slated to be resurfaced by PennDOT in 2027 or 2028.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Resolution No. 24

Mr. Johnson motioned to enter into Executive Session at 7:27 P.M. to discuss matters of potential litigation. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary