

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Council Chambers, City Hall
February 5, 2024

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

Members Excused: None

In Attendance: James Wetzel, City Manager
Harmony Motter, Finance Director
Cindi Power, City of Franklin
James Shreffler, City of Franklin
T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary
Amanda Power, City of Franklin
Brian Spaid, Solicitor
Jennifer Taylor, 1526 Buffalo Street
Jake Smith, 1346 Elk Street
Helen Fielding, The Derrick
Bev Hart, 1333 Elk Street
Tim Lowry, 603 Wiley Avenue, Sugarcreek Borough
Diana Hanna, 603 Wiley Avenue, Sugarcreek Borough
Terri Lowry, 602 Wiley Avenue, Sugarcreek Borough
Stephanie Felmlee, 313 13th Street
Ali Khurram, 902 Liberty Street
Barbara Matthews, 1239 Liberty Street
Dan Metz, Franklin Fire Department
Adam Guthrie, 1263 Elk Street
Jeff Lemier, 3827 Route 322
Deb Eckelberger, FICDA
Matt Beith, 324 16th Street

Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Resolution No. 11

Mrs. Fletcher moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Lyons. The motion passed unanimously.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Resolution No. 12

Mr. Lyons motioned to approve the minutes of the regular City Council meeting of January 8, 2024, as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PAY THE BILLS – Resolution No.13

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

CITIZENS' INQUIRIES –

- Matt Beith congratulated James Shreffler, Events and Marketing Coordinator, and Pat Dolecki, Franklin Fine Arts President, on putting together a very successful Franklin On Ice event.
- Terri Lowry, Resident of Rocky Grove, expressed concerns regarding the potential merger of the City of Franklin Police Department and the Sugarcreek Borough Police Department, particularly as it relates to police coverage throughout the entire Borough. Mayor Baker stated that plans are very preliminary with the primary objective of providing better police services for both communities.
- Stephanie Felmlee, owner of Amy's Closet and Sassy's Gifts, requested better instructional signage for using the parking kiosks in all parking lots and added that they are difficult to find.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS –

The following requests came before HARB at is January 23, 2024 meeting:

- 902 Liberty Street – Window Signs and Canopy Signs
 - Mr. Wetzel explained that the window wraps received a positive recommendation from HARB once the amount of window coverage was reduced, but the overhead signage did not. Store owner, Ali Khurram, stated that there are other businesses within the Historic District that have similar signage. A HARB member provided an alternative sign with overhead, gooseneck lighting; however, Mr. Khurram argued this style of signage does not provide ample illumination to advertise his business.
 - **Resolution No. 14** – Mr. Lyons motioned and Mrs. Fletcher seconded to approve the window wraps at the reduced size and the backlit overhead sign as presented in the HARB application. Motion to approve the request passed with a 6-1 vote, with Mrs. Smith voting in opposition.
- 1263 Elk Street – Doors, paint, lights
 - **Resolution No 15** – Mrs. Fletcher motioned and Mr. Marshall seconded to approve the request as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

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FIRST READING – BILL NO. 1 – LIMITED EXCEPTION TO OPEN CONTAINER ACT – Resolution No. 16

Mr. Spaid read Bill No. 1, "Limited Exception to Open Container Act," in its entirety into the record.

Mr. Marshall motioned to pass on First Reading of Bill No. 1. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PARK AND PARADE ASSEMBLY REQUESTS – Resolution No. 17

Mr. Wetzel introduced the following public assembly request:

- September 14, 2024 • Bandstand Park • Franklin Retail Association • Pet Fest

Mr. Johnson motioned and Mrs. Smith seconded to approve the request as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Manager –

- Traffic controller at 13th and Elk is operational again.
- FY-2020 CDBG paving project was completed this year but came in \$23,845.84 under budget. DCED approved a request to move these funds into another project within an LMI neighborhood. Mrs. Power would like to utilize the funds to make upgrades to the 11th Street playground, as it has already been determined to be an eligible area. It does, however, require a public hearing.
 - **Resolution No. 18** – Mrs. Fletcher motioned to hold the public hearing for the change of use of remaining FY-2020 CDBG funds on March 4, 2024 at 7 P.M. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Reminded Council of the joint project with Sandycreek and Frenchcreek Townships and the City to expend FY-2024 County Liquid Fuels allocation to pave Old Mercer Road. Requested two (2) Council members to serve as a voting delegate and an alternate to represent the City to act as the voting authority at the time of bid award. Mr. Wetzel will advise when the bid opening will be.
 - **Resolution No. 19** – Mayor Baker motioned to nominate Mrs. Fletcher to serve as the voting delegate to represent the City at the time of bid award, and Mrs. Smith to serve as the alternate delegate. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- Presented a request from the Street Department to purchase a Bobcat L28 Articulated Loader with an angle broom, bucket, snow blade, and pallet forks. Their current loader is not intended for commercial use and requires frequent repairs when they use it. The new machine would be purchased through a COSTARS contract and costs about \$54,000 which will be paid for with Liquid Fuels funds.

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- **Resolution No. 20** – Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the purchase of the Bobcat L28 Articulated Loader as presented. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 21** – Mrs. Fletcher motioned and Mr. Johnson seconded to appoint Mrs. Motter as the Deputy City Manager. The motion passed unanimously.
- Advised Council that the Meter Enforcement Officer handed in her resignation.
- Informed of the Fire Department’s intent to submit a federal AFG grant to purchase a new fire engine, and another AFG grant to jointly purchase new radios with the City of Oil City Fire Department. Each requires 5% match.
- Pending approval at the next General Authority meeting, the General Authority will begin installing new water mains on Pinoak Drive, Wintergreen Drive and Woodland Drive. They also received a funding offer from PENNVEST for a \$3.68 million loan at 1% interest for the first five (5) years and 1.743% for the remaining fifteen (15) years; they will vote on whether or not to accept the offer at their next meeting. Lastly, they were awarded an H2O grant in the amount of \$585,333 for a generator at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Requested time in Executive Session for the purposes of negotiations and personnel.

Solicitor – None

Mayor Appointments – **Resolution No. 22** – Mayor Baker motioned to appoint Linda Lusher to serve a five (5) year term on the Redevelopment Authority ending on January 31, 2029. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Baker – Franklin On Ice was outstanding! Appreciates the work that went into the event.

Mrs. Fletcher – None

Mr. Johnson – Enjoyed Franklin On Ice and the Nature Art Showcase at the Barrow-Civic Theatre.

Mr. Marshall – Received a message of concern from Franklin Historic Preservation about the addition that Trails to Ales II is building. Since it is not in the Historic District, it does not have to go through HARB, but is going through the proper code enforcement channels.

Mr. Lyons – None

Mrs. Smith – Received positive feedback for the multimodal trail from the City to Giant Eagle.

Mr. Zahner – None

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EXECUTIVE SESSION - Resolution No. 23

Mrs. Fletcher motioned to enter into Executive Session for the purposes of negotiations and personnel. Mr. Marshall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Resolution No. 24** – Mr. Marshall motioned and Mr. Lyons seconded to allow Mr. Spaid to begin Eminent Domain proceedings for condemned property located at 533 and 533-1/2 3rd Street, owned by Rose Tracy. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 25** – Mr. Lyons motioned to pay for one-third (1/3) of the total cost of commercial appraisals needed for properties owned by Joy Manufacturing Co. and Pheonix Franklin Industrial Investors, LLC. Mrs. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary