

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Council Chambers, City Hall
September 8, 2025

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

Members Excused: None

In Attendance: James Wetzel, City Manager
Harmony Motter, City of Franklin
Cindi Power, City of Franklin
Kevin Saragian, Police Chief
Charles Gibbons, Code Enforcement Officer
T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary
Amanda Power, City of Franklin
Brian Spaid, Solicitor
Helen Fielding, The Derrick
Alex Spaid, Dale Woodard Gent McFate
Matt Beith, 174 Pioneer Road
Sharon Dorogy, Adelaide Avenue
Richard Austin, 4 Innis Street, Oil City
Nancy Arroyo, 132 Grant Street
Jeff Farren and Jennifer Delucia, 312 8th Street
Karl Castonway, 732 Elk Street
McKenna Hanely, 220 8th Street
Bronson Smith and Chris Van Winkle
Crystal Riley, 1252 Liberty Street
Shane Ross and Lucy Miller-Ross, 210 8th Street
Jerome Cochran, 977 Tarklin Road
Ashleigh Nelson, 1539 Elk Street
Connie Pratt, 211 8th Street
Gail Stewart, 649A Elk Street
Scott Nespor, 802 Elk Street
Steve and Colleen Holtz, 636 Elk Street
Eric and Rebecca Cook, 817 Elk Street
Eric Ring, 626 Elk Street
Dennis Beggs, 714 Elk Street
Kelly Daugherty and Kay Daugherty, 1190 Elk Street
Bev Hart, 1333 Elk Street
Mary Anne Parys, 633 Elk Street

Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 7:28 P.M.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Resolution No. 107

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Resolution No. 108

Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the minutes of the regular City Council meeting of August 4, 2025, as presented. Ms. Zaccari seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PAY THE BILLS – Resolution No. 109

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

CITIZENS’ INQUIRIES –

- Nancy Arroyo explained that she had approached Mr. Gibbons several years ago with the hopes of opening a tattoo parlor in Franklin. She stated that Mr. Gibbons had informed that the zoning ordinance classifies tattoo parlors as “adult oriented businesses” and must be located in an industrial zone. She referenced locations in Franklin that offer tattooing services and reached out to Mr. Gibbons several times to get clarification as to why tattooing services are allowed at these locations, but Mr. Gibbons never responded. Mr. Spaid said he would review the ordinance and speak with Messrs Gibbons and Wetzel.
- Jerry Cochran spoke on behalf of the Franklin Men’s Softball League. The League would like to install a telescopic flagpole that can be removed in winter months with a plaque in memory of former League chairman, Herb Bigley, at the Miller-Sibley ball field. It would have spotlights to illuminate it at night and surrounded by a planter. The flag would be lowered and stored appropriately after each game. He provided Council with a sketch of the proposed pole and accoutrements. Mr. Wetzel said he would check with Mr. Reed to make sure the proposed location is suitable.
 - **Resolution No. 110** – Mayor Baker motioned and Mr. Lyons seconded to approve the request to install a removable flagpole, surrounding planter, spotlights, and plaque in memory of Herb Bigley. The motion passed unanimously.
- Karl Castonway, Elk Street resident, presented proposed changes to directional traffic flow on Elk Street to alleviate the amount of traffic on the street, primarily those who use Elk Street to bypass heavier traffic and traffic signals on Liberty Street, and to also encourage drivers to drive more slowly.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS – Resolution No. 111

The following requests came before HARB at its August 26, 2025 meeting:

- 1264 Liberty Street – Signs
- 404 16th Street – Paint, Porch, Roof
- 1190 Elk Street – Roof, Paint, Doors

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

APPROVAL – AUTISM STANDS RELOCATION OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT – Resolution No. 112

Mr. Wetzel reminded Council of their approval to install inclusive playground equipment at the 11th Street Playground which is being supplied by Autism Stands. Since the aforementioned playground is under renovation to include the addition of inclusive sensory equipment using CDBG funds, Riverfront Park was recommended as an alternative location for the donated equipment.

Mr. Johnson motioned and Mr. Marshall seconded to approve the installation of sensory playground equipment donated by Autism Stands at Riverfront Park. The motion passed unanimously.

FINAL READING – BILL NO. 4 – ZONING MAP AMENDMENT – Resolution No. 113

Mr. Spaid read Bill No. 4, “Zoning Map Amendment”, into the record.

Mr. Marshall motioned and Ms. Zaccari seconded to approve on Final Reading Bill No. 4. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF FY-2025 CDBG PROPOSED PROJECTS – Resolution No. 114

Mrs. Power reminded Council that the City’s total CDBG FY-2025 allocation is \$305,575. After deducting \$55,000 for administrative costs, \$250,575 remains for carrying out projects. Mrs. Power requested to put the full amount towards updates to the Atlantic Avenue Playground, which includes the installation of ADA compliant playground equipment for preschool and school-age play, installation of ADA compliant impact surfaces, and replacement of the existing basketball court, fencing, pavilion and picnic tables. She added that the project is supported by the results of a community and recreational assets survey that was conducted a couple years ago.

Mr. Lyons moved to accept the proposed FY-2025 CDBG project as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ANNUAL FAIR HOUSING RESOLUTION – Resolution No. 115

Mrs. Power presented Council with the annual Fair Housing Resolution for approval. She explained that the resolution is a step in protecting City residents from discrimination when applying for housing and it also designates the Code Enforcement Officer, Charles Gibbons, as the Fair Housing Officer.

Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the resolution as presented. Ms. Zaccari seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

DESIGNATION OF SECTION 504 OFFICER – Resolution No. 116

Ms. Zaccari motioned and Mr. Marshall seconded to name City Manager, James Wetzel as the City of Franklin Section 504 Officer. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL – 2008 PIERCE VELOCITY BID RESULTS – Resolution No. 117

Mr. Wetzel announced the highest bid received for the 2008 Pierce Velocity was \$25,100, submitted by Mr. Scott Murry of Clinton, New York. A total of 41 bids were received.

Mr. Marshall motioned to accept the bid from Scott Murry of Clinton, New York in the amount of \$25,100 as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

APPROVAL – FNB LEASE/PURCHASE AGREEMENT – 2025 FORD F-150 – Resolution No. 118

Mr. Wetzel informed that the Fire Department’s pick up truck is in poor condition. The City has a \$15,000 grant through the Fire Commissioner’s office which will be utilized as the down payment for a 2025 Ford F-150, with the remainder being financed with a lease through First National Bank.

Mr. Johnson motioned and Mr. Marshall seconded to approve the proposed lease agreement with First National Bank to finance a 2025 Ford F-150 for the City of Franklin Fire Department. The motion passed unanimously.

2026 MINIMUM MUNICIPAL OBLIGATION

Mr. Wetzel presented the 2026 Minimum Municipal Obligation figures for the Police (\$164,991), Fire (\$92,637), and Non-Uniform (\$151,500) Pension accounts.

SET HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREAT HOURS – Resolution No. 119

Mr. Lyons motioned to set October 31, 2024, between 6 P.M. and 8 P.M. as the City-wide Trick or Treat date and time. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PARK AND PARADE ASSEMBLY REQUESTS – Resolution No. 120

Mr. Wetzel introduced the following public assembly request:

- September 10, 2025 • Bandstand Park, Elk Street • Alicia Stanton, Franklin High School • Homecoming Parade
- September 13, 2025 • Fountain Park • Kim Harris, Oil Region Alliance • Kayak Adventure Series
- September 28, 2025 • Bandstand Park • Ashleigh Litwin, Impel Pilates • Down Dog For A Cause
- October 7, 2025 • Fountain Park • Mary Jane Long • Pink Splash For The Cure

Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the public assembly request as presented, seconded by Mrs. Fletcher. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Manager –

- **Resolution No. 121** – Mr. Lyons motioned and Mr. Johnson seconded to hold a special City Council meeting on Monday, October 27, 2025 at 4 P.M. to approve the submission of the FY-2025 CDBG application. The motion passed unanimously.
- The final payment was made on the City Hall HVAC renovation project. A couple minor issues remain but are being addressed. The final contract amount was \$1,301,009. This included the bid amount of \$1,247,000 and change orders totaling \$54,009.
- 621 Hillside Avenue, which is in repository, received a bid of \$700 by Hripsime Harutyunyan of New York City. Council did not have any objections to the bid.
- 1323 Eagle Street, which is in repository, received a bid of \$600 by Bemis Rentals, LLC of Wheatland, Pennsylvania. Council did not have any objections to the bid.
- Mr. Wetzel asked if Council if they had any objections to placing the Fire Department's pickup truck, Truck 30, for public bid on Municibid. Council did not object.
- The annual flu shot clinic will be held in Council Chambers on September 24, 2025 at 9 A.M.
- The Community Development Department recently went through a successful CDBG Performance Review Monitoring for Fiscal Years 2013-2016.
- The 11th Street Playground is currently closed due to renovations using CDBG funds.
- Requested time in Executive Session to discuss matters of negotiations and real estate.

Solicitor – Mr. Spaid had nothing to report.

Mayor Appointments – None

COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Baker – Commended Mrs. Rodgers and Mrs. Power on the successful completion of the CDBG Performance Review Monitoring.

Mrs. Fletcher –

- Concerned that the Route 62 Betterment Project will detract from the aesthetic of Liberty Street.
- Congratulated Dave Ballard for his promotional video to showcase Franklin.
- Asked if the construction work occurring near Wanango Country Club is related to any of the water line replacement projects. Mr. Wetzel said it was most likely National Fuel installing gas lines.

Mr. Johnson –

- Enjoyed Rock In River Fest
- Reported on a stop sign with solar powered blinking warning lights that is not working.

Mr. Marshall –

- Working with Pastor Barrett to set up a warming station at the Free Methodist Church on Buffalo Street for CATA bus riders.

- Asked if the software to submit code violations could be customized to add photos. Mr. Gibbons said it is currently turned off, but can be turned back on.
- Requested a report on parking revenues for year's time. Mr. Wetzel said that could be provided and advised that it will also be included in the FY-2026 budget when it is presented to Council.
- Concerned about traffic backing up caused by the General Authority's the A-108 project and the possible negative impact of downtown businesses. He also confirmed that Applefest is still occurring as scheduled, despite rumors that it has been canceled due to construction.
- Contacted to PennDOT to hold another public meeting to explain the Route 62 Betterment Project. PennDOT has not agreed but he will continue to reach out. He has received many comments from concerned residents regarding the project.
- Asked if the City could adopt an ordinance that limits the number of vape shops in the City as many residents are concerned that more will keep opening in downtown. Mr. Spaid advised that would have to be discussed with the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- Noticed several encampment areas on Waterworks Road that has residents concerned, particularly as there have been camp fires with nobody around to keep an eye on it and sanitation.

Mr. Lyons – Received complaints about e-bikes on City sidewalks. Chief Saragian said that there is currently no ordinance regarding e-bikes. He advised that municipalities can adopt an ordinance that prohibits e-bikes on sidewalks within a business district. Mr. Spaid said he can look into drafting an ordinance with guidance from Chief Saragian.

Ms. Zaccari –

- Enjoyed attending Wings and Wheels at the Venango Airport, Rock In River Fest, Historical Walking Tours of Ballrooms put on by Franklin Preservation, events at O.A.R.S and Trails to Ales II, and the Ronnie Beith Tribute Concert.
- HARB is looking for locations for murals.
- Attending the Municipal Leadership Summit in Erie with Mayor Baker next month.

Mr. Zahner – Nothing to report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Resolution No. 122

Mrs. Fletcher motioned to enter into Executive Session at 8:41 P.M. to discuss matters of negotiations and real estate. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The Executive Session ended at 9:28 P.M.

APPROVAL – CITY OF FRANKLIN FIRE DEPARTMENT IAFF LOCAL 2835 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT – Resolution No. 123

Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the collective bargaining agreement between the City and the Franklin Fire Department IAFF Local 2835 as presented. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS – None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T.J. Parks", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary