

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
150 Prospect Avenue  
September 9, 2024

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

Members Excused: Todd Zahner

In Attendance: James Wetzel, City Manager  
Brian Spaid, Esq., City Solicitor  
Harmony Motter, Finance Director  
T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary  
Amanda Power, Community Development Director  
Cindi Power, City of Franklin  
Kevin Saragian, Police Chief  
Helen Fielding, The Derrick  
Alex Spaid, Dale, Woodard, Gent, McFate  
Stephanie Felmlee, 313 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Jennifer Taylor, 1526 Buffalo Street  
Caleb Williams and Jenna Dillion, 1212 Elk Street

Mayor Baker reconvened the meeting at 7:02 P.M.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Resolution No. 130**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Resolution No. 131**

Mr. Marshall motioned to approve the minutes of the regular City Council meeting of August 5, 2024. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**PAY THE BILLS – Resolution No. 132**

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

**CITIZENS' INQUIRIES –**

Caleb Williams, of 1212 Elk Street, returned to Council to follow up with his request at last month's meeting to establish a residential parking fee. Mr. Wetzel shared information he had gathered from other municipalities with residential parking permits in regards to fees, if any, and requirements to show proof of residency. Mayor Baker asked if the current technology can accommodate such a permit, to which Chief Siragian replied that it could. Mayor Baker replied

that Council and City staff will discuss it further and notify Mr. Williams when a decision is made.

**CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS – Resolution No. 133**

The following requests came before HARB at its August 27, 2024 meeting:

- 1218 Elk Street – Paint

Mr. Lyons motioned and Mr. Johnson seconded to approve the requests as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**FINAL READING – BILL NO. 6 – TRAFFIC CODE AMENDMENT – ELM STREET – Resolution No. 134**

Mr. Spaid read Bill No. 6, “Traffic Code Amendment – Elm Street,” into the record.

Mr. Marshall motioned and Mr. Johnson seconded to pass on First Reading Bill No. 6. The motion passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF FY-2024 CDBG PROPOSED PROJECTS – Resolution No. 135**

Mrs. Power reminded Council of the City’s FY-2024 CDBG allocation of \$307,040, and explained that \$55,260 (18%) of the total amount has been allocated to cover administrative costs, leaving a balance of \$251,780 for project costs. Mrs. Power went on to propose the following projects for FY-2024:

- \$209,805 to mill and pave the following streets:
  - Adams, from Hayes to Madison
  - Washington, from Tyler to Hayes
  - Taylor, from Lincoln to Pierce
  - Hayes, from Washington to Jefferson
  - Polk, from Washington to Lincoln
- \$41,975 for the demolishing/clearance of blighted structures (locations not yet determined)

The second public hearing is scheduled to be held on October 7, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. prior to the regular City Council meeting. A special meeting will need to be scheduled in order to approve the submission of the FY-2024 CDBG application prior to the submission deadline on November 1, 2024.

Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the projects with the allocated amounts, as presented. Ms. Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**CDBG FAIR HOUSING RESOLUTION – Resolution No. 136**

Mrs. Power presented Council with the annual Fair Housing Resolution for Council’s 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.

Mrs. Fletcher motioned to approve the resolution as presented. Ms. Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**NAME SECTION 504 OFFICER – Resolution No. 137**

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

**2025 MINIMUM MUNICIPAL OBLIGATION**

Mr. Wetzel presented the 2025 Minimum Municipal Obligation figures for the Police (\$280,967), Fire (\$82,176), and Non-Uniform (\$231,078) Pension accounts.

**FY-2023 FEMA ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT – Resolution No. 138**

Mr. Wetzel announced that the City was awarded a FY-2023 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant in the amount of \$697,171 to go towards the purchase of a new fire engine. The grant requires a 5% match in the amount of \$33,198.62, leaving a balance \$663,972.38 for the fire engine. Mr. Wetzel respectfully asked Council to approve entering into the grant contract and approve the required matching funds.

Mr. Marshall motioned to approve the grant award and required matching funds as presented. Ms. Smith seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**SET HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREAT HOURS – Resolution No. 139**

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. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**PARK AND PARADE ASSEMBLY REQUESTS – Resolution No. 140**

Mr. Wetzel introduced the following public assembly requests:

1. October 8, 2024 • Fountain Park • Cheryl Carson • Pink Splash for the Cure
2. October 9, 2024 • South Park Street, Elk Street, West Park Street, Otter Street • Franklin High School • Homecoming Parade
3. October 19, 2024 • 12<sup>th</sup> Street, from Buffalo to Liberty • Franklin Retail Association • Witch Walk
4. October 25, 2024 • 1200 Block of Liberty Street • FFAC • Downtown Trick or Treat
5. November 23, 2024 • Liberty Street/Fountain Park • FFAC/City of Franklin • Light Up Night
6. November 25, 2024-January 10, 2025 • Fountain Park • FFAC • Christmas Walk in the Park

Mr. Johnson motioned to accept all requests as presented, seconded by Mr. Marshall. The motion passed unanimously.

## REPORTS

### Manager –

- **Resolution No. 141** – Mrs. Fletcher motioned and Mr. Lyons seconded to ratify approval for Change Order No. 1 for the WWII/Korean War Memorial for an additional contract amount of \$3,380 to add drainage around the structure. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 142** – Mr. Lyons motioned and Mr. Marshall seconded to schedule the final FY-2024 CDBG Public Hearing for 7 P.M. on October 7, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 143** – Mr. Marshall motioned and Mr. Johnson seconded to hold a Special City Council Meeting on October 28, 2024 at 4:30 P.M. to give final approval of the FY-2024 CDBG application. The motion passed unanimously.
- Second floor HVAC upgrades at City Hall began on August 19<sup>th</sup> and continue in conjunction with demolition of the exterior steps to the police department.
- A stormwater line on an abandoned portion of 5<sup>th</sup> Street collapsed and caused a deep sink hole to form. Mr. Reed from the Street Department is working on obtaining quotes to repair it.
- There is a tax appeal on Wednesday for a property at 1343 New Street.
- In reference to the FEMA grant for the fire engine, Mr. Wetzel informed that the cost of a new fire engine is roughly \$1.2 million. The City has approximately \$300,000 set aside, in addition to recently awarded grant funds. There is a four (4) year lead time and the new engine would replace engine 35 which is a 1986 model.
- Requested time in Executive Session for the purposes of negotiations and potential litigation.

### Solicitor –

- Mr. Spaid stated that an appeal was filed for a property maintenance violation at 221 Orchard Street after a pedestrian reported tripping on the sidewalk at that property.
  - **Resolution No. 144** – Mr. Johnson motioned to set the appeal hearing for 6:30 P.M. on Monday, October 7, 2024 prior to the City Council meeting. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Eminent Domain has been filed on property located at 533 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. The property has been secured.
- The General Authority was awarded a PENNVEST grant and loan package to fund the A-108 project. The loan will require approval from City Council, which Mr. Spaid will provide after the new year.
- Requested time in Executive Session to discuss matters of litigation, potential litigation and personnel.

### Mayor Appointments – None

## **COUNCIL REPORTS**

### **Mayor Baker – None**

### **Mrs. Fletcher –**

- Noted that she saw an advertisement for Applefest on an international travel site.
- Asked Ms. Fielding from The News Herald if there were any press releases about the large number of anglers that were in town the past weekend. Ms. Fielding stated that it was a surprise to her as well.
- Noted to Stephanie Felmlee of the Franklin Business and Retail Association that she went to brunch at a restaurant that was supposed to be open but was closed.
- Asked residents to be patient with Applefest visitors.

### **Mr. Johnson –**

- New Life Family Worship Center offers free back-to-school and clothing items for children.
- Reminded everyone of the Community Conversations at the Library

### **Mr. Marshall –**

- Still receiving concerns from Steve Holtz regarding speed in the 600 block of Elk Street. Mr. Holtz is requesting speed humps on Elk Street.
- The Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce and the Franklin Business and Retail Association would like to set up a meeting with a PennDOT representative to discuss what construction will be like in regards to the Betterment Project and how it could impact businesses. City officials are welcome to attend the discussion. Mr. Wetzel informed that the project may be delayed due to the A-108 project.

**Mr. Lyons –** The YMCA will provide this summer's swimming pool statistics at the October City Council meeting.

### **Ms. Smith –**

- The next household waste collection is November 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Venango County Recycling Center at the Airport.
- The Venango County Planning Commission is still accepting public comment on the draft Comprehensive Plan until October 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Asked if the City has looked into grants for electric vehicle charging stations
  - Mrs. Power replied that while we are eligible to receive funding, we do not currently have the infrastructure to support it. The Community Development Department is searching for funding opportunities.

### **Mr. Zahner –**

- Concerned about the conditions at Atlantic Avenue Playground.
- When a heavy vehicle drives by houses in the 200 block of Atlantic Avenue, houses shake due to a loose connection of something underground.

- Received complaints about loud music and other party activity until 2:00 A.M. at O.A.R.S.
- Expressed sympathies with the property owner at 221 Orchard Street.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION - Resolution No. 145**

Mrs. Fletcher motioned to enter into Executive Session at 7:47 P.M. for the purposes of personnel, negotiations, litigation and potential litigation. Ms. Smith seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**OTHER BUSINESS - None**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary