



City Council Meeting Minutes Monday, February 7, 2022 - 6:00 p.m. Council Chambers, City Hall

Council in attendance: Councilor Valerie Blake, Councilor April Bunker, Councilor Jay Chandler, Councilor Bob Desrochers, Councilor George Dzujna, Councilor Ribas, Councilor Ted Starkweather, Councilor Paul Trudel and Councilor Olivia Zink.

Absent: Mayor Jo Brown.

Others in attendance: City Manager Judie Milner, City Department Heads, and members of the public.

Councilor Zink, acting as chair in Mayor's absence, called the meeting to order in Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m.

Salute to the Flag was led by Councilor April Bunker.

Moment of Silence for our Veterans

Councilor Desrochers asked for a couple moments of silence for police officers. Over the past year you have heard about police shooting innocent victims but what you don't hear on the news are police officers getting shot, targeted, having things thrown at them, beat up, etc. You also don't hear how many firefighters die each day in this country. About three weeks ago three firefighters were killed in the line of duty. These people risk their lives daily and don't get recognition from the media so if a moment of silence can be had for those police officers and fire fighters.

Councilor Desrochers asked for a moment of silence for Porter Young who served on an aircraft carrier in the US Navy from 1952-1955 as an airman and for Mark LaRoche who served in US Army from 1977-1987.

Legislative Update

None

Comments from the Public

Dan and Karen Darling from Ward III spoke in honor of it being Black History Month they wanted to share with the Council and City Manager a document that was written in response to the racial injustice. The document is at the end of the minutes.

Kandyce Tucker, Coordinator for Franklin Mayor's Drug Task Force, gave an update regarding two bills being voted on and passed committee. The first is marijuana legalization and two letters have been written and sent regarding why this is not necessarily the most well written

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bill they have done. The second is a bill that every two years data is collected using the youth risk survey which is currently an opt out so it goes to all students and they can opt out. With this new bill that would change this survey to an opt in where parents would have to sign up their child to take the survey and that will not bring in the data that we have been using. Police Chief Goldstein went to the hearing a few weeks ago to educate the legislature why this data is important.

The task force is going to be doing a community survey to see where we are as a community for drug use and past thirty day use, as this type of survey hasn't been done in several years.

MDTF Coordinator Tucker stated they will be working on updating the website and are looking for some new board members if anyone is interested or knows of anyone who would be interested, please email her.

She talked about the kids who wrote a PSA to really get information regarding mental health of how kids are struggling. She played the ad that will be playing on FM 94.1 and will be played for a couple of months.

Councilor Blake asked for the bill numbers and MDTF Coordinator Tucker stated she will email them to her.

Councilor Dzujna, as MSD Committee Chairman read a letter from retired Municipal Services Director Brian Sullivan regarding Councilor Desrochers December 6, 2021 letter read into the record. The document is at the end of the minutes.

Councilor Desrochers replied by saying ex-Director Sullivan was not present at the meeting and make no mistake that the City Manager stated in a public forum 10 to 15% was going back to the City and if that is not a kickback, what is it called as you can't tell me that \$250 for a service where the City is getting money back from that service isn't this. Kickback is a return of funds of a fee charged for a transaction so no matter what you do by taking money back that is charged in public form is a kickback. The yellow top containers are in addition to the curbside collection at a cost of \$250 per container. He doesn't post or ask questions on social media, City Manager's office, Mayor's office or anywhere else. He will ask questions here in the public forum where everyone can see and hear. If this continues to happen every time a councilor questions something the City is doing or when a civil suit was brought by a past employee against the Council as they tried to do last year, there is something is wrong with this system. If we don't start speaking up instead of sitting around this table like bobbleheads and say yes to everything someone puts forward, he is not going to do that as he has never done it and refused to do that.

Councilor Zink closed public comment.

City Council Acknowledgements

Councilor Dzujna thanked the revitalization team for their efforts, Jim Aberg, Marty Parichand, Niel Cannon, Seth Creighton. He wanted to especially thank City Manager Milner as she

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contributes to this revitalization team. Recently Taylor Caswell, 1st Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs and Development of Travel and Tourism has noted many times that the City of Franklin should be a model for revitalization.

Councilor Blake thanked Chief Foss as she had the most amazing afternoon a few weeks ago as she went on call to experience first hand what they have to do. The firefighters contributed compassion, high intelligence, great skills and it was an honor to be there. She also wanted to thank MSD Director Hanscom for another wonderful cleanup after the latest storm.

Agenda Item I.

Motion - Councilor Trudel moved that the Franklin City Council approve the minutes of the January 3, 2022 City Council Meeting. Seconded by Councilor Starkweather.

Councilor Zink mentioned on page 4 there is one change on the 2nd to last paragraph welcome should be thank.

Councilor Bunker abstained and all others in favor. Motion PASSED.

Agenda Item II.

Monthly School Board update to the City Council.

None.

Agenda Item III.

Council to consider setting a public hearing on Resolution #09-22, accepting and appropriating up to \$6,414.59 in funding from SAU18 to support student services in the afterschool programs.

Motion - Councilor Bunker moved that the Franklin City Council schedule a public hearing on Resolution #09-22 at 6:00 pm on March 7th, 2022 to accept and appropriate up to \$6,414.59 from SAU 18 to support student services in the After School Program in title only. Seconded by Councilor Starkweather.

All in favor. Motion PASSED.

Agenda Item IV.

Council to consider setting a public hearing on Resolution #10-22, accepting and appropriating \$117,938 from the Federal Child Care Achieving Stabilization Program for costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in the parks and recreation before and after school programs.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council schedule a public hearing on Resolution #10-22 at 6:00 pm on March 7th, 2022 to accept and appropriate \$117,938 from the Federal CCASP (Child Care Achieving Stabilization Program) for the purpose of funding costs associated with the COVID 19 pandemic for the Parks and Recreation Before and After School

Program in title only. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

All in favor. Motion PASSED.

Agenda Item V.

Council to consider setting a public hearing on Resolution #11-22, appropriating up to \$20,958 from the Raymond and Betty Turcotte Expendable Trust Fund for the purchase of a rescue boat.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council schedule a public hearing date for 6:00 pm on March 7th, 2022 for Resolution #11-22, approving and expenditure of up to \$20,958 from the Raymond and Betty Turcotte Expendable Trust Fund. This expenditure will be utilized for the purchase of a new Fire Department Rescue Boat. Seconded by Councilor Starkweather.

All in favor. Motion PASSED.

Agenda Item VI.

Council to consider rescheduling the 2022 City Council meeting falling on the July 4th holiday.

Motion – Councilor Trudel moved that the Franklin City Council schedule the regularly scheduled July 4th meeting to July 11, 2022. Seconded by Councilor Dzujna.

Councilor Zink clarified that our normal July meeting that is falling on July 4th will be held on July 11.

All in favor. Motion PASSED.

Agenda Item VII.

Other Business

1. Council Appointments:

Motion – Councilor Dzujna moved that the Franklin City Council appoint Marsha Palazzolo to the Library Board of Trustees, seat LT3, term of service through January 2025. Seconded by Councilor Ribas.

All in Favor. Motion passes.

Motion – Councilor Dzujna moved that the Franklin City Council appoint Valerie Blake to the Planning Board Councilor seat, seat PB3, term of service through January 2025 term of office. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Councilor Blake abstained all others in Favor. Motion passes.

Motion – Councilor Dzujna moved that the Franklin City Council appoint Ted Starkweather to the Planning Board Alternate Councilor seat, seat PB12, term of service through January 2023 term of office. Seconded by Councilor Blake.

All in Favor. Motion passes.

Motion – Councilor Dzujna moved that the Franklin City Council appoint Richard Soucier to the Personnel Advisory Board, seat PA2, term of service through January 2024. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

All in Favor. Motion passes.

2. Committee Reports:

Finance Committee Chair/Councilor Ribas reported that the committee looked at the budget timeline and they are a little over, due to the snow. The City is looking at a Pay and Class Study update, the last one was 2014, the due date for bids is the end of February with a start date of September 2022. This data would not be available for the budget until 2024. The City is looking to potentially replace the sweeper which was purchased in 1995. The City has a deal with Burlington for a used one. We are looking at potentially excluding debt service from the cap for one year for some potential uses. The next meeting tentatively will be April 13 as a joint meeting with the school.

MSD Committee Chair/Councilor Dzujna mentioned there will be an MSD meeting on February 23 at 10:00 am at the Water Treatment Plant.

Fire Committee Chair/Councilor Starkweather reported that the committee met on January 19 and went over the hydrant ordinance. He would like to take this off the table.

Motion – Councilor Starkweather moved that the Franklin City Council take off the table Ordinance #04-21 Hydrant Ordinance. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

All in Favor. Motion passes.

Motion – Councilor Starkweather moved that Fire Chief Foss and City Manager Milner revise the ordinance per the discussion at the January 19, 2022 Fire Committee meeting and renumber the ordinance and place on the March 7, 2022 City Council Agenda for consideration to set a public hearing for the April 4, 2022 City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

All in Favor. Motion passes.

3. City Manager's Update:

- a. Contingent Grant Line Activity – \$179.76 from State of NH Sex Offender Compliance Grant, \$4,518.73 from Merrimack Valley Day Care After School and Food Program, \$75 Scholarship Funding for Parks and Rec, \$1,000 from Boomers BBQ for the toy drive, \$300 in donations for Kayak Plantings and \$1,000 from VFW for playground

improvements.

- b. Trust Fund for School Funding is at \$147.79.
- c. Welcome Kate Burton, Police Communications Center and Lisa Jones, Executive Secretary who is starting on February 28.
City Manager Milner gave a strong shout out and thank you to Sherry Ryea, Nicole Havey, Marie Creasey, Judy Bibbins and Lauraine Paquin who kept her organized through this transition and she wanted to say thank you for the work they have done.
- d. The FY2023 Budget workshop dates have been decided as follows: May 2 - budget to City Council, May 4 - School Budget Presentation, May 9, 16, 23 - Municipal Departments Presentations.
- e. Good Luck to Leo Leifester, Water Dept, who retired on 1/31/22 after 11 years of service.
- f. Congratulations to Kendall Porier, Police – FBI Certified Crisis Negotiator also includes negotiating over social media; Brandon Adams, Fire – Swift Water Rescue Technician; Mike Mussey, Fire – Swift Water Rescue Technician; Sierra Rodenhuis, Fire – Swift Water Rescue Technician and member of Central NH Hazmat Team; Dan Chapman, Fire – Fire Officer I Certification; Alex Greene, Fire – Fire Officer I Certification.
- g. City Manager Milner, FBIDC Director Jim Aberg and Mayor Brown met with Merrimack County Commissioner Trachy and County Administrator Cunningham regarding ARPA funding and how the county may help the City and have agreed on a standing bi-weekly meeting. They are planning to dole out what they are planning on doing to the cities and towns in the county over the summer. They are looking to get a feel for what we need.
- h. Next workshop meeting is 2/27/22 for all things ARPA. We are getting the \$909K but also other areas the City is getting ARPA funds from. To also talk about what we can do with the Merrimack County money.
- i. Committee Meetings for January – Fire Committee will be meeting Wednesday the 19th at 5:30 pm at the fire department. Finance will be determined after City Manager Milner talks with Finance Chair Ribas. A CIP meeting is expected this month and City Manager Milner will talk with the Chair Councilor Desrochers.
- j. City Offices are closed on Monday, January 17, 2022 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr/Civil Rights Day.
- k. City Manager Milner has some scheduled days off – 1/6, 1/7, 1/14, 1/21 in pm only and Finance Director Gaudette will be in charge during her absence.
- l. City Manager Milner thanked the Economic Development Task Force – Niel Cannon, Jim Aberg, Seth Creighton, Marty Parichand for the presentation to the City Council on January 24.
- m. Committee Meetings: MSD will meet February 23 at 10 am at the Water Treatment Plant and the Legislative will meet February 22 at 5:30 in the Library.
- n. City Offices will be closed on February 21st in observance of President's Day.

Councilor Bunker asked about the video recordings and City Manager Milner stated they are on the website.

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Councilor Dzujna asked if there is any number from Merrimack County? City Manager Milner stated no that is what they are going to figure out this summer. They will ask cities and towns for applications, like a grant process, and appropriate it in their calendar year 2023 budget which is passed in March 2023. They are not sure what they are going to dole out to each municipality. She explained what ARPA funds are for the public.

Councilor Desrochers read a portion of the Code of Conduct as he made a motion last year to use funds on roads and sidewalks of \$125K and none was to be used on Central St. He now sees money is encumbered for New Hampton Road, Central St, Peabody Place, Main St. When New Hampton Rd started the money was already in place and paved the road last winter but now sees some of the \$125K is being used there.

Last year he asked what the cost was for the Keegan Parking Lot and had not received an answer. Last month's meeting he put a second request in writing and still has no answer. This is his third request as to what was the cost of the Keegan Parking Lot and what was the balance of the funds used for?

He referred to the Solar 1 & 2 termination letter from City Attorney Fitzgerald, what is the status since he was last told it went to him on 11/1/21. It has been three months so when will this be dealt with? These things need to be taken care of so the questions don't have to keep being asked. He doesn't know what is going on or why get he get answers? We appropriate money for projects and the Council needs to know where the money goes and if there is money remaining where does that money go. The Council is responsible for the budget and if we don't look at these items and ask questions then why are we here? The questions that are asked need to be answered.

City Manager Milner spoke about her follow up log. The \$125K and it is encumbered in the 2021 budget is part of a \$668,350 encumbrance and that \$125K she hopes will do a piece of South Main St and a piece of New Hampton Rd. The plan is to do the rest of Central St as it is imperative to save the Ward I bridge. Keegan Block project was \$57,750 and is not fully expended yet as there is a decorative light and some shrubbery that still has to be finished.

You can find these appropriations online under finance in the budget. For 2021 it is on page 150 and the appropriation was moved to page 136 for roads. For 2022 it is on page 23 that the \$668,350 encumbrance is on the line for roads.

For the solar the Council voted in early November to send a letter and if the solar people don't agree we will go to court and we feel we have a good standing on that.

For the Council Meetings she is looking to go back to wired mics but wants to test them first.

Mojalaki Solar Case we just heard this morning that the Court sided with the Planning Board and now they have 30 days to appeal.

A water department vehicle was transferred to the general fund so the residual value will be posted for this year.

Steven's Mill Die House is a separate permit and that is in process.

A discussion was held previously regarding a community wood pile and the City's insurance company does not like that idea at all because of the liability of citizens using power equipment, etc. While it was a great idea the insurance company is not on board.

Councilor Desrochers thanked City Manager Milner for answering the questions.

Councilor Ribas clarified that the letter from Solar 1 & 2 went out in November but we haven't heard back yet? City Manager Milner replied that she believed it went out in December and she believes we should be hearing real soon and has a good feeling in our favor.

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Desrochers and seconded by Councilor Trudel. All in favor. Motion PASSED.

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauraine Paquin