City Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 4, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.
Franklin Lodge of Elks

Council in attendance: Mayor Jo Brown, Councilor Jay Chandler, Councilor Leigh Webb, Councilor George Dzujna, Councilor Ted Starkweather, Councilor Paul Trudel, Councilor Valerie Blake, Councilor Vince Ribas, Councilor Olivia Zink and Councilor Bob Desrochers

Absent: None

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

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order in Council Chambers at 6:01 p.m.

Salute to the Flag was led by Councilor Dzujna.
Councilor Desrochers asked for a moment of silence for the following veterans that passed away last month: Bradley Haas (US Army Military Police, Franklin Police Officer retired), David English (PFC US Army E-3, Korean war), and Michael Murphy (Petty Officer 2nd Class E-5, Electronics Technician 2nd Class ENT, US Navy 1971 – 1975 Vietnam ERA).

Public Hearings:

Resolution 11-24 authorizing a one-time retention, recruitment & referral bonus program for police department employees and appropriating $413,412 in fund balance to support the program.

The public hearing opened at 6:03 p.m.

The majority of the public comments were in support of this resolution.
Councilor Blake also read two letters into record from residents Maureen Aube and Bill Yacopucci, which can be found at the end of the minutes.

The public hearing on Resolution 11-24 closed at 6:16 p.m.

Legislative Update:
There is no update at this time and the representative was not present.

Milner stated that she would like to present some social media busters before the public comments start.

- The 1st charette on outdoor recreation leveraged their rivers and effects private partnerships with Mill City Park and the Opera House. The three main partnerships that the city has are Mill City Park, Franklin Opera House and the Franklin Outing Club. These

are all free to the public. The council is looking at these private partnerships under a 35,000' view. They all operate on city owned land/buildings and all operate under a lease with the city. Mill City Park alone includes 18 acres of land that they maintain. This includes over 26 invasive species on the land that they are taking care of instead of the city having to do it. She asked how it would look if the city were to abandon a partial project?

- As far as taxes, Milner stated that they are still under the tax cap in Franklin. If assessments go up the tax rate comes down. There are some desirable properties in Franklin, per the current market, which have driven assessments up. The CPIU is at 6.5% this year. Also, the Governor paid $338,000 of the taxes for Franklin last year as a one-time relief in state funds. This is why the taxes were lower on the last bill as well.

Milner urged residents to reach out to the assessing department with any questions about their home assessments.

<u>Comments from the Public:</u>

Mayor Brown reminded everyone that persons wishing to address the council may speak for a maximum of three minutes and no more than thirty minutes will be devoted to public commentary.

Public comments opened at 6:27 p.m.

Many residents approached the council with comments and they are outlined below:

- Jeff Perkins announced that he would like the city council to schedule a workshop meeting on December 14th to meet with the Franklin Opera House board.
- Resident Al Warner read from an email he wrote to the council, which is attached to the end of the minutes.
- A resident stated that he was excited to see all of the new businesses like, eBikes, Waterhorse Pub, and Chinburg coming to the city that are here because of Mill City Park.
- A resident thanked everyone in the city for the emergency evacuation efforts. He also encouraged the city council to meet with the Opera House board, to allow the welcome signs, and to extend the Mill City Park MOA to save the city money by not having to maintain the land.
- Many other residents came before the council to give their support on renewing the Mill City Park MOA and were in favor of allowing the city to apply for grants to help the White-Water Park. It was mentioned that the land used to be a dump before Mill City Park cleaned everything up with the use of volunteers. The majority of comments on this subject were in support, with only one request that the vote on the MOA be tabled until the newly elected council is seated at the January meeting.
- An email to the council from resident Myla Marie Danforth requesting that the vote for extending the MOA for Mill City Park be tabled until the new city council is seated was read into record. This letter is attached to the end of the minutes.

Coalition Coordinator, Stephanie Wolff, provided updates on Franklin's Partners in Prevention:

- On November 16th, Franklin's Partners in Prevention and Franklin High School hosted the first Family Engagement event with the wildlife encounters. They had about 30 students in attendance and several members of school staff. They are looking to schedule another engagement event following the holidays.

- Wolff thanked the Franklin Business Group and everyone involved in planning the Holiday Stroll. It was a great time! She also gave a shout out to Christine Dzujna and Jamie Bryant for representing FPIP and handing out about 4 gallons of hot cider.

Letters/emails were read into record by Councilor Desrochers, Councilor Blake, Councilor Dzujna, Councilor Zink, and Mayor Brown. These are all attached to the end of the minutes.

Public comments closed at 7:35 p.m.

Mayor's Update:

- Mayor Brown thanked all of the people who participated in the very quick action and recovery of the gas leak on Central Street a couple of weeks ago. Fire Chief Foss addressed concerns directly with anyone involved or who had questions. The collaboration between fire, police, municipal and state agencies was tight, professional and effective in assuring the safety of the citizens and the teamwork with all of the departments was amazing during the evacuation.
- The above was followed by the shooting of retired Police Chief Haas. There was a lot of media attention and the city held a remembrance service on November 20th.
- She had the opportunity to speak to some middle school students at the NH Veterans Cemetery who were helping to lay wreaths on the graves. She stated that she will always take the time to remember our veterans, who are also among America's greatest heroes.

City Council Acknowledgement:

Councilor Dzujna acknowledged everyone that helped with getting Christmas lighting up in the downtown, including the tree at Marceau Park, and making everything look so festive.

Councilor Webb acknowledged the Festival of Trees this year. It was another wonderful community event that was very successful and echoed Councilor Dzujna about the downtown lighting.

Councilor Blake thanked everyone who had anything to do with making the Holiday Stroll the success that it was. She stated that they also hosted their first annual window decorating contest, so she urged everyone to go downtown and take a look at the storefront windows.

Mayor Brown called for a 10-minute break at 7:43 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:53 p.m.

Agenda Item I.
Approval of Minutes.

Council to consider the minutes of the October 23rd, 2023 City Council Workshop meeting, the October 23rd, 2023 City Council Workshop nonpublic meeting, November 6th, 2023 City Council meeting, and the November 20th, 2023 City Council Workshop meeting.

Motion – Councilor Dzujna moved that the Franklin City Council approve the minutes of the October 23rd, 2023 City Council Workshop meeting, the October 23rd, 2023 City Council Workshop nonpublic meeting, November 6th, 2023 City Council meeting, and the November 20th, 2023 City Council Workshop meeting. Seconded by Councilor Ribas.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion.
Councilor Zink had a few amendments that she made to the November 6th minutes.

All in favor. Motion PASSED.

Agenda Item II.
FBIDC to present new welcoming signs for Franklin.

Motion – Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council accepts FBIDC's gift of new welcome to Franklin signage to the city and authorizes the municipal services department to assist in the placement and installation of signage. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion.

Jim Aberg stated that there were four Welcome to Franklin signs that they would like to present. They would be 4' x 6'. The FBIDC board has the funding for the signs and wouldn't cost the city anything. They raised funds separately for the signs.

There was a letter brought up about the pictures on the signs being trademarked and only usable on the 4 signs being presented. There was a discussion about whether this was something that should be revised with the company that is trademarking the pictures. Some argued that this may pose a problem and others stated that it is common business practice to put a trademark on their work.

There was also a discussion about whether the downtown sign should say Franklin Falls or just the City of Franklin.

The council discussed having FBIDC come back after getting the trademark issues squared away and looking more into the naming of Franklin Falls.

Motion – Councilor Ribas withdrew his motion to accept FBIDC's gift of new welcome to Franklin signage to the city and authorizes the municipal services department to assist in the placement and installation of signage. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any objection.
There was no objection to the withdrawn motion.

Jim Aberg asked what exactly was needed when he brings this back to the council. He acknowledged that he would have to review the trademark policy with the company who made the logo for them. He asked if the council does not want to recognize the historic district of Franklin Falls with one sign and have all signs just say "Franklin, NH".

Councilor Desrochers stated that there should not be any other names for the historical district, as it separates downtown from everyone else in Franklin.

Mayor Brown did mention a comparison in Laconia. They have Weirs Beach in Laconia as a marketing thing, but they are all still in Laconia.

Agenda Item IV. (moved above item III)
School Board Update

Superintendent LeGallo's updates were as follows:

- **State Test Results and Drop-Out Rate:** The 2022-2023 state test results from last spring are out. They saw some improvements but not enough to get off the Federal Accountability Designations of Comprehensive Support and Improvemnet School (CSI) at the elementary and middle school and Targeted Support and Improvement School (TSI) at the high school. They are continuing to implement their school improvement plans that were developed and finalized over the summer. They also received their Drop-Out rate numbers for 2023-2024 and they are at 3.72%. This is creeping up from their low of 1.51% last year, but less than the over 4% and 8% from previous years. LeGallo had a printout chart for the council, which is included at the end of the minutes.

- **High School Redesign:** LeGallo stated that he is going to have their High School Principal, Dave Levesque, join him next month to share the news of how the high school redesign work is going this year.

- **Franklin Footlight Theatre is partnering with Franklin High School in the production of the Addam's Family:** The show runs this Friday through Sunday with 4 productions at Franklin Middle School. Tickets are available online on the Opera House website.

- **School Board Member:** He would like to begin the process of replacing their outgoing School Board member, who will be the mayor starting next month.

Agenda Item III.
City Manager's Update

- Milner stated that without objection she would be setting up a workshop on the 14th with the Opera house Board. This would be at 7pm at the Lodge of Elks. There was no objection.

- The council was informed that she will have the budget reports for FY24 out to them tomorrow. The city Finance Director is out on medical leave until the end of January so Milner has been doing two jobs and plans on getting temporary help from MRI.

- Contingent Grant Line Activity – Received $2,722.05 from the Franklin Partners in Prevention Fall/Soup Festival. $865 from various donors, $225 from Franklin Savings Bank for downtown lighting, $1,000 from Benson's for youth sports scholarships and $75 for recreation scholarships.

- Trust fund for school funding – $272.55

- Thank you – Milner wanted to reiterate how proud she is of this management team and employees of the City of Franklin for how they handled opening the emergency operations center for the gasoline leak on Central Street. There is an employee of City Hall who has a sister that works at DES that happened to mention that the gentleman that came back from DES said that Franklin handled this emergency very well. She also thanked the businesses and the folks that live downtown, as they rallied together to find places for everyone to go.

- Workshops – December 18th - All things Municipal Services
  January 29th – All city departments coming to the city council just to describe their weaknesses, challenges, strengths, etc.

- Welcome Aboard - Trevor Lowder – PD
  Josh Nason – MSD (Welcome back)

- Congratulations – Sargeant Ball and Lieutenant Poirier from PD for completing the executive development certification at Roger Williams University, Chief Goldstein who received the NH Chief of Police President's Award for outstanding service, and firefighter Nate Ecker for completing his firefighter I & II certifications.

- Shout Out – Glen Morrill and his Tuesday group for transitioning into the downtown winter décor so quickly, also to the businesses and participants of the Holiday Stroll. She gave a huge shoutout to Franklin Opera House and the Tuesday group for making the downtown look like a Hallmark movie.
  She also stated that she can't thank the police department enough, as they are shorthanded, understaffed, working many hours and they still took the time and were proud to carry former Chief Haas at the funeral.

- Committee Meetings – December:
  Parks & Rec Committee – TBD
  Police Committee – 12/21 @ noon at the police department

- Media contacts – The Boston Chronicle report on the City of Franklin aired on November 8, 2023, which is available on their website still. It was very well done.

- City SPIRIT – Save the Date – The event is going to be rolled out on Saturday, April 6th, 2024 at the Bessie Rowell Community Center. More details will be coming.

- NHMA Conference - Milner attended the conference early in November and spent a lot of time on municipal/community solar. This project will have to hold for a little bit until a couple of other projects come off of the table. She does think that this will be a good thing for Franklin and she will get info and brochures from NHMA to the council before having a conversation.

- Stanley Mill Update – In the process of doing the RFQ for the qualified engineer professional, which will go out shortly so that the city can hire the person who will be responsible for overseeing the project. The first thing that person will need to do is send an RFP of the actual building demo to make sure that it does not affect any contaminants are going into the river.

- City Hall Update – The city has received a preliminary report from the architects and there will be a meeting on it with city staff and the architects. After the meeting, a workshop meeting will be scheduled to go over that with the council.

- Inaugural Meeting – This will be on January 8th, 2024 @ 6pm at the Lodge of Elks.

- City Offices Closed – City offices are closed on Friday, December 22nd at noontime, Monday, December 25th, and Monday, January 1st.

- Holiday Luncheon – It is a catered lunch by Hart's at the fire station on Friday, December 22nd at noon. She invited the mayor and council to attend.

- Milner addressed something concerning that she heard about tabling items for the new council. She reminded the public that the city is an ongoing entity and the City Council has to make decisions that move on past their term a lot. The City Council acts as a body, not necessarily the individuals that are on it. Tabling items for a new council is probably counterproductive.

<u>Agenda Item V.</u>
Council to consider Resolution 11-24 authorizing a one-time retention, recruitment & referral bonus program for Police department employees and appropriating $413,412 in fund balance to support the program.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council adopt Resolution #11-24 authorizing a one-time retention, recruitment, referral and field training officer bonus program for employees and appropriating $413,412 in fund balance to support the program. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.
A long discussion ensued about the need for this resolution.

By a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Councilor Chandler	yes	Councilor Webb	yes	Councilor Desrochers	abstained
Councilor Dzujna	yes	Councilor Blake	yes	Councilor Trudel	yes
Councilor Ribas	yes	Councilor Starkweather	yes	Councilor Zink	yes

8 in favor; 1 abstention. Motion PASSED

RESOLUTION #11-24

A Resolution Relating to a Supplemental Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2024.

In the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Three,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire adopted a budget for Fiscal Year 2024 which began July 1, 2023, **and;**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire understands the particular challenges of the current labor market and national conversation; specifically, the police department's challenges in recruiting and retaining employees as a result, **and;**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire wishes to be more competitive with other police department hiring practices in order to recruit and retain high quality employees for the police department, **and;**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire wishes to implement a referral, retention and recruitment program for all current police department open and filled positions to give the recruitment efforts another "tool in the toolbelt" for success, **and**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire wishes to fund this program through the one-time, non-lapsing appropriation of $413,412 from the City's accumulated fund balance, **Now,**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that at the scheduled meeting of the City Council on Monday, December 4, 2023 at 6pm the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire does hereby adopt resolution #11-24 authorizing a one-time retention, recruitment and referral bonus program for police department positions under the following guidelines:

Bonus Rules:
One time retention bonus of $10,000 for current full-time employees based

on FY2024 authorized position listing positions once they have been employed for at least one year

One time retention bonus of $2,500 for current part time officers with 8 hour per week average hours over the last 52 weeks

One time recruitment bonus of $20,000 for current open full-time positions to be paid as follows: $10,000 upon hire, $5,000 at the end of year 1, $5,000 at the end of year 2 (the employee signs a 3-year contract upon hire requiring the payback of the bonus if they terminate employment within the contract period)

One time referral bonus of $5,000 for any employee who refers an individual successfully to one of the full-time open positions to be paid as follows: $2,500 upon hire, $2,500 upon 1 year recruited employee's anniversary

Temporary increase in Field Training Officer pay to $5 stipend for the training of the recruits to the current open positions

Must remain active employee for the duration of the period to be eligible for bonus - no proration of bonuses.

And authorizing the following non lapsing one-time appropriation:

An increase in FY2024 revenues:

Use of Fund Balance Acct. No. 01-0-000-39399-000 – Four Hundred Thirteen Thousand Four Hundred Twelve dollars ($413,412)

And an increase in FY2024 expenditure accounts,

Retention Bonus Acct No. 01-1-302-40131-000 - Four Hundred Thirteen Thousand Four Hundred Twelve dollars ($413,412)

Agenda Item VI.
Council to consider selling miscellaneous municipal fire alarm equipment which is no longer in use.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council authorize the Fire Department Administration to sell and/or scrap the accumulated surplus municipal fire alarm system equipment for the best possible price as well as donate the *console, small bell and ticker with take up reel, and a Master Box* to the Franklin Firefighters Association to set up a small-scale functioning system in the Firefighter Museum. Seconded by Councilor Starkweather.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.
No discussion ensued.

All in favor. Motion PASSED

Agenda Item VII.
Council to consider renewal of Memorandum of Agreement with Mill City Park.

Motion - Councilor Dzujna moved that the Franklin City Council re-affirm the 9/13/2017 memorandum of agreement between the City and Mill City Park through 9/30/2027. Seconded by Councilor Blake.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.

There was a small discussion about the agreement. Councilor Blake did state that she is not a member of the Mill City Park board, so this should not affect her right to vote on this. Mayor Brown also reiterated that this is just an agreement that just need to be renewed and is like any other agreement with other city partnerships on city owned property.

Milner explained that on the memorandum of agreement it states that positions that signed the agreement can actually extend it. She did feel it was necessary to bring to the council because she feels like two of the positions are occupied by different people, but technically the agreement could move forward with just the signatures.

She does think that for the Land & Water Conservation Fund grant, it is necessary to have this in place, as they will be looking at it. She stated that she would appreciate a vote on this from the council. It does not need to be reaffirmed by the council, but would be a stronger agreement for grants if approved by the council.

Motion - Councilor Desrochers moved that the Franklin City Council postpone the vote on the Mill City Park MOA to the City Council Workshop meeting on December 14th, 2023. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

5 in favor; 4 opposed. Motion PASSED

Agenda Item VIII.
Council to consider authorizing the City to apply for 2 Land & Water Conservation Fund grants for the white-water park.

Motion - Councilor Trudel moved that the Franklin City Council authorize the City Manager to apply for (2) $500,000 grants through Land & Water Conservation Fund for the construction of (2) water features in the river at Mill City Park. Seconded by Councilor Dzujna.

Milner let the council know that the ask is a little bit different than the two water features at Mill City Park. It is a $500,000 grant for water feature number 2 at MCP and a $500,000 grant for the next phase of the land portion at MCP.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council amend the motion to say one $500,000 grant for the water feature and one $500,000 grant for the land feature. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.

A small discussion ensued and Milner confirmed that grant matching funds would be with CDFA tax credits, the current value that the city has in TIF, and on the land portion it is a private donation match and an in-kind match, meaning some kind of donation labor. This would mean no current taxpayer dollars.

Milner stated that Land & Water Conservation has already walked through this grant and the city has been approved to apply.

8 in favor; 1 abstention. Motion PASSED

<u>Agenda Item IX.</u>
Council to consider setting public hearing on Ordinance 06-24 regarding the elected and appointed officials code of conduct.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council set a public hearing for 6pm on Monday, January 8, 2024, regarding the adoption of Ordinance 06-24, Code of Conduct for Elected Officials and Appointed Board Members. (In title only) Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.
No discussion ensued.

All in favor. Motion PASSED

<u>Agenda Item X.</u>
Council to consider setting a public hearing on Resolution 12-24 accepting and appropriating $500,000 Community Development Block grant funds for the Healthfirst project.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council set a public hearing on Monday, January 8, 2024 at 6pm regarding resolution 12-24 accepting & appropriating $500,000 Community Development Block Grant Public Facility Funds received through Community Development Finance Authority for the Healthfirst Renovation/Addition Project. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.
No discussion ensued.

All in favor. Motion PASSED

Councilor Ribas read Resolution 12-24 to the public.

RESOLUTION #12-24

A Resolution Relating to a Supplemental Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2024.

In the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Four,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin has adopted a budget for Fiscal Year 2024 which began July 1, 2023, and;

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire supported, at their June 5, 2023 City Council meeting, an application through Community Development Block Grant Public Facility Funds for Healthfirst Family Care renovation/addition project, and;

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Franklin acknowledges receipt of a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of $500,000 from the Community Development Finance Authority for the Healthfirst Renovation/Addition Project, **Now**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that at the scheduled meeting of the City Council on Monday, January 8, 2024, the City Council of the City of Franklin, New Hampshire does hereby adopt resolution 12-24 accepting the community development block grant in the amount of $500,000 from the Community Development Finance Authority and authorize the following non-lapsing appropriation:

An increase in revenue:

Federal Grants – CDBG Healthfirst Acct No. 14-9-012-33110-467 – Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($500,000),

And an increase in expenditure:

Federal Grant Buildings – CDBG Healthfirst Account No. 14-9-012-40720-467 in the amount of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($500,000).

<u>Agenda Item XI.</u>
Council to consider MOU with New England Mountain Bike Association for trail development at the Veterans Memorial Ski Area.

Motion - Councilor Dzujna moved that the Franklin City Council approve the revised Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Franklin, Franklin Outing Club and New England Mountain Bike Association for the construction of recreational trails at the Veteran's Memorial Ski Area. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.
A small discussion ensued.

All in favor. Motion PASSED

<u>Agenda Item XII.</u>
Council to consider disposition of tax deeded property.

Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council authorize the City Manager to dispose of the following properties; Map/Lot# 117-268-000 163 Central Street (direct sale) and Map/Lot# 135-115-000 46 Orchard Street (bid of $10,000). Seconded by Councilor Blake.

Mayor Brown asked if there was any discussion on this motion.
Councilor Zink asked if 46 Orchard Street would need to be demolished and rebuilt due to the conditions. Milner confirmed that was correct.

All in favor. Motion PASSED

<u>Agenda Item XIII.</u>

Other Business:

1. **Mayor & Council Appointments:**

   Motion - Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council appoint Yama Ploskonka to the Zoning Board of Adjustment Committee, seat ZBA2, term of service to January 2027, appoint Debbie Davis to the Zoning Board of Adjustment Committee as an Alternate, seat ZBA6, term of service to January 2027, reappoint Justin Hanscom to the Concord Regional Solid Waste/Resource Recovery Cooperative, term of service to December 2026, and reappoint Rocky Marsh to the Concord Regional Solid Waste/Resource Recovery Cooperative as an Alternate, term of service to December 2026. Seconded by Councilor Dzujna.

   All in favor. Motion PASSED

2. **Committee Reports:**

   There were no committee reports at this time.

3. **Late Items:**

   There were no late items.

4. Nonpublic Session Needed:

Milner stated that they were ready to enter into a nonpublic session.

Motion – Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council enter into nonpublic according to RSA 91-A:3, II (l) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present. Seconded by Councilor Trudel.

By a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Councilor Blake	**yes**	**Councilor Desrochers**	**yes**	**Councilor Starkweather**	**yes**
Councilor Webb	**yes**	**Councilor Dzujna**	**yes**	**Councilor Trudel**	**yes**
Councilor Chandler	**yes**	**Councilor Ribas**	**yes**	**Councilor Zink**	**yes**

All in favor. Motion PASSED

Entered into nonpublic at 9:59 p.m.

Motion – Councilor Zink moved to leave nonpublic session and return to public session. Seconded by Councilor Chandler.

All in favor. Motion PASSED

Public Session reconvened at 10:20 p.m.

Motion — Councilor Zink moved to seal the minutes. Seconded by Councilor Ribas.

By a roll call vote.

Roll Call:

Councilor Blake	**yes**	**Councilor Desrochers**	**yes**	**Councilor Starkweather**	**yes**
Councilor Webb	**yes**	**Councilor Dzujna**	**yes**	**Councilor Trudel**	**yes**
Councilor Chandler	**yes**	**Councilor Ribas**	**yes**	**Councilor Zink**	**yes**

All in favor. Motion PASSED

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Zink and seconded by Councilor Chandler. All in favor. Motion PASSED.

The meeting adjourned at 10:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa A. Jones
Executive Secretary

December 4, 2023

To: Councilors of Wards 1, 2, and 3

Re: **Resolution #11-24**

From: Maureen D. Aube, Ward 3

19 Mountain View Drive, Franklin

603-520-2523

Even though I reside in Ward 3, I believe that all of you represent me. The decisions you make impact all the residents of the City of Franklin.

I request that all city councilors approve **Resolution #11-24** to release $413,412 in fund balance to support authorizing a one-time retention, recruiting and referral bonus to the Franklin Police Department's employees.

In addition, I request that you and the incoming council make it a priority to address the immense salary inequities of our city employees – police, fire fighters and teachers. This will help in retaining the above-mentioned who contribute so much to our city.

Maureen D. Aube, Ward 3

*{**This paragraph not to be read at the meeting:** This has been formatted with a larger font and space between paragraphs, to make it easier to be read aloud by another person. It would not normally be three pages long. It has been timed, at a normal pace, to be under the 3-minute maximum allotted for individual comment.}*

Testimony to Franklin City Council regarding Resolution 11-24

From: Bill Yacopucci, Ward III Resident

Date: December 4, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding this issue. Work has prevented my attendance in person.

I believe I can provide some perspective on the current state of employment at the Franklin Police Department. I was a police officer for Franklin in the late 1980s and early 1990s and there are parallels between now and then.

Franklin had the lowest starting pay in the area. We always had several openings for full-time officers. And many of the officers we did have were only with us for a year or two. They used Franklin to get their foot in the door for law enforcement.

Compared to the smaller communities around us, we had a higher call volume that provided officers with good experience. But all too often they would take that experience - after our footing the bill for their academy certification - and go elsewhere.

Since the age of 14 I had been part of a Police Explorer program that existed at the time. For Franklin, there was no time to waste - I was sworn in as a part-time officer on my 18th birthday. Though I was enrolled in college full-time, I commuted back to Franklin to do several night shifts a week – working 25 to 30 hours on average. Summertime, I worked about 80 hours a week between patrols and special details.

Being young and dumb I ate it up. I was happy and proud to serve my community. But this is not sustainable. Even if an officer is willing to put in overtime; too much and it will eventually affect their mental acuity and alertness – two important factors in a job with often-high consequences.

I recall working 30 straight days without a day off. I vividly remember once waking up at 3am – behind the wheel of my patrol car - wildly fishtailing in the snow, barely recovering before heading off an embankment. Fortunately, the adrenaline rush from avoiding near-disaster kept me awake for the rest of the shift.

That was just one of many near misses I and my fellow officers experienced. These are nothing to brag about. The public only hears about them when one goes really sideways.

Fast-forward to today. Imagine that exhaustion - and you must respond to an armed, barricaded subject intent on killing people. As the last month has shown, you don't always get a chance to process one tragedy, before the next comes along.

One key difference between now and then: Back then we had a much larger part-time officer contingent than today. Just as fire departments have experienced over the last few decades, people must commute further for regular employment. This makes people less willing and available to fill part-time service needs in their communities. The void that we filled then, today falls more heavily on the full-time officer staff.

I have had the pleasure of interacting with many of Franklin's current officers and they are a fine group of professionals. I see their dedication to their job and community. But that can only go so far. Officers are like any other citizen, they have loved ones, responsibilities, and expenses.

In my estimation there is no adequate amount of compensation for what the officers of today are asked to do. No one becomes a cop to get rich. That being said, there is such a thing as adequate compensation - and our community falls short.

The incentives outlined in this proposal will not be the highest in the area, but they show appreciation and understanding for the men and women of law enforcement and can go a long way toward retaining good officers. Dedication is a two-way street. While we may not be able to offer the most, we must do what we can.

Even for those who choose to ignore what an officer faces - and are concerned only about budgets - there is something to like here. These incentives will likely pay for themselves simply by reducing the amount of overtime paid for shifts that would normally be straight time.

Having a professional police department is not a given, it must be cultivated.

al.warner@outlook.com

From: Al Warner
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 4:29 PM
To: Gdzujna@franklinnh.org; Jay Chandler (JChandler@franklinnh.org); tstarkweather@franklinnh.org; ozink@franklinnh.org; vribas@franklinnh.org; rdesrochers@franklinnh.org; lwebb@franklinnh.org; vblake@franklinnh.org; ptrudel@franklinnh.org
Subject: Dec 4, 2023 Agenda Items 7 & 8

Hello,

I wanted to address the MOA and the two grants to be discussed tonight in agenda items 7 and 8. According to the packet, the MOA in item 7 is to facilitate the grants to be applied for in item 8. My concern is with any obligations, implicit or otherwise that may pertain to the two grants. I would like to know what matching funds, if any, may be required by those grants and the total estimated cost of work to be covered by those grant funds. Although matching funds may not be required, any costs beyond the funding supplied by the grants would represent an obligation to expend funds. Do we have funds budgeted for said work or should this be part of the discussion on whether to apply?

At first glance, an offer for "free" money is attractive, but it can carry its own burden. I call to your attention to the Trestle situation and wonder if we will hear an update on how the City will be able to fund Franklin's 20% of the solution? It would be reckless to proceed at full speed into one situation without reasonable assurances that the first is covered.

Al Warner
al.warner@outlook.com
Ward 3
Franklin, NH

Gmail

Myla Everett <robamieva@gmail.com>

City Council Letter

1 message

Marie Danforth <mmariedanforth@gmail.com>
To: Mom <robamieva@gmail.com>

Tue, Dec 5, 2023 at 12:15 AM

Thank you Madame Mayor and Councilors,

I respectfully and strongly encourage the City Council to table the vote on the Memorandum of Agreement with the Mill City Park until the incoming City Council is in place.

The incoming City Council will be responsible for any decisions made tonight by the sitting City Council. This is a highly controversial topic for the City of Franklin. The outcome of this decision (for or against) will most assuredly produce pushback from residents.

The incoming City Council will be left to address this pushback. How can the new City Council defend a decision they were not involved in making? Considering the extreme controversy on both sides of this issue, shouldn't the citizens of

Franklin be involved in this decision?

In addition, I want to remind the City Council that anyone on the City Council involved with the management of Mill City Park should recuse themselves from any vote involving the Mill City Park.

Thank you for considering my views on this agenda item.

Myla Marie Danforth

Myla Everett

City Council Meeting 12/4/2023 – Public Comment

Dear Mayor Brown, City Council and City Manager Milner,

I apologize for not being present at tonight's meeting to engage in public comment myself. Unfortunately, I had emergency surgery last week and have been put on bedrest. However, be assured, I am doing my best to stay abreast of current events. I would like to voice my concern for the "MOU's" included on the agenda this evening. I would request they be tabled as I feel with 2 new councilors, a new mayor and different committee assignments, the residents would be best served enjoying continuity. These agreements will also benefit the non-profits involved as it will encourage the establishment of rapports with the newly elected.

The current "Commitment for Continued Collaboration" between the City of Franklin, FBIDC and Mill City Park was expired in September of 2022 and while a well-written document, its active use exposed some limitations and omissions that require address in order to be a truly collaborative agreement between the three parties.

I would also suggest the City Council review the language of the City Charter Chapter 77, Planning Board. The language within the charter supports the economic development that is currently being mis-handled by City Manager Judie Milner. All economic development, by charter law, should be discussed among this specific committee under the rules and regulations ratified to shield the City of Franklin from liability and to oversee that ethical behavior is maintained. The current "Economic Development Task Force" privately formed by City Manager Judie Milner, exposes not only the individuals on this unvetted entity, but also the taxpayer and those we hope to engage in future economic relationships with. Some of the specific rules of the Planning Board as required by our charter are absent from the "Economic Development Task Force". Those are that all members be residents and also the requirement of regularly scheduled meeting and the provision of minutes. To dismiss any forthcoming argument that The Economic Development Task Force is required to maintain a level of "secrecy" as described by a member of this team, to protect potential investors. I would remind all who echo that sentiment that is why we have non-public sessions. The City Charter Chapter 77-11 states "The Board shall have the authority to make such investigations, maps, reports and recommendations in connection therewith relating to the planning and development of the city as it deems advisable. It shall be the duty of the Board to consult with and advise public officials and agencies, public utility companies, civic, educational, professional, research and other organizations and citizens in relation to the protecting or carrying out of the Master Plan and to make recommendations relating to the development of the city." This language not only invalidates the existence of Judie Milner's Task Force but advises the Council that your City Manager has been operating outside her scope. Please make arrangements to address this immediately.

Finally, with regard to the mayor and councilor appointments listed in today's agenda, I would ask that you follow the charter and leave those appointments to the year they expire, 2024. It is a gross overstep of authority and will certainly cause problems for all involved. Let's end things on a good note.

Desiree McLaughlin
Mayor-Elect

Gmail

Valerie Blake <vplblake@gmail.com>

Fwd: December vote on MCP

1 message

Valerie Blake <VBlake@franklinnh.org>
To: Valerie Blake <vplblake@gmail.com>

Mon, Dec 4, 2023 at 9:18 AM

Valerie P. Blake, Ward 3 Councilor
6 Dumont Avenue
Franklin, NH 03235
603.671.7353 H
603.674.8812 C

From: Kathleen Lauer-Rago <TXKATLR@msn.com>
Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 3:55:57 PM
To: Valerie Blake <VBlake@franklinnh.org>
Subject: December vote on MCP

You don't often get email from txkatlr@msn.com. Learn why this is important

Councilor Blake,
I am writing to ask you to recuse yourself from any votes next week regarding the Mill City Park since you are on the Board of Directors of the Park.
Thank you,
Kathy Rago
Ward 3

Sent from Mail for Windows

George Dzujna

From: Dan Trombly <dant8428@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 8:34 AM
To: George Dzujna
Subject: Mill city park

[You don't often get email from dant8428@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

Dear Mr. Dzujne
I encourage you to vote no on any matters to do with Mill city park at this time. We as tax payers need our employees working on other issues at this time.

Thank you

Dan Trombly
PO Box 571
6Webster Ave
Franklin,NH 03235
Dant8428@gmail.com
802-535-5003 C

Compose

From: Gary Auger <christianrepair@msn.com>
Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 7:55:35 AM
To: Leigh Webb <LWebb@franklinnh.org>; Valerie Blake <VBlake@franklinnh.org>; Paul Trudel <PTrudel@franklinnh.org>
Subject: The renewing of the memorandum of agreement with MCP

Some people who received this message don't often get email from christianrepair@msn.com. Learn why this is important

To My Councilors

This is Debbie Auger of ward 3, I'm asking that the vote on renewing of the memorandum of agreement with MCP be p people are sworn in in January. I feel this is an important vote and that the outgoing councilors should not vote on this, The want some changes and I'm asking that you let the people that the city elected make this decision.

I also know that this is not a vote that Councilor Blake should be a part of at all.

P.S I would like this read into the minutes of the city council meeting.

Thank you for your time
Debbie Auger

postpone until
city has 5 ty

December 4, 2023

To: Councilors of Wards 1, 2, and 3

Re: **MOA between the City and Mill City Park**

From: Maureen D. Aube, Ward 3

19 Mountain View Drive, Franklin

.603-520-2523

Even though I reside in Ward 3, I believe that all of you represent me. The decisions you make impact all the residents of the City of Franklin.

I have been a resident of Franklin since 1968. Sadly, I have witnessed its economic decline which has severely impacted our city's infrastructure, municipal departments, municipal services and schools. Now, I am witnessing its regrowth in the downtown area – all due to the Mill City Park. I want this re-growth to continue.

I request that all city councilors **re-affirm the 9/13/2017 MOV between the City and Mill City Park through 9/30/2027.**

Maureen D. Aube, Ward 3

Dear Councilors and Mayor Brown:

I hoped to be able to attend tonight's City Council meeting in order to speak up in support of the renewal of the City's Memorandum of Agreement with Mill City Park, but I am unable to attend due to a prior engagement. I hope you will all take the time to read this, and perhaps to share my thoughts with those who are able to attend the meeting in person.

For those who I have not yet had the pleasure to meet, my name is Frank Genus. I am an attorney and father of six children (2 of whom were born right here in Franklin at our home on Beech Street!). I moved my law practice and my family to Franklin from Philadelphia three years ago.

We had many choices when we were looking for a new home in New Hampshire in the Fall of 2020. We considered homes in several cities and towns, such as Portsmouth, Exeter, New Durham, Wolfeboro, and Jaffrey. We proudly chose Franklin as our forever home for several reasons, including its beauty, the ease of access to outdoor activities, its charming and walkable downtown, its impressive history, its many long-time residents, and its fierce sense of civic pride. My wife literally broke out in tears as we drove over the bridge onto downtown Central Street to place a bid on our new home, as she immediately recognized this City as the place where she wanted to continue to raise our family.

Even more important to our decision, however, was what we believed was the commitment of the City and the residents to a revitalization based on community and family. So much urban renewal these days, at least where we are from, is based solely around nightlife and young, single professionals who will come and go. We strongly believe the planned Mill City Park is an important cornerstone project that will lead to increased investment and interest in the city, leading in turn to stronger businesses, residents, families, and community involvement.

Indeed, it already has! We've watched with pride and excitement as the continuing development and buzz around Mill City Park has spurred on further investment and development in Franklin. We've been delighted to see the new restaurants, businesses, and apartments moving in as work on the park continues, and more importantly, how those new folks are working closely with those whose families and businesses have been here for generations to better our City.

We are looking forward to the park's completion (especially the features designed for children and teens, like the water play areas, natural play areas, and bike pump track), and we are hoping for a downtown full of small, mom-and-pop businesses and services to which our children can walk and patronize with their friends as they grow, just like my wife and I were able to do when we were young. We hope the Council will renew the Memorandum to allow the folks behind Mill City Park and the rest of the City to move forward together on this important project.

Yours truly,

Frank Genus

December 4th, 2023

Franklin City Council
316 Central St
Franklin, NH 03235

Dear Council Members,

We are writing to express our support to renew the agreement between the City of Franklin and Mill City Park.

We believe progress on the park needs to continue for the future of the city, its businesses, and its citizens. We also believe it would be foolhardy for the city not to extend the agreement as the city would have to assume the costs of maintenance and stewardship on the land at a time when the budget is already strained.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Damon and Megan Lewis (ward 3)
Vulgar Brewing Company

T: 603.333.1439 | E: hello@vulgarbrewing.com | A: 378 Central Street, Franklin, NH 03235

Good Evening
Bob Lucas, Ward I

Please include in minutes (3pg)

THANK YOU MADAM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILLORS, CITY MANAGER, FELLOW CITIZENS AND OTHERS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL.

I'D LIKE TO ADDRESS TWO ISSUES....

1. I SUPPORT SIGNING THE MOU BETWEEN THE WHITE WATER PARK AND THE CITY OF FRANKLIN AND URGE ITS RENEWAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. PERSONALLY, I DON'T SEE A DOWNSIDE. WE'VE BEEN ASSURED THAT NO TAXPAYERS MONEY WILL BE USED FOR THE PROJECT, THAT GRANTS WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO BE AWARDED WHEN THE PARTNERSHIP EXISTS, AND THAT THE COUNCILLOR WHO HAD A DUAL ROLE HAS RESIGNED FROM THE WWP BOARD. NO NEED FOR RECUSAL.

2. TONIGHTS AGENDA INCLUDES A DISCUSSION ABOUT NEW WELCOME SIGNS. I'D LIKE TO SHARE A STORY WITH YOU AND A PLEA FOR SUPPORT. OVER 11 YEARS AGO AFTER MOVING TO THIS GREAT CITY, I WAS DOING A LITTLE GOOGLING, ANXIOUS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FRANKLIN. I CAME ACROSS PICTURES OF TWO SIGNS THAT APPEARED TO BE FROM THE 1930's AND WERE LIKELY ERECTED ALONG RT. 3 COMING INTO AND LEAVING FRANKLIN. I HAVE CIRCULATED PICTURES AS THEY ARE WORTH 1000 WORDS. I ASKED AROUND TO SEE IF THESE MIGHT STILL EXIST AND WITH THE HELP OF LEIGH WEBB THE WERE LOCATED ! THEY WERE MOVED TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR SAFEKEEPING BUT REMAIN THE PROPERTY OF THE CITY AND ITS RESIDENTS. UPON LOCATING THEM, I SHARED THIS NES WITH THE THEN CITY MANAGER, ELIZABETH DRAGON. I'VE ALSO SPOKEN WITH MS. MILNER ON AT LEAST TWO OCCASIONS ALONG WITH A FEW EMAILS SEEKING SUPPORT IN REERECTING THESE SIGNS SOMEWHERE DOWNTOWN FOR THEIR HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF A LARGER "AUDIENCE". I'VE ALSO DISCUSSED THIS WITH JIM ABERG FROM FBIDC AND HE AND HIS TEAM SUPPORT THIS AS PART OF THE LARGER SIGN INITIATIVE. THESE SIGNS CAN BE MOUNTED IN SUCH A WAY TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD OF VANDALISM. I BELIEVE THAT RE-ERECTING THESE SIGNS TIES RIGHT IN WITH DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION. TONIGHT, I ASK YOUR SUPPORT IN FACILITATING THE PUBLIC WORKS STAFF AND TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE OFFER TO FUND THE PROJECT UP TO $500 ADVANCED BY THE FBIDC.

3. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, CONSIDERATION AND ANTICIPATED SUPPORT.

TO YOU WHO HAVE VISITED US:-
WE HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED YOUR VISIT WITH US AND THAT WE MAY PART AS FRIENDS. MAY SUCH PLEASANT MEMORIES OF OUR CITY EXIST WITH YOU THAT WE MAY HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME YOU BACK. GOOD LUCK TO YOU TILL WE MEET AGAIN.
CITY OF FRANKLIN, N. H.
Come Again!
Franklin
Chamber of Commerce.

THE CITY OF FRANKLIN
GREETS YOU
BIDE AWHILE WITH US. OBSERVE THE BEAUTY AND ADVANTAGES OF OUR NATURAL SURROUNDINGS. ACQUAINT YOURSELF WITH OUR AIMS FOR HOMES, CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, INDUSTRIES, BUSINESS AND A HAPPY AND USEFUL LIFE. WHILE YOU ARE WITH US AND WHEN YOU GO AWAY, PONDER ON OUR MOTTO:-
"WE STRIVE AMONG THE COMMON THINGS OF LIFE TO REACH THE EVERLASTING RIGHT"

Franklin Reading Assessment Cohort Scores
% Proficient

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11
Class of 2032	4%						No Testing	No Testing	
Class of 2031	15%	19%							
Class of 2030	23%	7%	20%						
Class of 2029	*	23%	27%	32%					
Class of 2028		*	27%	25%	35%				
Classof 2027			*	32%	26%	28%			
Class of 2026				*	35%	31%			
Class of 2025					*	37%			
Class of 2024						*			32%
Class of 2023									36%
Class of 2022									37%

*19-20 no testing Covid

22-23 test scores

Franklin Math Assessment Cohort Scores
% Proficient

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11
Class of 2032	10%						no testing	no testing	
Class of 2031	24%	15%							
Class of 2030	20%	6%	10%						
Class of 2029	*	10%	11%	17%					
Class of 2028		*	2%	10%	16%				
Classof 2027			*	11%	18%	17%			
Class of 2026				*	13%	20%			
Class of 2025					*	20%			
Class of 2024						20%			5%
Class of 2023									10%
Class of 2022									29%

* 19-20 no testing Covid

22-23 test scores