

**FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 4, 2012**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on Wednesday, January 4, 2012 at the Franklin Municipal Building, 355 East Central Street, Franklin, Massachusetts. Councilors present; Andrew Bissanti, Robert Dellorco, Glenn Jones, Matt Kelly, Thomas Mercer, Judith Pfeffer, Tina Powderly, Jeff Roy, Robert Vallee. Administrative personnel in attendance: Jeffrey Nutting; Town Administrator, Mark Cerel; Town Attorney and Maxine Kinhart; Assistant to the Town Administrator.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Vallee called the meeting to order at 7:00PM with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: NONE

ANNOUNCEMENTS: ► Councilor Pfeffer asked Town Administrator Nutting to discuss the Council's use of Town-issued laptops. Mr. Nutting explained that nine laptops had been purchased from the Technology Capital Budget for the use of the councilors. Mr. Nutting explained the purchase price of the laptops roughly equaled the annual amount of money the Town spends on paper, ink toner and man-hours needed to produce the Council Agenda and supporting documents that can run 30 - 40 pages in length. Mr. Nutting noted that not only was the use of laptops more efficient, but also more environmentally friendly. Councilor Pfeffer applauded the use of the laptops, but questioned the timing of the purchase when raises have not been given to municipal employees. Councilor Pfeffer declined the laptop designated for her use and requested the laptop be donated to another department. The Town Administrator said he would reassign the laptop to another area. ► Chairman Vallee announced that the Town Council meeting is recorded by Comcast, Verizon and Franklin Matters.

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: NONE

CITIZEN COMMENTS: NONE

APPOINTMENTS: *Master Plan Committee - Amendments* MOTION by Councilor Jones to Amend appointments to the committee to include Gene Grella and Nathan Carlucci **SECONDED** by Councilor Powderly. **DISCUSSION:** The Town Administrator said that with these two additions to the committee, there are now 13 Committee Members. Mr. Nutting said there was still time to apply to be a Committee Member and hoped that he would have more gender diversity on the Committee. Councilor Vallee noted that Steve Whalen had recently resigned from the committee due to a recent surgery that Mr. Whalen had undergone. **VOTE to Approve: Unanimous.**

Master Plan Committee - David Dobrzynski, Christine Apicella, Gregory Rondeau, Norm Ristaino, Gene Grella and Nathan Carlucci: Motion by Councilor Pfeffer to ratify the appointment of David Dobrzynski, Christine Apicella, Gregory Rondeau, Norm Ristaino, Gene Grella and Nathan Carlucci to the Master Plan Committee **SECONDED** by Councilor Powderly. **VOTE to Approve: Yes – Unanimous.**

HEARINGS: NONE

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS: NONE

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS: NONE

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: *Economic Development Committee* – Councilor Jones said the Committee is scheduled to meet on February 7, 2012, and has also discussed having an Economic Strategic Plan Meeting on February 29, 2012 in hopes of devising a plan in partnership with the Master Plan Committee. The meetings will be open to anyone who would like to attend.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

Resolution 12-01: Acceptance of Gift – Red Brick School - Councilor Pfeffer read the resolution to gratefully accept a \$1000.00 donation from the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School and to thank BFCCPS for their continued support of the Red Brick School. **MOTION** by Councilor Powderly to move Resolution 12-01 **SECONDED** by Councilor Jones. **DISCUSSION:** Mr. Nutting explained the Town has a year-to-year lease with the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School. BFCCPS donates to the Town approximately 50% of the cost of the electricity and heat needed to run the building. The Town covers the remaining 50% of heat/electricity costs. The Town Administrator said BFCCPS only uses the Red Brick School a few hours each afternoon during school days and the Town would have to heat the building in the winter anyway. Councilor Kelly sited the historical value of the Red Brick School as the longest running schoolhouse in the United States. **VOTE: Yes – Unanimous.**

Resolution 12-02 Acceptance of Gift – Council on Aging – Councilor Pfeffer read the resolution to gratefully accept a generous donation of \$684.22 received from two eighth grade students from the Benjamin Franklin Classical Public Charter School who raised the money by putting on a talent show. This donation was for the benefit of the Council on Aging. **MOTION** by Councilor Powderly to move Resolution 12-02 **SECONDED** by Councilor Jones. **VOTE to Approve: Yes – Unanimous.**

Bylaw Amendment 11-666 Changes to 185-5 Zoning Map, Biotechnology Uses Overlay Zoning District 2nd Reading – **MOTION** by Councilor Powderly to waive the reading **SECONDED** by Councilor Jones. **VOTE to Approve: Yes – Unanimous.** **MOTION** by Councilor Jones to adopt Bylaw Amendment 11-666 **SECONDED** by Councilor Kelly. **ROLL CALL: Bissanti-Yes, Dellorco-Yes, Jones-Yes, Kelly-Yes, Mercer-Yes, Pfeffer-Yes, Powderly-Yes, Roy-Yes, Vallee-Yes. VOTE: 9 – 0 – 0**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT: ► Mr. Nutting recognized Norma Collins for her hard work and dedication as a Public Procurement Officer. Ms. Collins is credited with saving the Town “dollars and cents” during the 15 years of her service. ► Mr. Nutting also announced the Grand Opening of Hamilton Storage. Mr. Nutting sited the jobs and economy boost that the new company will hopefully bring to Franklin. ► Mr. Nutting is currently meeting with Department Heads to begin the budget process. ► The Town has spent \$60,000 of the Snow/Ice Budget so far this season. Mr. Nutting

was hopeful that if the mild weather continued the Town would be able to catch up on several projects including removing tree limbs, repairing signs and cleaning catch basins.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: ► Councilor Roy asked that Remote Participation be put on the Agenda to hopefully enact the use of technology that would allow for long-distance participation in Council Meetings as well as Committee Meetings. ► Councilor Pfeffer asked about giving Franklin residents and Veterans preference for Town employment opportunities. The Town Administrator said the policy of Human Resources is to first promote from within and then to hire Franklin residents, where qualified. Councilor Pfeffer asked the Town Administrator to look into having this policy “in writing”. ► Councilor Jones asked Mr. Nutting to conduct a cost analysis of the savings attributed to going “paperless”. Councilor Jones said he would like to have actual numbers available for the public to see the validity of investing Town funds on the laptops. ► Councilor Dellorco clarified with the Town Administrator that the laptops are Town property, and must be returned by each councilor to the Town at the point they are no longer on the Town Council. ► Councilor Mercer also applauded Norma Collins and said they worked together on at least 3 or 4 school projects and Ms. Collins was always able to keep the process running smoothly. Councilor Mercer also provided an update on the New Franklin High School Project. The High School Building Committee will be available to any and all groups for presentations of information pertaining to the new model of the high school. Councilor Mercer wished to thank the Project Manager and Architect for working so diligently on adjustments and negotiations with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The state reimbursement rate was recently raised to 59.52% for the project. Councilor Vallee asked about the rationale of tearing down the existing field house. Councilor Mercer explained that the MSBA would not reimburse the town for any costs associated with the renovation of the existing field house. Councilor Mercer said the field house has structural issues whose price to repair would be insurmountable. He also said the new facility would have a gymnasium whose square footage would be the equivalent of the existing field house. Councilor Mercer projected the following time frames: On January 25, 2012 the MSBA Board will vote on the project. If the project passes the vote, the Town will have 120 days to fund the project. With this in mind, the Building Committee will come to the Council on February 2, 2012 to request a Debt Exclusion be put to ballot with the hope that a Town vote will occur in late March 2012. If the Debt Exclusion is passed, Councilor Mercer expects construction to begin by September or October 2012 with a project completion date of Fall 2014. ► Councilor Bissanti invited fellow councilors to tour Franklin High School with him at 9:30AM on January 6, 2012. ► Councilor Powderly agreed with Councilor Pfeffer regarding the laptops improving efficiency, but also declined the use of the laptop and would instead use her own personal laptop for Council business. Councilor Powderly echoed Councilor Mercer’s sentiments praising all those who are involved on the New High School Project. Councilor Powderly reminded viewers that a Budget Workshop is scheduled for the following Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at 7:00PM in Council Chambers and everyone is welcome to attend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: NONE

ADJOURN: MOTION by Councilor Mercer to adjourn **SECONDED** by Councilor Kelly. **VOTE to Approve: Unanimous.** Meeting adjourned at 7:40PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jan Brecht, Recording Secretary