

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING AND 2011 INAUGURAL
JANUARY 3, 2011**

In Attendance

Councilor Clarenbach, Councilor Boyd, Councilor Starkweather, Councilor LeBlanc, Councilor Feener, Councilor Audet, Councilor Bowers, Councilor Sharon, Councilor Andreozzi, Mayor Merrifield, City Manager Dragon and City Solicitor Fitzgerald.

Mayor Merrifield welcomed everyone. The Franklin Fire Department Color Guard presented the flags and the Franklin State Champion Cheerleaders led in The Salute to the Flag.

Mayor Merrifield, in honor of the Champion Cheerleaders, declared this day, January 3, 2011 as Franklin Cheerleader Day. Mayor Merrifield commented that four out of the last five years the Franklin Cheerleaders have won the State championship and each year there are new girls that join the team.

The Serendipity Singer sang God Bless America and the National Anthem.

Public Hearing

Ordinance #03-11 – an ordinance concerning the unlawful sale and possession of illegal smoking products in the City of Franklin.

Mayor Merrifield opened the public hearing. Representative Dennis Reed addressed the Mayor and Council stating he is the co-sponsor of a bill in the House with Representative Sue Emerson banning the sale of these drugs and he stated he is still learning about them but knows they are not a good thing. Representative Reed advised that there was a business in Franklin that was selling the drug referred to as “K2” or “Spice” and he visited the business owner and had him show him what was being sold and this business owner in Franklin has since removed the product from his shelves. Representative Reed further commented that he understands the drug is still being sold in Tilton. Mrs. Kathy Russo, resident and School Board Chair spoke in support of the bill.

No one else came forth to speak; Mayor Merrifield closed the public hearing.

Minutes

Motion made by Councilor Sharon that the Franklin City Council approves the minutes of the December 13, 2010 City Council Meeting, motion seconded by Councilor Bowers.

Councilor Feener pointed out that on Page 2 of the minutes, first paragraph, line 4 should read Regal Sign.

All in favor; minutes approved as corrected.

Councilor Feener made a motion that the Franklin City Council adjourns the 2010 session, seconded by Councilor Bowers. All in favor, motion passes.

2011 Inaugural Program

Invocation given by Father Ray Gagnon

Swearing In of Councilors

City Solicitor Paul Fitzgerald gave the oath of office to: Councilor Ted Starkweather, Ward I; Councilor Douglas A. Boyd, Ward II, and Councilor-Elect Paul C. Trudel, Ward III.

Swearing In Board of Education

City Solicitor Paul Fitzgerald gave the oath of office to: Ray Yonaitis, Robert Alan Warner, Keith Lohman and Steve Barton.

State of the City

Mayor Merrifield gave his State of the City; copy is attached to these minutes.

Citizen of the Year

Mayor Merrifield presented Citizen of the Year to Coach “Skip” Dubois and Coach Dave Therrien. Mayor Merrifield stated that these co-citizens of the year have achieved some incredible things together and have brought repeated honors to the City of Franklin and Franklin High School. These two coaches have coached the girl’s softball team and have certainly taught them more than softball. These two men have brought four variety softball championships and have been coaching together since 1998 and their incredible record is 228 wins and 58 losses. “Skip” has been Coach of the Year several times. In 2009 he was awarded Coach of the Year by the Manchester Union for the entire State of New Hampshire out of 85 other nominated coaches.

Presentation of Thanks to Out-Going Councilor LeBlanc

Mayor Merrifield thanked Councilor LeBlanc for his term of service to the City of Franklin as a Councilor and presented him with a plaque in appreciation of his service. Mayor Merrifield commented that Councilor LeBlanc not only served on the City Council but before coming to the City Council he had served as a school board member.

Battle Hymn of the Republic was sung by the Serendipity Singers and then the Inaugural closed with a reception and refreshments.

2011 City Council Meeting

Ordinance #03-11 – a resolution concerning the unlawful sale and possession of illegal smoking products.

Motion made by Councilor Feener that the Franklin City Council approves Ordinance #03-11 by a roll call vote, motion seconded by Councilor Bowers.

Roll Call Vote

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Councilor Clarenbach – Yes
Councilor Starkweather – Yes
Councilor Sharon – Yes
Councilor Bowers – Yes
Councilor Audet – Yes

Councilor Boyd – Yes
Councilor Feener – Yes
Councilor Trudel – Yes
Councilor Andreozzi – Yes

All in favor, Ordinance #03-11 is approved.

Other Business

Manager's Update

Manager Dragon advised she has been contacted by Metrocast concerning their franchise agreement with the City which expires in December of 2013 and Metrocast will be contacting the Manager Dragon in the near future concerning a schedule for the renewal process.

Rekeying of the City Hall building has begun and the front door now has bars so that when it is locked you can press on the bar and exit the building.

Manager Corrow thanked the City Council on behalf of the employees for the holiday luncheon held December 23rd and advised there was a record attendance of approximately 85.

Manager Dragon advised budget time will be fast approaching. She offered her schedule for the process and advised budget packets will be prepared and gotten to the department heads in early January. Committee meetings will be scheduled.

Concerning the January Three Rivers Newsletter, Manager Dragon advised the Superintendent wrote an article and included a chart comparing appropriations of the school and city from year to year since 2004. Manager Dragon stated the chart could be misleading so she requested that Finance Director Milner to create

a comparison from 1997 till now including statewide education funding numbers for the school. The amount of funds that the School has to spend each includes not only local funds (which were shown on the Superintendent's chart) but funds from the State of New Hampshire as well. This shows instead of a five-year decrease of \$129,642 as was indicated in the article, there is an increase of \$2,098,538 over that same five-year period. The article continues stating the school children have suffered significantly in funding; whereas, in reality the funding for the school has increased by \$2,098,538. She asked the Council if they would like her to provide some additional information on this in the February Three Rivers Newsletter.

Councilor Feener commented there are two sides to every story and we should offer the correct side. Councilor Bowers commented he would like to see an accurate depiction. Councilor Andreozzi commented it should be explained why the chart is there and what it is showing should be there, otherwise, no one is going to look at it. Councilor Clarenbach asked if we heard the Mayor's speech earlier. Mayor Merrifield commented that the truth is important and the way the article was written in the Three River Paper did not paint a true and accurate picture. Councilor Bowers commented it does not have to be an "in-your-face" letter but needs to be a complete picture. Mayor Merrifield commented that in light of his comments earlier and the comment from Councilor Clarenbach what he would suggest is the tone of the article would be very important and it should not be a rebuttal. Manager Dragon stated she would agree with that and she stated typically she reads things in the paper all the time that are inaccurate and don't comment; however, this is an important piece of information that people need to base their decisions on, what they support, what they do in the budget and it is important to know the whole picture. An average citizen reading that article would not understand the whole picture. Councilor Andreozzi commented that she believes there is a gross misunderstanding of how the schools are funded. Many people seem to think that the amount the City votes to appropriate to the schools is all they have to work with and they don't understand that the schools receive not only State funds but many grants as well and all those funds are spent on and for the students.

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Mayor Appointment

Planning Board – Mayor Merrifield reappointed Anthony “Tony” Giunta to the Planning Board. Term of service to January, 2014.

Council Appointment

Planning Board – *Motion made by Councilor Bowers that the City Council reappoints Councilor Starkweather to the Planning Board. Term of service; term of office. Motion seconded by Councilor Feener. All in favor, motion passes.*

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Feener, seconded by Councilor Bowers. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue E. May

