

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING AND
2011 INAUGURAL PROGRAM**

Call to Order

Mayor Merrifield called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Franklin City Hall.

The Colors were presented by the Franklin Fire Department Color Guard and Salute to the Flag was led by the Color Guard. God Bless America was sung by the Serendipity Singers.

Absent

Councilor Boyd, Councilor Feener and Councilor Audet.

2011 City Council Business

Public Hearings

Resolution #05-12 – a supplemental appropriation for FY 2012 revising the appropriations and corresponding revenue for the Drug Free Community Grant which funds the Franklin Mayor's Drug & Alcohol Abuse Task Force.

Mayor Merrifield commented that this resolution is largely a housekeeping matter correcting appropriation so that they line up with Federal fiscal years along with the City's fiscal year. Mayor Merrifield opened the public hearing, no one came forth to speak; the public hearing was closed.

Resolution #04-12 – supplemental appropriation for FY12 concerning a withdrawal up to \$75,000 from the Special Education Trust Fund to provide funding for additional unforeseen out of district placement costs incurred by the Franklin School District for the placement of court involved youth.

Mayor Merrifield opened the public hearing, no one came forth to speak; the public hearing was closed.

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Board of Education: Ward II, Ed Cogan, Term Three Years

Ward III, Robert "Al" Warner, Term Three Years

Mayor Merrifield gave his Inaugural Address. Copy of his address is attached to these minutes.

Citizen of the Year was presented to Councilor Robert Sharon and a copy of the comments made by Mayor Merrifield is attached.

Presentation of Appreciation Plaques were given to Councilor Andreozzi and Councilor Bowers. Councilor Audet was not in attendance to receive his plaque.

Battle Hymn of the Republic was sung by the Serendipity Singers.

A reception and refreshments were then held.

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Resolution #05-12 – this resolution revises FY12 appropriations and matching revenue for the Drug Free Communities Grant.

Motion made by Councilor Clarenbach that the Franklin City Council adopts Resolution #05-12 revising the FY12 appropriations and matching revenue for the Drug Free Communities Grant. Motion seconded by Councilor Dzujna.

Roll Call:

Councilor Clarenbach – Yes

Councilor Sharon – Yes

Councilor Desrochers – Yes

Councilor Starkweather – Yes

Councilor Dzujna – Yes

Councilor Cournoyer – Yes

Councilor Trudel – Yes

All in favor, Resolution #05-12 passes

Resolution #04-12 – this resolution allows for the withdrawal of up to \$75,000 from the Special Education Trust Fund.

Motion made by Councilor Clarenbach that the Franklin City Council adopts Resolution #04-12, motion seconded by Councilor Starkweather.

Councilor Desrochers inquired if all these funds are released now and they are only 4 months into the school year, what would happen two months from now if more funds are needed and he stated he has reservations about releasing all these funds right now not knowing what may happen later on and where will the funds come from.

Business Administrator for the School District Mike O'Neill responded stating the purpose for coming to the Council with this as they are in a situation right now where they actually have 19 students and 13 were budgeted for, so they are 6 students over. He stated where he can to cover the costs of the out of district placements with other budget line items that can be cut without affecting the education of the students. He stated he came to the Council basically to say that this current situation is of concern because he is not going to be able to cover these out of district costs through the end of the year if some funds can't be taken out of the Trust. If this option is not available, he will be forced to make other cuts in the budget. He stated he is not here tonight to take \$75,000 out of the Trust Fund, he stated he is here to get the ability to do that if needed and he stated it would not be his first choice and he will attempt to save money on other line items. Councilor Desrochers responded then you basically just want this as an available tool, and Mr. O'Neill commented that is correct and that his plan right now is not to spend this money but to leave it in the Trust Fund because with \$160,000 in the Trust Fund, if \$75, is taken out that does not leave a lot going forward. Councilor Desrochers asked Mr. O'Neill if he would give the Council a report when he takes money out of the Trust and what the balance is after the withdrawal. Mr. O'Neill responded he cannot take any money out of the Trust Fund without coming back to the City Council with the information on exactly what the withdrawal is for. The City Council is the agent to expend for this

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Trust Fund. Mayor Merrifield commented that he believes if the Council takes this action tonight, you would have up to \$75,000 that could be taken at any time. Councilor Clarenbach commented that he believes he would have to go to the School Board to justify the amount he wants to withdraw but not to the Council as the money is transferred over for use. Mayor Merrifield informed Mr. O'Neill he would not have to come back to the Council if the Council approves the resolution this evening.

Councilor Dzujna commented at the moment there is 6 students over budget, is it possible it could be 10? Special Education Director Ann Holton explained that it is very difficult to anticipate the numbers of students. If a student commits delinquent acts and is identified as eligible for Special Education, the Court has the authority to place the student in a different setting and there is no choice but to pay the bills for that which are related to the educational expenses up to the cap of about \$37,000. She stated at this point they are at a bit of a low, there have been some recent placements in the past few weeks, hopefully that is it for now but it is very difficult to anticipate.

Councilor Clarenbach commented this is really no different than welfare, welfare benefits have to be paid when a person is entitled to assistance and the same thing with special education, when the Court says you have to pay it, you have to pay it.

Mr. O'Neill stated that his special education costs out of district for FY2008 were \$487,000, FY2009 \$517,000, FY2010 \$384,000 and last year \$566,000 and this year it is project to be \$880,637. He stated a small increase he can handle but this increase is so much larger than the school has seen. \$755,000 was budgeted.

Mr. O'Neill stated that if he takes into consideration that the students in placement right now the expense would be \$888,638 which is \$133,000 over budget currently and the request to the Council is to release up to \$75,000.

Roll Call:

Councilor Clarenbach – Yes

Councilor Sharon – Yes

Councilor Desrochers – Yes

Councilor Starkweather – Yes

Councilor Dzujna – Yes

Councilor Cournoyer – Yes

Councilor Trudel – Yes

All in favor, Resolution #04-12 passes

CDBG Grant on Behalf of the Headstart Program – scheduling of public hearing.

Councilor Sharon made a motion that the Franklin City Council schedules two consecutive public hearing on Monday, January 23, 2012 beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Franklin City Hall regarding an application for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) up to \$350,000 on behalf of Headstart for renovations to the Bessie Rowell School. Motion seconded by Councilor Starkweather. All in favor, motion passes.

Other Business

Manager Dragon advised there are two late items to be considered. Manager Dragon advised the first items is to schedule a public hearing on Resolution #08-12 for Monday, January 23, 2012 which revises FY 12 appropriations and matching revenue for the CDBG Tiny Twisters Grant. This allows the grant already received to be rolled into the budget revenue columns so the money can begin to be expended.

Motion made by Councilor Starkweather that the Franklin City Council schedules a public hearing on Monday, January 23, 2012 at 6:05 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Franklin City Hall regarding the adoption of Resolution #08-12 revising FY12 appropriations and matching revenue for the CDBG Tiny Twisters Grant. Motion seconded by Councilor Desrochers. All in favor, motion to set public hearing passes.

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Motion made by Councilor Starkweather that Resolution #08-12 be read in title only, seconded by Councilor Clarenbach. All in favor.

Mayor Merrifield read into the record: Resolution #08-12

Manager Dragon advised the second late item concerns the Water Storage Tank(s) Replacement Project. She advised since the December 19, 2011 Council Meeting Director Sullivan was in contact with the State of New Hampshire advised them the City was not able to move forward with the Cross Street Tank Project and consequently there was more discussion about whether or not the City would be able to do work to the other tanks and they have now decided that they would allow us to do work on the other tanks. Therefore, we are requesting of the Council to set two public hearings, one hearing authorizing the Mayor, City Council and City Manager to borrow from the State of New Hampshire Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund for the Salisbury Road/North Main Street Water Storage Tank Replacement Project.

Motion made by Councilor Clarenbach that the Franklin City Council set two consecutive Public Hearings on Monday, January 23, 2012 at 6:07 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Franklin City Hall concerning Resolution #06-12 and Resolution #07-12. Motion seconded by Councilor Starkweather. All in favor, motion to set public hearings passes.

Motion made by Councilor Clarenbach that Resolution #06-12 and Resolution #07-12 be read in title only, motion seconded by Councilor Starkweather. All in favor, motion passes.

Mayor Merrifield read into the record Resolution #06-12 and Resolution #07-12.

Manager's Report

Manager Dragon advised under the contingency grant line another \$60.00 has been received in cash donations for Letters to Santa and \$1,710.00 from FBIDC for watering of the flowers.

Manager Dragon advised she had emailed or provided a copy concerning the response from the School regarding the question concerning the \$15,000 that was budgeted for the closing of Bessie Rowell School. When the Council had their meeting on December 19th the School Board also had a meeting and the Mayor was forwarded a motion which the Manager was copied on and was requested to forward on to the Council.

The motion was Keith Lohmann moved to reimburse the City of Franklin the amount of \$6,512.42 for storage of all 13 cafeteria tables and 240 folding tables from October 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 and the Franklin School District is no longer liable for payment of utilities or upkeep of the formerly known Bessie Rowell School Building. Motion seconded by Al Warner. Motion passed: 5 in favor; 3 opposed and 1 abstained. Manager Dragon stated that is a confusing motion because we don't currently have any plans to store chairs or tables for the school for 2012 and the question really was about the remaining monies for the Bessie Rowell School closure. Manager Dragon stated she did respond back but has not heard back from her response.

Mr. Lohmann stated the reason the motion as made the way that it was that the staff informed us at the meeting that just making a motion to move money without a reason would be problematic in the case of an audit or something else. He stated they needed some kind of a reason to move the money. He stated they were also told that there were a number of tables and chairs by agreement between the School and the City that are currently being stored at Bessie Rowell School and that maybe a way to resolve the issue was to make the money contingent upon the City agreeing to continue to store those items that are already there until the end of June and he stated that sounded like a reasonable

idea and that is why the motion was made. Mayor Merrifield commented that it is his understanding that there is no such agreement. Manager Dragon also stated there is no such agreement and that she had talked with Brian Barry who is the only other person that would have any kind of verbal agreement with Chuck Norwood and Brian Barry stated there was no agreement. Mayor Merrifield suggested that the City Manager and the School Department have some conversation concerning details of this issue.

Appointments

Planning Board – Mayor Appointments

Mayor Merrifield reappointed Powell Glenn to the Franklin Planning Board as a full voting member. Term of office to January, 2014.

Mayor Merrifield reappointed Brian Colburn to the Franklin Planning Board as a full voting member. Term of office to January, 2014.

Mayor Merrifield reappointed Michael Freeman to the Franklin Planning Board as a full voting member. Term of office to January, 2014.

Mayor Merrifield reappointed David Veysey to the Franklin Planning Board as an Alternate. Term of office to January, 2015.

Zoning Board – Council Appointment

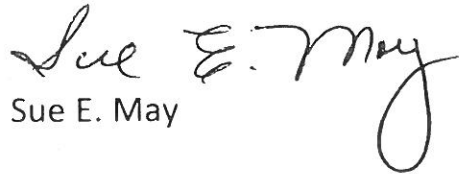
Motion made by Councilor Starkweather that Charles Farmer be reappointed to the Franklin Zoning Board as a full voting member. Term of office to January, 2014. Motion seconded by Councilor Cournoyer. All in favor, motion passes.

Mayor Merrifield provided copies of the Mayor's Committee Assignments and copies of the City Council's Meeting Schedule and Closing Dates for 2012.

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Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Starkweather, seconded by Councilor Desrochers. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sue E. May

Attachments: Mayor Merrifield's Inaugural Address
Mayor Merrifield's Citizen of the Year Presentation



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January 3, 2012

Father Gagnon, Members of the City Council for 2011 and 2012, honored school board members, family, friends, and fellow citizens of Franklin:

Fifty years ago tomorrow, a little more than a year before I was born, Mayor Roland Desrochers exhorted the people of Franklin with the words of his college English professor. Desrochers said, at that 1962 Inaugural: "Do not be the first to adopt the new, nor the last to drop the old."

His Honor, the Mayor, acknowledged that "We all resent change, [because] that is human nature." But he challenged his audience nonetheless to embrace progress, and when necessary, to "break the bonds of tradition ... and forge ahead."

Change is always difficult. We are creatures of habit. But change is also inevitable. There have been changes to our city council this evening, and we honor the service of those departing tonight, even while we welcome our new members with the highest hopes for their success. It is personally very moving to me that the Freshman Class of this City Council - and myself - are all members of the same church and the Knight of Columbus. Franklin is forever bound together by these human connections.

In studying the words of past mayors, I was reminded again of the admonition of a great Franklin friend who told me a couple of years ago that "some things really need to change in Franklin. And some things absolutely have to stay the same." Indeed - the nephew of Mayor Desrochers has just tonight taken the oath to serve you as a Councilor. So Franklin does change - but the unbreakable chords of our history, our pride, and our families persevere all the while.

Franklin - The Three Rivers City

And I think that my predecessors in this office would agree that, as we grow, we must not break all the bonds of tradition, or we will then forget “who we are”. Franklin is a proud, resolute, frugal, and fiercely determined city. We know adversity, the value of a dollar, and the price to be paid for success. Our community spirit is second to none, and it is demonstrated daily in our schools, churches, fraternal and community organizations.

I have been greatly honored by your votes to serve our city - as a school board member and Chairman, as a councilor, and now [remarkably, to me] as a three-term Mayor. During that time, we have been moving resolutely and constantly toward the rebirth of our “Golden Age”. Some of these plans, large and small, will come to final fruition in 2012.

Chief among these would be the reconfiguration of traffic in the heart of Franklin's downtown. You might have noticed...? While this major grant-funded project is nearly complete, I would urge our residents to have patience as we all grow more familiar with the change. The goal of the Council here is to facilitate access to and egress from the Mill District, and all will be successful if we can increase commercial interest in the Tax Increment Financing District - and the downtown properties to the north of Central Street. We offer thanks to all those who have brought the project to this stage, and yet we still recognize the difficulty of the change for our residents.

Another long-awaited task involves the treatment of our drinking water. Our water customers have been paying a premium for several years in order for this project to become a reality. By the middle of 2012, we expect the new treatment facility to be open - with the promise of improved water quality that we have sought for decades.

The greatest change of all for Franklin still awaits in the years beyond 2012, of course. But I urge our community leaders, municipal and school professionals, anyone with a desire to see Franklin succeed - to join in the daily effort to promote the Northern Pass project. With the advent of this profound investment in Franklin, all doors will open for us and lead us to a bright, prosperous future. We must make this happen.

But a healthy and prosperous community begins with healthy and prosperous individuals and businesses. I remain deeply grateful for the community's support of several personal initiatives from the Mayor's office, including the Drug Task Force and the Foster Care Task Force, and well as the Revenue Study Commission. In 2012, I plan to add to these undertakings with a Franklin business acknowledgment series and a Mayor's Office "Internship program" for high school and college students. As always, I invite you all to offer your ideas for content, for nominations, and for selection criteria for these two new efforts.

I also want to express my gratitude to the 2011 Council for renewing the City Manager's contract for another four years. Elizabeth Dragon brings not only stability and continuity, but professional excellence. We are a very lucky to have Mrs. Dragon and the superlative team she has assembled. I am personally very grateful to our municipal and school leadership and all of Franklin's public employees-- for all you have done, and all you will do in 2012.

As I begin another two years as Franklin's Mayor, I would humbly ask that we all restate our commitment to the success of this city, just as Mayor Frank Parsons implored us at the very first Franklin Inaugural. Even the opponents of the new city form of government pledged to Mayor Parsons their best efforts to ensure its success in January 1895.

With renewed vigor, energy, and purpose - let us summon the strength to change all that must be changed -- and preserve all that is sacred to the best city on earth. Let us take the words from the 10th Chapter of the Book of Ezra to heart as we say: "Rise up; this matter is in your hands.... So take courage and do it."

Thank you. Happy New Year to you all, and may God bless our great city.

Our Citizen of the Year

I have personally known our Citizen of the Year for decades. It would be impossible to list all of his accomplishments and contributions to Franklin, but I will do my best.

This great Franklin booster and visionary has been involved for many years with our area churches, notably the Hope Community Chapel and the Congregational Church. He was a crucial player in bringing hundreds of young people to Franklin to help elderly and disabled residents with home repairs. Pastor Glen Carter calls him "an authentic, sincere man of God".

His efforts as Sexton of the Webster Place Cemetery are legendary, even when his health has not been the best.

Our Citizen of the Year has been helpful to the elderly, the infirm, and the needy of our community - through his involvement in the TRIP Center, the Franklin VNA, and the Bread & Roses Kitchen.

He was instrumental in arranging a fundraiser for life-saving equipment at the TRIP Center. Nancy Marceau says that he "is always going above and beyond, and we certainly appreciate all he does".

He has served on the Board of the Franklin Opera House, with the Franklin Rotary, the Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee, the Franklin Planning Board, and our City Council for many, many years.

He has operated successful businesses in Franklin and literally has his finger on the pulse of our community. And that is how I met my first friend in Franklin.

When I was in my early twenties and bought my first home here, my car wouldn't start the very first week that I lived in Franklin. I went to the yellow pages and found Bob Sharon. He got my car started, got me to work on time, and never charged me a penny. He did get all of my auto repair business after that!

Please join me in congratulating one of my dearest friends, our Franklin "Citizen of the Year", Bob Sharon.