



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, November 17, 2025 at 5:30 PM

1 Benjamin Franklin Way Franklin, Ohio 45005

www.FranklinOhio.org

CLERK'S JOURNAL

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Centers called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Matt Wilcher

Paul Ruppert

Mayor Brent Centers

Michael Aldridge

Debbie Fouts

Ryan Roberts

ABSENT

Vice Mayor Todd Hall

Staff: Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Steed, Ms. Trice, Ms. Dunn, Mr. Damian, Chief Colon, Chief Stitzel, Mr. Inman, and one on duty police officer.

Council member elect, Mr. Robert Lipps was present. There were two guests in attendance.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Centers led the pledge of allegiance.

4. APPROVE THE CLERK'S JOURNAL AND ACCEPT THE TAPES AS THE OFFICIAL MINUTES

A. November 10, 2025

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: Wilcher, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Roberts

Motion passed.

5. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Reception of Visitors at 5:33pm as none asked to be heard.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2025-81 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE WARREN COUNTY HUMANE ASSOCIATION FOR 2026

This agreement commits the City to provide \$15,000 in funding to the Warren County Human Association (WCHA) in calendar year 2026, in exchange for the WCHA providing educational and other beneficial animal welfare services programs within the City limits (e.g. spay/neuter programs). The programs will be designed to improve animal welfare and reduce the number of homeless animals in the City.

Motion made by Wilcher, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: Wilcher, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Roberts

Motion passed.

B. RESOLUTION 2025-82 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE 2025 CITY WATER MAIN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT; AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN

The Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) requires the government authority to pass legislation for application of a loan and the execution of an agreement as well as designating a dedicated repayment source. The Loan Repayment for the Projects would be taken out of the Waterworks Replacement Fund.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Fouts.

Voting Yea: Wilcher, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Roberts

Motion passed.

7. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Westendorf presented a high-level review of 2025.

Projects for 2025 included the Spray Park and restrooms at Dial Park, resurfacing the tennis and basketball courts at Community Park, the SR-123 roundabout, and the ground level storage tank and pump house at Community Park.

The Fire Levy townhalls started early in the year to get feedback from the citizens on what would be supported. The May levy was not successful, but the levy did pass during the November election.

The reconfiguration of the bike trail and stabilizing of the retaining wall on Dixie Highway was completed under budget.

Staff coordinated with Franklin City Schools on safety improvements at the Franklin Jr High and Intermediate campus.

Fourth Friday on Fourth Street launched in May and ran through October. Attendance was lower than anticipated for the first season. Staff plans to grow the event next year.

Fourth of July was a point of concern with construction occurring on SR-123. Despite the location change, the event was one of the best events we've hosted. Other events hosted include National Night Out, the Farmers Market, Ohio Valley Cruisers Cruise In, Trunk or Treat on Main Street, the Fury 5K, and A Very Merry Main Street.

Economic Development projects include the Modula Expansion, Sheetz opening, Lee's Restaurant construction, Walther Engineering expansion, interstate Utility trucking and Arbor Homes. These projects are participating in the NCA.

The City was awarded the APA Ohio Because We Plan Award for the Downtown Streetscape project.

Two new residential developments are coming into the City, Shaker Farms and Shaker Meadows.

Woodard Development is working to bring redevelopment to the Bank building on Main Street.

The mural at the intersection of Fourth and Main will happen when the weather breaks in 2026. The Slipcast project should be able to finish their SBA funding piece now that the federal government is reopened. The alley and parking lot at Sixth and Main are under construction.

The next water main project is scheduled to start in March at Sixth, Fifth, Fourth, Third, Riley and Anderson. It should be completed prior to school starting and Main Street resurfacing will occur.

The engineering work for the west side roundabout is underway. A public meeting will be scheduled soon as staff coordinates with ODOT.

The lead time for a Fire apparatus is about four years. A ladder truck has been identified that is already on the assembly line and will be a two-year lead time. A safety committee meeting will be requested to consider the purchase of needed apparatus.

Staff has been working on bringing development to the vacant Franklin Springs industrial park. No news to share yet, but momentum is being built with residential growth.

8. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Roberts said the Fury 5K was awesome, great job to the Division of Police. The Tree lighting was incredible, great crowd. Great job to both Chiefs and their teams on responding to the crash that occurred and keeping everyone safe. Public Works did a great job with the events.

Mrs. Fouts was unable to attend but has heard great feedback. Our first responders acted very quickly and professionally to the crash.

She will not be at next meeting due to a surgery.

Mr. Aldridge was out of town but heard great things about the event and is looking forward to next year.

Mr. Wilcher echoed Mr. Roberts and Mr. Aldridge comments about the events downtown. The forethought that went into downtown planning is great and helps keep our community safe. The way we designed things downtown will save lives.

What has been accomplished this year is spectacular. Our City has taken a nice leap forward in the last four years. This team has changed our City for the better and will continue to do so moving forward. The City is under good watch with everyone here. He is thankful for everyone in this room.

Mr. Ruppert said Saturday night was great. It was a bigger crowd than previous years. It was great to see how many people were having fun. Great job to the Public Works crew on their work throughout the day. He doesn't know how they do it. Please thank them all.

Mayor Centers said our thoughts go out to Vice Mayor Hall and his family as his mother had passed.

The tree lighting and 5K were great events. The Night of Gratitude was a fun way to show appreciation to City staff.

He thanked Ms. Dunn for her work in preparing for and processing back-to-back Council meetings. Congressman Landsman would like to get together to touch base. The Mayor will keep everyone informed when he has more information.

The Mayor led a discussion regarding Council Committees for 2026. He asked for any feedback following the discussion to be sent to Ms. Dunn.

The Franklin City Schools Board of Education would like to meet with City Council to discuss a communication plan, a financial presentation from their treasurer, economic development, an income tax levy, and the two properties they have for sale. They would like to meet in December. Ms. Dunn will coordinate dates with the school staff.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. To consider the purchase of property for public purposes pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G)(2).

Motion to enter executive session made by Aldridge, Seconded by Fouts.

Voting Yea: Wilcher, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Roberts

Motion passed. Council entered into executive session at 6:37pm.

Motion to exit executive session made by Wilcher, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: Wilcher, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Roberts

Motion passed. Council exited executive session at 7:56 pm.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Fouts, Seconded by Wilcher.

Voting Yea: Wilcher, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Roberts

Motion passed. Council adjourned at 7:56pm.

Brent Centers, Mayor

Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council