



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, June 16, 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 5:32pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

D. Denny Centers

Paul Ruppert

Vice Mayor Todd Hall

Mayor Brent Centers

Michael Aldridge

Debbie Fouts

Matt Wilcher

Staff: Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Steed, Ms. Trice, Chief Colon, Chief Stitzel, Mr. Inman, Mr. Miller, Mr. Damian, and Ms. Chibis.

There were three 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. June 2, 2025

Motion made by Aldridge, Seconded by Ruppert.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Wilcher

Voting Abstaining: Fouts

Motion passed.

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Swearing in City Engineer Eric Damian

Mayor Centers sworn in Eric Damian as the City Engineer.

6. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Reception of Visitors at 5:38pm as none asked to be heard.

A guest arrived after the initial Reception of Visitors and asked to address Council. The Mayor reopened the Reception of Visitors at 5:53pm.

Brother Stephen Gerard Sidlovsky of 1109 W 8th St in Loraine Ohio asked to be heard. He requested that Council pass a resolution that declares Franklin a prolife personhood city in the State of Ohio.

Mayor Centers closed the Reception of Visitors at 5:56pm.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. ORDINANCE 2025-13 AMENDING THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN, OHIO

The Ordinance proposes various amendments to Chapter 1103 “Definitions”, Section 1107.11(j) “Fences and Walls”, Table 1111.07-5: Required Number of Parking Spaces, and Section 1115.11 “Approvals by the Zoning Official.”

The text amendments are requested in order to define and prohibit the use “Truck Terminal”, include material standards for fences located in the side or rear yard, adding appropriate paving materials, modify the parking requirements for the use “Retail, Service”, and clarify when a Certificate of Zoning Compliance is required.

Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the text amendments to Council during its May 14, 2025, meeting.

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Public Hearing at 5:41pm as none asked to be heard.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher
Motion passed.

B. ORDINANCE 2025-14 AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE DELINEATING OVERLAYS IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED SHAKER FARMS INCENTIVE DISTRICTS #1 THROUGH #5, WITHIN THE CITY OF FRANKLIN, OHIO; ADOPTING A WRITTEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AS TO SAME; SETTING THE TIME AND PLACE OF A PUBLIC HEARING; AUTHORIZING AND RATIFYING THE GIVING OF NOTICE TO THE FRANKLIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, THE WARREN COUNTY CAREER CENTER, AND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WARREN COUNTY, OHIO, ALL PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE SECTION 5709.40(C) AND ITS RELATED RULES AND LAWS; AND DISPENSING WITH THE REQUIREMENT THAT THIS ORDINANCE MUST BE READ ON THREE DIFFERENT DAYS PURSUANT TO SECTION 4.05 OF THE CITY CHARTER

This emergency ordinance establishes overlays for the proposed Shaker Farms Incentive Districts #1–#5 within the City of Franklin, adopts a written economic development plan, sets a public hearing date, and authorizes required notifications pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 5709.40(C). These procedural steps enable future consideration of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) ordinance for the districts.

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Public Hearing at 5:46pm as none asked to be heard.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Wilcher.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher
Motion passed.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2025-32 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A LICENSE AGREEMENT AND OTHER DOCUMENTS WITH FRANKLIN CITY SCHOOLS

The School District uses several recreational field spaces and storage facilities in the Parks for athletic/extracurricular events. The City agrees to license the Premises to the District in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement. The Parks shall remain continuously open to the public throughout the district’s use of the facilities.

Motion made by Aldridge, Seconded by Ruppert.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher

Motion passed.

B. RESOLUTION 2025-33 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A LICENSE AGREEMENT AND OTHER DOCUMENTS WITH FRANKLIN PEE WEE FOOTBALL

Franklin Pee Wee Football uses several recreational field spaces and storage facilities in the Parks for athletic events. The City agrees to license the Premises to the Organization in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement. The Parks shall remain continuously open to the public throughout the district's use of the facilities.

The organization has specifically requested the removal of the press box on the pee wee football fields. This agreement formalizes that request.

Motion made by D. Centers, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher

Motion passed.

C. RESOLUTION 2025-34 CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF ERIC DAMIAN AS THE CITY ENGINEER OF RECORD

Eric Damian has accepted the position of City Engineer. This resolution confirms the appointment of Mr. Damian as the City Engineer of Record.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Vice Mayor Hall.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher

Motion passed.

D. RESOLUTION 2025-35 APPOINTING COUNCIL MEMBERS AND MEMBERS-AT-LARGE TO CERTAIN DULY AUTHORIZED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN, OHIO AND TO OTHER REGIONAL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS (Khristi Dunn)

This resolution appoints various members to boards and commissions. The newly appointed City Engineer will be serving on the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission Technical Advisory Committee, Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, and the Warren County Regional Planning Commission. All other appoints are renewals of currently serving members.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher

Motion passed.

9. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Westendorf asked each department to provide a summary of the work done since the past Council meeting as a staff update had not been done so far that year.

Chief Colon, Chief Stitzel, Mr. Damian, Mr. Inman, Ms. Trice, Ms. Dunn, and Ms. Steed shared departmental updates.

Mr. Westendorf gave an update on the 4th and Beam safety improvements in front of the Franklin Junior High School. Staff is working with the schools to improve pedestrian safety. This is a \$55,000 investment from schools. The improvements are temporary as final work at that site is not done.

Staff continues to work on the Water Main project on Riley, Anderson, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th. A comprehensive review is in progress to ensure all is correct and benchmarks are met to keep timing on track.

The Northwest Warren County Chamber awarded the City their inaugural Reimagined award for the Main Street Streetscape project. It was an honor and a great event. Mr. Westendorf received great feedback on the project during the event.

He attended the ribbon cutting for Main Street Tavern the past week. Main Street Tavern is still waiting on a beer license. They can sell liquor and wine. Staff is working to bring an SID and DORA to the area. A SID would bring additional licenses to the City, which is also important for the development of the Bank building.

The new Lee's Chicken building on Commerce Center Drive has submitted plans and staff is working through those to ensure traffic works well with upcoming developments.

The City received the Ohio Brownfield remediation grant for the former Boxboard property. Patriot Engineering will be doing that work through the award.

Three developers are looking to do projects downtown. Mr. Westendorf and Ms. Steed continue to follow up with them as projects continue.

Mr. Westendorf met with Moreno's office last week and had a call with Hustead's office regarding the BUILD grant. A decision should be made in the coming weeks.

Council recently initiated some updates. The Zoning and Hearing Notice updates are going to Planning Commission at their July meeting. An A-Frame signs proposal being reviewed by Bricker. The RV parking updates are still being reviewed. The City planner had family medical issues, and a meeting was rescheduled.

Staff is working on updates to covenants and park fees for residential developments.

Warren County Water and Sewer is adding redundant transmission feed from their water plant on Shelly Street.

Staff received the final Shaker Farms planning development which will be reviewed at the July Planning Commission meeting.

Retail Strategy will be presenting a proposal at the next Council meeting. A representative from Texas will be in attendance to propose how to fill vacant retail space.

There are ongoing Property Tax issues in the state of Ohio.

Mr. Westendorf reported that despite all efforts to distribute information, it is hard to communicate to various groups, get feedback and move forward. He would like to launch a podcast to add another level of communication with residents.

10. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Wilcher had no comments.

Mrs. Fouts said that Chief Colon was very helpful with a parking issues. She said it's amazing the great things the Chief encourages the officers to do and what they ask to do to further their training and education.

On Saturday she visited downtown businesses including Vinnie & Velvet and Pisanello's Pizza. There was a lot of activity with the Farmers Market, and the downtown shops. It was great being a part of it, even in the rain.

Mr. Aldridge welcomed Mr. Damian and said everyone wears a lot of hats and you will as well. He is impressed and proud of the leadership and the stamp they have put on their department. Leaders create leaders and that is happening throughout the City. We have an atmosphere that people want to be a part of. The work staff does makes Council's job easier. Council members do not make decisions lightly, but all the information provided helps them make those decisions.

Mr. D. Centers asked if the Liquor Control board could issue a beer license for Main Street Tavern and asked how the City could help. Mr. Westendorf said MST believes they have a license on the way and added that the City will be notified. The solution would be to create a special improvement district, which is now possible due to downtown development. Mr. D. Centers requested an update on the Fourth of July parade. Mr. Westendorf said the route was not yet announced due to the roundabout construction. He would like to end at the park if possible. It will be announced closer to July 4th. The parade will go along Main Street.

Mr. Ruppert was recently out of town and is glad to be back.

Vice Mayor Hall said he knows that staff works hard. There isn't anyone who believes in you more than these 7 people and we appreciate everything you do. We know you're tired and we are glad that you take vacation. You do what you do to make the City better for your family and our families. He welcomed Mr. Damian to the City of Franklin.

Mayor Centers said the Modula expansion, Main Street Tavern opening and Chamber awards were all very exciting. Well done to Ms. Dunn on the Chamber award event.

Mark and Mary Nenninger were approached about being the Grand Marshall for the Fourth of July parade. He thanked them for their service to the community. They did not want recognition. Staff is pursuing other Grand Marshall suggestions.

Taylor Millard, owner of a local barber shop, had been very vocal recently on social media. Mr. Westendorf and Mayor Centers had a meeting scheduled with her to address her concerns and she unfortunately did not show up to that meeting.

The Mayor thanked Officer Miller for attending and being Sergeant at Arms after Chief Colon had to leave.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher

Motion approved. Council adjourned at 7:23pm.

Brent Centers, Mayor

Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council