



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, March 04, 2024 at 6:00 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 6:00PM.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

D. Denny Centers

Paul Ruppert

Vice Mayor Todd Hall

Mayor Brent Centers

Michael Aldridge

Debbie Fouts

Matt Wilcher

Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Sherman, Ms. Trice, Ms. Dunn, Chief Stitzel, Ms. Steed, Captain Pacifico, Mr. Inman, Mr. Miller, Mr. Conway, Ms. Chibis, and approximately 10 guests were also 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. February 5, 2024

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Wilcher.

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

Voting Abstaining: Mayor Centers

Motion passed.

B. February 24, 2024

Motion made by D. Centers, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Voting Abstaining: Wilcher

Motion passed.

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Recognizing Dr. Gebhart for Years of Service as Medical Director

Mr. Westendorf and Chief Stitzel thanked Dr. Gebhardt for his years of service, including establishing EMS service, in the City of Franklin.

B. Franklin City Schools Levy

Dr. Michael Sander thanked everyone for attending the dedication of the new high school building the previous Saturday. He asked for an endorsement from the City of Franklin for the upcoming levy on the March 19 ballot. In order to provide services as they are provided today, the levy would need to pass.

Motion to endorse the Franklin City Schools Levy made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by D. Centers. Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher Motion passed.

C. Warren County Drug Task Force Annual Report

Major Arrasmith with the Warren County Drug Task Force distributed the annual report and provided an overview of operations in 2023. He reported that a multijurisdictional task force is the best way to target drug trafficking offenses. He thanked Council and staff for their support of the Force.

Mayor Centers asked if digital currency has factored into drug trafficking. Major reported that he has not seen this yet in Warren County.

D. Public Works Update

Mr. Inman gave an update on the 2023 operations of the Public Works Department and outlined projects for 2024. Information was given on Water Treatment and Distribution, Sewer Collection, Stormwater, Streets and Parks. Projects in 2024 include the Downtown Streetscape project, paving Second Street from Deardoff to River Street, and installation of solar panels at the water plant and Public Works buildings.

E. Committee Reports

Mr. Aldridge gave an update from the Economic Development & Planning Committee meeting that was held on February 26. The Committee received an overview of the Reinvent Franklin 2040 Comprehensive Plan from the Warren County Regional Planning Commission. The presentation will be taken to Planning Commission in March. In April they will revisit and provide feedback. Upon any recommendations, changes, or approval, it will move to Council for approval and adoption. Staff introduced a Historic District Proposal. This would put protections back in place for a smaller area on the West Side of the bridge. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation would apply to this district.

Staff is working with McBride Dale Clairon to update fees within the Code. Planning Commission asked that the fees be brought back to them for updates after changes were made last year. Staff will provide an update once the fees are taken to Planning Commission.

There was a Safety Committee meeting held earlier that evening. Mayor Centers gave his update with each piece of corresponding legislation.

6. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Mayor Centers opened the Reception of Visitors at 6:48pm.

Eric Grassman, owner of Valley Laundry, located at 522 S Main Street asked to be heard. His business is in the middle of the Main Street Streetscape project. His long-term plan is to move to a different location and would like to stay in Franklin. He feels his business is a valuable part of Franklin and would like to be recognized as such. He would like more communication about the streetscape project. The Mayor replied that Mr. Westendorf is meeting with business owners weekly, and said he would join him more often in those meetings.

Teresa Barnett of 5143 Spring Drive asked to be heard. Her home is located in view of the new Sheetz development. She is frustrated and angry after seeing that so much of the ground has been removed where a screening fence and landscape is planned. She does not feel the fence will be adequate with the ground being lowered. Mr. Westendorf and Assistant Law Director Ms. Sherman said that once the fence is constructed, the screening could be evaluated.

The Mayor closed the reception of visitors at 7:16pm

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. ORDINANCE 2024-01 AMENDING CHAPTER 935 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN CODIFIED ORDINANCES

This Ordinance amends various provisions of Chapter 935 (Parks) to allow dogs in the City’s public parks, and set forth rules and conditions for people bringing dogs into the parks. The Council Parks and Recreation Committee as well as the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend bringing this legislation to Council for consideration.

Council shared concerns about how the leash requirements would be enforced. Mr. Westendorf replied that the Parks staff does a good job of monitoring the parks and can call the police as needed.

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 7:21PM.

Kendra Parker of 107 West Bryant Ave asked to be heard. She reported that Springboro is enforcing leash requirements at Hazelwood Park, which connects to Community Park. She spoke in favor of the Ordinance and said that signage would be beneficial in enforcing requirements. Mr. D. Centers agreed and said that a warning of fines should be listed.

The Mayor closed the public hearing at 7:24PM.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Fouts.

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

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2024-10 AWARDING THE BID AND AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF THE CONTRACT WITH EVANS LANDSCAPING FOR THE SPRINGBORO FRANKLIN GATEWAY IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

The Engineer’s estimated cost for the Project was \$260,000.00. The project includes the installation of street trees and landscaping on SR 73 at the I-75 Interchange.

On February 27, 2024, the City of Franklin in conjunction with the City of Springboro opened bids for this project, the bids for the Franklin part of the project were as follows

Bidder	Total Bid
Evans Landscaping	\$149,710.00
O’Heil	\$251,350.00

The Springboro Franklin Gateway Implementation Project will be taken out of the Capital Improvement Fund. The City will also accept an add alternate 12 month contractor provided maintenance program for an additional \$47,500.00. Staff recommends that we accept the bid in the amount of \$149,710.00 and the additional \$47,500.00 12 month maintenance program from Evans Landscaping, as the lowest and best bid.

Motion made by Wilcher, Seconded by Fouts.

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

Motion passed.

B. RESOLUTION 2024-11 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT A CLEAN OHIO TRAILS FUND GRANT APPLICATION TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN

This Resolution authorizes the City Manager to apply for a Clean Ohio Trail Fund Grant to construct part of the Great-Little Connector Trail (formerly referred to as the Clearcreek bike path) along Sixth Street (SR 123) from Franklin Community Park to the Great Miami River Bike Path within the City. The Engineer's estimate for the project is \$625,000.00. The City will be applying for \$468,750.00 through the Clean Ohio Trail Fund. This would be a reimbursement type grant where the city would pay for the project and be reimbursed by the Clean Ohio Trail Fund.

Motion made by D. Centers, Seconded by Vice Mayor Hall.

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

Motion passed.

C. RESOLUTION 2024-12 ENACTING THE FINAL LEGISLATION AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) TO COMPLETE THE ROUNDABOUT PROJECT ON SR 123 AT COMMUNITY PARK

This Resolution is the final legislation required by ODOT for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of S.R. 123 and Community Park Drive / High School Drive (PID No. 110740). The project consists of pavement, drainage, curb, curb and gutter, sidewalk, curb ramps, traffic signal upgrades, signage, lighting upgrades, and pavement markings, lying within the City of Franklin. The City share of the project will come from the ODOT Program Fund. The final estimate for the project is \$2,851,357.00. The City's share of the project is \$2,309,357.00.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

D. RESOLUTION 2024-13 A RESOLUTION TO APPOINT MAYOR MARK MESSER TO THE WARREN COUNTY 911 PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE REPRESENTING THE CITY OF LEBANON

Warren County reached out to the City of Lebanon about appointing a legislative representative from Lebanon to the Countywide 911 program committee to fill a vacancy on the committee. Mayor Mark Messer has volunteered to serve on the committee, and his appointment requires a majority vote of the municipalities in Warren County.

Mayor Brent Centers serves as the City of Franklin representative.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

E. RESOLUTION 2024-14 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL COST SHARING AGREEMENT WITH THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, OHIO AND THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY ENGINEERS OFFICE, OHIO RELATING TO THE RIGHT OF WAY AND CONSTRUCTION PHASES OF THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE DAYTON-CINCINNATI PIKE RETAINING WALL

This IGA allows the City of Franklin to jointly work with the Montgomery County Engineer’s Office to complete the right of way and construction phases for the reconstruction of the retaining wall along Dayton-Cincinnati Pike (N. Dixie Highway). The retaining wall is approximately 791 feet long with 53% of the wall being located in the City of Franklin.

The County Engineers office estimates the wall will cost approximately \$2,566,000 to reconstruct. The City share of the construction cost is approximately \$1,408,000. The City has been awarded \$785,000 from OPWC for the project. The City share of the project will come from the Capital Improvement Fund and OPWC.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

F. RESOLUTION 2024-15 AMENDING THE POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR THE FULL-TIME INCOME TAX CLERK

As we prepare to hire a new full-time Income Tax Clerk, we’ve updated the job descriptions to more accurately depict the duties of the position.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

G. RESOLUTION 2024-16 OPENING PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATIONS FOR VACANT FIRE & EMS LIEUTENANT POSITION TO OUTSIDE QUALIFIED CANDIDATES

On August 21, 2023, Council authorized the change in Fire & EMS Lieutenant positions from three to five. There was only one Fire & EMS Lieutenant on staff at that time. Since that time, three of the positions have been filled by Lt. Beckett, Lt. Wiseman, and Lt. Posega.

Lt. Beckett has accepted the Chief position with Wayne Township. His last day with the City of Franklin was March 2, 2024. As we continue to fill these leadership roles, we are seeking approval to consider both internal and external candidates.

Motion made by Wilcher, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

H. RESOLUTION 2024-17 AUTHORIZING A PROPERTY LEASE BETWEEN THE CITY OF FRANKLIN AND HUNTINGTON NATIONAL BANK

This resolution authorizes a lease to purchase agreement with Huntington Bank for a 2023 Chevy Tahoe Fire Command Vehicle including the upfitting of emergency warning equipment and installation, decals, and compartment equipment. Total lease amount of \$65,500 paid over four years in annual installments. The vehicle will be assigned to the fire chief and be equipped to serve as an incident command vehicle.

Motion made by D. Centers, Seconded by Vice Mayor Hall.

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

I. RESOLUTION 2024-18 AUTHORIZING ADESA OHIO, LLC (OR A CLOSELY RELATED AFFILIATE ENTITY) TO SERVE AS AUCTIONEER FOR THE SALE OF CERTAIN SURPLUS CITY VEHICLES

Section 115.02(b)(3) of the City’s Codified Ordinances authorizes City Council to sell by auction personal property no longer needed for a municipal purpose. City staff has identified Adesa Ohio, LLC (and/or its closely related affiliate companies) as a qualified auctioneer to auction off surplus City vehicles. This Resolution authorizes the City to engage Adesa to serve as the City’s auctioneer for the sale of certain surplus vehicles under the Police Department’s supervision and control.

Motion made by Aldridge, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

Motion passed.

J. FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Application (Chief Stitzel)

Chief Stitzel requested approval to submit an application for the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant to purchase firefighter protective turnout gear in order to provide all firefighters with two sets of gear. Research has shown that in effort to prevent firefighter related cancers, firefighters should not wear contaminated gear following a structure fire until it has been properly laundered and decontaminated. This would provide the firefighter a second set to wear during the cleaning and decontamination process.

Total Grant project is \$224,200. Federal Share is \$213,523.81. City’s local share is \$10,676.19

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Vice Mayor Hall.

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

Motion passed.

K. Flock Contract

The City of Franklin has 12 Flock cameras which currently are \$2,500 per year. We have the opportunity to lock in that price with a five-year agreement. If we do not lock into a five-year contract, that price will be \$3000 per camera, annually.

Motion to authorize the City Manager to execute the Flock Safety contract on the City’s behalf made by Fouts, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

Motion passed.

9. INTRODUCTION OF NEW LEGISLATION

A. ORDINANCE 2024-02 AMENDING SECTIONS 1103.01, 1107.07, AND 1115.10 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

It was the first day of classes at the new high school. It was an exciting day and Mr. Westendorf thanked the police division for the supported provided. They will remain on site for the remainder of the week and into the next week to ensure a smooth transition. The buses were all gone 60 seconds after dismissal. Staff will continue to evaluate and make improvements as needed.

The roundabout will make a big difference and solve a lot of problems when installed next year. There is lots of construction occurring in the area. He appreciates staff making sure things went well.

The intersection at Sixth and Main closed as of that day as part of the Main Street Streetscape project. Light poles were being removed. Wooly’s has reached out with concerns about darkness. The lights will not be restored until the end of the project, which looks to be around September. This has been communicated with the businesses along Main Street.

The sidewalks are being removed as well. Concrete was poured under the facades during the last streetscape project. Damage is being addressed and repaired as it is found. Mr. Westendorf will continue to communicate as the project progresses.

The RAISE grant was submitted. Mr. Westendorf said that staff did a wonderful job and thanked Council for meeting the previous Saturday and reviewing the application. The cost benefit ratio of the project is 1.67. A minimum of 1 is required to submit and be awarded. There were 40+ letters of support submitted, including those from Senators and Congressmen.

Congressman Landsman's office reported that a decision on the funding for the water main project should occur by Friday. Staff intends to submit another congressional ask to help with the RAISE grant project. He and Ms. Steed met with Senator Brown's staff to review the project. It was extremely well received and will likely result in a site visit with staff.

Chamber45005 and the Springboro Chamber announced collaboration on certain events for their members. There are approximately 750 members between the two entities. This collaboration is a starting point and will help give a larger voice to this area of Warren County.

While construction occurs around the Franklin Food Truck Park, the Firefighters will be hosting food trucks for the community to enjoy. Food Trucks with Firefighters will kickoff on March 15th.

Officer Butler has requested reinstatement of his K9 position. A K9 has been identified and there is a courting relationship with Officer Bulter's family. If all goes well, training will begin on March 18th.

Efforts to over communicate with downtown businesses continues. Mr. Westendorf said we have a great team working very hard and he appreciates the support.

11. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Wilcher attended the dedication of the new high school on the previous Saturday. He said the only way to sum it up is "epic". His son said, "That looks like somewhere I want to be." The school is just the beginning, there is more coming for Franklin.

Mrs. Fouts was sorry she was unable to attend the dedication but did watch it via livestream. It is very exciting for the kids.

She asked about a fire damaged property on Millard. Staff reported that a demolition permit had been pulled. She said that people continue to dump at the property.

Mr. Aldridge echoed Mr. Wilcher's comments. The dedication was the first time he had stepped into the new school, and it exceeded his expectations. The building was beautiful and very well done. The courtyard was very inviting. The ceremony was first class.

Mr. D. Centers was very impressed with the school. He said the ceremony was heartfelt and great for the community. He had a downtown business owner reach to him and said the City is doing a great job with communication about the Main Street project. Mr. Aldridge and Mayor Centers both had similar conversations.

A citizen reached out and offered to donate a mayors gavel from the 1960s to the City.

Mr. Ruppert said the new school is very impressive. It will serve the community well. The courtyard was the final kicker for the whole thing. He was shocked when he saw it, everything was well done. He

graduated from the old high school on that property. His grandfather attended the dedication of that school, so he was glad he was able to attend the dedication of this one. The connection was emotional.

Vice Mayor Hall said there wasn't much more to be said about the new school. The kids deserve it. They deserved it twenty years ago. It's unfortunate that it took so long to happen, but he's glad the kids get to enjoy it.

People are starting to talk about our City in a different way. He is hearing good things from those outside of town. He took a drive with his family, and they are amazed at what's going on. Everyone should be proud of where we are headed. He's been on council 20 years, and he's thrilled we are finally headed in right direction.

Mayor Centers echoed all the compliments on the new school. He complimented the Public Works team on their efficient snow plowing a few weeks ago. There is so much going on, and staff makes their jobs easy.

The Mayor was at an event recently where a Council member from Springboro said "Whatever you are doing in Franklin, keep doing it. My residents keep calling me talking about Franklin." He appreciated the compliment from our neighbors. He told staff to keep it up, Council appreciates the work.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed. Council adjourned at 8:27pm

Brent Centers, Mayor

Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council