

**FRANKLIN CITY COUNCIL  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
DRAFT: MEETING MINUTES**

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**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING  
FRANKLIN CITY BUILDING, 1 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN WAY, FRANKLIN, OHIO  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2019  
5:00 PM**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Debbie Fouts, Chairwoman  
Todd Hall, Mayor  
Brent Centers, Vice Mayor**

**CITY STAFF**

**Sonny Lewis, City Manager  
Karisa Steed, Assistant to the City Manager  
Lynnette Dinkler, Law Director  
Cindy Ryan, Finance Director  
Steve Inman, Public Works Director  
Barry Conway, City Engineer  
Ross Coulton, Assistant Safety Director  
Russ Whitman, Police Chief  
Jonathan Westendorf, Fire and EMS Chief  
Jane McGee, Clerk of Council**

Members of the City Council Government Affairs Committee met in regular session on Monday, December 2, 2019, at 5:00 PM at the Franklin City Building.

**1. Call to Order.** Chairwoman Debbie Fouts called the meeting to order. Ms. McGee called roll which showed Chairwoman Fouts, Mayor Hall and Vice Mayor B. Centers were present. Also present at the meeting were Mr. Lewis, Ms. Dinkler, Ms. Ryan, and Ms. McGee. There was one member of the press in attendance.

Mrs. Fouts outlined the agenda for the meeting with the two main topics being Social Media and a salary increase for Council members. Chairwoman Fouts noted that it had been 22 years since there had been an increase in Council pay. She wanted to consult with Ms. Dinkler on the rules for approving a pay increase.

**2. Approve the July 15, 2019 minutes.** Mr. Hall made the Motion to approve the minutes from the July 15, 2019 meeting, seconded by Mr. B. Centers. A voice vote was called for and by voice vote the minutes were approved 3-0.

**3. Social Media.** Mrs. Fouts noted that the City's Facebook page has been created and expressed appreciation. She asked that content be shared to increase the page's visibility and exposure, as this is a common means of communication. She wanted to discuss expectations, content ideas and asked for input from the other committee members. In her professional

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experience with Social Media, a post can reach a couple thousand people. Mrs. Fouts wants to highlight the good things being done in Franklin. She thinks this can help offset any negative discussions that may occur on Facebook.

Mr. Lewis explained that Ms. Steed and Chief Westendorf are able to post on the City Facebook page. Chief Whitman can post on the Police Facebook page and he manages additional users for that page. For the City page, a calendar was created to plan postings. Additional postings will be added throughout the year. Council and Committee meetings, City events, weather alerts and other items will be regular postings to the page. Mr. Lewis has asked Department Heads to contribute content regarding their individual departments. The City's Facebook page will share posts by the Police Department page and vice versa as this seems to be common practice observed with other organizations. Business and Employee appreciation posts are also planned. Monitoring will be done to see what posts are successful and ideas will be gathered from other city pages. He asked for the Committee's input.

Mrs. Fouts commented that the page is still new, and the content described will be helpful in building the page. She would like to see a questionnaire sent out to local businesses for the business appreciation posts. This would provide content and a means of being fair when choosing a business to highlight.

Mr. B. Centers noted that to increase followers, the page administrator/editor can invite a person to like the page once they like a post. Mrs. Fouts explained a way to see those who have liked a post but have yet to like the page. Mr. B. Centers added that different people will react to a post about a downtown event than those who react to an emergency run. Mrs. Fouts responded with an example from the previous day where the Police page shared that an accident had occurred. This helped in planning the logistics of her business during that time. Mrs. Fouts added that she would like to see the City's page focus on non-profit organizations, like Forever Franklin. Mr. Lewis asked if Forever Franklin had their own page, Mr. B. Centers and Mrs. Fouts confirmed that they do. Mr. B. Centers said that the City's page has more followers than the Forever Franklin page and sharing can promote the Forever Franklin page to those increased followers. Ms. Dinkler suggested there be a questionnaire sent out to for-profit and non-profit entities. Mrs. Fouts confirmed and suggested the Chamber be included. She had a recent conversation with the Chamber about the Historical Society and discussed ideas of how the City can help promote the museum and the Historical Society in general. She also would like to highlight area clubs, like the Rotary Club. Mr. B. Centers suggested the City reach out to these organizations and ask for a copy of their calendars. Mrs. Fouts added that when

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someone is planning to come to Franklin, they would be looking for information in these types of posts. Mr. B. Centers would like to see more posts about the Boxboard property. Council receives questions about this property, and he sees discussions happening on various Facebook groups. He thinks the City posting updates could control the narrative in a positive way by explaining what is going on. He would like to see more posts educating the public on current events like this. Mr. Lewis said this could be done and added that pictures of the demolition process had been posted at the Committee's request.

Mrs. Fouts offered that for upcoming events, like the Tree Lighting, a post should be done daily to promote the event. She knows this may seem cumbersome but added that posts can be scheduled in advance. She would also like to see the Community Pool promoted early in the year to build membership and awareness. She suggested that a photo of the Lion's Bridge, illuminated at night by the snowflake lights be posted soon as it would create a "hometown" feel and would be a popular post. She and Mr. B. Centers said that the calendar is a great start for the page. They also offered the idea of "Throwback" and "While you Were Asleep" posts. Mr. B. Centers suggested that Public Works posts are always popular because it shows City operations and educates the citizens. Mrs. Fouts concluded by saying that she would not live and operate her business in Franklin if she did not think it was great, she wants everyone else to know that it is great as well. Mr. Lewis agreed.

**4. Council Salary Increase.** Mrs. Fouts thanked the City staff for providing information on a Council increase. Mr. B. Centers clarified that if an increase were voted on by Council, the increase would not take effect until the following election. Ms. Dinkler confirmed and expanded that the key point is that Council cannot vote to give themselves a raise in their current elected term. If an increase were voted on, it would take effect in the next elected term. She explained that if an increase were desired for the next term, it would need voted on by the end of the year by emergency legislation. Mr. B. Centers and Mrs. Fouts felt this would be poorly received and were against moving forward at this time. Mr. B. Centers commented that a neighboring City had voted to have Council salary set at the state minimum income to be eligible for insurance as opposed to having a set salary. This would keep Council from having to discuss the issue continually as increases would occur automatically with the state minimum. Ms. Dinkler provided Council with an attorney-client protected communication on legal issues relating to Council increase and benefits. Mrs. Fouts thanked Ms. Dinkler for the information as she wanted to understand the facts of the issue. Mr. Ed Richter, Reporter, commented that he believed Council was one of the highest paid municipalities in the area, aside from Dayton and Cincinnati. Ms. Ryan noted that in 2020, members of Council would not get a full year service

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credit in PERS, so she did not believe they could be the highest paid as she thought most area Council's would be getting a credit. Mr. Richter said he did not believe that everyone is getting a credit for PERS. Mr. B. Centers asked if this included villages, and Mr. Richter confirmed it did. Mr. B Centers stated that when compared to cities, Council was not one of the highest paid. Mr. Richter commented it was more than a neighboring city. Mr. B. Centers said that including Franklin in with villages was not a fair comparison.

**5. Adjournment.** Mrs. Fouts asked for any further comments. With no further comments, Chairwoman Fouts called for a motion to adjourn. Vice Mayor B. Centers made the motion, seconded by Mayor Hall. A voice vote was called for and by voice vote the motion was approved 3-0 at 5:33 PM.

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Debbie Fouts, Chairwoman