



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, January 07, 2025 at 6:00 PM

1 Benjamin Franklin Way Franklin, Ohio 45005

www.FranklinOhio.org

CLERK'S JOURNAL

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Mayor Hall called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

D. Denny Centers

Paul Ruppert

Vice Mayor Todd Hall

Michael Aldridge

Debbie Fouts

Matt Wilcher

ABSENT

Mayor Brent Centers

Staff: Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Steed, Ms. Dunn, Chief Colon, Chief Stitzel, Mr. Inman, Mr. Conway, and Ms. Chibis.

There were two guests in attendance.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Inman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

A. December 16, 2024

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

5. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Vice Mayor Hall opened and closed the Reception of Visitors at 6:04pm as none asked to be heard.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. **ORDINANCE 2024-34** AMENDING SECTIONS 1103 AND 1111.08 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

The Ordinance proposes various amendments to Section 1111.08 Signs. These amendments include new regulations for signs not previously contemplated in the code, the consolidation of similar sign regulations, and general revisions which aim to increase the accessibility of the sign regulation for both staff and the public.

In addition to the amendments to Section 1111.08 of the Municipal Code, it is also recommended that the definitions pertaining to signs in Chapter 1103 be updated to properly define the new sign types and ensure that the existing definitions are not in conflict with the proposed regulations.

Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the text amendments to Council during its December 11, 2024 meeting.

Mr. D. Centers expressed concern about removing the use of temporary/portable signs. Mr. Westendorf clarified that the use of these signs was currently prohibited. There was discussion including the extensive work done by Planning Commission on these updates. Mr. D. Centers was in favor of passing the Ordinance but would like to revisit the topic soon.

Vice Mayor Hall opened and closed the Public Hearing at 6:20pm as none asked to be heard.

Motion made by Aldridge, Seconded by Wilcher.

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

Voting Abstaining: Fouts

Motion passed.

B. ORDINANCE 2024-35 AMENDING SECTION 1105.09 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

The Ordinance proposes various amendments to Section 1105.09 Fees. This updated fee schedule applies to planning and zoning related applications. The city's current fees were reviewed against peer cities to determine if the fees were generally lower or higher. Overall, Franklin's fees are lower than most, if not all, of the other communities that were reviewed. The proposed fee increases will remain equal to or less than the peer cities to ensure that Franklin's fees are fair to the residents and developers that work within the City of Franklin.

Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the text amendments to Council during its December 11, 2024 meeting.

Vice Mayor Hall opened and closed the Public Hearing at 6:24pm as none asked to be heard

Motion made by D. Centers, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

C. ORDINANCE 2024-36 ENACTING SECTION 532.14 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN, OHIO, CAPTIONED "USE OF TEMPORARY GENERATORS"

This Ordinance renders it illegal to use any temporary/portable generators or similar equipment to supply electricity to property, unless the owner or occupant of the property has first received permit-approval from the City authorizing use of the equipment.

The permitting process is not applicable during an area wide outage. Permanent, whole home generators already require an electrical permit.

Vice Mayor Hall opened and closed the Public Hearing at 6:39pm as none asked to be heard.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Voting Nay: Fouts

Motion passed.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2025-01 PRELIMINARY CONSENT LEGISLATION FOR THE INTERCONNECTED RAILROAD SIGNAL PREEMPTION PROJECT FOR THE TRAFFIC SIGNALS ON SIXTH STREET AT S. MAIN ST. AND S. RIVER ST.

This Resolution is the preliminary legislation required by ODOT for the Interconnected Railroad Traffic Signal Preemption Project to replace the existing traffic signals on Sixth Street at the intersections with South Main Street and South River Street.

Construction of the project is scheduled to begin May 1, 2025.

The total cost for this Project is currently estimated at \$691,710. The City's share of this would be \$0.00.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Wilcher.

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

Motion passed.

B. RESOLUTION 2025-02 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO WARREN COUNTY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS FOR A 2025 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AND EXECUTE ANY NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

This Resolution authorizes the City Manager to apply for CDBG funds for fiscal year 2025 to Warren County and execute any necessary documents with the County Commissioners. The proposed project will include improvements to East Sixth Street from South Main Street to Riley Blvd. Improvements will include milling and repaving, new curb and gutter, new sidewalk on the north side, new storm sewer as well as replacing any bad subgrade.

Per the 2010 Census, these areas of the City of Franklin are classified as Low-to-Moderate Income and meet the LMI qualification in areas where CDBG work is to be performed.

Further, because Warren County has been classified as an urban county, the County Office of Grants Administration will administer the entire project, including bidding for the project.

Bryant Avenue

Estimated Total Project cost: \$606,000

Estimated CDBG Funds: \$200,000

Estimated City's portion: \$406,000

Funds will be part of the County Vehicle Tax Fund and Stormwater Utility Fund.

Motion made by Wilcher, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

Motion passed.

C. RESOLUTION 2025-03 AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A SPLASH PAD FROM RAIN DROP PRODUCTS, LLC THROUGH THE SOURCEWELL PURCHASING PROGRAM

This Resolution authorizes the purchase of aquatic play equipment on State bid for a total cost of \$496,356.10

Mr. D. Centers feels that lighting, benches, and a restroom need to be in place in order to move forward with a the splashpad. Mr. Westendorf showed a rendering for the entire project that is to include a shelter, restrooms, playground, and fencing. This will need to be done in phases due to the cost of each phase. Mr. Ruppert and Vice Mayor Hall suggested signage with the phased plans to let everyone know what is coming.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

8. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Staff received the first draft of the new RAISE Grant Narrative that day. Franklin Area Historical Society submitted the first letter of support. Staff has had great conversations with ODOT and variety of partners. The process is going well.

The Division of Fire & EMS Town Halls will be held on January 9, 11, and 14.

There will be no Council meeting on January 20 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. A Special Meeting was scheduled for January 22 at 6:00pm.

Staff had identified a citizen to fill the Franklin seat on the Warren County Board of Health. Council approval would be sought on January 22.

Development Moratorium Update: Planning Commission is scheduled to meet on January 8 and January 15. The goal is to have the zoning updates finalized and approved for introduction at Council on January 22, with a vote on February 3. This would have the updates in effect on March 5. Mr. Westendorf plans on placing conditional legislation on the March 3 agenda that would end moratorium once new legislation is effective.

Mr. Westendorf extended a big "Thank You" to the Public Works crew for an outstanding job and continuing to do an outstanding job on clearing snow after recent winter storm. They have worked non-stop since Sunday.

9. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Wilcher said he saw a post about the car show returning and asked about future shows. Mr. Westendorf doesn't think it will return after 2025 but is working on a different car show opportunity.

Mrs. Fouts has received lots of compliments about the road conditions. The car show returning is exciting. It will make a lot of people happy. She would like to see what events will happen this summer. She appreciates everything. It will be a great year.

Mr. D. Centers heard compliments about the roads at breakfast that morning.

He said the water tower on Fourth Street needs painted or cleaned. Mr. Inman said it was in the budget for 2026. The new tower at the park has to be running before the old one can be drained and painted. Fall is the best time for painting due to low humidity. The cost is \$1 million, which includes painting the

inside of the tank. He said they were advised to stop pressure washing the tank as it would cause it to rust.

Mr. Ruppert thanked Mr. Inman for the work done on the roads. Franklin stands out from other towns. He had been asked several times if the lights would be left on the trees along Main Street. Mr. Westendorf said they should be down that week.

Mr. Aldridge echoed previous comments. He's not on social media so he doesn't hear the negative, but he gets a lot of positive comments especially about downtown. He attended Christmas Eve service downtown, and it was even more special. For the longest time we've been telling people what we are going to do, and now they are seeing it. He loves coming downtown. Hats off to everyone.

Vice Mayor Hall said that the Public Works Director has been in a plow moving snow to help get the streets cleared. For a small town, we do a lot of stuff. Everyone should be proud of what is accomplished. We've got the park that looks nice, getting ready to have a splashpad that looks nice. He can't wait for people to see that. We are moving in the right direction. There are things that are going to be circumstantial but need to be dealt with because we've never had to deal with them before. It's unfortunate, but we are doing things to improve curb appeal and property values. We are slowly fighting the battle and we will get there eventually.
He thanked everyone for attending the rescheduled meeting.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. To consider the appointment, employment, and compensation of a public employee or official pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G)(1).

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

Voting Yea: D. Centers, Ruppert, Aldridge, Fouts, Wilcher

Voting Nay: Vice Mayor Hall

Motion passed. Council went into executive session at 7:32pm.

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

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

Motion passed. Council exited executive session at 8:04pm.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Aldridge, Seconded by Fouts.

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

Motion passed. Council adjourned at 8:04pm.

Brent Centers, Mayor

Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council