



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, May 19, 2025 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 6:01pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Paul Ruppert
Vice Mayor Todd Hall
Mayor Brent Centers
Michael Aldridge
Debbie Fouts

ABSENT

D. Denny Centers
Matt Wilcher

Staff: Ms. Steed, Mr. Yoder, Ms. Trice, Ms. Dunn, Chief Colon, Chief Stitzel, Ms. Fields, Mr. Miller, Mr. Ward, Ms. Chibis

There were two guests, including David Hopper, Planning Commission Chair.

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. May 5, 2025

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Voting Abstaining: Vice Mayor Hall

Motion passed.

5. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Mayor Centers opened and closed the reception of visitors at 6:03pm as none asked to be heard.

6. WORK SESSION

A. General discussion purposes including potential zoning and planning updates and the recent fire levy.

A-Frame Signs Discussion.

Council members expressed desire to allow these types of signs. Ms. Fouts said they are widely used and are vital for advertising and encourage healthy competition. Mr. Ruppert felt they are practical and invite customers to businesses.

Mr. Aldridge remembers from the conversation previously that they may clutter the new streetscape. Mr. Hopper added that a change was not made as they were not previously allowed. After a lengthy discussion, Planning Commission elected to not allow them for now with plans to put standards and procedures in place as the downtown business community grows.

There was discussion about the use of A Frame signs in other communities and the regulations in place in those communities.

Mr. Ward shared that his experience is that if the signs are not weighted, they collapse and become a trip hazard or can be blown into the street with high winds.

Mrs. Fouts said it's an inexpensive way to advertise. Signage is very expensive and some vendors provide A Frames at no cost. She feels prohibiting these signs is overreach. She does feel regulations are appropriate.

Mr. Aldridge is not in favor of over-regulation but also thinks property maintenance is important.

Mayor Centers hates overreach and thinks A Frames are very inviting. He would like to see standards implemented to allow these types of signs. He asked if Council would like to see some regulations from area communities. Council was in favor of seeing examples for sidewalk signs.

Mr. Yoder asked if Council would like to consider certain zones to allow the signage. Council would like to include all commercial business districts.

Temporary Generators Discussion

Mayor Centers asked for information as he missed the meeting when this legislation was discussed. Ms. Steed gave background information and said the need came from multiple complaints from neighbors. Staff has not received any complaints since the implementation. After a discussion, Council gave no direction and asked staff to leave the code as is.

RV Parking Discussion.

Mayor Centers has received complaints about the current code. He does not feel like the current code works well for homes on larger lots. Mr. Yoder provided some options on the appropriate surfaces for parking recreational vehicles that could lessen the complaints.

Mr. Ward felt that even properties with more than 2 acres still need standards as not everyone follows the rules. The solid surface requirement protects the equipment. The code also says that the vehicle cannot be seen from public view. Neighbors change and without standards there is no means to remedy a situation.

Mr. Hopper cautioned against differentiating larger lots as he felt it is unfair to discriminate against smaller lots.

Mr. Yoder suggested that there could possibly be a set of regulations that could help and allow for variances when appropriate.

Ms. Fields looked at 8 other communities in the area and said that the City of Franklin code was consistent with the other communities. All require paved surfaces. Some allow parking in the side yard and Franklin does not. Liberty Township was the only community that had different regulations for larger lots. Some allow gravel as a surface if not in subdivision. No other communities had information about screening; Mr. Yoder offered that Deerfield Township requires screening.

After continued discussion, Council was in favor of relaxing the standards. Staff will bring some options to Council.

Fire Levy Discussion

Mayor Centers said that the Fire Levy campaigned extremely well. The issued failed by less than 150 votes. He asked Council to discuss next steps.

Vice Mayor Hall said that the schools said they will continue to place a levy on the ballot until it passes.

Mayor Centers said the Fire Levy campaign was very transparent and he rarely saw or received negative feedback on the fire levy. He doesn't want to reduce the millage as the amount needed is very necessary. He said the City must have an agreement with school district to only have one levy on the ballot at a time. That will tell us if the community wants us to reduce staffing and apparatus or if two levies at once was too much.

Vice Mayor Hall said we can't count on going alone as we already were told this election would be alone. We need to act on what's best for the whole City.

Mayor Centers said he knows the need is great but also respects the voters and wonders if cuts could be made. Mr. Aldridge said that less than 150 votes may not be indicative of the voice of the community and maybe a change isn't necessary on the type and amount of the levy.

Mr. Hopper added that the Fire Department and everyone did a great job of getting the word out. He thought it was a good idea to go back in November and do more to educate.

Council asked for staff to pull numbers and bring back what going on in November would be. They asked staff to look at the results per precinct for educational opportunities. Council would like also to know the effect on general fund if they levy doesn't pass.

7. ITEMS TO REMOVE FROM CONSENT AGENDA Matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be enacted in one motion and one vote of consent. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed and considered separately.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

A. RESOLUTION 2025-24 AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF DE-ICING SALT FROM THE CARGIL INC DEICING TECHNOLOGY BUSINESS UNIT, THROUGH THE WARREN COUNTY ENGINEER'S JOINT SALT PURCHASING PROGRAM

B. RESOLUTION 2025-25 AMENDING THE RULES OF COUNCIL

C. RESOLUTION 2025-26 CHANGING THE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR 2025 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF COUNCIL

D. RESOLUTION 2025-27 ADOPTING A VIRTUAL MEETING POLICY

Motion to approve items on the consent agenda made by Fouts, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2025-28 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT A NATUREWORKS 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 Nature Works Grant to install a new sport court at Harmon Park. The cost of this project is currently estimated at \$55,000, and the City's share would be \$13,750. If our application for the grant is approved, the Nature Works Grant Program is a reimbursement-type program, so the City would have to pay the entire project cost upfront, and we would then be reimbursed \$41,250 under the Grant Program. The costs for this Project would be paid out of the Recreation Fund.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

10. INTRODUCTION OF NEW LEGISLATION

A. ORDINANCE 2025-11 AN ORDINANCE TO CONSIDER THE REQUEST FROM HENDERSON DEVELOPMENT COMPANY TO REZONE 47.28 ACRES OF LAND SOUTH OF PLEASANT HILL BOULEVARD

B. ORDINANCE 2025-12 AN ORDINANCE TO CONSIDER A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION AND PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR SHAKER MEADOWS FROM HENDERSON DEVELOPMENT COMPANY FOR A 47.28 ACRES OF LAND SOUTH OF PLEASANT HILL BOULEVARD

11. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Trice shared that the Income Tax Administrator had rendered her resignation due to her spouse being located by their job. Her last day would be December 1. This will give staff time to recruit a new and hopefully experienced replacement. She appreciates the work done by Ms. Newell and the advanced notice given.

Ms. Steed added that Ms. Newell has done a great job and it will be a loss to the Department. It is a true testament to Ms. Trice and Ms. Newell on the great tax season.

Ms. Steed shared an image with Council that showed ideas on how to better manage traffic at the Franklin Junior High and Intermediate campus as they have had several incidents. This would be a temporary fix until the school realigns their driveway in the next few years. The goal is to have something in place before the start of the next school year. Vice Mayor Hall asked if orange striping could be added to a crosswalk. Ms. Steed will relay the suggestion and see if it's allowed. Mrs. Fouts asked if a caution light could be added across the road.

Jurgensen will be paving the SR-123 roundabout on May 21 and 22. Staff gave permission to pave at night for a better product and safer construction.

There are two subdivisions coming to the City. Current code says that park land must be donated to the City, or the developer can pay a fee in lieu of the donation. The City is already maintaining and expanding public parks. The developments will still provide amenities for residents, but public park land is not currently necessary. Planning Commission will be making a recommendation on the fee schedule for the pay in lieu of option.

12. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mrs. Fouts appreciates Mr. Hopper attending the meeting and the input he shared during the discussion.

Mr. Aldridge had no further comments.

Mr. Ruppert had no further comments.

Vice Mayor Hall asked everyone to come to Memorial Day Parade.

Mayor Centers gave an update on a study for the Franklin Municipal Court. The Mayor and Mr. Westendorf had met with Judge Ruppert over a year ago when the Judge requested a site visit to a potential new building. The Judge had also approached the Division of Police about a new building. He then proposed upgrades and increased security at the current building. Judge Ruppert also proposed going to a full-time court. The Mayor met with the Judge and suggested an independent study of the existing court to determine the need and proposed sharing the cost of the study. There were no further discussions after that proposal. The Judge sent a request this April wanting to go full-time and stating he would be approaching the Supreme Court regarding this request. He has also requested updates to the building in the amount of \$280,000. Funding for this would be from the Courts Special Projects Fund, but he also asked for City assistance. Council wants to do their due diligence. The Mayor again proposed the same independent study be done before any large decision on upgrades, a new building or a full-time court proceeded. The Judge consistently says the Franklin Municipal Court is the busiest part-time court. The Mayor said that part-time courts have largely been absorbed. It is Council's job to do their due diligence and be the best steward of tax dollars. The City's Law Director recommended the National Center for State Courts: Court Consulting Services ("NCSC")—to perform a formal study with respect to Court operations and facilities. The proposed cost is \$20,727. The Judge refused to split the cost of the study and said it was a bad use of taxpayer funds. Council decided to move forward with the study at the City's sole expense.

The Mayor received a call from the license bureau. They shared a story about a customer who complained that a fee was a hardship. Officer Hensley was present and stepped in to settle the conversation. The Officer ended up paying for the fee out of his own pocket. Officer Hensley was also recently named Officer of the Year by his peers. The Mayor appreciates the Officer's care for the community and said the recognition was well deserved.

He congratulated the class of 2025 on their recent graduation.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

Motion to enter made by Aldridge, Seconded by Ruppert.

Voting Yea: Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts

Voting Nay: Vice Mayor Hall

Motion passed. Council entered into Executive Session at 7:57pm.

Motion to exit made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

Motion passed. Council exited Executive Session at 8:11pm

14. ADJOURNMENT

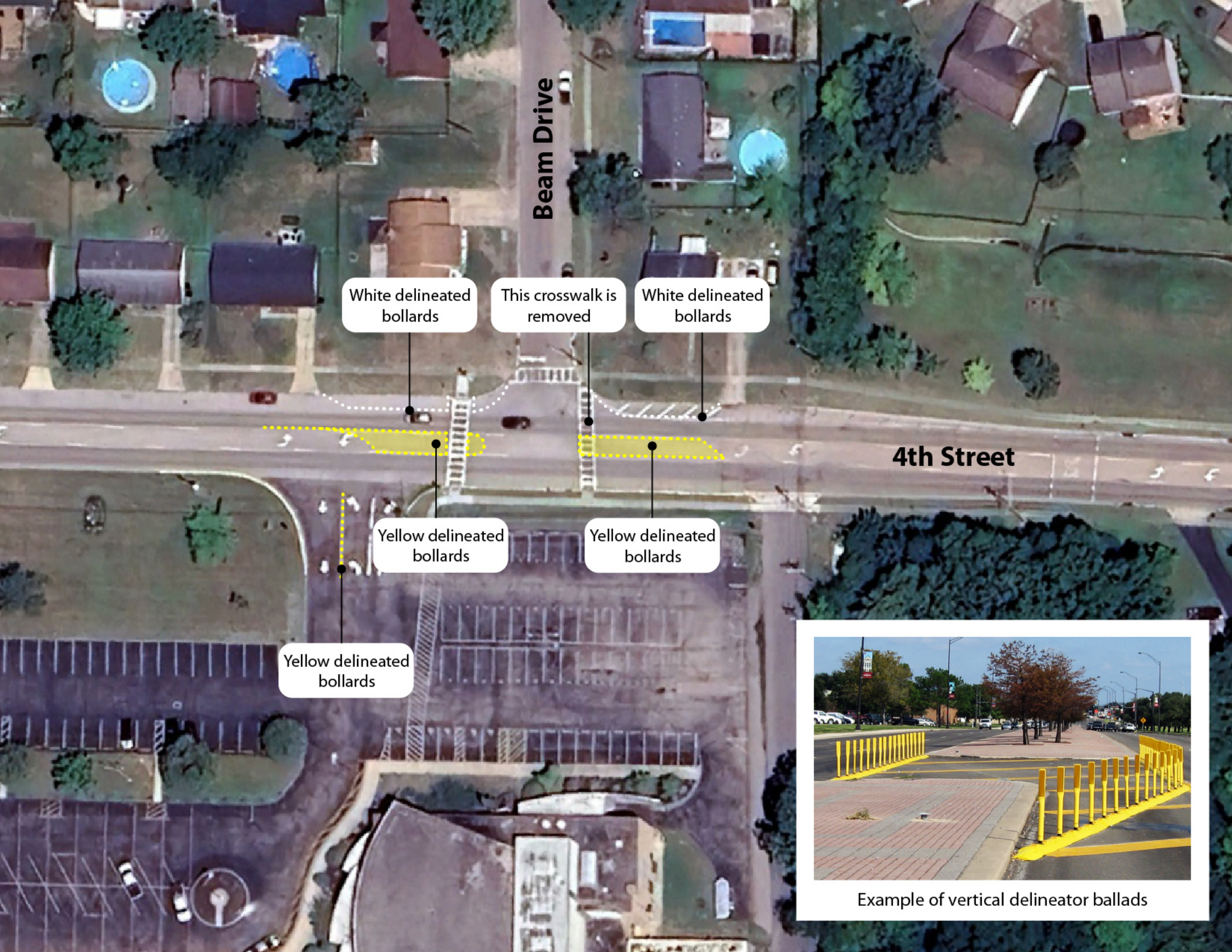
Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

Motion passed. Council adjourned at 8:11pm.

Brent Centers, Mayor

Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council



Beam Drive

White delineated bollards

This crosswalk is removed

White delineated bollards

4th Street

Yellow delineated bollards

Yellow delineated bollards

Yellow delineated bollards



Example of vertical delineator bollards