



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, March 02, 2026 at 5:30 PM

1 Benjamin Franklin Way Franklin, Ohio 45005

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## CLERK'S JOURNAL

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Centers called the meeting to order at 5:31pm

### 2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Ryan Roberts

Paul Ruppert

Vice Mayor Todd Hall

Mayor Brent Centers

Michael Aldridge

Debbie Fouts

Robert Lipps

Staff: Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Steed, Ms. Trice, Ms. Dunn, Chief Colon, Chief Stitzel, Mr. Damian, Mr. Inman, Ms. Chibis, Mr. Miller, and an on-duty police officer.

There were 13 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. February 2, 2026

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Lipps

Voting Abstaining: Fouts

Motion passed.

### 5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Warren County Sheriff's Office Drug Task Force Report (Major Arrasmith)

Major Arrasmith thanked Council, staff, and the community for their support. The Warren County Drug Task Force is an initiative of the Ohio High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) and has been operating since 2004. The multijurisdictional operation is most effective way to combat drug trafficking. Major Arrasmith reviewed the 2025 Annual Report.

B. Firefighter Retirement (Chief Stitzel)

Chief Stitzel recognized Firefighter Brad Cooper for his fifteen years of service to the City. Mr. Cooper is retiring after a back injury.

Committee Reports: Mr. Westendorf gave an overview of the Parks and Recreation Council Committee meeting that occurred earlier that day. The committee discussed utilizing a mowing contract for right-of-way mowing, allowing full time staff to return to the street and water divisions and providing a cost saving to the City. Dial Park updates were also discussed as Ms. Steed and Mr. Damian made a request for the State Capitol budget to fund further improvements. Lastly, the committee discussed Community Park and an updated option of filling in the community pool, which is collapsing and poses safety concerns. Council would like to discuss the pool issue at their next meeting.

## **6. RECEPTION OF VISITORS**

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Reception of Visitors at 6:14pm as none asked to be heard.

## **7. PUBLIC HEARING**

**A. ORDINANCE 2026-02 APPROVING THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR SHAKER MEADOWS**  
Planning Commission recently reviewed an application for Final Development Plan approval for the Shaker Meadows Planned Unit Development located on parcels 0836351005 and 0835102001 within the PUD Overlay District. Planning Commission recommended that Council approve the Final Development Plan, subject to certain conditions. This Ordinance adopts Planning Commission's recommendation and approves the Final Development Plan, subject to certain conditions.

Mayor Centers opened the Public Hearing at 6:30pm. Seeing no one approach, the Mayor closed the floor at 6:31pm.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. RESOLUTION 2026-14 AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE GREATER WARREN COUNTY DRUG FORCE AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE RELATED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

This Resolution authorizes the City Manager to enter into the Greater Warren County Drug Task Force Memorandum of Understanding, which is a collaborative agreement by and among several political subdivisions and law enforcement entities for the purpose of enforcing criminal drug trafficking laws and associated criminal activity across jurisdictional boundaries.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

Motion passed.

### **B. RESOLUTION 2026-15 AMENDING RESOLUTION 2025-87 AND AUTHORIZING POSITION TITLES AND THE NUMBER OF POSITIONS FOR EACH TITLE FOR CITY OF FRANKLIN PERSONNEL FOR THE YEAR 2026**

Resolution 2025-87 is being amended to add the Construction Inspector position.

Motion made by Lipps, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

**C. RESOLUTION 2026-16 ADOPTING A POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INSPECTOR**

This Resolution adopts a position description for the Construction Inspector. This position is full-time and reports to the City Engineer. This position will provide technical support including conducting field inspections of public infrastructure construction projects and existing City infrastructure, monitor contractor performance, review plans, ensure correct procedures are followed and proper construction materials are used and installed. Ensures projects meet quality control standards and code compliance requirements. The Safety Committee reviewed the position at their February 2, 2026 meeting and recommends adoption.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Lipps.

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

Motion passed.

**D. RESOLUTION 2026-17 AMENDING RESOLUTION 2025-88 AND ESTABLISHING THE ORGANIZATIONAL LISTINGS AND PAY RATES FOR CITY OF FRANKLIN OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES FOR THE YEAR 2026**

Resolution 2025-88 is being amended to set the rates of pay for 2026.

The salary rate for the Construction Inspector has a range of \$64,480 - \$100,457.

An additional step is being added to the Recreation and Event Team members position. Step 5 is being set at \$12.93 / hour for returning staff.

Clerical errors are being corrected on the Landscape Beautification Division Head and Clerk of Courts positions.

Motion to approve with additional corrections to Step 4 of the HR Specialist and Step 5 of the Secretary to the City Manager made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Fouts.

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

Motion passed.

**E. RESOLUTION 2026-18 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR THE EAST 4TH STREET & BEAM AVENUE STUDENT PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT AND TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

The City of Franklin, in partnership with Franklin City Schools, desires to apply for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Infrastructure funding through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the East 4th Street & Beam Avenue Student Pedestrian Safety Improvements Project.

The project will implement safety improvements at a high-volume student crossing serving the City's Junior High and Intermediate School.

Despite existing countermeasures at this location, vehicle-pedestrian conflicts and near-miss incidents continue to occur during school arrival and dismissal periods. The proposed project consists of permanent infrastructure improvements located within both the City's public right-of-way and Franklin City Schools property. Improvements include roadway and school drive realignment, curb extensions (bump-outs) to shorten pedestrian crossing distances, and related geometric and safety enhancements. The project is identified in the City's School Travel Plan and is consistent with regional active transportation planning efforts.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

**F. RESOLUTION 2026-19 APPOINTING MEMBERS-AT-LARGE TO CERTAIN DULY AUTHORIZED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN, OHIO**

This resolution appoints Matt Wilcher to a vacant position on the Board of Zoning Appeals following the resignation of Mr. Heaney.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Lipps.

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

Motion passed.

**G. RESOLUTION 2026-20 AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF A SURPLUS CITY FIRE APPARATUS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 115.02 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN CODIFIED ORDINANCES**

This Resolution authorizes the City to sell a fire engine by competitive bid and/or auction, using the services of Garage Technologies, Inc. – a professional vendor engaged in the advertisement and sale of fire and EMS vehicles on behalf of emergency services agencies. Garage Technologies, Inc. charges a fee for its services equal to 10% of the final sale price for the fire engine (retained from the sale proceeds following consummation of the sale).

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Vice Mayor Hall.

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

Motion passed.

**H. RESOLUTION 2026-21 DETERMINING THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE APPLICATION TO ADD CERTAIN PARCELS OF REAL PROPERTY TO THE FRANKLIN NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY DISTRICT; TO AMEND THE PETITION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRANKLIN NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY AS A NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY UNDER CHAPTER 349 OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE; TO SET A DATE FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE APPLICATION AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

In April of 2023, City Council approved the establishment of the Franklin New Community Authority (the “NCA”), pursuant to City Ordinance 2023-10. Consistent with the City’s approach to direct new development projects through the NCA, the application (“Application”) attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A is being submitted by the property owner for real property located within the City on Commerce Center Drive and identified by parcel identification number 04-26-426-034, By adding the property to the NCA, the developer will benefit by being able to be reimbursed for a portion of certain costs it is committing to infrastructure improvements to such property that otherwise would have been needed to be constructed by the City. Additionally, the Application amends the Petition as previously approved by the City to include the new property and to allow the voluntary imposition of community development charges on the property.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

**I. Police Record Request Changes**

The proposed amendment to the Police Records Policy establishes a formal process for responding to requests for law enforcement video records, including body-worn camera footage, dash camera recordings, surveillance video, drone footage, and similar materials maintained by the Police Department. The policy authorizes the City to recover the actual costs associated with reviewing, redacting, preparing, and producing such video records, which are often resource-intensive to process. Pursuant to Ohio House Bill 315, municipalities are permitted to charge the actual cost of preparing law enforcement video records for inspection or production. The amendment sets that cost at \$75 per hour, capped at \$750 per request, requires advance payment of the estimated cost, and outlines limited exemptions—such as requests made by crime victims, government agencies, schools, or in cases of

significant public interest. This change ensures compliance with state law while providing transparency and fiscal responsibility in managing public records requests.

Motion to support the administrative policy change made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed.

## **9. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Westendorf provided updates on the new COLA rates, water meter replacement program, finance audit and reporting, and CAD to CAD integration.

The West side roundabout public meeting will be scheduled in coordination with ODOT. Staff has meet with the new owner of 205 Miami Ave who expressed support for the upgrade.

Interstate Trucking construction is taking shape with steel moving upward.

Parking Lot Light bases and conduit are being installed at Dial Park. Public Works is saving costs by performing the work in house.

Slipcast Brewing Groundbreaking Ceremony to take place on March 16, at 11:00am.

The Spray Park Grand Opening will occur on May 22 at 2:00pm.

Fourth of July Celebrations will be collaborative event with Franklin Township and Carlisle.

Camp Chautauqua annexation takes effect on Wednesday. A video will be released to welcome the camp and introduce them to the community.

A Strategic planning evaluation will be forthcoming.

Mr. Westendorf compared how other areas of Warren County use similar Tax Incentives to what the City of Franklin uses, including Mason, Monroe, Carlisle and Springboro. He also reviewed Franklin's pre-1994 CRA areas and projects within those areas, as well as the current TIF project.

Franklin City Schools has placed a 1% Traditional Income Tax on the May 2026 ballot. Staff has asked for a date for the next joint meeting and have been told we may get a date in late March.

Advisors at Bradley Payne have been asked to give a proposal for managing City's Financial strategies and reporting.

There has been an update to the Funding Strategy for the Riverfront. Keller Partners would be meeting with staff on Friday with the first grant opportunity, due on Friday as well. Warren County is attending the meeting and able to bring funds for utilities.

## **10. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mr. Lipps is very excited for Slipcast Brewing to break ground, as well as the America 250 celebrations. He is glad the parade will be held in the morning.

Mrs. Fouts has concerns about the amount of money being spent. There is a lot going on and a lot of information to process.

Mr. Aldridge asked about utility poles on Deardoff. Staff reported that work is occurring.

Mr. Roberts thanked staff for their hard work. It is appreciated.

Mr. Ruppert loves everything that is going on, it's all for the betterment of the City. He appreciates staff and what they do on a daily basis. Thanks for all your efforts.

Vice Mayor Hall asked about trash collection along roadways and reported that SR-73 needs attention. Mr. Inman will take care of it.

Vice Mayor Hall said that staff works hard and he appreciates it. He will stay on Council until a new pool is built - the sooner the better.

Mayor Centers is very excited about the Camp Chautauqua annexation, which was started about six years ago.

Mr. Hollingsworth sent out a nice email about the city-school partnership and it was very thorough.

He asked if the Court has reached out about the study and next steps in improving operational efficiency. Staff have not received any communication regarding the study from the courts.

Congressman Landsman would like to host a townhall with local leadership on April 7th in the afternoon. The Mayor will coordinate with Landsman's office and send out details once they are finalized.

## 11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. To consider the purchase of property for public purposes, and to consider the sale or other disposition of unneeded property in accordance with section 505.10 of the Revised Code. Premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G)(2).

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

Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Fouts, Lipps

Voting Nay: Vice Mayor Hall

Motion passed. Council entered into Executive Session at 7:59pm.

Motion to exit executive session made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed. Council exited Executive Session at 9:51pm.

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

Motion passed. Council exited Executive Session at 9:51pm.

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Brent Centers, Mayor

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Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council