



# SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 6:00 PM

1 Benjamin Franklin Way Franklin, Ohio 45005

[www.FranklinOhio.org](http://www.FranklinOhio.org)

## CLERK'S JOURNAL

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

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

### 2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

D. Denny Centers

Paul Ruppert

Vice Mayor Todd Hall

Mayor Brent Centers

Michael Aldridge

Debbie Fouts

Matt Wilcher

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

There were five guests and one member of the press 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. January 7, 2025

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Ruppert.

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

Voting Abstaining: Mayor Centers

Motion passed.

### 5. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Reception of Visitors at 6:03pm.

### 6. NEW BUSINESS

A. **RESOLUTION 2025-04** RESOLUTION OF NECESSITY TO LEVY AN ADDITIONAL TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN-MILL LIMITATION

This Resolution is the first step in placing a Fire Levy on the May 2025 ballot.

Mr. Westendorf reviewed the information presented at the three townhall meetings that were hosted to discuss the needs of the Division of Fire & EMS.

Mayor Centers attended the townhalls. He said Chief Stitzel's presentation was very well done and thorough. Mr. Ruppert and Mr. Wilcher said that the feedback from the townhalls were very supportive. Mr. Wilcher said that we as a community need to set up the Division of Fire & EMS for success.

Mayor Centers said that Council will decide the amount and term to put on the ballot, but the community will decide as it is their levy.

In June of 2024, Warren County Auditor Matt Nolan came to Council to review the increase to property taxes. As a follow up to his presentation, Mr. Westendorf shared numbers from the auditor for 2024 and increases for 2025. The City receives approximately 12.5% of property tax income. Almost 70% goes to Franklin City Schools, 10% goes to Warren County and the Warren County JVS, 2.9% goes to Special Districts and 1.5% goes to Franklin Township. The 12.5% received by the City is divided between the General Fund, Fire & Police Pensions, Miami Conservancy District, and Division of Fire & EMS. Franklin City Schools also has a levy on the May ballot. One mill will generate \$350,000 per year for the City. One mill for Franklin City Schools generates \$750,000 due to the township and other municipality residents that are in the school district.

Vice Mayor Hall said the we do a good job of wisely spending the money the taxpayers give us. We are growing and will continue to do so. The need will grow with the community growth. We are transparent and extend dollars as much as possible. Mr. D. Centers said these funds are like insurance, the payment is a liability until you need it, then you are very glad you paid it.

The millage amount and income to the Division will stay the same, but the cost to each resident can decrease over time with growth in the City.

After discussion, it was determined that a permanent levy at 4.9 mills would be necessary for staffing and fleet updates.

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

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

Motion passed.

**B. RESOLUTION 2025-05 APPOINTING MEMBERS-AT-LARGE TO REGIONAL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

This Resolution appoints Mr. Todd Lewis to the Franklin seat on the Warren County Board of Health.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Wilcher.

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

Motion passed.

**C. RESOLUTION 2025-06 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A PURCHASE AND SALE AGREEMENT AND OTHER DOCUMENTS FOR THE CITY OF FRANKLIN'S PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS WARREN COUNTY AUDITOR'S PARCEL ID NUMBER 0431137017**

This resolution allows the City Manager to execute a purchase and sale agreement for the City's purchase of 35 W 6th Street for \$220,000.

Motion made by Aldridge, Seconded by Fouts.

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

Motion passed.

**D. Authorization to Apply for RAISE Grant**

Mr. Westendorf asked for a voice motion and vote to submit the RAISE Grant application as presented. The application focuses on shovel ready projects related to Transportation, Infrastructure, and Economic Development. Project include Riverfront Improvements, Second and Miami Roundabout, Sixth and Riley Improvements, and the Great-Little Miami Connector Trail. The RAISE grant request is \$24,862,000.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.

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

## **7. INTRODUCTION OF NEW LEGISLATION**

- A. ORDINANCE 2025-01** AMENDING SECTION 1113.01 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE
  
- B. ORDINANCE 2025-02** AMENDING SECTION 1111.07 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE
  
- C. ORDINANCE 2025-03** AMENDING CHAPTER 1103 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE
  
- D. ORDINANCE 2025-04** AMENDING CHAPTER 1107 OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE AND OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN, OHIO

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

Mr. Westendorf congratulated Council on a thorough discussion regarding the fire levy and their commitment to look long term.

He reported that Assistant Public Works Director Nick Miller had returned to work that week after an extended medical leave.

Chamber45005 changed their name to the Northwest Warren County Chamber of Commerce. They hosted a ribbon cutting that week for a new business. Th window decorating contest that took place in December was very well received. The Chamber is doing great work to make Franklin a destination.

The next edition of the Franklin Post had been sent to the printer and would be mailed shortly after. There was an article in the Dayton Daily News in December that summarized the streetscape project and upcoming projects in 2025. The City was given permission to turn this into a one-page handout. We have a story to tell and are excited to tell it.

Mr. Westendorf reviewed projects and events through the beginning of July. He also reviewed projects submitted and ranked through Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission.

Changes to the UDO would be voted on at the next Council meeting. If passed, the Ordinances would update the UDO and Zoning Map to facilitate ending the development moratorium as swiftly as possible.

## **9. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mr. Wilcher thanked staff. He said his job would be much harder without all the great work done by staff.

Mrs. Fouts echoed Mr. Wilcher’s comment. She said that Council represents every citizen in town and it’s necessary to ask questions. She likes what was learned through the RAISE grant application and appreciates the work done by staff. She regretted that she was unable to attend the Fire Town Hall meetings and said, “We are here to support you.” She expressed appreciation for all our public services. She said it’s shaping up to be a fun year!

Mr. Aldridge had no comments other than this was a good meeting.

Mr. D. Centers said that Mr. Westendorf did a great job with his presentations that evening. He asked if neighboring communities had a ladder truck in their Fire fleet. Mayor Centers confirmed that Springboro also has a ladder truck.

He knows that the Public Works Department did the best they could with the snow downtown. He would like to figure out a way to get the snow out of the cutouts and suggested that other equipment would be helpful. Mr. Inman reported that they had modified some existing equipment and were able to clear the sidewalks and cutouts with the modified equipment.

Mr. Ruppert said that over the last few weeks the police have done great work and were recognized for it in the local news. He congratulated the Chief.

Vice Mayor Hall said we are doing something and people are talking about our City. “I like it, let's keep going.”

Mayor Centers went to Washington DC for the inauguration where Senator Portman approached him at the airport and asked him how the downtown finished up. People are talking.

The Fire Town Hall meetings made tonight's discussion easier.

Let's Talk Franklin media interviewed the Mayor that evening. He looks forward to their coverage of everything happening in Franklin.

The recent winter conditions were unprecedented. The Public Works teams did a great job and worked around the clock.

The Mayor and Mr. Westendorf attended the ICSC conference last year. He said the Dayton Daily News one page handout would be great for that event.

He asked for an update on the public parking lot going next to Valley Laundry. Mr. Westendorf replied that not much had changed or will change until the demolition and build out. He anticipates completion in Spring of 2026.

He thanked all the guests for attending the meeting that evening.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion 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 8:34pm.

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Brent Centers, Mayor

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Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council