MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 5, 2026

THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL held a regular meeting on Monday, October 5, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room located at 95 East Main Street Franklin, NC.

1. CALL TO ORDER
Mayor Stacy Guffey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present – Vice Mayor Mike Lewis and Council Members: Joe Collins, Travis Higdon, Rita Salain, Robbie Tompa, and Jeff Berry.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Mayor Mike Lewis.

3. ADOPTION OF THE OCTOBER 5, 2026 TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA
Councilman Robbie Tompa requested to add a closed session to discuss personnel matters to the agenda.

Council Member Robbie Tompa made a motion, seconded by Council Member Travis Higdon to approve the Town Council Agenda for October 5, 2026, with the addition of closed session for personnel. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.

4. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 5, 2026
A.) Approval of the Minutes Regular Meeting Minutes September 8, 2026
B.) Budget Amendment
C.) Economic Development Incentive Policy Amendment
D.) Refer Petition for Rezoning to Planning Board

Council Member Rita Salain made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to approve the consent agenda October 5, 2026 meeting, as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.

5. INTRODUCTION/RECOGNITION
~~A.) Officer Dillon McCall – introduction by Police Chief Devin Holland~~
B.) Town Planner Callie Barnett – introduction by Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Sarah Bishop

6. PUBLIC SESSION
No one signed up to speak.

7. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL
A) Appointment of Main Street Director to Macon County Economic Development Commission – Mayor Stacy Guffey
Mayor Guffey announced the appointment of Main Street Director Devin Dupuis to the Macon County Economic Development Commission, a seat the mayor currently holds. Mayor Guffey said the position aligns with economic development and offers an opportunity to build a relationship with Macon County.

B.) Appointment of Councilman Jeff Berry as Entertainment and Events Liaison – Mayor Stacy J. Guffey

Mayor Guffey announced the appointment of Councilman Jeff Berry as the Town's Entertainment and Events Liaison. He noted that Councilman Berry attends every event and entertainment venue and is always volunteering. Mayor Guffey expressed appreciation for his service.

C.) Other Items from Town Council

Councilman Higdon thanked everyone who participated in the fall town litter clean up.

Councilwoman Salain added her thanks to those who participated in the litter cleanup and thanked the Mayor and Councilman Higdon for leading the cleanup.

Councilman Berry encouraged attendance at the final Pickin' on the Square of the season.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A.) Request approval of Task Order 2 for the Main Street Transformation Project and budget amendment – Town Manager Amie Owens

Town Manager Amie Owens presented Task Order 2 for the Main Street Transformation Project. It supports continued work in coordination with the NCDOT resurfacing project and includes additional meetings with NCDOT. It also adds traffic studies for traffic entering from Highlands Road and Depot Street, which accounts for most of the increase over the prior estimate.

She requested approval of the task order, which runs through June 30, 2027, and a budget amendment of $29,546, bringing the full task order to $229,546. Vice Mayor Lewis said the additional work would help ensure the resurfacing is optimized so that changes would not be needed months later.

In response to Mayor Guffey's question about cost reductions, Ms. Owens said the task order had originally been $265,000. The consultants reduced it by replacing some in-person meetings with virtual ones. She added that the cost differences between firms partly reflect staffing levels, since one firm relies on more entry-level staff and another assigns top-level staff because of the project's importance to the Town.

Vice Mayor Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to approve Task Order 2 for the Main Street Transformation Project and to approve the subsequent budget amendment for $29,546, as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.

B.) Work Session – Town Charter Revisions – Mayor Stacy Guffey and Town Attorney, John Henning, Jr.

Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. provided Town Council with a copy of the Town Charter and a copy of G.S. 160A-3. He described the Charter as the Town's "organic document" and said it has been neglected over the years. It contains references to the private laws of 1905 and to practices such as mayor's court that the Town no longer follows. He explained that under G.S. 160A-3 a charter is also state law, and where a charter and a general law both address a matter,

the Town may rely on either. Because a charter update is a local act, it must be passed by the General Assembly. Ideally it would reach Senator Corbin's desk around the start of the year.

Mayor Guffey confirmed that the January deadline is a hard deadline and that the update must be submitted before the legislative session. Town Attorney Henning said the goals are to align the Charter with the Town's actual practices, resolve contradictory provisions, and remove outdated language, including for the benefit of anyone evaluating the Town for business. Town Attorney Henning noted general laws are supplementary to charters, so there may be flexibility. In response to a hypothetical question from Vice Mayor Lewis, Town Attorney Henning said the Town might be able to proceed on its own but could be subject to a local referendum.

Mayor Guffey proposed designating a small committee to meet with the Town Attorney Henning and prepare items, so the full Council would not need to meet multiple times before January. Town Attorney Henning advised that a committee would be treated as a public body and must announce its meetings. Councilwoman Salain and Councilman Tompa volunteered to serve with Mayor Guffey

Council Member Joe Collins made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Mike Lewis to appointment a committee, consisting of Mayor Guffey, Councilman Tompa and Councilwoman Salian, to work on the Town Charter Revisions. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.

9. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

A.) Finance – Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Sarah Bishop

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Bishop reported that the audit is being finalized and the auditors are drafting reports. The ABC audit was received that morning, which was one of the final pieces needed, and copies were available to Council on request. She said the finance team had transitioned the accounting software from an on-site server to a cloud-based system. This was expected to improve speed, cyber protection, and backups and to free server storage, and she credited staff for leading the technical work.

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director noted that quarterly budget meetings with department heads were about to begin. She also noted some costs were running higher than anticipated, with fuel prices a particular concern, but said nothing was worrisome and staff would adjust if needed. She also reported that updates to federal uniform guidance, which govern eligibility for federal funds and grants, take effect around January 1, 2027.

Council Member Salain praised the new monthly budget summary and the fleet maintenance report. Ms. Bishop credited finance staff member Alison Stamey for both reports.

B.) Planning/Code Enforcement - Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Sarah Bishop

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Sarah Bishop reported that work at 185 Rogers Road would begin that week under the approved budget amendment, with a contractor lined up by Code Enforcement Officer Angela Green. She noted that Code Enforcement was also handling routine violations and political signs. Mayor Guffey thanked Angela and the Police Department

for their help, noting that he had received many calls from that community.

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Bishop reported that the new Town Planner, Callie Barnett, is reviewing ordinances and identifying items needing updates. She will bring text amendments to ordinance review related to new legislation taking effect January 1, 2027.

She also reported that the Main Street Franklin Board would meet that week and that a work session with the North Carolina Department of Commerce on the economic development strategic plan was scheduled later in the week. The Town received 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation for Main Street Franklin, which will create grant opportunities.

Ms. Bishop also noted that October is National Code Compliance Month, recognized Angela's work, and said public service announcements educating residents about ordinances would be released during the month.

C.) Police Department – Chief Devin Holland

Chief Holland reported that Executive Assistant Diane Mahoney represented the department at the Senior Center resource fair, the Chick-fil-A first responder night, and a radio interview on scams. Scams remain among the most commonly reported crimes. The department collected about 55 pounds of medications and will take part in drug take-back events at Walmart and the Macon County Senior Services Building.

Chief Holland said the new speed cushion at West Main Street and Porter Street was installed with help from the Streets Department and has effectively slowed traffic. In response to community questions, he explained that NCDOT owns the street up to that intersection and does not permit speed cushions on its property, so the location was the appropriate choice.

Chief Holland noted the department received a Kawasaki Ridge UTV for events, festivals, inclement weather, and patrol where a standard vehicle is not feasible. It is expected to be outfitted in time for Pumpkinfest. He introduced Officer Dillon McCall, sworn in September 23 by Mayor Guffey. Officer McCall previously served three years as a deputy with the Haywood County Sheriff's Office, is married with three children, and lives in the Tatum's Creek area.

Chief Holland thanked the community for its prayers and condolences following the loss of Officer Marcus McCarson.

Vice Mayor Lewis asked about scam prevention. Chief Holland said that about 99 percent of the time victims do not recover their money, and that scammers increasingly coerce older victims into withdrawing cash and delivering or mailing it. He stressed that education of both residents and retailers, who can identify suspicious large gift card purchases, is the best prevention.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.) Next Town Council Meeting is Monday, November 2, 2026
B.) Final Pickin' on the Square for the season – October 10, 2026 – 6:00 p.m. on the Gazebo Square
C.) 30th Annual Pumpkinfest – Saturday, October 17, 2026 – 9 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

11. CLOSED SESSION

Enter into Closed Session under NC General Statute§ 143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel

Council Member Robbie Tompa made a motion, seconded by Council Member Travis Higdon to enter into Closed Session under North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 6-0.

Town Council entered into Closed Session at 6:38 p.m.

Town Council returned to Open Session at 7:35 p.m.

Mayor Guffey stated no action was taken during Closed Session.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Rita Salain made a motion, seconded by Council Member Travis Higdon to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6-0.

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Stacy J. Guffey, Mayor

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Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk