

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 3, 2025**

**THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL** held a regular meeting on Monday, February 3, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room located at 95 East Main Street Franklin, NC.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**Mayor Jack Horton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present:** Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey, Council Members: Joe Collins, David Culpepper, Mike Lewis, Rita Salain, and Robbie Tompa.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey.

**3. ADOPTION OF THE FEBRUARY 3, 2025 TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA**

*Council Member Rita Salain made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to adopt the Town Council Agenda for February 3, 2025 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.*

**4. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 3, 2025**

- A.) Approval of the January 6, 2025 Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes
- B.) Tax Release
- C.) Approval of purchase of air packs
- D.) Approval of Policy Prohibiting Pornography on Town Network and Devices
- E.) Proposed Text Amendment to Planning Board for reviews
- F.) Request Town Clerk to Certify Petition for Annexation
- G.) Request Authorization for Tax Collector to advertise 2024 taxes

*Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey to approve the consent agenda for February 3, 2025 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.*

**5. INTRODUCTION/RECOGNITION**

- A.) Jake Slagle – WW Lab 1 Certification – presented by Jason Hopkins, WWTP Supervisor/ORC

**6. PRESENTATION**

- A.) Vecinos, Inc. Update- Marianne Martinez, Chief Executive Officer  
Ms. Martinez discussed the new Vecinos Community Health Hub that will open in May of this year. She went over the history of Vecinos and the services they provide to low income, uninsured adults across Western North Carolina. She also discussed their funding sources and the need for volunteers.

## 7. PUBLIC SESSION

### A.) Vice Mayor Guffey – response to question of residency/eligibility for Town Council

Vice Mayor Guffey responded to an anonymous letter sent to The Franklin Press about his town residency. He prepared a power point presentation about his residency and properties he owns. Vice Mayor Guffey currently resides in an apartment on East Main Street, Apartment B in a building owned by his LLC, Revitalize Franklin.

Steve Grissim, Riverview Development, spoke and recommends that the town provide incentives for developers/builders. He said he has spoken to local business owners about housing in Franklin/Macon County on housing needs.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

### A.) Request approval of contract with Duke Energy for replacement globes on Main Street, Phillips Street and lotla Street- 10-year contract- Amie Owens, Town Manager

The globe lights on Main Street, Phillips Street and lotla Street need to be replaced. The Town has received a 10-year lease agreement with Duke Energy for 51 globe sets. There was a \$2,523.76 early retirement fee for the globes. The total cost of the globes over the 10-year period is \$152,816.40. This will be billed monthly and will increase the Town's Duke Energy bill by \$1,273 per month.

***Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Rita Salain to approve the 10-year contract with Duke Energy for replacement globes on Main Street, Phillips Street and lotla Street as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.***

### B.) Request approval for WNC Wagon Train parade on Sunday, June 29, 2025 - Amie Owens, Town Manager

Mark Hoyle, Wagon Master, said this is the 68<sup>th</sup> year of the WNC Wagon Train. They want to ride in Macon County this year. They will ride about a week. The WNC Wagon Train organizers met with Town Manager Amie Owens and Police Chief Devin Holland to establish a parade route. There will also be opportunity for the public to meet with the waggoneers and to see the horses.

Councilwoman Salain asked how many wagons would be in the parade. Mr. Hoyle said approximately 30, but he wasn't sure. Councilman Culpepper said he likes Sunday events and Councilman Lewis said he was glad to see the wagon train return.

***Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Joe Collins to approve the WNC Wagon Train parade on Sunday, June 29, 2025 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.***

### C.) Request approval of Macon County Farmers Market to use Town Hall Parking Lot for the 2025 season – May through November- Amie Owens, Town Manager

The Macon County Farmers Market has requested to use Town Hall parking lot from May 3, 2025 through November 29, 2025.

Mayor Horton thanked Town Manager Owens and all others involved in finding a reasonable, workable solution. Councilman Collins asked if there was a conflict with other town activities. Town Manager Owens said Pumpkinfest was the only conflict and the Macon County Farmers Market is in agreement that if there is a town sponsored event, they would not use the parking lot. Councilwoman Salain thanked Vice Mayor Guffey for volunteering and for his work on the location compromise.

***Council Member Rita Salain made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey to approve the Macon County Farmers Market to use Town Hall Parking Lot for the 2025 season, May through November, as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.***

- D.) Request approval of the left lane closure of Main Street from Patton Avenue to the mid-block cross walk on Saturday, April 5 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for National Tartan Day- Amie Owens, Town Manager

The Scottish Tartan Museum requested a lane closure for National Tartans Day to be held on Saturday, April 5 from 10:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. This is the same event as last year. Town Manager Owens stated the lane closure is to protect those who are participating in the event.

***Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to approve the left lane closure of Main Street from Patton Avenue to the mid-block cross walk on Saturday, April 5 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for National Tartan Day as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.***

- E.) Request approval of Main Street, Phillips Street, and Stewart Street closure June 14, 2025 from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for the Annual Braveheart 5K and Rob Roy Fun Run – Amie Owens, Town Manager

The Braveheart 5K and Rob Roy Fun Run is an annual event fundraiser for the Scottish Tartan Museum. The only change this year is that the finish line will be on Stewart Street, in front of the Rathskeller, and not in the Town Hall parking lot.

***Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Joe Collins to approve street closure of Main Street, Phillips Street and Stewart Street on June 14, 2025 from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for the Annual Braveheart 5K and Rob Roy Fun Run as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.***

- F.) Request approval of Artisan Alley to use Town Hall Parking Lot on the first and third Saturdays in March and April 2025 – Amie Owens, Town Manager

Artisan Alley has requested to use the Town Hall Parking Lot on the first and third Saturdays in March and April. This is another compromise to not close the streets downtown. They are working to find another location for May through November. Town Manager Owens noted that they are doing research and checking with the Tailgate Market that sets up in the parking lot on Palmer Street to see if those groups can join together.

***Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Rita Salain to approve the use of Town Hall Parking Lot by Artisan Alley on the first and third Saturdays in March and April 2025 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.***

- G.) Request approval of the contract with Carolina Parks and Play, LLC for the Whitmire Inclusive Playground project \$1,159,232.05 and subsequent budget amendment – John Henning, Jr., Town Attorney and Amie Owens, Town Manager

Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. has drafted a contract with Carolina Parks and Play, LLC for the Whitmire Inclusive Playground project. Town Manager Owens said we will also need a Capital Project Ordinance for this project so that if the project isn't completed by June 30, 2025 it will be able to cross into the next budget year. There is a 240-day contract on the project.

Mayor Horton said there is a possibility that we may have some partners who want to cost share in the project.

Vice Mayor Guffey asked when would construction would start. Town Manager Owens said we had to wait until the equipment is ordered and received. She said we are hoping for early summer.

***Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey approve the contract with Carolina Parks and Play, LLC for the Whitmire Inclusive Playground project \$1,159,232.05 and subsequent budget amendment as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.***

**Councilman Joe Collins was excused from the meeting 6:49 p.m.**

## **9. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES**

- A.) Public Works -Bill Deal, Public Works Director gave an update on Public Works: Wilkie Street sewer line project is complete except for the road overlay, 1,919 service tickets were completed in 2024, 1,330 were completed in locates in 2024, inclement weather and water line breaks.
- B.) Water Treatment Plant - Bill Deal, Public Works Director gave an update on the Water Treatment Plant: 6 backflow issues due to frozen water, plant upgrade projects, passed lagoon state inspection, and upcoming bids on clear well project.
- C.) Wastewater Treatment Plant - Jason Hopkins, WWTP Supervisor/ORC gave an update on the Wastewater Treatment Plant: state inspection had zero findings, PAR data for Leachate turned in, tree removal around the plant, and food trucks/restaurant grease traps inspections.
- D.) Streets – Chris Waldroop, Streets Supervisor gave an update on the Streets Department: Christmas decorations are down and put away, snowflakes and winter banners are still up and will come down soon, snow removal, alley way project to begin in March, sidewalks, and Whitmire project.

## **10. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL**

Councilwoman Salain thanked Mia Overton with The Franklin Press for a great article on housing.

Councilman Tompa said he was excited about the future for the Town and the County.

**11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A.) Next Town Council Regular Meeting is March 3, 2025
- B.) Joint Meeting with Town of Highlands and Macon County, Thursday, February 13, 2025 6:00 p.m. at the Old Edwards Inn, Highlands
- C.) Town Council Retreat -Friday, February 21 -6 p.m. and Saturday, February 22 -8:30 a.m. at Cope Hall at Andy's Trout Farm -Otto, NC
- D.) CityVision -April 29 -May 1, 2025 in Greenville, NC -registration open now

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

***Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Rita Salain to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0.***

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C. Jack Horton, Mayor

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Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk