

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 2, 2024**

THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL held a regular meeting on Monday, December 2, 2024, 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, Mike Lewis, and Robbie Tompa.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

3. MOTION TO EXCUSE COUNCIL MEMBERS – Mayor Jack Horton

Council Member Joe Collins made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to excuse Councilman David Culpepper from the December 2, 2024 meeting. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to excuse Councilwoman Rita Salain from the December 2, 2024 meeting. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.

4. ADOPTION OF THE DECEMBER 2, 2024 TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA

Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey made a motion, seconded by Council Member Joe Collins to adopt the Town Council Agenda for December 2, 2024 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.

5. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 2, 2024

- A.) Approval of the November 4, 2024 Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes
- B.) Budget Amendments
- C.) Tax Release

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Joe Collins to approve the consent agenda for December 2, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.

6. PUBLIC SESSION

No one signed up to speak

7. CALLS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- A.) Call for Public Hearing to be held on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 6:05 p.m. or as closely thereafter to gain public input on a request for conditional zoning for 153 Heritage Hollow Drive, PIN #6594191140- Town Planner Justin Sester

Jodi Balderrama submitted a request for conditional rezoning of 153 Heritage Hollow Drive from C-1 Commercial to C-2 CZ for a family practice medical clinic. The Planning Board reviewed the application request on November 18, 2024 and recommends approval of the rezoning for a medical clinic and to keep the existing C-1 setbacks.

Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. stated that with conditional zoning board members are allowed to talk to whomever and add additional conditions.

Vice Mayor Guffey mentioned the pedestrian bridge and Town Planner Sester said the owner had no objections to a foot bridge.

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to set the public hearing for Monday, January 6, 2025 at 6:05 p.m. or as closely thereafter as possible to receive public input on a rezoning request for 153 Heritage Hollow Drive from Commercial C-1 to Commercial C-2 CZ as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 4 – 0.

- B.) Call for Public Hearing to be held on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 6:08 p.m. or as closely thereafter to gain public input on a request for rezoning of 3 parcels – 1716 Bryson City Road, PIN #6585872109; 1660 Bryson City Road, PIN# 6585863910 and 1646 Bryson City Road, PIN #6585864778 – change from Residential R-1 to Commercial C-2 – Town Planner Justin Setser D&M Properties of Macon County, LLC and Mark Nowicki submitted a request for rezoning of 3 parcels of land located off Bryson City Road. The Planning Board reviewed the application request on November 18, 2024 and recommends approval of the rezoning request from Residential R-1 to Commercial C-2.

Council Member Robbie Tompa made a motion, seconded by Council Member Joe Collins to set the public hearing for Monday, January 6, 2025 at 6:08 p.m. or as closely thereafter as possible to receive public input on a rezoning request for property located at 1716 Bryson City Road, 1660 Bryson City Road and 1646 Bryson City Road from Residential R-1 to Commercial C-2 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 4 – 0.

8. PRESENTATION

- A.) Crawford Branch Greenway Feasibility Study – Kristy Carter, AICP, Senior Project Manager- TPD, Inc. with introduction by Town Planner Justin Setser
Town Planner Justin Setser noted the Town applied for grant over a year and half ago with NCDOT for a feasibility study of trails and side paths. The Crawford Branch Greenway was selected for the feasibility study. The Crawford Branch Greenway was originally part of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan for Bicyclists and Pedestrians.

Kristy Carver, Project Manager with TPD, Inc. presented the Crawford Branch Greenway Feasibility Study. She discussed the project goals, the connecting routes of Big Bear Park to Memorial Park and the discussion of next steps for the project. She suggested to adopt the plan, begin the early action items and to start thinking about conversations with property owners.

Councilman Collins asked if there was a need for this project. Ms. Carter stated that generally people want places to walk and bike. Town Planner Setser said there is a need for safe walkable paths to get around town.

Councilman Mike Lewis inquired about the potential to spur growth with the plan. Ms. Carver said greenway plans do create economic investment and they do bring more people. She also noted that some areas have done economic impact studies and the results were positive.

Mayor Horton would like to have all board members present before voting on the plan.

Councilman Collins inquired about the cost and funding of the project. Town Planner Setser said there were a lot of funding options to look at.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A.) Request approval of Resolution to Participate with NC Cooperative Liquidation Assets Securities System (NC CLASS) and Joinder Agreement to Interlocal Agreement – Sarah Bishop, Finance Director

Finance Director Sarah Bishop stated she would like to explore a partnership with NC CLASS. The Town currently has a savings account at United Community Bank with an approximate balance of \$222,372. The funds in this account are water/sewer funds and have not performed well. NC CLASS will offer better returns and more investment opportunities for the Town. She also noted that NC CLASS will offer more of a one-on-one service model.

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to approve the Resolution to Participate with NC CLASS and Joinder Agreement to Interlocal Agreement as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.

- B.) Request approval to extend social district hours from 9:00 p.m. on December 31 to 12:30 a.m. on January 1, 2025 for special event – Town Manager Amie Owens

The 11th Annual Ruby Drop will be held on New Year's Eve. Crabtree Family Enterprises, event organizers, have requested to extend the social district hours for this event.

Council Member Joe Collins made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey to approve the requested extension of social district hours on New Year's Eve as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4-0.

- C.) Request approval of change orders 1 and 2 for Fire Substation Interior Completion project – Town Manager Amie Owens

Town Manager Owens said the first change order was due to the removal of the sprinkler system and the removal of the over bedroom storage. The total cost decreased \$14,500. The second change order added fire doors and increased ceiling height with additional lights and exits signs. The cost for this change is \$16,455. The net change is \$1,955.75 added to the project cost. There is funding available from the grant received from the State for this project.

Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey made a motion, seconded by Council Member Joe Collins to approve change orders #1 and #2 for the Fire Substation Interior Completion as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4-0.

D.) Adoption of the 2025 Town Council Meeting Schedule – Town Manager Amie Owens

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey to adopt the meeting schedule for 2025 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4-0.

E.) Adoption of the 2025 Town Holiday Schedule – Town Manager Amie Owens

Council Member Joe Collins made a motion, seconded by Council Member Mike Lewis to adopt the holiday schedule for 2025 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4-0.

10. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

- A.) Human Resources – Nicole Bradley, Human Resource Director/Town Clerk gave an update on certifications received by Bill Allen and Kyle Pocquette, upcoming annual OSHA trainings, upcoming annual employee evaluations, current job openings, 2024 Employee of the Year nominations and the annual Holiday Luncheon.
- B.) Tax Collections/Events – Sabrina Scruggs, Tax Collector/Event Coordinator gave an update on tax collection, upcoming foreclosure class, 2024 Pickin' on the Square events, 2024 Pumpkinfest, and 2024 Winter Wonderland events.
- C.) Fire Department – Chief Ben Ormond gave an update on fire calls, trainings, 2024 Boo Bash event, Fire Substation, and the new shift schedule change.

11. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A.) Next Town Council Meeting is Monday, January 6, 2025
- B.) Winter Wonderland – Night Two, Saturday, December 7, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.
- C.) Town offices will be closed on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday – December 24, 25 and 26, 2024 in observance of the Christmas Holiday per the NC State Holiday Schedule
- D.) 11th Annual Ruby Drop – December 31, 2024 at 9:00 p.m. and Midnight
- E.) Town offices will be closed on Wednesday, January 1, 2025 in observation of the New Year's Holiday per the NC State Holiday Schedule

13. CLOSED SESSION

- A.) **Enter into Closed Session under NC General Statute § 143-318.11(a)(5) to discuss acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange or lease**

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey to enter into closed session under NC General Statute § 143-318.11(a)(5) to discuss acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange or lease at 7:12 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4- 0.

The Town Council entered Closed Session at 7:12 p.m.

The Town Council returned from Closed Session at 7:53 p.m.

No action was taken in Closed Session.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4-0.

C. Jack Horton, Mayor

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk