

City Council
Minutes Inaugural and Regular Meeting
January 5th, 2015

Call to Order

Mayor Merrifield called the meeting to order in the Council Chambers, Franklin City Hall at 6:00 p.m.

The Serendipity Singers sang God Bless America.

The Franklin Fire Department Color Guard Presented the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Serendipity Singers then sang the National Anthem.

In Attendance

Present: Councilor Dzujna, Councilor Giunta, Councilor Cournoyer, Councilor Desrochers, Councilor Feener, Councilor Barton, Councilor Starkweather, and Councilor Boyd, Mayor Merrifield, City Manager Dragon, and Attorney Paul Fitzgerald.

Public Hearings

Ordinance #08-15 – This ordinance concerns Chapter 284, Vehicles and Traffic of the Franklin Municipal Code.

Ed Cogan was present to speak on this hearing. He stated that in October they had approached the city about his daughter possibly parking at the Municipal Lot at the Police Department and was informed that there was no overnight parking in the lot. He indicated they then purchased a spot at the Franklin Street parking lot. The City is recommending adding parking for no cost at the Police Department. He requested that the City Council put this off until after the winter parking ban.

There was no further discussion.

Community Development Block Grant Project – This public hearing is to update the public on, and to take public comment concerning the progress of the renovations at the Bessie Rowell Community Center to accommodate the Twin Rivers Intergeneration

Program (TRIP) the center for seniors and disabled adults. The TRIP Center will be relocating to the Bessie Rowell Community Center.

The Mayor indicates that there is a script that was given to him by the Federal Government that has to be read. It states: "The Community Development Block Grant Funds are available to Municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available for economic development; up to \$500,000 for public facility and housing projects, and up to \$350,000 in emergency activities; up to \$12,000 is available for planning and feasibility study grants. All CDBG Projects must directly benefit a majority of low and moderate income persons. During a CDBG Project, a progress update public hearing is required. The public hearing will update the public on and take public comment on the progress of the CDBG Project. The hearing is to report on the progress of the renovation to a portion of the Bessie Rowell Community Center for the relocation of TRIP Services and the majority of the participants of TRIP Services are of low and moderate income households. The renovation work began last summer and is complete with just some punch list items remaining. They have a new dining area and activities area. The renovations included their own entrance to the building as well. TRIP annually serves 320 persons, including the meals on wheels program, the majority of which are low and moderate income. "

Bob Lucas, a citizen of Ward I, then spoke in support of the TRIP Center and submitted his speech (see attached). He stated the TRIP Center provides a venue for many activities and support systems; they strive to enhance the vitality and the well being of the seniors; but is an intergenerational center as they host the children's Halloween Party and Christmas Activities. The old location has poor restrooms that are used by the general public and is handicap accessible, but parking is difficult as well as the stairs at the building. Moving to the new location provides a cleaner environment, safer parking and the building is 100% handicap accessible. The Head Start and after school programs located at the Bessie Rowell Community Services will provide for opportunities for children, adolescents and the seniors to enjoy activities together.

There was no further public comment.

2014 City Council Business

- I. The City Council to consider the minutes of the December 1, 2014 City Council Meeting.

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Desrochers seconded to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2014 City Council Meeting.

Councilor Dzujna stated that on page 2, there is mention of the tent being purchased by Choose Franklin. The minutes make it appear that FBIDC provided the funding. The wording on page 2, last paragraph, second and third line, will be changed from, "She advised they will have a new heated tent which has been made possible through a grant from FBIDC," to "She advised they will have a new tent which has been made possible through a grant from FSB, facilitated by FBIDC."

Councilor Elect Jim Wells stated that on Page 2 it reflects him addressing the board; however, it states that he is from Ward II and he is from Ward III.

There were no further changes to the minutes.

All were in favor of approving the minutes as corrected.

- II. City Council to consider the approval of Ordinance #08-15 concerning Chapter 284 of the Municipal Code, Vehicles and Traffic.

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Boyd seconded that the Franklin City Council approve Ordinance #08-15 concerning Chapter 284, Vehicles and Traffic of the Franklin City Code, by a roll call vote.

MOTION: Councilor Desrochers and Councilor Cournoyer made a motion to postpone the approval until after the Winter Parking ban is completed.

Councilor Feener stated that the reason for the postponement is due to one section of the ordinance, regarding the parking at Hancock Terrace. He stated he would like to see a motion to remove this section of the ordinance until after the winter parking ban and revisit that later on.

Councilor Cournoyer removed his second. Councilor Desrochers removed his motion to postpone the approval of Ordinance #08-15 until after the winter parking ban.

Councilor Feener moved to amend his motion, approving Ordinance #08-15, with the removal of the wording on page 2, which states:

Street: City side of Courthouse/Police Station Parking lot on Hancock Terrace, Northeast side, adjacent to Baptist Church.

Number of Spaces: 16

Purpose: Overnight Parking 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.

All were in favor of the amendment.

All were in favor of the original motion as amended.

Councilor Barton asked if the ordinance goes into affect immediately. The Mayor stated that the remainder of the ordinance, with the removal of the allowance of overnight parking at Hancock Terrace, would be in affect immediately.

Councilor Desrochers asked if there were plans to post signs with the hours and days that the changes are in affect as the police and public will not know of the changes. Councilor Boyd stated the signs will all be changed, that Brian Sullivan and Chief Goldstein were at the meetings and are aware of the changes. City Manager Dragon stated the signs will be replaced; however some may need to be done in the spring.

Adjournment

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Desrochers seconded to adjourn the 2014 City Council Meeting. All were in favor and the motion passed.

2015 Inaugural Program

Invocation: Reverend Glen Carter gave the Invocation.

Councilor Cournoyer then presented Mayor Merrifield with a key to be passed on from Mayor to Mayor. The Key was explained to represent the great progress the City has been accomplishing and was given in the hopes that the City continue to move in the right direction. Mayor Merrifield accepted the key for the people and stated he looks forward to one day being able to turn it over to the next Mayor.

Swearing in of Councilors

City Attorney Paul Fitzgerald swore in Councilor-Elect George Dzujna, Ward I, to a three year term; Councilor-Elect Robert Desrochers, Sr., Ward II, to a three year term; and, Councilor-Elect James C. Wells, Ward III, to a three year term.

Swearing in Board of Education

City Attorney Paul Fitzgerald swore in Lisa Tremblay, Ward I, to a two year term on the School Board; Edward Cogan, Ward II, to a two year term on the School Board; and Robin Lyn Gargano, Ward III, to a two year term on the School Board.

State of the City

Mayor Merrifield gave the State of the City address. (See attached.)

Citizen of the Year

The Citizen of the Year award was given to Nancy Marceau for her years of dedication and commitment to the TRIP Center. Mrs. Marceau stated that she is speechless and truly honored to receive this award. She stated that she has been in Franklin for many years; but, has been at the TRIP Center for 15 years. She stated she wanted to thank the City for all their support and indicated that she cannot do what she does without the help of so many people and the citizens of Franklin.

The Serendipity Singers then sang the Battle Hymn.

The Inaugural was adjourned for a reception and refreshments.

2015 City Council Business

Call to Order

Mayor Merrifield called the meeting to order in the Council Chambers, Franklin City Hall at 7:05 p.m.

In Attendance

Present: Councilor Dzujna, Councilor Giunta, Councilor Wells, Councilor Desrochers, Councilor Feener, Councilor Barton, Councilor Starkweather, and Councilor Boyd, Mayor Merrifield, and City Manager Dragon. Councilor Clarenbach arrived at 7:10 p.m.

Public Comment

Mayor Merrifield indicated to the public that the public hearing portion of the meeting allows the general public to speak for not more than 3 minutes each, with the total public hearing portion of the meeting not to exceed 30 minutes.

Ed Cogan was present to speak. He stated that he would like to thank Councilor Desrochers and Brian Sullivan for getting the sidewalk plow to plow the sidewalks in his neighborhood. He stated that little things do add up.

There was no further public comment.

Agenda Item I.

City Council to consider the scheduling of a public hearing on Resolution #05-15 concerning whether to fund the "Cross Street Tank Rehabilitation Project" and Resolution #06-15 regarding authorization to participate in the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSR) or to determine some other form of combination of funding for financing the projects.

MOTION: Councilor Desrochers moved and Councilor Dzujna seconded to schedule a public hearing on Resolution 05-15 at 6:05 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2015, and a second public hearing on

Resolution 06-15 at 6:06 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2015 in the City Council Chambers, at Franklin City Hall.

Chair Desrochers stated that this is a time sensitive matter that cannot wait until the February 5th meeting. City Manager Dragon stated she doesn't believe that the 12th will work, as she believes the notice must be in the paper 10 days prior to the meeting. It was indicated there is some confusion as to whether it is 7 days or 10 days, but to play it safe the Council should schedule the hearing for the following week.

After a brief discussion it was indicated that the public hearing could be scheduled for Tuesday the 20th, as Monday the 19th is a Holiday, and that would meet the requirements for either time frame.

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Dzujna seconded to amend the date of the public hearing to Tuesday, January 20th, 2015.

All were in favor of the amendment to the motion.

All were in favor of the original motion as amended.

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Clarenbach seconded that regarding the public hearing for Resolution 05-15 and Resolution 06-15, that the Mayor read the Resolution in Title only. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mayor Merrifield then read the Title of the Resolutions into the record:

Resolution 05-15: A Resolution requesting guidance from the Franklin City Council relative to the appropriation of funds necessary to undertake two major Water Department Infrastructure Projects in the summer of 2015.

Resolution 06-15: A Resolution granting the City Manager the authority to file an application for the State of New Hampshire Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program and designating the City Manager as the City's authorized representative.

Agenda Item II.

City Council to discuss water/sewer late fees and practices.

Mayor Merrifield stated that regarding the water/sewer late fees he is suggesting that the City Council amend the regulations so that it would work as follows: Resident has 30 days to pay the bill; after 30 days in hand a late fee would be added however would not be charged until 30 days after the due date; and, 30 days after the late fees were added that shut off would take place. Ultimately this gives a resident 90 days to pay their bill. He also suggested that late fees be charged once on the entire bill and not late fees for water and late fees for sewer.

There was a discussion and clarification by the council. Currently the bills are sent out with a due date of 30 days from the date the bills are mailed. Late fees are charged after the due date, so at 31 days a late fee is charged.

City Manager Dragon stated that the water and sewer are separate funds and wanted to know which account would receive the late fees. She stated that the changes were made during the Ordinance change at the time of the budget. Before the clerk had discretion and could remove or not charge late fees to a resident. At the meeting it was determined that it should be an automatic fee and that no city employee should be given discretion for the fees.

Councilor Dzujna stated that the reason why this was changed was that the City needs to get their fees in a timely fashion and cannot be waiting months as the revenue goes to paying other City bills.

It was indicated the fee charged is \$10 and it is charged to water and sewer if they have both. The Council stated that every utility charges late fees and does shut off notices that are within the 60 day time period. Before there was a lot of leniency and now it is black and white and this is causing frustration by the residents. Councilor Dzujna stated that he was amazed by the amount of people who were paying their bills late before the ordinance change. There are costs associated with the resending of bills.

There was some discussion about allowing a few days grace period after the 30 days, 3-5 days, before the late fee is added.

The council was informed they could leave the ordinance as it is or send this to committee for amendments, whether they are the addition of a few days grace period or adding additional time of 30+ days for payments to be made.

MOTION: Councilor Giunta moved and Councilor Barton seconded to send the ordinance regarding water/sewer late fees and practices to the MSD Committee for review.

Councilor Clarenbach stated, as Chair of the MSD Committee, that he would like some direction from the chair and if there are no merits then why change the ordinance. Councilor Feener stated the only change he would agree with would be a three day grace period. Councilor Desrochers stated the ordinance should be left the way it is and that people will get use to it, but if the council keeps making changes no one is going to know what the rules are. Councilor Starkweather stated making changes is doing a disservice to those that pay their bills on time. He stated that no other utilities give this type of leniency.

Councilor Barton withdrew his second and Councilor Giunta withdrew his motion.

Other Business

Manager's Update

Contingency Grant Line Activity: Manager Dragon stated the City received \$1,484.25 this month, for Public Access (PEG Access Programing).

Northern Pass Advocacy: Manager Dragon stated she has once again arranged for Stuart Tracey to help with the monitoring of the legislation that could impact the Northern Pass Project and assist in the Cities advocacy efforts.

K9 Officer Max Update: Officer Max had his first tracking. He was certified in tracking in February of last year. Officer Max will be coming in soon for a visit. He has a new handler, Officer Rector. Officer Donnelly had to step down. Max is doing very well with Officer Rector.

Citizen's Institute for Rural Design- CIRP: Manager Dragon gave an update. She stated the project has a new name "Franklin for a Lifetime". The project is planning for the aging population. The goal is to enhance ways to get people to call Franklin their

home for their entire lives. A flyer was included in the packet for the council. The timeline is: January-March 31 they plan on engaging the community and completing their information review; a workshop will be held April 9-11th with Day 1 being a night of giving an overview, Day 2 is an all day workshop day and speakers will be coming in and Day 3 will be a full day with preliminary design ideas being drawn up based on the speakers from day 2 and the information received in group discussions; in May they will come to the Council to bring their information to the entire community.

The steering committee will be preparing for a site visit to the CIRD on January 15th.

Mapping Project: Manager Dragon stated that the three year mapping process is coming to an end. Cartographics (CAI) has researched the deeds, surveys and other plans and planning documents. They have supplied the City with a database of all the documents that were utilized in the making of the plans. They have utilized the State Ortho Photographs. The base layers for the GIS system have been made. If no survey was available, then CAI sent letters to the property owners looking for any additional information they may have (60 letters were sent and only 10 people responded). Planning, Zoning and Assessing are comparing the table of current land areas and the new land areas to see where the changes are and how drastic they are. The Planning, Zoning and Assessing Department will notify some property owners with drastic changes to see if they have any further information available to help with the maps. The project has been a long project but is a worthwhile project. The maps will need to be approved by the City Council.

Fire Department Update

Chief Lachapelle stated that last month he discussed the Thanksgiving Storm with the Council and the City's response for Emergency Management. This was a good test of the Emergency Management Plan that was just completed by the City. MSD, Fire and Police did a good job with the Emergency Management Planning, on top of the number of their normal calls going up significantly during this time. The Fire Department had 55 incidents in 30 hours, which is typically the number of incidents in a month. During this time period the police department also had to deal with two significant crimes.

Road closures and tree/lines down were within the norm for a storm of this magnitude. Power Outages however were pretty high.

Chief Lachapelle stated that the sheltering plan is as follows:

1. If there are less than 25 people and they are all Franklin residents, they are housed at the Rowell Community Center.
2. If there are more than 25 people and they are all Franklin residents, then they are housed at the Franklin Middle School.
3. If there are more than 25 people and they are area residents and not all from Franklin then they are housed at Winnisquam High School for the Regional Shelter.

The shelter was opened the first night, as people who were on oxygen were concerned about the length of time without power; however, no one showed and 10 employees were paid for 6 hours. The regional shelter was opened on days 2 and 3, and only one person from Franklin showed up.

Chief Lachapelle stated they worked with PSNH, the State and CoOp and had daily conference calls at noon with the Emergency Managers across the state for sheltering.

Post storm information includes that PSNH will be at the February Council Meeting to show how Franklin can make improvements to their power supply to keep from having numerous power outages.

Councilor Starkweather indicated that when people call for sheltering, they are first informed to try and find a place with family or friends and when they find out they are not being put up in a hotel, but in an emergency shelter, they usually find other means.

Chief Lachapelle stated they did take a few names and numbers and called them back when the shelter was opened, only to be informed that they were all set. Chief Lachapelle stated that this was good practice for the future. Councilor Desrochers commended the chief on a good job.

Mayor Appointments – Planning Board

The Mayor appointed the following returning board members for another three year term, which expires in 2018: Powell Glenn, David Veysey, Brian Colburn, Mike Freeman and Brian Sullivan.

City Council Appointments – Zoning Board

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Barton seconded that the Franklin City Council reappoint Sandy Hodgdon to the Franklin

Zoning Board, Term of Service to January 2018. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Angie Carey stated there are still two vacancies on the Zoning Board.

Late Items

Snow Removal

Councilor Desrochers read to the board the following ordinances:

§ 262-19_Prevention of hazardous conditions.

No person shall put or place or cause to be put or placed any snow or ice upon the surface of any sidewalk, street, highway or other public way within the City of Franklin, nor shall any person permit runoff from ice and snow accumulations upon his or her property to drain into any public way in such a fashion as to create a hazardous condition.

§ 262-20_Violations and penalties.

Any person found guilty of violating this article shall be fined not less than \$50 per violation.

§ 284-19_Towing of vehicles.

The Franklin Police Department is authorized to remove and tow away or have removed and towed away by commercial towing service any abandoned vehicle or other vehicle illegally parked in a place where it creates or constitutes a traffic hazard or violates the parking ordinances of the City of Franklin or obstructs snow removal or the movement of any emergency vehicles. Vehicles towed for illegal parking shall be stored in a safe place and shall be restored to the owner or operator upon payment of all fees for towing and storage.

He stated the City has overlooked this long enough. If people throw snow on a public way they should be fined. If they are fined or given a notice that they will be fined, then they are more apt to not do it again. He stated there are rules on smoking in private places that are not upheld either and the rules need to be upheld. The City should put their best foot forward and come up with a plan for enforcement of the code, which will help make Municipal services job easier.

It was indicated that this should be sent to the legislative committee to add fines if needed. Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Councilor Feener, stated that a list of the ordinances that need fines should be referred to him.

Councilor Desrochers stated Director Sullivan plowed the sidewalks in the area of Franklin Street and Elkins Street and within a few hours he had received calls about them doing a nice job.

Manager Dragon stated that there are laws regarding speeding, but people still speed. She stated they cannot be everywhere. There are a lot of regulations in place that they use when needed. The police are not patrolling for vehicles to tow, but in the past when it has been a problem vehicles have been towed. She stated positions have been eliminated due to budget restraints and the impacts on enforcement monetarily sometimes out weight the fines in place. A balance needs to be reached and this is a good conversation to have.

Councilor Feener stated that if the Council gets a list to the City Manager then he will schedule a meeting.

Councilor Desrochers stated that when MSD is out plowing, if they see any area where people are removing snow and placing it on a public way then they should make note of it and a letter should be sent. The letter could indicate that the next time they will be fined. He had three calls today about these issues. If no effort is put forward by the city, the issues will continue and sometimes just sending a letter indicating a fine will be enforced next time will rectify the issue.

Approved Energy Project Funding Interest Rate Change

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Desrochers seconded that the City of Franklin City Council set a public hearing for Monday, February 2nd, 2015, at 6:05 p.m. regarding resolution 07-15 increasing the interest rate on the lease for the energy project and re-appropriating the energy project in FY15. All were in favor and the motion passed.

MOTION: Councilor Feener moved and Councilor Clarenbach seconded that regarding the public hearing for Resolution 07-15, that the Mayor read the Resolution in Title only. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mayor Merrifield then read the Title of the Resolutions into the record:

Resolution #07-15: A Resolution relating to the authorization for the City of Franklin to enter into a lease purchase agreement through Municipal Leasing Consultants for a higher interest rate than originally approved with the energy project in February 2014 through resolution 07-14 and FY15 supplemental appropriation of the lease proceeds and additional funding from the Capital Reserve Fund in order to fund the Energy Performance Contract.

Adjournment

MOTION: Member Feener moved and Member Desrochers seconded to adjourn the City Council meeting of January 5th, 2015 at 8:04 p.m. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela M. Carey

Attachments: School Board Report
Bob Lucas comments
Mayor's State of the City
Mayor's Citizen of the Year comments

January 5, 2015

Good evening Mayor Merrifield, City Manager, City Councilors and fellow Franklin citizens.

My name is Bob Lucas and I am a Ward 1 Franklin citizen.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to speak briefly in support of the TRIP Center. The Twin Rivers *Intergenerational* Center supports area citizens by providing a venue for many activities and support systems. The TRIP Center, through their myriad services strives to enhance the vitality and well being of our senior citizens and is truly intergenerational as witnessed by activities such as the children's Halloween and Christmas parties to name a few.

The TRIP Center has been presented with a rare opportunity to move its operations into the recently renovated Bessie Rowell Community Center. The restrooms at the current location are in poor condition and are open to the general public. The entrance to the current site, although handicap assessable, uses a long, somewhat difficult ramp. Stairs are present; however they too can be difficult for our seniors and physically challenged to navigate. Parking at the current location is difficult and exiting the parking area is less than ideal.

This planned move has many benefits to the clients of the TRIP Center. By relocating to the BRCC, the TRIP Center will enjoy other benefits that include the use of multipurpose rooms for various activities, clean, safe

**FRANKLIN CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 5, 2015
FRANKLIN SCHOOL BOARD REPORT**

QUOTE: "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." George S. Patton

1. Carrie Charette and Superintendent McKenney appeared in the WFTN 94.1 Van with Fred Caruso to help raise funds for Cash and Cans, and hoping this new tradition will continue.
2. Strategic Planning is scheduled for SAU18 in the Professional Development Center on January 23 and 24, 2015. Mr. McKenney has met and obtained Dennis Martino has our strategic facilitator. His background information is attached.
3. As you may have heard, there is an increase of student population at the Paul Smith School; therefore, true to form, we are aggressively looking into this enrollment issue. At our last board meeting, Mr. McKenney asked if any School Board Members have any ideas for resolution to please e-mail him. Also, our School Leaders are also reviewing possibilities.
4. For more information, please see the attached information: Student Representative Report, School Board Minutes of the November 17, 2014, all Principal Reports, December 15, 2014 School Board Agenda, Paul Smith School Enrollment Numbers as of 12.12.14, BIO of our speaker December 15th President of Lakes Region Community College, Dr. Scott J. Kalicki, and background information on Dennis Martino. *added 12/15/14 board minutes.*

Wishing the City Council and City Staff a Healthy and Happy New Year



CITY OF FRANKLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE & CLOSING DATES FOR 2015

Council Meeting Date	Manager & Mayor Review Closing Date	Agenda and Supporting Documents Delivered To Councilors By
February 2, 2015	Noon – Friday January 23, 2015	COB Wednesday January 28, 2015
March 2, 2015	Noon – Friday February 20, 2015	COB Wednesday February 25, 2015
April 6, 2015	Noon – Friday March 27, 2015	COB Wednesday April 1, 2015
May 4, 2015	Noon – Friday April 24, 2015	COB Wednesday April 29, 2015
June 1, 2015	Noon – Friday May 22, 2015	COB Wednesday May 27, 2015
July 6, 2015	Noon – Friday June 26, 2015	COB Wednesday July 1, 2015
August 3, 2015	Noon – Friday July 24, 2015	COB Wednesday July 29, 2015
September 7, 2015	Noon – Friday August 28, 2015	COB Wednesday September 2, 2015
October 5, 2015	Noon – Friday September 25, 2015	COB Wednesday September 30, 2015
November 2, 2015	Noon – Friday October 23, 2015	COB Wednesday October 28, 2015
December 7, 2015	Noon – Friday November 27, 2015	COB Wednesday December 2, 2015
January 4, 2016	Noon – Friday December 25, 2015	COB Wednesday December 30, 2015

Items for consideration by the Franklin City Council must be submitted to the City Manager's office by noon on the Manager & Mayor Review Closing Date.

Late items **may be allowed** for Council consideration **with the concurrence of the Manager and the Mayor**, but will be discussed only under the agenda heading "Late Submissions" at the end of the Council meeting.

Late material submitted for Council consideration will be clearly marked as such, and may be distributed by any reasonable means, but late submissions will in no instance delay the delivery of meeting packets to the Franklin City Council.

The Mayor and Manager may agree to make adjustments to the schedule as required by Council-approved holiday observances or similar circumstances. A new annual schedule will be prepared by the Manager in December of each year.

This policy adopted by the Franklin City Council on May 5, 2008. Motion by Councilor Sharon, 2nd by Councilor Rabinowitz. All in Favor.



CITY OF FRANKLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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-January 5, 2015-

Pastor Carter, members of the City Council for 2014 and 2015, City Manager Dragon and Department Directors, honored School Board members, friends, and fellow citizens:

It will not surprise you when I say that we live in difficult and uncertain times. At times we feel as if events are beyond our control. William Butler Yeats put it this way: "*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world... The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity.*" And those words written nearly 100 years ago.

The Great Recession placed terrible strains on the national and local economy, and stalled the impressive growth that our community had experienced from 2000 to 2006.

We find that energy costs for the municipality, schools, and our residents are extremely volatile. We have been told to expect electricity price hikes as much as 50% this winter, due to New England's over-reliance on natural gas. NH Public Radio reminded us in November that: "Between the years ... 2000 and 2013, New England went from getting 15 percent of its energy from natural gas to 46 percent." And we all know how easy it would be to get approval of another gas pipeline or nuclear plant in New England, right?

Like all NH communities, we have also been the recipient of downshifted costs from the State government over the last decade. Given the historic level of expected State revenues, the completed FY 14 budget in Franklin was shorted \$138,000 in state revenue sharing; \$203,000 in rooms and meals revenues; \$205,000 in lost support for mandated retirement costs; \$30,000 from the highway block grant; and \$262,000 in school aid, because our enrollment has dropped 10% in ten years, just like enrollment throughout NH. That list totals \$838,000 in lost state revenue in just one fiscal year. What might have been done with that money if it ever arrived here? Rest assured, the one revenue that has

Franklin - The Three Rivers City

consistently increased over the last ten years has been the amount we collect from you in property taxes. Those who dislike the Tax Cap because it "holds us back" - might want to talk to the government in Concord first.

Much has been discussed in social media and the popular press recently about our downtown. It has admittedly and obviously lagged other areas in the city - being built, as it was, in a time when people walked to work and walked to shop. Lest we think we are alone – I saw the same challenges in a sister city just weeks ago. And you do not have to travel far from Franklin to see boarded windows and empty stores in a historic downtown even closer to the interstate. We should remember that when we visit Lowes or Tanger, Uno's or Sam's - we are confirming the belief of **their** investors that **they** should not put money in small downtowns.

We have seen nationally that police and other emergency and municipal workers are being disrespected and even killed because of their uniform. Before you say that it won't happen here: My son-in-law is a former soldier and a cop in a nearby community and he has also been attacked and badly injured during a simple traffic stop.

A large local employer has proclaimed "Now Hiring" from its property for many months, but can't find many applicants who can pass the drug screening. Dr. Paul Racicot from LRGHealthcare recently spoke to the Mayor's Drug Task Force and gave us this sad news: Fully 20% of the babies born in the Lakes Region today are born drug-addicted. If that doesn't make you a crusader against substance abuse, then nothing will.

But... because like most of you - I am an optimist, and believe in our city and believe in our people - I strongly feel that we cannot turn away from any of these challenges. And when we fight each other we solve absolutely nothing! So what way forward? Here are just a few of my thoughts:

As mayor, I will host a statewide energy conference in Franklin for business and energy experts early in 2015. As the federal and state governments prepare to make final decisions on the Northern Pass project, Franklin will no doubt be "ground zero" for energy policy discussions. And the likelihood that Northern Pass will be approved in some form continues to grow. The feds have granted the project the authority to start borrowing \$500 million for construction. Not only

Franklin - The Three Rivers City

will that converter station pay millions of new tax dollars to Franklin each year and double the taxable value of the city, providing funds for schools, roads, infrastructure, and tax relief - but it also will bring hundreds of workers into the community over the three year construction phase. Demand for consumer services and housing will soar, and the upside for Franklin investors is tremendous. An important mental health agency is currently seeking a location in Franklin, and I have been approached by two great residents in just the last couple of days with their plans for new businesses here.

As I have done at this time in past years, I am also calling upon members of the city council to recruit a business in 2015 from outside Franklin to join us here in the city. Remind them, Councilors, that one prominent investor recently said: "Franklin was the most helpful and accommodating city government that we have found in New England," and another major employer here has said: "[the] entire team ... has been just fabulous to work with" during their multi-million dollar expansion.

I and one of your city councilors will be meeting early in 2015 with another such investor who has made it his life's work to restore the downtowns of New England mill cities. He now has his eye on Franklin. These and some other efforts you read about in the press deserve our consideration, support, and cooperation.

I want to reiterate my profound respect and support for all our teachers, fire and EMS staff, all municipal workers and police. I think that it is important for mayors to be especially protective of cops on the beat - and in response - and contrast - to recent events in NYC, I will call on fellow mayors to join me in creating a movement and an organization to strengthen our bonds with our police officers.

And - as we enter the renewal phase for our Drug Free Communities grant, the Mayor's Drug Task Force has and will enlist the aid of community members in crafting a new grant proposal to steer our young people away from substance abuse and toward a healthier life.

As always, I want to say how grateful I am to have been selected as mayor on four different occasions. Obviously, not everyone agrees with me on every issue (that's nothing new), but I know all of us here are firmly united in our desire to see Franklin and its people succeed.

Franklin - The Three Rivers City

So I will conclude by wishing each of you health, prosperity, and luck in 2015 – and promising my own best efforts for the coming year. May God bless our city so that we can be reminded of the words of the Apostle in the 8th Chapter of Romans:

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ... How will He not ... graciously give us all things?... For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God."

Thank you and best wishes to all of you.



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Citizen of the Year 2014

One of the most difficult (but wonderful) responsibilities in this office is the selection of the Citizen of the Year. A happy challenge, but a challenge nonetheless. Franklin is a great and proud city, filled with good people. Many deserve recognition for their efforts.

I have often selected those who work with our young people. You may remember that past recipients included teachers Linda Davidson, and Jack and Jule Finley – as well as coaches Dave Therrien and Skip Dubois.

However...Perhaps because my own age is advancing so rapidly - I look in a slightly different direction this year. I mentioned that school enrollment in NH has fallen by 10% over the last 10 years. Young people are leaving the state faster than they joining us. And so we are becoming a State and Region of seniors.

All this means that services to our senior population are increasingly important. Older citizens have much to offer us, and great leadership is required to keep programs like "Meals on Wheels" and others running effectively and efficiently to benefit our senior community members.

One such beloved leader in our community stands out among many. Nancy Marceau has long demonstrated a loving commitment to our seniors, and if you know her and her work at the TRIP Center, you know how much she is revered and adored by her friends in that program. She is a vital link between the community and our seniors, and I am truly blessed to have known her, worked with her, and called her "friend". And she is the Citizen of the Year.