



Meeting Minutes

Work Session

Tuesday, September 24, 2024

5:00 PM

Board Room

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ken Moore called the meeting to order at 05:00 PM

Board Members Present: Beverly Burger, Patrick Baggett, Clyde Barnhill, Ann Petersen, Matt Brown, Jason Potts, Greg Caesar, Brandy Blanton

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Kristine Brock, Vernon Gerth, Bill Squires, Angie Skarp

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Comments on agenda items may be made in person at City Hall or by emailing recorder@franklintn.gov before noon on the day of the meeting. Comments will be submitted for the record.

Dennis Brashear, 509 Hermitage Drive, Franklin, TN, urged the Board to find a solution for the high-pitched sound emanating from the Oncology Center on Carothers Parkway.

WORK SESSION DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. **Consideration Of Contract No. 2024-0269, An Agreement Between The City Of Franklin And The Cool Springs Conference Center Designating The Conference Center As A Subrecipient Of American Rescue Plan Act Grant Funds**

Sponsors: Kristine Brock, Mike Lowe, Margaret Wilson

Kristine Brock, Assistant City Administrator, introduced the item. City Comptrollers, Mike Lowe and Margaret Wilson, and General Manager of the Cool Springs Conference Center, Matt Lahiff, were present to answer any questions from the Board.

Ms. Brock explained that the City of Franklin is a recipient of a direct allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). An approved use of these federal funds is for assisting the tourism and hospitality industry that was financially impacted by the pandemic. The City and Williamson County are joint owners of the Cool Springs Conference Center, which experienced loss of revenue for FY 2020, FY 2021 and FY 2022 as conferences and events were canceled, postponed or downsized. The operator of the center sets aside 5% of revenues for capital improvements to the facility. The loss of revenue during these years reduced the amount of funds available for improvements and upgrades programmed for 2025/2026. Hence, The City of Franklin proposes to appropriate \$1.2 million of ARPA grant funds to the soft goods renovation of the Cool Springs Conference Center. Williamson County government also plans to appropriate \$1.2 million of their ARPA allocation to improvements at the Cool Springs Conference Center. Mr. Lahiff discussed the various improvements proposed via a soft goods renovation including carpet and wall vinyl.

Alderman Burger clarified when the renovations need to be completed to qualify for the ARPA grant funds? Answer: Ms. Brock explained that the renovations need to be completed by the end of 2026. This date is set by the US Department of the Treasury. Mr. Lahiff added that they plan to have the renovations done by the

end of July 2025.

Alderman Caesar asked how this renovation would impact conference center revenues?

Answer: Currently, this renovation is predicated to take 30 days, so that is about a month without revenues via reservations of the space. However, the City and the Conference Center intentionally chose to pull the Conference Center offline in July 2025 because July is historically the slowest month of the year.

The item is planned for the October 8, 2024 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

2. Consideration Of Resolution 2024-68, A Resolution To Authorize Employees Of A Participating Political Subdivision Who Are Members Of The Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System ("TCRS") To Establish Retirement Credit In TCRS For Expanded Armed Conflict Military Service Credit Pursuant To Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-34-605

Sponsors: Kristine Brock, Sara Sylvis

Ms. Brock introduced the Expanded Armed Conflict Military Service provision for the TCRS Pension Program. At its March 2024 meeting, the Pension Committee received a presentation on a the Expanded Armed Conflict Military Service Credit program. This law expands eligibility to allow veterans of 6 armed conflicts to establish prior service credit of up to 4 years even if their military service did not interrupt TCRS covered employment.

- Multinational Force in Lebanon 8/21/82–2/26/84
- Invasion of Grenada/Operation Urgent Fury 10/25/83–12/15/83
- Invasion of Panama/Operation Just Cause 12/20/89–1/31/90
- Persian Gulf War 8/2/90–4/6/91
- Operation Enduring Freedom 10/7/01–12/28/14
- Operation Iraqi Freedom 3/19/03–8/31/10

Terms of the program allow for an eligible employee to decide for him or herself whether to purchase military service credit once a local government adopts the provision. There is no compulsory requirement for an employee to purchase service credit. Should the Board of Mayor and Aldermen desire to enter the program, TCRS requires an employer to "buy-in" at a cost determined by an actuarial study using data provided by a survey of interested employees. The City's HR Department conducted a survey of interest in spring 2024 with the results provided to TCRS for actuarial review. This study resulted in TCRS providing the City three financial options for joining the program:

1. Up-front payment of \$197,006, or
2. An increase in the City's employer contribution by 0.95% for a period of 12 months, or
3. An additional monthly payment from the City to TCRS in the amount of \$2,237 for a period of 120 months (10 years).

Staff recommends adoption of the Expanded Armed Forces Military Credit program and payment of the employer buy-in through an up-front payment of \$197,006 in fiscal year 2025. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen may appropriate these additional funds in a FY 2025 Budget Amendment.

Vice Mayor Brown asked if the up-front cost of \$197,006 was determined by the employee interest survey?

Answer: Yes. However, Ms. Brock explained that this could also be a huge benefit to future veterans that the City may employ. In fact, it could be an advantage to the city in the recruitment process.

Alderman Potts asked if there was a cost-savings associated with the single up-front payment?

Answer: Yes, but it was minimal. City Staff determined that we have the funds to incorporate our buy-in into the FY2025 budget.

The item is planned for the October 8, 2024 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

3. Consideration Of Resolution 2024-69, A Resolution For The Defined Contribution Retirement Plan As Required For Compliance With The Federal SECURE 2.0 Act Of 2022

Sponsors: Kristine Brock, Sara Sylvis

Ms. Brock introduced the item. The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement 2.0 Act (SECURE 2.0) affects both private sector and governmental retirement plans, with some provisions affecting only one type of plan. There is a phase-in implementation of changes over several years beginning in 2023. The SECURE 2.0 Act made changes to both federal law and the Internal Revenue Code. Most required changes to governmental plans do not require the approval of plan sponsors and will be implemented by plan administrators. However, some changes do require approval by plan sponsors.

There is no significant financial impact on the City of Franklin as a plan sponsor. However, there will be federal tax implications for certain employees of the City, primarily employees affected by the changes in the Catch-Up Provisions for ages 50 and over. Certain other city employees and retirees may have a financial benefit from provisions that eliminate penalties related to distributions for specific situations such as death of a spouse, terminal illness or for payment of retiree medical premiums for retired public safety employees.

The item is planned for the October 8, 2024 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

4. Discussion Concerning A Request For A Right Turn Only Eastbound On South Margin At 3rd Ave South

Sponsors: Paul Holzen, Adam Moser

Paul Holzen, Engineering Director, and Adam Moser, City Traffic Engineer, presented this item. Mr. Moser explained that City staff received a request from the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) to evaluate the implementation of a "right-turn only" restriction for northeast-bound traffic on South Margin Street at 3rd Avenue South. In partnership, the City of Franklin and DNA conducted a turning movement study at this intersection, located in the downtown area. The study revealed that over 90% of vehicles traveling northeast on South Margin Street turn right onto southeast-bound 3rd Avenue South (TN State Route 96E).

South Margin Street serves as a major local bypass through downtown Franklin, offering an alternative to the busy Main Street tourist and retail area. This bypass helps reduce vehicle travel time through the city's core. To further alleviate congestion, the DNA is proposing a right-turn only restriction for northeast-bound traffic at this intersection, a change also supported by the Downtown Franklin Association (DFA).

Mr. Holzen walked through the pros and cons of implementing this right-turn only modification.

Public Comments:

Margaret Martin, 238 Third Ave South, Franklin, TN, commended Staff for their work with the DNA on this traffic study. However, she does not think this will alleviate traffic concerns in the downtown corridor.

Bob Martin, 238 Third Ave South, Franklin, TN, expressed opposition to the recommended changes to South Margin at Third Ave South.

Board Comments:

Alderman Baggett echoed Ms. Martin's hesitations, but on the contrary, there is not really another traffic solution for this intersection. He stated that some improvement is better than no improvement, especially at this bottleneck.

Alderman Blanton expressed hesitation with changing a well-known traffic pattern in the downtown corridor. She stated that she often utilizes South Margin as a straight-through intersection as well, so limiting it to right-

turns would be an adjustment.

Alderman Potts recommended significant public education on various media outlets to communicate this traffic pattern change if it moves forward.

Vice Mayor Brown does not want to pursue this traffic change until the Lewisburg and Five Points construction has been completed.

Staff assured him that this change would not coincide with current construction downtown.

To Alderman Potts' point, Alderman Burger argued that people on that road may not be local or may not be privy to educational resources about the change.

Bob Ravenor, representative from the DNA, believes that this solution will be the most cost-effective and most impactful on overall traffic congestion issues downtown. He expressed that doing nothing should not be an option.

Mayor Moore agreed with Vice Mayor Brown's sentiments. He also added that there may not be enough information on the impacts we will see elsewhere downtown if we move forward with a right-turn only on South Margin.

Alderman Caesar does not see an issue with trying out the right-turn only solution to see how it is received. It does not have to be a permanent change.

Alderman Barnhill agreed that this intersection contributes to downtown traffic congestion. He would not wait for the Lewisburg Avenue construction to be completed before moving forward with this proposed change.

5. ***Consideration Of Amendment 1 To COF Contract No. 2023-0399, With Tennessee Department Of Environment And Conservation For Preservation Grant For Toussaint L'Ouverture Cemetery**

Sponsors: Lisa Clayton, Heather Eusebio, Emily Huffer

The item was acknowledged and is on the September 24, 2024 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

6. **Discussion Of Possible City Naming Policy**

Sponsors: Lisa Clayton, Blake Harper

Lisa Clayton, Parks Director, and Blake Harper, Staff Attorney, introduced this item. They explained that the City has been approached regarding the naming of certain City-owned assets. The Board needs to decide if it would like to consider naming City assets when requested and if so, establish a uniform policy regarding requests for the naming or renaming of City-owned assets that are compatible with community interest and will enhance the values and heritage of the City of Franklin. In 2022, the City of Franklin adopted an honorary street naming policy. This ordinance is attached and may provide guidance applicable in developing a broader naming policy.

Discussion Points:

1. Should the naming policy be limited to only assets of the Parks Department?

The Board consensus was no.

2. Should the naming policy be open to the naming of buildings not within city parks? (For example, City Hall, Public Works, etc.)

Alderman Baggett would like to exclude the possibility of naming only City Hall. All other buildings' naming eligibility is up to the Board.

3. If the policy is open to the naming of City-owned buildings, is it also open to individual rooms or assets within buildings? (For example, the Board Room in new City Hall).

The Board consensus was yes.

4. Would the Board like a subcommittee to consider the naming applications, or would they prefer all applications to go before them?

Alderman Barnhill and Alderman Petersen would like a recommending committee, but the final decision would come before the Board.

Alderman Baggett stated that we need to have criteria for how we determine whether someone's name can be used in the naming process.

7. Consideration Of Certificate Of Compliance For Retail Liquor License For Saint Goose, LLC D/B/A Saint Goose, Located At 134 2nd Ave N, Ste 104, Franklin, TN, Managing Agent Westland Wine & Spirits, LLC

Sponsors: Angie Skarp

The item was acknowledged and is planned for the October 8, 2024 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

8. Presentation And Discussion Of Annexation Capabilities And Growth Potential By Drainage Basin

Sponsors: Emily Wright, Kelly Dannenfelser, Andrew Orr, Eric Conner

Vernon Gerth, Assistant City Administrator - Community Development, introduced the item. Eric Conner, City Planner, provided information to the Board of Mayor and Alderman regarding the status of drainage basins throughout the City and within the City's Urban Growth Boundary. The Annexation Capabilities review provided an assessment of the developmental hurdles related to infrastructure within each drainage basin. Emily Wright, Planning Director, further explained that this analysis is designed to provide the Board with information to better prioritize development attention and to help guide infrastructure investment.

Mayor Moore thanked Staff for adding the road infrastructure to these maps in connection to the drainage basin sewer plans.

Alderman Baggett asked Staff for the ROI investment analysis as well.

Alderman Petersen noted that the City pays for roads but not for water and sewer infrastructure.

9. Discussion Of 200 kW Solar Expansion At 135 Claude Yates Drive Known As The Water Reclamation Facility

Sponsors: Emily Wright, Andrew Orr

Andrew Orr, Long Range Planning Supervisor, Ron Merville, President and CEO of Energy Source Partners, and Mike Cassity, Chair of the Sustainability Commission, introduced the item. Mr. Orr explained that City staff and Energy Source Partners have been working together on the details of an amendment to the original 2011 contract regarding solar expansion at the Water Reclamation Facility and anticipate bringing forth a revised contract for the Board to consider. The amendment proposes an expansion via a Solar & Battery Storage Energy Reduction Plan that would include a 1.5 MW solar array and 0.5 MW Battery Storage Project and replacement of the existing 200 kW Solar Project at no expense to the City of Franklin. Mr. Cassity discussed the commitment to source American-made equipment and the use the Davis-Bacon wage rates for all employees.

The City of Franklin currently expends approximately \$150,000 per month for electricity to run the WWTP.

This Solar & Battery Energy Reduction Plan will reduce that expenditure by 20% to 25% per year. Over the next 20 years, this Energy Reduction Plan is estimated to result in about \$4,320,000 in energy savings for the City.

10. Proposed 2025 Calendar Of Board Of Mayor And Aldermen And Committee Meetings

Sponsors: Angie Skarp, Cayce Anderson

The item was acknowledged and is planned for the October 8, 2024 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

11. Discussion Of Board Of Mayor And Aldermen Pay

Sponsors: Alderman Beverly Burger

Alderman Burger advocated for an increase in Mayor and Alderman monthly pay in an attempt to empower those who are coming after us to run for office as well as younger candidates who juggle family responsibilities and full-time employment. Alderman Burger requested that this matter come before the Board for a vote at the October 8, 2024 Board of Mayor and Alderman Meeting.

Alderman Blanton agreed that the mayoral position is woefully underpaid, especially because it is no longer a true part-time job. However, she does not think the pay should be comparable to a corporate job in Franklin, because then people may serve with the wrong intentions. The purpose of the role should be to serve rather than to pay your bills and replace your full-time job. She also brought forth the idea of allowing the Alderman to continue on City health insurance after serving a certain number of terms with the City.

Alderman Potts suggested that Mayor and Alderman Pay be reviewed annually just like any other role within the City.

12. Discussion Of City Hall Commercial Space Options

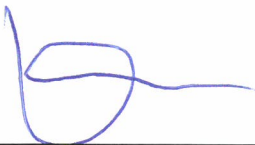
Sponsors: Alderman Patrick Baggett

This item will be discussed at a future Work Session.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Work Session Adjourned @ 6:58 PM



Dr. Ken Moore, Mayor

Minutes Prepared by Sarah Schilling, Assistant Deputy City Recorder, City Administrator's Office - 10/1/24, 11:03 AM