City of Franklin

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Meeting Minutes

Work Session

Tuesday, April 22, 2025 | **4:30 PM** | **Board Room**

CALL TO ORDER
Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 04:31 PM

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

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Eric Stuckey, Mark Hilty, Kristine Brock, Vernon Gerth, Shauna Billingsley, Angie Skarp

CITIZEN COMMENTS

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

WORK SESSION DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. **Consideration Of Event Permit For Bluegrass Along The Harpeth In Downtown Franklin On July 25 - 26, 2025**

   Sponsors: Milissa Reierson, Monique McCullough

   The item was acknowledged and is planned for the May 13, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

2. **Consideration Of Event Permit For The Pilgrimage Music And Cultural Festival At The Park At Harlinsdale Farm To Be Held September 27-28, 2025**

   Sponsors: Lisa Clayton, Milissa Reierson, Monique McCullough

   The item was acknowledged and is planned for the May 13, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

3. **Consideration Of Long-Term Special Event Permit For The Pilgrimage Music And Cultural Festival At The Park At Harlinsdale Farm (2025 Through 2029)**

   Sponsors: Milissa Reierson, Monique McCullough

   The item was acknowledged and is planned for the May 13, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

4. ***Consideration Of Resolution 2025-30, A Resolution Allowing The Delegated Authority Of Water And Wastewater Infrastructure To Be Provided To The Director And Designee Of The Water Management Department**

   Sponsors: Michelle Hatcher, Brian Goodwin

The item was acknowledged and is on the April 22, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

5. ***Consideration Of COF Contract No. 2025-0096, With The Tennessee Department Of Environment And Conservation For The Delegated Authority For Wastewater Infrastructure**

Sponsors: Michelle Hatcher, Brian Goodwin

The item was acknowledged and is on the April 22, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

6. ***Consideration Of COF Contract No. 2025-0097, With The Tennessee Department Of Environment And Conservation For The Delegated Authority For Water Infrastructure**

Sponsors: Michelle Hatcher, Brian Goodwin

The item was acknowledged and is on the April 22, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

7. **Capital Investment Plan - Round Two Prioritization Update**

Sponsors: Eric Stuckey, Paul Holzen, Lisa Clayton, Michael Walters Young

Mr. Stuckey introduced the latest update to the ongoing effort to finalize the City's 10-year Capital Investment Plan (CIP). He identified the modifications made after the second round of project rankings with a funding cap of $100,000,000. Paul Holzen, Engineering Director, shared the refined list of prioritized projects:

- $2,000,000 – Creekside Property
- $29,900,000 – Carothers Parkway (Falcon Creek to SR96 East)
- $10,500,000 – Fire Station 3 Replacement
- $3,950,000 – Bicentennial Park – East Parking Lot
- $650,000 – Station 2 Improvements
- $10,400,000 – Boyd Mill Avenue (South of SR96 to Downs Boulevard)

City staff are seeking input and collaboration from BOMA to determine how best to proceed with the prioritization and funding of these projects.

Alderman Brown reiterated that the road network and road improvements need to be a priority. He stated the Franklin Road (SR-96) improvements need to be ranked higher by the group to accommodate the growth in the northwest corridor of the City, especially with the development of Armistead and continued expansion of Westhaven. The remaining arterial pinch points in the City will hopefully be funded by TDOT or developers, making this one neglected.
Mr. Holzen and Mr. Stuckey agreed that this is a problematic corridor that needs improvement.

Alderman Baggett agreed with Alderman Brown's concern about Franklin Road and thinks more funding should be allocated to not only temporary remedies, but long-term solutions as well. He also expressed concern about the Carothers Parkway (Falcon Creek) project with a price tag of ~$30M. He asked Mr. Holzen

how many people travel on that road every day?
Answer: About 15,000 vehicles daily on Carothers Parkway. To put it into perspective, Eddy Lane or Boyd Mill Lane average between 3,000–4,000 per day.
Alderman Baggett noted that we could use that money to fund more small-scale projects rather than dedicate about half of our CIP budget to one city intersection. He worried that it would be unwise to allocate the funds so heavily towards one project. He asked for the Board to explain why this ~$30M project ranked so highly for them.

Alderman Barnhill suggested focusing on the roads in the Southeast where Franklin will see the most growth in the next ten years.

Alderman Petersen stated that the funded projects should be a result of traffic data. In other words, we should be funding CIP projects that would benefit the most people on a daily basis.

Mr. Stuckey explained that there is an already-identified opportunity for many of these projects, such as Eddy Lane, Boyd Mill, Carothers Parkway, etc., to reduce the size and scope and free up some funding for other projects. He stated that he would bring those options to the Board for review. Additionally, he will provide traffic count data to help paint the picture of where traffic solutions are needed the most throughout the city.

Alderman Blanton agreed with Alderman Brown and Alderman Barnhill in that we need to work on putting the infrastructure in place before the developments. We do not want to continue to be behind the eight-ball because traffic is a huge priority. In addition to the roadway improvements, she reiterated that the Station 3 replacement needs to stay a priority. In general, she is in agreement with the priorities list as it stands, but noted that there is never enough money to do all that needs to be done.

Alderman Caesar emphasized that the biggest challenge here was balancing the projects with the limited pool of money at our disposal for the CIP. He stated that he does not want us to get in the habit of supporting state road improvements with city taxpayer dollars. He does not think it is fiscally responsible to put our city's money into projects that really should not be ours at all. He wants to be able to focus on other projects that will improve citizens' quality of life. He supported Mr. Stuckey's suggestion to band-aid some state route improvements to hopefully hold us over until the state funds their roads. Furthermore, he does not want us to neglect Jim Warren Park and other park improvements. He argued that parks are revenue generators for the City because people travel in to use the facilities, but they also stay in our hotels and eat in our restaurants.

In response to Mr. Caesar's parks commentary, Mr. Stuckey and Lisa Clayton, Parks Director, explained that as The Pearl (Southeast Park) comes online, it is an opportunity to reimagine Jim Warren Park and how our recreational fields fit together.

Vice Mayor Potts wants the City to maximize TDOT funding as much as possible as we move forward with funding the CIP. He generally supports the project ranking as it stands, and agrees that it is imperative to put the infrastructure before the growth in the Southeast corridor.

Alderman Burger generally supported the priority list as it stands as well. She argued that transportation/traffic is the city's biggest issue, so road improvements and sewer infrastructure need to be ranked accordingly (higher than parks).

Alderman Brown contended that we have to balance the analysis of the CIP projects by equally considering pain points and funding sources. If there is an opportunity to get state or federal funding for a project, maybe it deserves a higher ranking even if it's not as impactful as some other suggested projects.

Alderman Barnhill suggested that the city and county could look internally for funding mechanisms. For example, the property tax reassessment is coming down the pipeline, and we have an opportunity to reevaluate property tax as a larger revenue stream.

In response, Alderman Burger said that if we propose raising a tax to fund city infrastructure, we need to have support from our constituents. She stated: "If that's what they want, they need to tell us."

Mayor Moore added that he has seen two tax increases since he has been in office, and both have been tied to funding specific projects in the community. He stated that the big picture problem here is a funding issue, primarily at the state level. In summary, he agreed that the CIP priority projects should revolve around transportation and traffic remediation. He would probably focus efforts on the Southeast corridor because that is where the growth is projected. In response to the Franklin Road spot improvements, he asked staff if perhaps there are safety enhancement grants that could support some of that funding. Regarding the Boyd Mill Lane sidewalks and Fire Station 3 replacement, he does not feel that those are as high a priority as his fellow alderman.

Alderman Baggett argued that he is not willing to even consider raising the property tax to fund transportation projects without a more thorough data analysis of where the need truly lies. This decision should not be based on anecdotes from the Board or the public.

Alderman Blanton expressed that Franklin's current low tax base is nonsensical. In response to Alderman Burger's comment about having the citizens specifically request a property tax increase, she argued that the public is not necessarily engaged in city decisions unless it negatively affects them, so she does not expect that request to ever come. She agreed that capital decisions need to be based on data, but they are also driven by knowledge as a leader in this community.

Alderman Caesar wanted to reiterate how important the SR-96 and I-65 intersection project is due to ongoing safety issues.

Mr. Stuckey concluded that the current CIP project list is satisfactory, so staff will bring forward the various options within these projects. Staff will plan to provide traffic count data to guide the modifications to these projects, as well as options for spot improvements on certain road infrastructure projects like Franklin Road and Carothers Parkway. We will provide more data and more options to hopefully free up some capacity.

8. ***Consideration Of Ordinance 2025-04, An Ordinance To Amend Chapter 4 Of Title 25 - Section 25-405, Section 25-406 And Section 420 Of The Franklin Municipal Code, Concerning Parkland Impact Fees As Amended**

Sponsors: Mark Hilty, Lisa Clayton, Kevin Lindsey, Heather Eusebio, Chris Franklin

Ms. Clayton addressed Alderman Brown's previous request to define an area of public art in the community. Hence, in response, the ordinance now reads that public art in open space areas or areas of public or private park-like amenities may be eligible to receive Parkland Impact Fee reimbursement upon the recommendation of approval from the Franklin Public Arts Commission and approval from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Ms. Clayton also relayed the Franklin Public Arts Commission's recommendation to develop a public art masterplan citywide.

The item is on the April 22, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for First of Three Readings.

9. ***Consideration Of Resolution 2025-29, A Resolution Authorizing The Update Of Transit Vehicle Titles To Franklin Transit Authority**

Sponsors: Vernon Gerth, Kristine Brock

The item was acknowledged and is on the April 22, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

10. **Consideration Of Resolution 2025-34, A Resolution To Consider Whether To Approve A Funding Request From Franktown Open Hearts To Offset Stormwater Infrastructure Which Is Required In Developing A New Facility Located On The Northeast Corner Of Johnson Circle And Granbury Street**

Sponsors: Vernon Gerth

Mr. Stuckey and Mr. Gerth introduced the item. As discussed, Franktown intends to develop a new facility on a county-owned parcel located on the northeast corner of Johnson Circle and Granberry Street. This resolution provides the following options for the BOMA to select the level of funding should they decide to support Franktown with this stormwater improvement.

Option 1 - Provide Funding in an amount not to exceed $900,000, as requested.
Option 2 - Provide Funding in an amount not to exceed $450,000, 50% of the requested amount.
Option 3 - Provide funding in another amount to be determined by the BOMA.
Option 4 - Provide No Additional Funding.

Funding is expected to come primarily from the County Adequate Facilities Tax Fund and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) with the City's General Fund as a last-resort piece of a fund strategy. The City would negotiate an agreement that would provide for funding over a two- to three-year period.

Vice Mayor Potts asked if staff could provide any examples of agreements that the city has entered into where we fund a non-profit project?
Answer: Mr. Gerth explained that historically, CDBG funds have supported local housing non-profits, such as the Franklin Housing Authority and Habitat for Humanity.

Alderman Barnhill clarified that the resolution for upcoming vote would outline whichever option we choose tonight?
Answer: Yes.

Alderman Baggett listed other examples of when the city funded non-profit projects. He argued that this is an opportunity to provide capital improvement to a legacy neighborhood where we cannot rely on new development to make these stormwater improvements. He views this as an infrastructure project over anything else. Hence, he made the recommendation to provide funding in an amount not to exceed $650,000.

Alderman Barnhill remained of the opinion that Franktown Open Hearts have not provided all the requested information following their presentation.

Alderman Caesar argued that this is not an infrastructure project because without the new Franktown development on that lot, the current stormwater infrastructure would suffice. The nexus for the improvements is, in fact, the new Franktown facility.

However, Alderman Baggett contended that the stormwater improvements on Johnson Circle will satisfy the need for Franktown's new facility but also the full use case for development on that road. They would be going above and beyond with these improvements because it will benefit the future Franklin Housing Authority location and allow for the construction to occur only once. That's what makes it a unique situation, and why the City would offset some of the cost.

Mr. Gerth clarified that this project would bring Johnson Circle up to the current city standards for storm sewer infrastructure.

Alerman Caesar remained steadfast in his stance that despite all that discussion, Johnson Circle is functioning as it is. Additionally, he requested that if the Board moves forward with funding this project, that gating is incorporated into the contract to ensure that no taxpayer money is spent if this project does not come to fruition for whatever reason.

Mr. Stuckey clarified that Alderman Caesar wants certainty that the project is financed and ready to go before making a commitment.

Vice Mayor Potts confirmed that sidewalks are not a part of this project cost, but perhaps considered what it would take to include that for the sake of child and pedestrian safety, given the use of this development. Overall, he supported bringing it up to city standards, and "doing it right the first time."

Alderman Barnhill asked if the county would have encountered the same stormwater infrastructure issues when it was being considered for the Boys and Girls Club in the past?
Answer: Yes.

Mayor Moore spoke in support of Franktown's mission, but he is hesitant to spend this money on a project that does not alleviate housing or traffic problems (the City's two biggest challenges). Similar to Alderman Caesar, he does not think Franktown has proved that this is truly a viable project.

The item is planned for the May 13, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

11. **Consideration Of Resolution 2025-33, A Resolution For The Board Of Mayor And Aldermen For The Closed City Of Franklin Employees' Pension Plan, Providing A Cost Of Living Adjustment To The Monthly Benefit For Retired Recipients, Effective July 2025**

Sponsors: Kristine Brock

The item was acknowledged and is planned for the May 13, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

12. **Consideration Of Resolution 2025-36, A Resolution Declaring The Intent Of The City Of Franklin, Tennessee, To Reimburse Itself In A Not-To-Exceed Amount of $113,000,000 For Certain Project Expenditures With The Proceeds Of General Obligation Bonds, Notes, Or Other Obligations To Be Issued By The City**

Sponsors: Kristine Brock

Ms. Brock introduced the item. She explained that the City's Capital Improvement Plan is funded, in part, with General Obligation Bonds issued by the City. The next General Obligation Bond is planned for issuance at the beginning of calendar year 2026 for the purposes of funding the purchase of replacement fire apparatus, certain costs related to the new Pearl M. Bransford Park project, including Robinson Lake, Major Road Resurfacing and new City Hall.

She added that approval of Resolution 2025-36 will allow the City to reimburse itself with bond proceeds for expenses incurred between the date in which the resolution is adopted and closing of the bond issue (approximately February 2026). This intent resolution does not by itself authorize issuance of long term debt. The Board's consideration of the two resolutions required for issuance of general obligation debt is planned for late calendar year 2025 or early 2026.

The item is planned for the May 13, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

13. **Update Of Strategic Planning Process**

Sponsors: Eric Stuckey, Michael Walters Young

Michael Walters Young, Chief Budget & Performance Officer, introduced the ongoing updates to the City's Strategic Plan. He summarized the progress that has been made on the plan so far. The timeline has been as follows:

- December 2023: Kick-off & Values discussion with BOMA
- January 2024: Breakfast with the Mayors: kick-off of a community-wide survey
- March 2024: Determination of vision statement and values by BOMA; small group discussions had (non-profit, youth, faith leaders, business leaders)
- July 2024: SWOT Analysis conducted, mission statement worked on, strategic goals with initial outcomes determined between BOMA and Board of Mayor and Aldermen Work Session
- August 2024: Board of Mayor and Aldermen Work Session Plus Station Exercise on the New 6 Goals (Attachment included)
- Fall 2024-Spring 2025: Internal Review & Refinement of Strategic Measures & Indicators (as part of FY 2026 Budget Development Process - ongoing)
- February-March 2025: Leadership Team reviewed and developed Mission Statement ideas

To review, the City's vision statement is as follows: America's finest hometown, driven by excellence, balancing preservation and progress.

The values as defined by the Board are: culture of excellence, collaborative, service driven, heart, and purposeful.

The goals as decided by the Board are: safe, clean, livable city, sustainable growth & economic vitality, fiscally sound, quality life experiences, organizational health, and operational excellence.

The next step is to finalize a mission statement. The City's leadership team workshopped a mission statement for months before landing on the following: Serve. Connect. Lead. Deliver.
Serving with excellence. Connecting our community. Leading with vision. Delivering with integrity.

Mr. Walters Young asked the Board for feedback on the mission statement proposal.

Alderman Brown opined that his role is to help craft the vision, and it is the job of the City of Franklin employees to determine a mission that can get us there. Hence, if staff can get behind that mission, then he will champion it.

Alderman Blanton echoed Alderman Brown's sentiments.

Alderman Baggett agreed with Alderman Brown as well. He questioned whether the "why" prompt was covered in the mission statement.

Mr. Stuckey explained that his "why" is to reinforce the vision to make this community special.

Mayor Moore expressed support for the mission statement. He highlighted his appreciation for the extended version that includes: excellence, community, vision, and integrity.

Vice Mayor Potts loves that the proposed mission statement is applicable to all departments. He believes that the Board is already actively working towards the goals that helped craft the city's vision.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Work Session Adjourned @ 6:43 PM

Dr. Ken Moore, Mayor

Minutes Prepared by Sarah Schilling, Assistant Deputy City Recorder, City Administrator's Office - 4/23/2025, 1:42 PM