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City of Franklin

Meeting Minutes

Work Session

Tuesday, September 23, 2025 | **5:00 PM** | **Williamson County Auditorium**

CALL TO ORDER

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

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

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 Certificate Of Compliance To Sell Wine In A Retail Food Store For Greys Franklin, LLC (Jacquline Mau, Managing Agent), 230 Franklin Road, Suite 12B, Franklin, TN 37064**

   Sponsors: Angie Skarp

   The item was acknowledged and is planned for the September 23, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

2. ***Consideration Of Certificate Of Compliance For Liquor License For Smoky Barrel, LLC (Khem Poudel, Managing Agent), 595 Hillsboro Road, Suite 327, Franklin, TN, 37064**

   Sponsors: Angie Skarp

   The item was acknowledged and is planned for the September 23, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

3. **Consideration Of Ordinance 2025-43, An Ordinance To Amend Title 5, Chapter 7, Section 705 Of The Franklin Municipal Code Relative To Hotel/Motel Occupancy Tax Collection And Refund**

   Sponsors: Kristine Brock, Jessica Davey

   Jessica Davey, Billing & Licensing Director, introduced the item. She explained that this ordinance addresses a recent amendment in state law regarding the collection and refund of hotel/motel occupancy taxes. Previously, under T.C.A. § 67-4-1404, occupants who had maintained occupancy for thirty (30) continuous days were entitled to a refund or credit, and hotel operators were similarly entitled to a credit for the same amount paid to the City of Franklin. Now, T.C.A. § 67-4-1404(b), as amended by Public Chapter 364, mandates that operators remit the tax to the municipality for the first thirty (30) days and cease collecting the tax from the occupant for the remainder of their stay. Consequently, Franklin Municipal Code section 5-

705(2) should be amended to align with this new state law.

The item is planned for the October 14, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration on First Reading.

4. ***Consideration Of Ordinance 2025-46, An Ordinance To Amend Title 7, Chapter 5 Of The Franklin Municipal Code To Adopt The NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, 2024 Edition**

Sponsors: Glenn Johnson

The item was acknowledged and is planned for the September 23, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration on First Reading.

5. ***Consideration Of Ordinance 2025-47, An Ordinance To Amend Title 7, Chapter 2 Of The Franklin Municipal Code To Adopt The International Fire Code, 2024 Edition**

Sponsors: Glenn Johnson

The item was acknowledged and is planned for the September 23, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration on First Reading.

6. **Consideration Of Amendment 8 To COF Contract No. 2020-0041, With OHM/Studio 8 Design For Additional Services Related To Design Development And Construction Drawings In The Amount Of $32,580 And Design Contingency In The Amount Of $67,420 For A Total Of A Not To Exceed Amount Of $100,000**

Sponsors: Mark Hilty, Kelly Dannenfelser

Mark Hilty, Assistant City Administrator - Public Works, introduced the item. City staff, via OHM/Studio 8, asked for additional work related to design development and construction drawings for the amount of $32,580.00. This work was largely related to the redesign and coordination of utilities and stormwater systems that ultimately generated a construction cost savings of approximately $198,000.00. In addition, staff is requesting to add design contingency dollars in the amount of $67,420.00 to take advantage of potential opportunities in the future should they arise and to make design adjustments based on unforeseen site conditions.

Alderman Barnhill requested an estimate of how much has been paid to OHM/Studio 8 thus far for the City Hall Project.
Staff will get back to him with the answer.

The item is planned for the October 14, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

7. **Consideration Of COF Contract No. 2025-0316, With Williamson County Schools For An Interlocal Agreement For Use Of Parks For Theatrical Performances**

Sponsors: Lisa Clayton, Blake Harper

Lisa Clayton, Parks Director, introduced the item. She explained that Williamson County Schools have requested the use of City Parks for theatrical performances through their school dramatic arts programs. The City will be able to provide the spaces for these performances free of charge as a benefit to the community. Each event will be applied for using a special event permit, and then scheduled and approved by City staff. WCS will not charge admission fees to attend any their performances on City property, but may sell concessions and solicit donations for their program. The term for this agreement will begin upon signature from all parties and terminate on July 31, 2030.

The item is planned for the October 14, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

8. Consideration Of COF Contract No. 2025-0208, With Bass, Berry and Sims PLC For An Engagement Letter For Bond Counsel

Sponsors: Shauna Billingsley, Kristine Brock

Shauna Billinglsey, City Attorney, introduced the item. The Law Department wishes to obtain specialized legal services required for the issuance of municipal bonds, ensuring compliance with federal and state laws and the proper financial structuring. This engagement letter also enables the City to possibly use bond counsel to prepare for any matter that may arise where specialized bond counsel expertise is needed. The bond counsel will generally be paid from the proceeds of the bonds at the time of closing. However, should the City require expertise outside a bond issue, the rate for the bond counsel is $450/hr for partner level attorneys, $325/hr for associates, and $135/hr for paralegals.

The item is planned for the October 14, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

9. Consideration Of DRAFT Resolution 2025-85, A Resolution To Reapprove And Modify The City Of Franklin Capital Investment Plan

Sponsors: Eric Stuckey, Michael Walters Young, Paul Holzen

Mr. Stuckey introduced Resolution 2025-85, which updates Franklin's Capital Investment Plan (CIP). Staff, led by Michael Walters Young (Chief Budget & Performance Officer) and Paul Holzen (Engineering Director), outlined that Franklin projects $460 million in revenues over the next decade, split between 30% debt and 70% cash. Currently, about $364.5 million in projects are already committed, including projects under construction, in right-of-way acquisition, and in design. The resolution adds seven new projects totaling $91.5 million, bringing the committed total to ~$456 million. Staff noted that some projects (Eddy Lane sidewalks and Boyd Mill Avenue improvements) may come in under their listed "worst-case" cost estimates, freeing up capacity later.

Alderman Baggett questioned the heavy cost of the Goose Creek Bypass/Carothers Parkway extension, noting that while the project may be important in the long term, a $40 million allocation is a significant portion of the CIP compared to the smaller "micro projects" that address pressing traffic and infrastructure needs in other areas. He expressed concern that such a large project could delay improvements where residents already face congestion, especially on state roads. He also suggested that as the city winds down the federally-supported home raising project, leftover funds from that effort could be redirected to smaller neighborhood-scale projects. His comments reflected a desire for flexibility and balance between large infrastructure investments and quick, high-impact fixes.

Vice Mayor Potts emphasized that the Goose Creek/Carothers Parkway project has consistently been ranked as a top priority in past CIP evaluations. While acknowledging concerns about its cost, he urged the board not to prematurely cut or scale back the project. Vice Mayor Potts supported keeping it in the long-term plan, pointing out that its timing is likely in the back half of the ten-year horizon. He stressed the importance of revisiting the CIP in 18 to 24 months as costs evolve, and new needs emerge, but he also highlighted the risks of pushing aside long-term infrastructure in favor of short-term wins. His position struck a balance between recognizing the necessity of smaller projects while defending the value of planning for major future needs.

Alderman Blanton noted that while this addresses the community's concern about building infrastructure before growth, it comes at a high price. Furthermore, if it is addressed in the back half of the ten-year plan, the total project cost will only continue to rise.

Alderman Petersen expressed difficulty in understanding the specific scope of the Goose Creek Bypass project due to the lack of maps and clear visuals. She wanted more concrete details on what exactly is being proposed before the board commits to funding it. She also drew comparisons between Boyd Mill Avenue and Eddy Lane, suggesting that both fall into the same category of important but smaller-scale improvements. Additionally, she reiterated an expectation that the Fire Station Three replacement would remain a priority within the plan. Ultimately, she had a cautious and detail-oriented approach, underscoring the need for clearer information and community input before proceeding with large-scale commitments.

Alderman Burger focused comments on the traffic-related aspects of the CIP projects. She stressed that decisions should be driven by data, specifically current traffic volumes, forecasts for the next decade, and the impact of new developments on surrounding feeder roads. She called for prioritizing projects that most effectively alleviate congestion and prevent gridlock, pointing to Franklin Road and the Mack Hatcher/Hillsboro Road intersection as particularly critical. She also underscored the importance of supporting first responders, emphasizing that fire station projects should not be overlooked in the prioritization process. These comments reflected a strong focus on ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with growth and safety needs.

Alderman Caesar emphasized the need to strike a balance between “macro projects” like Goose Creek and the smaller, more immediate “micro projects” that directly impact neighborhoods. He expressed concern that committing $40 million to one project could not only limit financial flexibility but also strain staff resources, potentially delaying smaller sidewalk, bike path, and road projects that residents frequently request. While acknowledging that Goose Creek may eventually be necessary, he noted it was not a top personal priority because of its sheer scale and the risk of sidelining quick wins. He suggested the city look to innovative public-private partnerships to reduce the city’s burden on such large projects, reflecting a pragmatic focus on neighborhood improvements and careful resource allocation.

Alderman Barnhill spoke strongly in favor of keeping the Goose Creek Bypass as a central priority, noting that it has consistently been Franklin’s number one capital project for years. He expressed concern that the board might undercut long-term infrastructure by diverting resources to smaller, lower-ranked projects. He argued that growth in Franklin is clearly moving south along I-65 and Carothers Parkway, making it critical to stay ahead of that expansion with robust road investments. Drawing on the city’s experience with South Carothers Parkway, Alderman Barnhill warned that Franklin would be in far worse shape today had that project been delayed or downsized.

Alderman Brown cautioned against letting debate over Goose Creek stall momentum on other projects. He argued that Franklin Road improvements and the Hillsboro Road/Mack Hatcher intersection should move forward quickly regardless of how the Goose Creek project is handled. He emphasized the importance of quarterly CIP updates and frequent reassessments, agreeing that priorities may shift but warning that delaying smaller improvements in the meantime would harm residents. He does not want to let one debate overshadow the rest of the city’s infrastructure needs.

The mayor concluded by noting Franklin currently has nearly half a billion dollars in projects in progress or committed, a major milestone.

Consensus emerged that the Goose Creek Bypass/Carothers extension should remain in the CIP, but with flexibility to reevaluate timing, costs, and partnerships. Meanwhile, the board emphasized the need to accelerate smaller, high-impact projects to address immediate traffic and infrastructure concerns while planning for long-term growth.

The item is planned for the October 14, 2025 Board of Mayor and Aldermen Meeting for consideration.

10. **Presentation On Financial Aspects Of Infrastructure Development Districts**

Sponsors: Eric Stuckey, Kristine Brock, Vernon Gerth, Shauna Billingsley

Mr. Stuckey introduced the discussion of the financial framework of Infrastructure Development Districts (IDDs). City staff, along with invited experts Tripp Davenport III and Robert Rivera of FMS Bonds, and legal counsel Betsy Knotts of Bass, Berry & Sims, provided background on how special assessment bonds have been structured in Texas and other states. The presentation emphasized that Franklin's state statute mirrors the Texas model, which has seen significant success with no bond defaults to date.

The experts highlighted that IDDs shift financing responsibility for infrastructure from the general tax base to the property owners within the district, with strict safeguards such as due diligence reviews, reserve funds, trustee-held proceeds, and third-party administration. The board engaged in extensive questioning about risk, flexibility, use cases, and how Franklin could adapt the tool to local needs—particularly affordable housing and infrastructure relief.

Alderman Petersen pressed for clarity on the affordability aspect of assessments and expressed concern about whether such tools might unintentionally price out residents. She noted Franklin's unique challenges with its low tax rate and high property values, which could make the assessment burden unusual compared to Texas. Then, she highlighted the need for detailed appraisals and transparent communication so homeowners and builders clearly understand the impact of assessments before committing to them.

Alderman Burger raised questions about whether the city itself should act as administrator of IDDs or whether a third-party administrator would be preferable. After hearing from the experts, she emphasized support for outsourcing administration to experienced firms to reduce risk and protect the city's reputation. Alderman Burger also stressed that staff must engage developers early to run "test cases" and model scenarios before committing to a policy, ensuring Franklin avoids unintended financial consequences.

Alderman Caesar focused on the story bond process and who would be responsible for telling the development "story" to investors. He expressed concern about the city being placed in a position to represent or defend a developer's financial narrative, emphasizing that the responsibility should fall on the developer and underwriter, not Franklin. He underscored that Franklin's role should be limited to oversight and covenant enforcement, not advocacy on behalf of private projects.

Alderman Baggett honed in on the interaction between IDDs and Franklin's existing impact fees. He noted the potential equity issue: smaller businesses outside IDDs would have to pay impact fees up front, while large developers within districts might be able to spread them out over 30 years. Alderman Baggett said this could disadvantage smaller builders and distort the local market. He reiterated that the tool should not be used to accelerate growth but rather to strategically reduce the city's long-term infrastructure burden.

Alderman Barnhill questioned whether Franklin, as a large and highly desirable city, truly needs to use this tool. He pointed out that unlike smaller Texas cities that use IDDs to attract development, Franklin is already experiencing pressure from growth. He asked why Franklin should adopt a mechanism designed to incentivize projects when the city's challenge is more about managing and slowing growth. He remained cautious, suggesting Franklin proceed only if the benefits clearly outweigh risks.

Alderman Blanton highlighted attainable and workforce housing as the most compelling reason to consider IDDs. She noted that Franklin's biggest challenge is not attracting development but ensuring teachers, first responders, and working families can afford to live in the community. She expressed strong support for pursuing policies that would link IDDs to housing affordability goals, noting that inclusionary zoning tools were stripped away by the legislature, and IDDs could provide an alternative path.

Alderman Brown cautioned against relying too heavily on rigid scoring systems for evaluating public benefits. Referring to the Armistead development, he noted that even projects meeting multiple criteria might not score highly under a strict rubric. Alderman Brown argued for flexibility in applying scorecards so that the board retains discretion to weigh the unique context of each project. He further emphasized that a rigid system could unintentionally block excellent projects from moving forward.

The discussion concluded with consensus that Franklin must structure any IDD policy carefully to avoid unintended impacts. Key themes included:

- Flexibility in policy design to allow for case-by-case evaluation.
- Third-party administration to protect the city and reduce risk.
- Alignment with community goals, especially attainable housing, infrastructure expansion, and preservation of Franklin's character.

Staff committed to bringing back a draft policy that includes a 3:1 value-to-lien ratio, clear disclosure requirements, and a flexible framework for evaluating public benefits.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Meeting Adjourned @ 07:09 PM

Dr. Ken Moore, Mayor

Disclaimer: The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Minutes Prepared by Sarah Schilling, Deputy City Recorder, City Recorder's Office - 10/1/25, 4:33PM