

**MINUTES**

**FRANKFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**March 2, 2015**

Town Council	Joanne Bacon, Pres.	
Roll call:	Pamela Davis, Vice-Pres.	
	Velicia Melson, Sec. /Treasurer	
	Jesse Truitt	
	Charles Shelton	
Town Employees:	Terry Truitt, Town Administrator	
	David Ward	
Others:	Bryan Murray	Beth Dabrowski
	Herb Melson	Edward Ash
	Barbara Franklin	Albert Franklin
	Russell Davenport	James Sample
	Tony Morgan, II	Mathew Melson
	Anna Sipes	Kathy Murray
	Greg Welch	Robert Murray, Sr.
	Andrea Dismuke	Jerry Smith
	Maria Counts, Coastal Point	Annie Ford
	Janet Hearn	Edgar Hearn
	Bernard Lynch	Dawn Beck
	Duane Beck	Liz Carpenter
	Marty Presley	Clarence Quillen
	Cheryl Workman	

The regular monthly meeting of the Frankford Town Council was opened by Pres. Joanne Bacon at 7:00 PM.

Charles Shelton officiated by swearing in two new council members by reading the oath of office aloud to each member. Velicia Melson and Joanne Bacon took their oath of office and were welcomed to Council.

Reorganization of Council was next on agenda. The following appointments for the upcoming year were suggested as follows:

Joanne Bacon	President.
Pamela Davis	Vice-President
Velicia Melson	Sec. / Treasurer

The following liaison positions for the upcoming year were suggested as follows:

Parks & Grants:	Velicia Melson
Streets:	Pamela Davis
Police:	Charles Shelton
Water:	Jesse Truitt/ Joanne Bacon

A motion to accept the above listed appointments to Council and nominations for the appointment to their respective liaison positions was made by Jesse Truitt with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Velicia Melson. Motion was unanimous.

A motion was made to rehire the current Agents: Jefferson, Urian, Doane & Sterner; URS, Cabe Associates under existing conditions by Velicia Melson with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jesse Truitt. Motion was unanimous.

Pres. Joanne Bacon announced the resignation of Dennis Schrader as the Town Solicitor.

A motion was made to accept the agenda as posted with no deletions or additions by Velicia Melson with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Charles Shelton. Motion was unanimous.

A review of the following meeting minutes were performed:

- Town Council Monthly Minutes from February 2, 2015
- Executive Session Minutes from February 2, 2015
- Executive Session Minutes from January 5, 2015
- Executive Session Minutes from December 8, 2014

Velicia Melson noted she was not in attendance during the above Executive Session Meetings therefore would not be voting on them or their contents.

A motion was made to accept the above listed minutes as presented by Charles Shelton with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pamela Davis. Motion was 4 in favor; one vote sustained. (Velicia Melson).

Pres. Joanne Bacon called on Velicia Melson to read aloud the Financial Report in its entirety. Velicia Melson noted she could read the financial report out loud but could not attest to the contents. Pres. Joanne agreed to her reading the report only. Council reviewed the Financial Report/ Accounts Payable; A motion to pay the bills as listed was made by Charles Shelton with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pamela Davis. Motion was 4 in favor; one vote sustained. (Velicia Melson).

**Report from Town Employees:**

**Water Plant:** Jesse Truitt announced the issues that had been ongoing with the Town water. He noted over periods of time the Town water has been shades of yellow. He outlined the various leaks which occurred during the month. He outlined the various issues with the water plant: valve on the decant tank was showing closed yet is actuality it was open; the conversion of the on ground storage tank to a decant tank led to the float inside the on ground storage tank to hang up; sludge inside the on ground storage tank had to be pumped out. He commented that the Town in the past had pumped out the decant tank mid fall one time a year but this year the Town had pumped it out twice with the latest time being done while cold weather conditions were present. He added the sludge actually froze and became slushy inside the decant tank. He remarked the severe cold weather conditions caused issues that made flushing hydrants to be reduced to slow flow. He commented that he had met with staff from Mountaire with regards to their water quality causing them to go through expensive filters every 2-3 days. Mountaire had requested to have the hydrant located near them flushed hard and though they were warned that it would make matters worse they still insisted on having it done. The end result was it did make matters worse. Once the decant tank was full flushing had to stop. He added the decant tank is gravity fed. He noted two (2) 4-5" Bray valves need to be purchased at a cost estimated between 1,900-\$2,300.00 each. Council discussed the necessity of ordering the valves and how it affected the operation of the plant. A motion was made to approve the cost of ordering two (2) Bray valves with estimated cost of \$1,900-\$2,300.00 each was made by Velicia Melson with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jesse Truitt. Motion was unanimous.

Annie Ford noted her water could not be used at all and questioned Council if the residents were going to be given an adjustment?

Russell Davenport questioned if the engineer had been contacted about the dead ends? (referring to Dover Street). Jesse Truitt replied no, as they had been dealing with water plant and it was a funding issue.

Elizabeth Carpenter questioned if comparisons of cost of valves could be done. Jesse Truitt replied that the Town was best served putting back the type of valves that were being replaced. He added that these are not something that can be purchased locally and have to be ordered based on the plant specifications.

Robert Murray if the contractor/ Artesian by pumping in the fall caused the discoloration? Jesse Truitt replied no adding they had tried to pump it out semi-annually / quarterly based on smaller loads.

Greg Welch questioned if the public could be notified better? Jesse said he was not sure of a way to do so given the direction and path to correct. He added the decant valve this last time was the main problem in the discolored water quality.

Bernard Lynch questioned if the water quality to not being the same when Tidewater operated the water plant. Jesse Truitt replied that both companies ran the plant correctly but each have their own ways of doing things.

Kathy Murray questioned the role Artesian played in the discolored water? Jesse Truitt replied their responsibility is in the production of the water only and not the equipment.

Bryan Murray questioned if the fire company could assist with random flushing that needed to be done? Jesse Truitt replied it has to be done on a slow flow as to not disrupt the system worse than it already is.

Bernard Lynch questioned if Artesian had been asked to give pricing on flushing the lines in the street? Jesse Truitt replied that the Town could do the 2-3 locations being flushed.

Jerry Smith inquired when the contract between the Town and Artesian was due for renewal. Pres. Joanne Bacon replied November 2015 but it would require six (6) month advance notification.

Kathy Murray questioned with the water dept. / tower maintenance had the Town weighed their options? Jesse Truitt questioned her if she was referring to selling the water department? She replied yes. He said the Town does not want to entertain that as they will lose all control on the pricing and also had loans and payments outstanding on it. She then suggested the Council form a committee to review all possible options and cost. Jesse Truitt noted back originally he wanted to revamp the old existing water plant and not build a new one but he was out voted. He added installing a color monitor would help in detecting discoloration concerns.

**Terry Truitt, Town Administrator:** Terry Truitt presented Council with a request to have a formal motion made following an email dated February 11, 2015 between Joanne Bacon and Cheryl Workman with regards to the pay raise given to David Ward at the Town Council meeting on February 2, 2015. The email was a follow up stating they had exited the Executive session discussion and no formal motion was made. A motion was made to approve the pay raise to David Ward in the amount of \$1.00 hourly effective February 11, 2015 for the entire pay period by Pamela Davis with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Charles Shelton. Motion was unanimous. Terry Truitt outlined the account correction made to account #1290 titled Fines Receivable and account#4004 Fines Receivable.

She explained the error was made over the last three months when payments came in from the State of Delaware and were posted to the incorrect account through deposits. She thanked Kathy Murray for her initial inquiry made during the past few months which enabled them to catch the mistake timely. (copy of the QuickBooks report is on file with these minutes). Terry Truitt then discussed with Council the passing of Marilyn Hobbs (p/t clerk) mother on 2/26/15, She called for a motion to honor the family request for monetary donations to be made to the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius Villa Sacred Heart. Council discussed the subject. A motion was made to make a \$75.00 monetary donation to the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius Villa Sacred Heart in memory of Marilyn Hobbs mothers passing by Velicia Melson with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jesse Truitt. Motion was unanimous.

**Maintenance:** David Ward read aloud his monthly maintenance report which reflect three (3) water leaks during the past month, reading of water meters, flushing of hydrants. He reported the Fire Company had given him another flushers which made a total of three now for the Town. (copy is on file with these minutes).

Russell Davenport questioned the Council of providing David Ward with a Town telephone. Pres. Joanne Bacon replied all the employees including the Council do work on behalf of the Town and use their own telephones.

**Police:** Charles Shelton reported the Town had received eight (8) applications for the Police Chief position. He said they were ready to be reviewed since the posting advertisement period ran for two (2) weeks.

Tony Morgan suggested the Town Council consider using officers from surrounding Towns. Charles Shelton replied they would be discussing that subject during executive session.

Kathy Murray questioned who would facilitate over the interviews? Charles Shelton replied the Town Council and possibly the Delaware Police Chiefs Council or one of the surrounding Police Dept. Chiefs.

Elizabeth Carpenter offered to serve as a citizen watch member. Charles Shelton noted the department needs to get back up and running and then the Neighborhood Watch Program could be enacted again. Elizabeth Carpenter questioned who had access to the Police Department and their items. Charles Shelton replied all items are securely locked up.

Russell Davenport questioned moving a police car around Town to give the appearance of an active police department. Charles Shelton that due to liability issues that could not be done.

**REPORTS:**

President Bacon asked for report(s) from Council regarding Parks, Police, Streets and Water.

**Joanne Bacon- Parks-** She noted she had nothing to report.

**Charles Shelton, Police-** He commented that he had covered everything earlier in the meeting.

**Pamela Davis, Streets-** She noted she had nothing to report.

**Jesse Truitt, Water-** He noted he had covered his report earlier in the meeting.to report at this time.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Pres. Joanne Bacon noted there was nothing to cover under unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Pres. Joanne Bacon read aloud the synopsis of the proposed Charter Amendment in its entirety. She called for comments and / or concerns from Council members or the audience.

Marty Presley commented that he felt the Charter amendment was a good start but felt it needed to have comprehensive revisions made to it as to who can vote, employee roles with regards to the election. Pres. Joanne Bacon noted the Town Attorney had drafted the Charter Amendment based on the revisions raised over the past Town Elections issues.

Jerry Smith questioned if the Board of Election authorized Dennis Schrader to draft the Charter Amendment? Pres. Bacon replied that she was not present during the recent Board of Election hearing held but knew the key points raised had been comprised into the current amendment.

Elizabeth Carpenter questioned the proposed Charter Amendment with regards to the authority of who was requested to prepare it. She noted she was hopeful the Council would be receptive to hearing public concerns and input before proceeding with it.

Councilwoman Velicia Melson felt the proposed Charter Amendment being considered tonight should be tabled until a comprehensive review can be done of the entire Town Charter. She added it would make sense to send a complete revision to be considered for adoption as opposed to doing separate pieces. She suggested that the Town Council consider forming a committee to review the Town Charter in its entirety. Council discussed the amendment and asked Velicia Melson to head up the committee. A motion was made to table the Charter Amendment and form a committee to review the Charter in its entirety by Velicia Melson with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pamela Davis. Motion was unanimous.

Pres. Joanne Bacon read aloud the next item on the agenda for consideration. Council was to review and discuss possible discretionary options for use of the Sussex County 2015 Economic Development and Infrastructure Grant in the amount of \$10,000. She noted it was a discretionary grant and had to be submitted to the County for approval beforehand.

Elizabeth Carpenter questioned if it could be used to develop startup funding for new businesses?

Pres. Bacon noted the Town should consider using it toward the water plant or tower. Council discussed the viable options and uses and felt it would be best served in offsetting the maintenance of the water tower. A motion was made to accept the Sussex County 2015 Economic Development and Infrastructure Grant in the amount of \$10,000 with it being used toward the cost of maintenance toward the water tower by Jesse Truitt with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Charles Shelton. Motion was unanimous.

**Citizen's Privilege:**

Dawn Beck thanked Jesse Truitt for taking on the extra work of taking care of the Town water department. She then suggested that Town Hall should be more ADA compliant with furniture being rearranged to accommodate wheelchairs. She outlined her recent issue with coming into the Town Hall to vote in the recent Town Election and had to maneuver around the rear office furniture. She added that the trash cans, recycling containers and Terry Truitt personal vehicle also make the building noncompliant. She stated she had contacted the State Fire Marshall's office and added the rear door should remain open during working hours of the Town Hall. Pres. Joanne Bacon noted the small within the Town Hall is limited with the possibilities.

Kathy Murray noted it was an ADA issue/ violation. Pres. Joanne Bacon noted they would look into it further.

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Edward Ash noted he hoped the Council looks at all of the Police Chief applications fairly and does a thorough investigation of all.

Greg Welch commented that the Town Charter Amendment needs to have open discussions entertained. He stated looking at the current draft that there are still issues regarding Town Elections. He noted any amendments being done should come from the Town Council and residents participating in its revision.

Elizabeth Carpenter commented that Dennis Schrader had commented during the Board of Election hearing that he had some changes to be made to the Town Charter and that she had corrected him in stating it was not his place to do so.

Jerry Smith commented that the proposed Charter change should have the change clarified that they are voting on to make an informed vote.

Dawn Beck stated that she felt the financial report being read aloud does not coincide with the reports being distributed. Councilwoman Velicia Melson replied that she would look into it.

Pres. Joanne Bacon requested a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues and acquisitions. A motion was made to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues and acquisitions at 8:40 PM by Velicia Melson with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Charles Shelton. Motion was unanimous.

Council returned from Executive Session at 10:11 PM with a formal motion to be made.

Pres. Joanne Bacon requested a physical check of those who were in attendance earlier to rejoin the meeting. Eight (8) attendees rejoined the regular meeting.

Pres. Joanne Bacon commented that as a result of the Executive Session the following was discussed. With regards to hiring two (2) officers from surrounding Towns to work twenty (20) hours each at a pay rate not to exceed \$15.00-\$18.00 per hour. A motion was made to hire two (2) officers from surrounding Towns to work twenty (20) hours each at a pay rate not to exceed \$15.00-\$18.00 per hour by Charles Shelton with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Velicia Melson. Motion was unanimous.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Charles Shelton with a 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pamela Davis at 10:13 PM. Motion was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry H. Truitt  
Town Administrator  
Town of Frankford