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## FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES March 20, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m.

### **Call to Order:**

Township Chairman Gerstenhaber called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Vice Chair Dea and Supervisors Dowling, Johnston, and Odgers. Also, in attendance on behalf of Franklin Township (FT) were Township Solicitor Guy Donatelli, Township Operations Manager Jeff Eastburn, and Township Secretary Stacy Hollis. There were 6 members of the public in attendance.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment:** Resident John Auerbach announced he had prepared comments on the Township trails agenda item but would hold them until the Public Comment discussion at the end of the meeting.

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Motion:** Vice Chair Dea moved, seconded by Supervisor Johnston, to accept the minutes for the Board of Supervisors (BOS) Meeting from February 21, 2024, v2. Motion passed 5-0.

**Motion:** Vice Chair Dea moved, seconded by Chairman Gerstenhaber, to accept the minutes for the Board of Supervisors Workshop Meeting from March 4, 2024, v2. Motion passed 5-0.

### **Reports**

a. **Treasurer's Report:** Supervisor Dowling gave the FT February Treasurer's report as submitted by Township Controller/Office Manager, Melissa Ortega. The General Fund with disbursements and transfers of \$121,423.37; The Park and Recreation Fund with disbursements of \$262.28; the Open Space Fund with disbursements of \$5,350.16; the Capital Reserve Fund with disbursements of \$0; the Emergency Services Fund with disbursements of \$0 and the Fire Hydrant Fund with disbursements of \$580.80, leaving a balance in all funds totaling \$1,867,968.11.

**Motion:** Supervisor Dowling moved, seconded by Vice Chair Dea, to accept the February 2024 Treasurer's Report as submitted by Melissa Ortega. Motion passed 5-0.

b. **Zoning Officer's Report:** Supervisor Johnston reported that in February, 10 permits were issued. \$2,404.50 in permit fees; \$0 in miscellaneous fees and \$0 in Recreations and Open Space fees, and \$0 in Impact Fees were collected. 40 inspections were performed.

c. **Park, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Report:** PRO Chair Andrea Roberts announced that Eagle Scout Jacob Henning had met with the PRO to present his bicycle repair station idea for Crossan Park. Mr. Henning will present his project to the BOS at their April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Roberts updated the Board on revisions to the Crossan Park trail maps and the trail revitalization project. The group will continue to work with the Board regarding what materials are best suited for the trail connectivity project, which will connect two walking paths together at the lower end of the park. White Clay Watershed-Wild and Scenic Program Director, Shane Morgan, asked for a letter of support from the Board to apply for a grant through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to provide the

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resources needed for the development of a flood model for the White Clay watershed. Ms. Morgan explained the valuable data the Township could gain from the study and that it may help with the Township's stormwater management (MS4) project planning. Ms. Morgan would require a collective 24 hours of volunteer help from the PRO. This time would be used to verify data the group's modelers obtained or for possible site visits. The Board was unanimous in their support of Ms. Morgan's plan and Chairman Gerstenhaber signed the letter of support to apply for grant funding. Ms. Morgan will update the Board in mid-to-late August 2024 on whether the funding for the project was granted.

Member Overton updated the Board on the phases of improvements to the Crossan Park trails. Mr. Overton mentioned Liam Kelley's Eagle Scout project to install trail markers at Franklin Preserve and suggested the PRO consider presenting a project of their own to the Board to install trail markers in Crossan Park.

- d. Friends of the Healing Garden: Supervisor Dowling provided an update on the Bluebird boxes at Crossan Park, and the new Bluebird signs designed by PRO member Kyle Bianco. The signs will be printed and installed. Volunteer Amy Carletti is monitoring the boxes and posting updates on the group's Facebook page. Ms. Dowling announced that the partnership with the Avon Grove Library for story times at Crossan Park will continue this year in late May and in August. A Little Free Library decorating contest is in development.
- e. Big Elk Creek Report: FT appointed Advisory Board representative, Anteia Consorto, informed the Board that the first task force meeting is scheduled for next week. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Director, John Hallas has unilaterally added more members to the task force. Meetings are being managed by DCNR and are only open to the appointed Advisory Board members. There is no public access to the meetings; Stakeholders from the January 2024 Townhall meeting are also not invited. Vice Chair Dea advised Ms. Consorto to have a co-chair for the advisory board and remind the group of the terms that were agreed by the Stakeholders. Chairman Gerstenhaber will send Ms. Consorto his summary of the meeting. The lack of transparency of the task force meetings was discussed. Township Solicitor, Guy Donatelli recommended submitting Right-to-Know requests to ensure the taped recordings from the non-public meeting are preserved.
- f. Stormwater Management (MS4) Report: FT Operations Manager, Jeff Eastburn, updated the Board on the progress Township Road Engineer, Ron Ragan, has made with his approach to the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Mr. Ragan will continue to work with Township Staff and the DEP during this transition from FT's former MS4 engineering firm. Mr. Ragan anticipates that the TMDL requirements will likely be less than the amount estimated by the previous MS4 engineering firm.
- g. Planning Commission (PC) Report: No March meeting was held.
- h. Historical Commission (HC)/Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB): No March meeting was held.

### **Business**

#### **a. Township Event Updates:**

- Franklin Fall Festival- The event will take place on Saturday, September 14, 2024.
- Easter Event- Supervisor Dowling gave a recap of the Easter Egg Hunt at Crossan Park which was held on Saturday, March 16. All were pleased with the size of the turnout.

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The free plant giveaway was a huge success. Ms. Dowling thanked: Supervisor Odgers for her work designing the Jade plant giveaways, Face Painter Della Mowrer, and FT Secretary Hollis for her efforts creating the crafting activities at the event. Mr. Eastburn also thanked the event sponsors: Brandywine Septic, Smarties Candies and Zig Zag Aerial. Vice Chair Dea commented on the playground equipment and thanked the Franklin Sportsman's Association (FSA) for the beautiful paint job.

- Franklin Township Clean Up Day: The event will be held on Saturday, April 20, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Participants should meet with resident John Auerbach on the day of the event for orientation at the FT municipal building, 20 Municipal Ln.
- b. 2024 Road Program Overview: Mr. Eastburn updated the Board on the FT Road Program. An "Option 1" plan was presented that includes: work on the paving of Mackey Court and Flint Hill Road from Rt. 841 to Paradox Vineyard, as well as patching due to winter deterioration on Auburn Road (200 sy), Cavender Lane (50 sy), Kimbelot Lane (100 sy), Hess Mill Road (100 sy) and Walker Road (50 sy). Total estimated costs are \$234,971.23. The costs for the infiltration trench repairs for South View and Thompson Estates and the curb to improve drainage for Mackey Court are estimated to be \$191,332.00. Mr. Eastburn has been in contact with the homeowners and will keep the Board apprised of the infiltration trench testing results. Chairman Gerstenhaber commended the Township for its overall road quality and repair efforts. Vice Chair Dea clarified that the Township's "Liquid Fuel" money from the state will also be used for these repair jobs. The Board agreed to move forward with the "Option 1" plan. The bidding process including the consideration of an equipment and labor bid was discussed. Further discussion of the bid process was suggested for the next Board of Supervisors Workshop Meeting on April 1, 2024.
- c. Franklin Sportsman's Association (FSA) Hunting License Renewal:  
**Motion**: Supervisor Johnston moved, seconded by Vice Chair Dea, to approve RESOLUTION 2024-06, the FSA Hunting License Renewal for the 2024-2025 hunting season. Motion passed 5-0.
- d. Banffshire Preserve Trails: Chairman Gerstenhaber announced the cross trails at Banffshire Preserve will be closed again this year for the hunting season from November 11, 2024, to approximately December 12, 2024. PRO member Paul Overton recommended the trails in Banffshire Preserve remain open. Mr. Gerstenhaber responded that the Board could revisit this decision next year, citing that the Township had not received any complaints about the closures from residents. The Board agreed to create signs explaining why the trails are closed and posting the cross-trail closure dates on its Facebook page.
- e. Trail Policy Discussion: Chairman Gerstenhaber discussed impervious and non-impervious trail surface options. The Board discussed their preferences. Supervisor Dowling questioned the use of millings in wetlands leading to a conversation on why the surface selected for a particular trail needs to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Gerstenhaber stated millings are a free resource that could be used on projects, but they may be better suited in certain areas of the park. Supervisor Johnston cited the connector trail project in Crossan Park as an example of a trail better suited to the use of natural based materials such as stone or wood chips. The Board agreed that Staff should consult with Ron Ragan, Township Engineer on these trail projects. Mr. Ragan's recommendations should then be presented to the Board for final approval.

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*f. Solicitor's Report:* Township Solicitor, Guy Donatelli gave an update to the Board on the Lexington Point development. He announced that the developer still needs to complete key tasks. Vice Chair Dea commented that FT Sanitary Engineer, Stan Corbett of AECOM, has provided the Board with a checklist with a timeline for items that need to be completed before the wastewater treatment facility can be turned over to the township.

Mr. Donatelli presented the Board with the Frazee-Gill subdivision, Sewage Facilities Planning Module for New Land Development. FT Sanitary Engineer, Stan Corbett of AECOM informed the Board that the planning module package is now acceptable for consideration by the Board for approval.

**Motion:** Chairman Gerstenhaber moved, seconded by Supervisor Johnston, to approve RESOLUTION 2024-05, a Plan Revision for New Land Development, as reviewed and recommended by Township Sanitary Engineer, Stan Corbett of AECOM in his letter dated February 19, 2024. Motion passed 5-0.

**Public Comment:** Chairman Gerstenhaber opened the floor for public comments. Resident John Auerbach commented on the Township's Road Program and the importance of continued infrastructure maintenance. Mr. Auerbach also questioned the Crossan Park connecting trail project and the Township's trail resurfacing process. He reminded the Board that resurfacing projects need to be compliant with the Act 167 stormwater management requirements.

**Adjourn:** Chairman Gerstenhaber moved, seconded by Supervisor Johnston, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Motion passed 5-0.

**Executive Session:** Chairman Gerstenhaber called for an Executive Session with the Township Solicitor Mr. Donatelli to discuss legal issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Hollis  
Township Secretary