

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR FRANKLIN CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, February 12, 2025**

A Regular Meeting of the Franklin City Council was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Franklin City Hall. Council members present were: Gruendemann, M. Mumme, R. Kokesch, Schneider, and Lund. Staff Department Heads present were: Radermacher, K. Kokesch, Minkel. Guests present were: S. Traulich, J. Mathwig, J. Gustafson, P. Schmidt, T. Johnson, R. Keicker.

At 6:00 p.m., Mayor Gruendemann called the meeting to order. Roll call showed all present. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Mayor Gruendemann called for approval of the minutes of the regular council meeting on January 8, 2025. Mumme motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Second by Lund, RCV-5 Yes, 0 No.

Mayor Gruendemann called for approval of the consent agenda: bills were presented in the amount of \$72,691.70, Cash receipts for January were \$131,722.69; there were 13 past due utility accounts; no zoning permits issued. **R. Kokesch motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented, second by Schneider, RCV-5 Yes, 0 No.**

P. Schmidt was asked by council to clarify intentions on her funds raised in the 2024 Kiss the Catfish contest. Schmidt originally announced that her funds raised were to go toward a new playground as well as a drinking fountain at the Veteran's Ball Park. Schmidt agreed to direct some funds to a drinking fountain at the Lion's park if there were enough funds, she agreed. T. Johnson spoke on Schmidt's behalf and stated that she would rather direct funds to other things at the Ball Park. Council asked Schmidt and Johnson how much funds were available, no response given. Council, Schmidt, Johnson and Gustafson discussed how the history of Kiss the Catfish fundraiser has changed in the past few years. Originally funds were to be raised for a non-profit entity and specific funded items were to be discussed with the entity funds are being raised. Schmidt stated that her priority list of how she would like her unknown amount of funds to be spent at the Ball Park were as follows: drinking fountain, bases, a shelter over the sandbox, and a new fridge in shelter. Questions were asked that will need to be researched, including: if the drinking fountain needs to be ADA accessible, were the fountain could be installed and still seen by cameras, and how much funds are available so that estimates could be acquired. Schmidt and Johnson agreed to reach out for assistance from K. Kokesch to figure out details and find a suitable drinking fountain.

J. Mathwig highlighted some hours on the monthly Sheriff's Department report for January. Mathwig reported that with little snow so far this winter, there has been very few issues with cars left on streets for snow removal. The white house that has been an ongoing issue with Franklin's blighted properties. The owner has expressed interest in removing the structure. There has not been a snowmobile class held yet this season due to the lack of snow. A vehicle was removed from 2nd Ave West due to it having expired tabs.

J. Gustafson spoke to council about updates to the power outside City Hall. Each year during Catfish Days, the bands use City Hall's electricity but the past couple of years the bands have overloaded power and caused blown fuses and power outages. Gruendemann has looked into this previously with an electrician and stated that there is not enough power inside City Hall to be able to get the power needed outside of the building. Gustafson stated that the current power outlet outside of City Hall is currently not up to code and should be brought up to code. Council discussed not allowing use of the outside power outlet for liability reasons for the time being. Council agreed to look at estimates on the cost for increasing the power capacity at City Hall if estimates are acquired. Gustafson asked council if a food truck would be allowed to hook up to City Hall's power over Catfish Days; council discussed and agreed not to allow use of the outside power outlet at all until the issue is resolved and in the future when the power issue is resolved the food trucks can ask for permission ahead of time. In the meantime, it was suggested to speak with the telephone company to see if there is any outside power availability for use during Catfish Days.

Department heads reported: C. Minkel reported that the MRU bylaws have been discussed at the last MRU meeting and will be brought up for approval at the next MRU meeting before being brought to the next City Council meeting. Minkel asked for permission to invite the Cougar Cub daycare employees to combine CPR classes, council approved as long as each entity is billed for their own employees. Minkel reported submitting a Fire Dept application a while back and is wondering where that sits; as the application was submitted some time ago, the council asked that she fill out a new application and submit to City Hall. K. Kokesch presented an update on the DOT beginning the clean up of the living snow fence. Radermacher did not have the Rural Fire/ Ambulance Association meetings minutes completed but reported and error pointed out during the meeting on the Rural Fire financial report that was corrected and approved by the Rural Fire; another error on the financial report was pointed out after the meeting and will be corrected and noted on the financial report next year. Radermacher also reported that the Rural Fire/Amb Association members asked if there has been any progress on supporting the MRU long term; they asked about the idea of combining the Fire and MRU departments. Fire department training information was presented to council for specialized training at the end of March in Austin; Menk was not present and no further discussion was made.

Traulich presented some project updates for the council; easement will be sought for the ravine project and a wetland delineation will be needed as soon as the frost lifts. The environmental assessment for the 2nd Ave project was discussed and sent to DEED for approval, there is a 16 day public comment period in which the project details will be posted outside city hall; any comments received will be sent to DEED for final approval. A wetland delineation was discussed for the 2nd Ave project and will not be pursued.

Tree removal and trimming proposals from McGowan tree service were presented to council for discussion. Council discussed each proposal and agreed that some maintenance is needed but council would like to work within the budget. Discussion with McGowan Tree service will happen to figure out what can be done within budget.

Radermacher reported the upcoming administrative public hearing on the Birch Cooley Solar project that is scheduled for March 11th.

Radermacher reported recent issues with compliance on the exclusive contract with Clobes sanitation. Two businesses in town are using a different service and will be contacted to inform them of the exclusive contract within the city.

R. Kokesch reported getting a phone call from the Longbranch bar owner upset over the enforcement of the policy to require responsible beverage server training. A letter is to be sent to both bar owners with a copy of the ordinance. R. Kokesch stated that the council should consider hiring a citizen to enforce ordinances; this would free up sheriff's department contracted hours for other things. Gruendemann was unable to attend the last school board meeting to discuss painting of the community center due to the fact that the meeting were on the same day; Gruendemann plans to attend the next meeting. R. Kokesch stated that the painting needs to be completed with or without the shared maintenance agreement follow through.

At 7:43 Lund motioned to approve a 5 minute recess, seconded by Schneider, RCV- 5 Yes, 0 No.

At 7:47 Mayor Gruendemann called the meeting back to order. Mayor Gruendemann motioned to go into closed session pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 13D.05, subdivision 3(b) to discuss potential and threatened litigation with Jesse Vogel of The Household of Fod pertaining to easement encroachment and the City's 2024-2025 Watermain Improvements Project. Our attorney from Kennedy and Graven is present to discuss the ongoing dispute, and the need for confidentiality in discussing these matters with the city attorney outweighs the purposes of the open meeting law because legal council intends to candidly discuss the merits of potential litigation stemming from threats made by MR. Vogel, along with strategies moving forward in light of recent developments, Seconded by Lund, RCV- 5 Yes, 0 No.

At 8:16 Mayor Gruendemann motioned to go back into open session, Seconded by Lund, RCV- 5 Yes, 0 No.

At 8:17 P.M., R. Kokesch motioned for adjournment, Seconded by Mumme, RCV-5 Yes, 0 No. The next regular meeting will be Wednesday March 12, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Respectfully Submitted by
Trista Radermacher, City Clerk/Treasurer