CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, April 20, 2026 at 5:30 PM

1 Benjamin Franklin Way Franklin, Ohio 45005

www.FranklinOhio.org

CLERK'S JOURNAL

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Centers called the meeting to order at 5:33pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT
Ryan Roberts
Paul Ruppert
Vice Mayor Todd Hall
Mayor Brent Centers
Michael Aldridge
Robert Lipps

ABSENT
Debbie Fouts

Staff: Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Steed, Ms. Dunn, Chief Stitzel, Chief Colon, Mr. Damian, Mr. Inman, Ms. Chibis, and one on-duty police officer

There were three guests in attendance.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Centers led the pledge of allegiance.

4. APPROVE THE CLERK'S JOURNAL AND ACCEPT THE TAPES AS THE OFFICIAL MINUTES

A. April 6, 2026

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Aldridge.
Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Lipps
Motion passed.

5. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Reception of Visitors at 5:34pm as none asked to be heard.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. ORDINANCE 2026-03 AMENDING CHAPTER 1313 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES TO UPDATE BUILDING PERMIT AND INSPECTION FEES

This ordinance proposes updates to Chapter 1313 of the Codified Ordinances, which establishes the City's building permit and inspection fee schedule.
The proposed updates revise residential, commercial, and administrative fee categories to better align with the Warren County Building and Zoning Department.

Mayor Centers opened and closed the Public Hearing at 5:35pm as none asked to be heard.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Ruppert.
Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Lipps
Motion passed.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2026-27 APPROVING A REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION IN COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA# 4 FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 400 COMMERCE CENTER DRIVE (LEE'S)

The City of Franklin received a completed application for tax exemption within the City's Community Reinvestment Area # 4 on March 27, 2026. Construction of a restaurant is ongoing. Staff has reviewed the application and supporting documentation identifying the costs of construction of the project and recommends that the construction complies with the terms of the Community Reinvestment Area #4 program parameters established pursuant to City Resolutions 1991-12, 1991-49, 1994-42, and 199-.99. Pursuant to City Resolution 1994-42, City Council must approve all applications for tax exemption with Community Reinvestment Area #4.

Motion made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.
Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Lipps
Motion passed.

8. INTRODUCTION OF NEW LEGISLATION

A. ORDINANCE 2026-04 DETERMINING TO PROCEED WITH THE IMPROVEMENT OF CITY STREETS AND PUBLIC WAYS BY THE LIGHTING THEREOF FOR THE YEAR 2027
B. ORDINANCE 2026-05 APPROVING THE MAJOR SUBDIVISION FOR THE RIGHT OF WAY DEDICATION ON E 2ND STREET (STATE ROUTE 73) FOR THE REALTY LINK DEVELOPMENT (VALVOLINE & DUTCH BROS)

9. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

The Franklin Post Volume 9 will be issued by the end of the month.

The proposed Charter Amendments are outlined in an educational video and posted to the City's website and social media. Please share this educational video leading up the May 5 election.

Mr. Westendorf, Ms. Steed, Mayor Centers, and Warren County Administrator Martin Russell recently traveled to Washington, D.C. During the visit, they met with Keller Partners and federal representatives to advocate for funding priorities, including water main replacement and downtown/riverfront revitalization efforts.

Following a recent roundtable discussion, staff also met with Congressman Landsman to highlight riverbank concerns and discuss potential federal funding opportunities to address those issues.

Staff will be meeting with the Miami Conservancy District to discuss riverbank erosion. There may be street closures as issues are addressed along River Street.

The Mayor said the DC trip was great and they received support from the leadership. They will travel back to DC in fall as part of Warren County fly-in and will follow up with the representatives.
Having Martin Russell attend and advocate for the Franklin projects added a ton of value.

The west-side roundabout public meeting would be held the following day. The meeting will be led by ODOT.

The next BZA meeting will be postponed. There is an administrative appeal on the agenda which requires four members. The items will be presented at the May 11 meeting.

The Humane Association of Warren County will host a community meeting on May 2 at 12:00 PM at the Division of Fire & EMS to introduce a special Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program for Franklin residents.

The Council Finance Committee will meet on May 4 at 4:30pm.

The Ohio Valley Cruisers Downtown Cruise-In will start on May 5.

11. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Lipps encouraged everyone to celebrate Earth Day by visiting our parks. He went to do an informal cleanup but commented on how clean the parks were.
There is an election on May 5; he encouraged everyone to get out and vote.

Mr. Aldridge said the issue with the utility pole on Deardoff has been resolved. Thank you to staff.
He reflected on how far we've come. For federal partners to consider us a “sophisticated partner” shows that we’ve come a long way. Staff has formed great partnerships and does great work for the community.

Mr. Roberts thanked the tax department as they did a great job this income tax season.
The lights at Dial Park look great - thanks to Mr. Inman and staff.
City Staff is awesome, hardworking, and moving in right direction.

Mr. Westendorf added that cameras will be added to Dial Park as well.

Mr. Ruppert thanked everyone involved in having the DC meetings – it sounds like they were successful, and this is something we haven't had in the past. It shows that this town is trying to do something.
He expressed concern about the possibility of data centers. Mr. Westendorf said the city is at low risk due to power requirements.
He said the City is looking good.

Vice Mayor Hall thanked the Lakes family for coming to the meeting.
We've been trying to get a lot of attention here for a long time. We have now done it; it's a good thing.
He's glad he stuck around and kept looking forward. It's amazing how many times we've had people from DC stop in and talk to us with no results. Now things are happening; those at the federal level and even Warren County are starting to notice. Keep up the good work and the good fight.

Mayor Centers thanked the Lakes family for coming to the meeting. A project on their property was approved at the last Planning Commission meeting. Legislation resulting from a recommendation at that meeting was introduced during Council that evening, and at the May 4 Council meeting there will be a Public Hearing and a vote for final approval. There are additional items that will go to BZA as well.
He recently stopped at Main Street Tavern and was told their beer license is being processed.
The Mayor was approached about our Downtown Murals. Now that Main Street is two-way, there are new canvases. Mr. Westendorf reported that a new roadway mural going in this spring at 4th and Main. The intersection will be closed for about a week during installation.
He said the Tax Department did an incredible job during tax season.
The Mayor also wished Mrs. Fouts well during her recovery.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. To consider the purchase of property for public purposes, and to consider the sale or other disposition of unneeded property in accordance with section 505.10 of the Revised Code. Premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest pursuant to ORC 121.22 (G)(2).

Motion to enter made by Ruppert, Seconded by Aldridge.
Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Lipps
Motion passed. Council entered Executive Session at 6:02pm

Motion to exit made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Lipps.
Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Lipps
Motion passed. Council exited Executive Session at 6:44pm

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Vice Mayor Hall, Seconded by Lipps.
Voting Yea: Roberts, Ruppert, Vice Mayor Hall, Mayor Centers, Aldridge, Lipps
Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 6:44pm.

Brent W. Centers

Brent Centers, Mayor

Khristi Dunn

Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council