

The Council Retreat of the Township Council of the Township of Franklin, County of Somerset, New Jersey was called to order by the Mayor at 1:10 p.m.

Mayor Levine read the following statement: “In accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, be advised that adequate notice of this Council Retreat of the Township Council of the Township of Franklin, County of Somerset was made by the posting on the bulletin board at the Municipal Complex and by faxing to the officially designated newspapers, a notice indicating that the Council Retreat would take place in the Council Chambers, Municipal Building at 1:00 p.m. on January 29, 2012. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.”

All present participated in the pledge of allegiance.

The Township Clerk called the roll:

Present: Mr. Chase, Ms. Francois (arrived at 2:38 p.m.), Deputy Mayor Kramer, Mayor Levine, Mr. Prasad (arrived at 1:18 p.m.), Ms. Sherman, Mr. Vassanella, Mr. Wright (arrived at 2:01 p.m.)

Absent: Mr. Regan

Also Present: Craig R. Novick, Township Manager, Donna Vieiro, Assistant Township Manager; and Ann Marie McCarthy, Township Clerk

### **PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Mr. Vassanella moved to open the meeting for public discussion. Said motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Kramer and carried unanimously upon voice vote.

There being no comments made from the public, a motion was made by Mr. Chase to close the meeting to the public. Said motion was seconded by Mr. Vassanella and carried unanimously upon voice vote.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

#### **Preliminary Overview**

Deputy Mayor Kramer provided a preliminary overview of how the retreat would run. He stated that each Council member will be allotted three minutes to advocate their top goals. The next step would be each Council member voting for their top five goals. The Clerk will tally the goals. Lastly, Council will discuss their top five goals.

Deputy Mayor Kramer advocated for the following:

- ⇒ Middlebush Park Improvements
- ⇒ Budget Cuts
- ⇒ Animal Shelter
- ⇒ East Millstone Redevelopment
- ⇒ State-Owned Property Maintenance
- ⇒ Elimination of Standing Committees

Ms. Sherman advocated for the following:

- ⇒ Youth Activity Center
- ⇒ Sewer Authority
- ⇒ Develop Additional Revenue Sources
- ⇒ Expand Use of Township Website
- ⇒ EcoTourism/Tourism
- ⇒ Community Vision
- ⇒ Establish improved relationships with neighboring municipalities

Mr. Chase advocated for the following:

- ⇒ Community Vision/Sustainable NJ
- ⇒ Historic Preservation to bring together private historical societies – work together – apply for grants
- ⇒ Vacant properties (Live Where You Work Program)
- ⇒ Energy Efficiencies
- ⇒ Township continue with energy re-seller
- ⇒ Repair Water Lines on Route 27

Mr. Vassanella advocated for the following:

- ⇒ Sewerage Authority/Shared Services
- ⇒ Ecotourism/Tourism – Redevelopment/Tourism
- ⇒ Improve relationships with neighboring municipalities
- ⇒ Contamination Issues – Improvements in East Millstone
- ⇒ Strengthen Customer Services (Increase management of employees)
- ⇒ Eliminate Standing Committees

Later in the meeting, Mr. Vassanella added Canal access and bridge over the canal next to the Somerset Diner.

Mr. Prasad advocated for the following:

- ⇒ Fiscal Management
- ⇒ Youth Activity Center (better utilization of Senior Center)
- ⇒ Middlebush Park Improvements
- ⇒ Route 27 Water Lines
- ⇒ Economic Development
- ⇒ Grants
- ⇒ Improve Customer Service
- ⇒ Energy Improvement Loans/Disaster Recovery Loans

Mayor Levine advocated for the following:

- ⇒ Economic Development/Marketing
- ⇒ Improve relationships with neighboring municipalities
- ⇒ Budget Cuts
- ⇒ Recreation Needs
- ⇒ Customer Service
- ⇒ Standing Committees

The Township Council each voted for their top priorities from the following list:

**Parks and Recreation**

1. Public Youth Activity Center (YMCA) (5)
2. Middlebush Park Improvements
3. Canal access and bridge over the canal next to the Somerset Diner (3)
4. State-Owned Property Maintenance (1)
5. Expand and Support Cultural Arts

**Finance**

1. Budget Cuts (1)
2. Improvements of Management of Employees
3. Sewer Authority
4. Shared Services/Developing Additional Revenue Sources/Outsourcing Opportunities (5)

**Customer Service**

1. Strength in Customer Service (1)
2. Expand Use of Township TV/Website

**Economic Development**

1. Economic Development/Aggressive Marketing/Tourism (4)

**Green Initiatives**

1. Energy Efficiencies (both public and private) (1)

**Government**

1. Build better relationships with neighboring communities (3)
2. Eliminate Council Standing Committees
3. Community Vision – Develop a Sustainable Community Plan (2)

**Infrastructure/Redevelopment**

1. Replace Water Lines along Route 27 south of Route 518 (3)
2. Resolve Contamination Issues involving Franklin Inn/E. Millstone Redev. (4)
3. Animal Shelter (Expand) (2)

After calculating the results, the following are the Township Council's top seven (7) priorities:

**Parks and Recreation**

1. Public Youth Activity Center (***Recreation Needs Study***)
2. Canal access and bridge over the canal next to the Somerset Diner (***Township Manager/Staff to Land Use Standing Committee***)

**Finance**

1. Shared Services/Developing Additional Revenue Sources/Outsourcing Opportunities (***Township Manager***)

**Economic Development**

1. Economic Development/Aggressive Marketing/Tourism (***Township Manager/Staff recommendation to Council Discussion Item***)

**Government**

1. Build better relationships with neighboring communities (***Mgr to Mgr – point person – send ideas to Manager***)

**Infrastructure/Redevelopment**

1. Replace Water Lines along Route 27 south of Route 518 (***Township Manager/Staff - PW Standing Committee - Council***)
2. Resolve Contamination Issues involving Franklin Inn/East Millstone Redevelopment (***Set up task force under Township Manager direction***)

The Township Council briefly discussed the aforesaid priorities and then directed the Township Manager as indicated above in parentheses.

Deputy Mayor Kramer requested these items be listed as “Old Business” items on the meeting agendas.

The Township Council directed the Township Clerk to construct a directory of the twelve (12) adjoining municipalities and the three (2) counties. At the February 28<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, as a discussion item, Council will schedule their next work session/strategy session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Prasad, the Retreat adjourned at 3:01 p.m. Said motion carried unanimously upon call of the roll.

Approved: *As Amended.* Brian D. Levine. Mayor

Date: *February 15, 2012* Ann Marie McCarthy, Township Clerk