

Common Terms

Township Council – The Township is chartered under the Optional Municipal Charter Act as Council-Manager, Plan D. The Township Council consists of nine members – one (1) Mayor elected from the Township at large, five (5) elected for each of the five (5) wards and three (3) elected from the Township at large.

The Mayor serves as the Presiding Officer. The Deputy Mayor serves in the Mayor's absence.

The Council's power consists of adopting ordinances; reviewing, revising and adopting the budget; levying taxes; authorizing bond issues and establishing general municipal policies.

The Council has the power to initiate hearings for the purpose of gathering information, airing public problems and supervising the spending of its appropriations.

Work Session/Regular Meeting – The Township Council meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at the Municipal Building, 475 DeMott Lane. These meetings are open to the public and public input on any subject is accepted. Exceptions to Meeting Schedule – Meetings are not held on the 4th Tuesday of the month in July, August and December. The Work Session is held at the beginning of the meeting to discuss various discussion items. After Council Discussion Items, the Regular Meeting begins and formal actions by Council are taken.

Agenda – An outline of the items to be discussed or acted upon at a meeting.

Consent Agenda – Items are considered and enacted with a single motion. All items on the Consent Agenda have been reviewed in advance by Council. Any Council Member may request that an item be removed from the consent agenda and discussed separately.

Council Discussion Items – These are matters or issues discussed by Council during the Work Session portion of the meeting. Matters include proposed Township policies and ordinances.

Executive Session – In certain instances, the law permits meetings that are closed to the public. The Council is permitted by law to discuss personnel matters, contracts and litigation during these closed sessions. Minutes of these proceedings are made available to the public once the matter under discussion is concluded.

Ordinances – The term "Ordinance" means and includes any act or regulation of the Township Council required to be reduced to writing and read at more than one meeting and published. Ordinances are first listed on the agenda for Introduction where the ordinance is read by title; adopted on first reading and a public hearing is scheduled. The public hearing of an ordinance is usually held two meetings later. After the public hearing is held, Council votes on the adoption of the ordinance.

Public Discussion – The portion of the meeting where members of the public can speak to the Township Council on any matter of concern.

Quorum – The number representing the majority of members of Council that when duly assembled is legally competent to transact business. A quorum of the Township Council is 5 members.

Rules of Order – These are procedures that guide the conduct of a meeting. Depending on the item under consideration, the Council may take action by adopting a resolution or ordinance, passing a motion or simply through a consensus, or "roll call" of agreement. Roberts Rules of Order is used as a guide.

Resolution – An action of the Township Council that is put into writing and may be adopted at the same time it is introduced. Council resolutions deal with the expenditure of funds, issuance of licenses, award of contracts, implementation of Township policies, among other matters.

Warrants – Listing of all bills to be approved for payment by Council.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I find out in advance what items will be on the agenda?

The tentative agenda is available to the public the Friday before a meeting by the posting on the bulletin board at the Municipal Complex. It is also posted on the Township's website the Saturday prior to the meeting at www.franklintwpnj.org. An agenda is available at the Work Session/Regular Meeting on the counter next to the Township Clerk. You also may call the Township Clerk's Office for a copy of an agenda or information about an upcoming agenda at 732-873-2500 ext 6208.

Can I read the full text of each resolution or ordinance on the agenda?

Resolutions and ordinances are linked on agendas posted on the website at www.franklintwpnj.org. Also copy of each resolution and ordinance on the current agenda is available on the counter next to the Township Clerk during the Work Session/Regular Meeting. Copies of all ordinances scheduled for public hearing are posted on the bulletin board in the main lobby outside the Council Chambers.

Can I review the minutes of the meeting?

Minutes from all open sessions are available for public inspection once they are approved by Council. One may review them on the web site www.franklintwpnj.org or inspect them at the Clerk's Office in the Municipal Bldg.

If I wish to speak during the public discussion portion of a meeting, what is the procedure I should follow?

When the Mayor announces that the public discussion of the meeting has been opened, raise your hand and wait to be recognized. Then come up to the podium at the front of the room and clearly state your name and address. All public comments should be addressed to the Mayor. Public comments can be of any matter of concern.

What is the difference between a public hearing of an ordinance and the public discussion portion of a meeting?

During a public hearing of an ordinance, only the subject matter of the ordinance can be discussed, questioned or commented on during this portion of the meeting. As previously stated, any matter of concern can be discussed during the public discussion portion of the meeting.

Who are the people seated at the dais who are not members of the Township Council?

Township Manager Craig R. Novick, is the Chief Executive Officer of the Township, provides for the administration of the Township's daily operations.

Township Attorney Louis N. Rainone, Esq., acts as legal counsel for the Township Council and all Township departments except as may be otherwise provided by resolution (for instance, the Planning Board, Board of Adjustment and Rent Leveling Board all have different attorneys.

Township Clerk Ann Marie McCarthy is responsible for the administrative functions of the Council. Her office prepares agendas and minutes and handles official correspondence, legal notices, licenses, elections, public records and meeting distribution.

How can I contact a Township Council Member?

The most reliable way to contact the Township Council is to write in care of the Township Clerk at 475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ 08873 or send a fax to (732)-873-1059. Individual contact information of each member of Council can be found on the Township's website www.franklintwpnj.org. You may address your correspondence to one Council member or the entire Council.

As a matter of decorum, it is requested that during the meeting to shut off or put on silent mode all cell phones and beepers.

All work session/regular meetings are recorded to be aired on Franklin Township's Government Access Channel (Channel 25). To be recorded clearly, when one is speaking at the podium, they need to speak 3 to 4 inches from the microphone.

2011 Franklin Township Council

Brian D. Levine, Mayor

Term expires: 12/31/11

Serves on: Board of Library Trustees; Civil Task Force; Community Foundation; Fire Prevention Board; Somerset Community Action Program; and Board of Education Joint Subcommittee.

Standing Committees: Administration & Financial Oversight; Public Works

Rajiv Prasad, Deputy Mayor/Councilman At-Large

Term expires: 12/31/11

Serves on: Community Foundation and Human Relations Commission.

Standing Committees: Land Use, Open Space, Recreation & Parks; Public Works

Kimberly Francois, Councilwoman At-Large

Term expires: 12/31/11

Serves on: Community Foundation; Somerset Community Action Program; and Redevelopment Agency; Board of Education Joint Subcommittee; Youth Services Commission/Alliance Against Drug Abuse.

Standing Committees: Administration & Financial Oversight

Brian G. Regan, Councilman At-Large

Term expires: 12/31/11

Serves on: Library Board of Trustees & Sewerage Authority

Standing Committees: Administration & Financial Oversight

Theodore Chase, Ward I Councilman

Term expires: 12/31/13

Serves on: Local Energy Team; Municipal Cross-Acceptance Committee; Municipal Wastewater Management Planning Committee; Green Team; Environmental Commission; Historic Preservation Commission; Joint Advisory Committee/Village of Kingston; Open Space Advisory Committee; Planning Board.

Standing Committees: Land Use, Open Space, Recreation & Parks; Public Works

Rozalyn Sherman, Ward II Councilwoman

Term expires: 12/31/13

Serves on: Hamilton Street Business & Community Corporation; Senior Citizen Advisory Committee; Emergency Life Support Committee; and Fire Prevention Board.

Standing Committees: Public Safety; Public Works

Phillip Kramer, Ward III Councilman

Term expires: 12/31/13

Serves on: Board of Education Joint Subcommittee; Board of Education Liaison; Route 27 Pedestrian System Feasibility Study Steering Committee; Advisory Board of Health; Civilian Task Force; and Trails Advisory Committee.

Standing Committees: Administration & Financial Oversight; Public Safety

Carl Wright, Ward IV Councilman

Term expires: 12/31/13

Serves on: Hamilton Street Business & Community Corporation; Board of Education Joint Subcommittee; Advisory Recreation Council; Housing Authority; Redevelopment Agency; Rent Leveling Board; and Youth Services Commission/Alliance Against Drug Abuse

Standing Committees: Public Safety; Land Use, Open Space, Recreation & Parks

James Vassanella, Ward V Councilman

Term expires: 12/31/13

Serves on: Cable TV Advisory Committee; Community Foundation; Emergency Life Support Committee; Hamilton Street Business & Community Corporation; Somerset County Housing Resource Center Board; Green Team; and Emergency Management Council

Standing Committees: Public Safety; Land Use, Open Space, Recreation & Parks