



# The Town of Franklin

P.O. Box 209, Route 3, Vermontville, NY 12989 • 518-891-2189 • Fax: 518-891-6389 • www.townoffranklin.com



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## Town of Franklin Board Meetings

### Organizational Meeting January 13, 2021 5:30pm

#### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Supervisor Dorothy Brown, Councilman Tom Bartiss, Councilman Richard Jarvis and Councilman Leo Demong

#### BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Councilman Don Hamm

#### OTHERS PRESENT:

Phil Brown, Jacques DeMars—Highway Superintendent and Lauren LeFebvre—Town Clerk

#### 1. TOWN OF FRANKLIN 2021 BOARD APPOINTMENTS

**Deputy Supervisor:** Leo Demong has been appointed by Supervisor Brown as Deputy Supervisor with all the powers and obligations accorded to him by law and will be paid \$500 per year as per budget. (A1220.4)

**Deputy Highway Superintendent:** Brian Snickles has been appointed by Highway Superintendent DeMars and will be paid \$2601 per year as per budget. The stipend will be renegotiated with each deputy each year. (A5010.11)

**Deputy Town Clerk:** Sandra Oliver has been appointed First Deputy Town Clerk, Autumn LeFebvre has been appointed Second Deputy and Veronica Nason has been appointed Third Deputy Town Clerk by Lauren LeFebvre. There is no salary for this position.

**Budget Officer:** Richard Meagher has been appointed Budget Officer and will be paid \$1018 per year as per budget (A1340.4)

**Town Bookkeeper:** Richard Meagher will contract with the Town for the position of Bookkeeper in amount of \$11,642 per year as per budget (A1320.4)

**Town Historian:** Phyllis King and Susan Goff have been appointed Town Historian and will be paid an \$400 each stipend per year as per budget (A7510.4)

**Registrar of Vital Statistics:** Lauren LeFebvre, Town Clerk will serve as Registrar and will be paid \$420 per budget. (A4020.4)

**Fixed Asset Manager:** Lauren LeFebvre will serve as fixed asset manager at \$400 per year. {A1410.4}

**Court Clerk:** Meredith Symonds has been re-appointed Court Clerk at an hourly rate of \$15.30 (A1130.1)

**Supervisor's Confidential Secretary:** Melissa Begor has been re-appointed Confidential Secretary to the Supervisor at an hourly rate of \$15.30 (A1310.1)

**Codes Enforcement Officer:** Derrick Martineau has been re-appointed as Codes Enforcement Officer at a salary of \$11,216 per year. (A3010.4)

**Process Server:** Brian Manny will continue to serve as Process Server and will receive \$250 per year. (A3120.4)

**Cemetery Custodian:** Timothy Goff has been appointed as Cemetery Custodian and will receive \$800 per year. Susan Goff has been appointed Assistant Cemetery Custodian and will be paid \$15.30 per hour, not to exceed \$300 per fiscal year.(A8810.4)

**Assessor:** Doug Tichenor will receive a salary of \$18,000 per year. (A1355.1)

**Health Officer:** Lisa Cagulia will serve as Health Officer at a yearly salary of \$300. (A4010.4)

**Official Town Newspaper:** The Adirondack Daily Enterprise is designated as the Official Town Newspaper.

**Board Liaison Committees:** Committees will be established on an ad hoc basis. Current Committees are:

**Cemetery:**Dick Jarvis and Tom Bartiss

**Broadband:**Tom Bartiss and Leo Demong

**Recreation:**Leo Demong and Dick Jarvis

**Salaries:** All salaries of elected and appointed officials are set out in the 2021 budget, as follows:

**Supervisor** - \$21,328

**Council Members** - \$19,217 (4 members)

**Town Clerk** - \$21,328

**Highway Superintendent** - \$65,265

**Justice** - \$11,500

**Medical Insurance:** As the general fund employee position has been eliminated, medical insurance will be offered to Highway Department employees as per Teamster's Contract.

**Pension Plan:** The Town is a member of the NYS Retirement System and is offered to all Town employees. All new employees are obliged to join the Retirement Plan. Part-time employee membership in the Plan is optional.

**Official Depository:** Community Bank, Broadway, Saranac Lake, NY, is the Official Depository for the Town. The Town will also continue to contract with MBIA (CLASS) as a savings depository.

**Petty Cash Fund:** The Supervisor and the Town Clerk have declined the option of a petty cash fund.

**Contracts:** The Town will contract as follows:

**Fire Protection** -Bloomingdale Volunteer Fire Department \$45,915

**Ambulance** -Saranac Lake Voluntary Ambulance & Rescue, Inc. \$31,374

**Ambulance** -North Country LifeFlight \$1,600

**Children s Activities** -Saranac Lake Civic Center \$1550

**Recreation** -Franklin Snowmobilers, Inc. \$300

**Employee Services** -Employee Assistance Service \$40 per person (All employees, Elected Officials and Appointed Officials)

**Landfill monitoring** -Tisdell Associates \$2000

**Municipal support** -Association of Towns of the State of NY \$899

**Municipal support** -Adirondack Association of Towns \$449

**Workers Compensation** -Franklin County Self-Insurance

**Animal Control** -Tri-Lakes Humane Society \$2870

**Senior Citizens Activities** -Town of Franklin 55+ Club (A6772.4) \$1500

**Saranac Lake Adult Cen.** -\$1000

**Town Hall Cleaning** -Bonnie Webb, \$45.00 per cleaning (A1620.4)

**Town of Harrietstown** -Adirondack Regional Airport \$1500

**Board of Assessment Review:** Members are Julie Ulacco-Woodcock, Jennifer Norman, Nancy Bernstein, Paul Capone and Edward Martin. Member stipend is \$50 for Grievance Day and mileage to/from required training. {A1355.4}

**Board of Ethics:** Members Al Berg, Aaron Caiazza and Marie Van Nortwick will serve as unpaid members.

**Town Attorney:** Eric Gustafson has contracted with the Town at a cost of \$150 per hr. Mileage Allowance – Reimbursement for mileage for officers, employees and appointees in performance of business for the Town will be \$.58 cents per mile.

## 2. RULES OF PROCEDURE

The Rules of Procedure for regular and special Town Board meetings, workshops and executive sessions follow and replace and suspend all prior town board rules of procedure: REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETINGS

A regular town board meeting is one in which the town board meets once a month at a fixed time and place throughout the year to conduct town business. In the case of the Town of Franklin, regular town board meetings will be held once a month on the second Wednesday at 5:30pm. The board will audit the bills a half hour prior to the meeting start.

### Notice of Regular Town Board Meetings

After the town board establishes by resolution a regular fixed time and place for its meetings throughout the year, no other notice need be given to the members of the board. The Town Clerk is authorized by the Town Board to publish one Public Notice yearly.

### **Rules of Conduct at a Regular Town Board Meeting**

The supervisor, when present, shall preside and act as chairperson. In his/her absence, his/her deputy shall act for him/her.

Members of the board are to be recognized by the chairperson before addressing the rest of the board or the public.

No member of the public shall be permitted to address the town board unless recognized by the chairperson. In that event, the person must identify himself /herself by clearly stating his/her full name and address and then stating the nature of his/her business.

When the agenda permits, a period of 15 minutes will be aside at the start of each meeting for public comment or questions. Members of the public will be given 2 minutes to ask their question or make their comment. A sign-in sheet will be located near the front door. Any person wishing to speak during this comment period must so indicate by signing the sheet. The chairperson may set a limit on the time on each occasion which each member of the public addresses the board.

Persons speaking to the town board with the consent of the chairperson shall address their remarks to the town board, not to other members of the audience.

No such person has the right to demand an answer to a specific question from a member of the board. All such questions shall be directed to the chairperson, who may either answer them or refer the questions to a board member or the attorney for the town, if present. The answer may be deferred and subject to further review or study and answered at a later date.

No member of the public or board shall engage in any demonstration, booing, hand clapping, or otherwise disrupt the formality of a town board meeting.

### **Town Board Resolutions**

The adoption of resolutions is the most frequent type of formal action taken by the town board in its legislative and administrative capacities. Resolutions are often confused with motions. The latter are the vehicle by which resolutions are brought before a town board for action. The two can be used interchangeably. Typical examples of actions that require resolutions are as follows:

transferring money from one budget to another establishing a salary designating depositories

Town Board Voting at a Town Board Meeting

The voting on every issue requiring a resolution, ordinance, or law shall be "ayes" and "nays" and the names of the members present and their votes shall be entered in the minutes of the town board.

The supervisor is a member of the board and therefore must vote. He/she may also move or second resolutions.

The town clerk or (in his/her absence) his/her deputy calls a roll of town board members on every issue in question before the town board.

The town clerk will take minutes and to create a record of all proceedings of the board meetings

### **Regular Town Board Meeting Agendas**

A preliminary agenda will be developed by the supervisor prior to the meeting and published via posting in public places, newsletter, and/or news media whenever practical. Because urgent issues may not be presented to the board until shortly before a town board meeting, a final agenda may not be prepared by the supervisor until shortly before the meeting.

No additional matters are to be considered until each matter on the prepared agenda has been acted on by the town board.

Members of the public are invited to bring an issue, questions, or comments before the board in one of the following four ways:

by written request to be put on the formal agenda at least five business days before the scheduled regular town board meeting, or

by addressing the board at a segment set aside per the Agenda at the end of the meeting specifically for that purpose. The supervisor reserves the right to limit each speaker to two minutes. The speaker may request that the board have a special meeting at a later date to consider that particular issue. At the end of this session, the board will decide if such a meeting is feasible and will set a date and time for it, or

by addressing the board at the end of the meeting if "Public Comment" is on the agenda. Members of the news media may have ten minutes at the conclusion of the meeting to ask questions concerning matters that came up at the meeting.

### **Minutes of Regular Town Board Meetings**

The town clerk, when present, will record minutes of the meetings proceedings as prescribed by law and shall make such minutes available within two weeks (three weeks for the month of January) of the meeting. In the absence of the town clerk, his/her deputy or another person appointed by the board shall take his/her place.

### **TOWN BOARD WORK SESSIONS**

A town board work session is held to discuss and deliberate matters that are coming up at the next regular board meeting, special board meetings, or public hearing. No votes will be taken at work sessions. As with all public meetings, the public is free to attend these sessions but are not to participate or ask questions. Members of the board are expected to attend work sessions when called for by the supervisor.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS BY THE TOWN BOARD**

A public hearing is a meeting of the board and the public regarding an important issue that may have a significant economic, environmental, or other serious impact on the town and its residents. The purpose of a public hearing is to give the public an opportunity to express its views. The public has the right to appear and give evidence and the right to hear and examine witnesses regarding the issue at hand. Notice of Public Hearings The supervisor will give notice of public hearings in writing to the board and town clerk ten days before the hearing, when possible. The town clerk will then post a notice of the hearing in at least one public location and will give notice to the news media at least 72 hours prior to the hearing. Preparation for Public Hearing A study or report should be prepared by an expert in the subject matter of the hearing, such person to be present to testify in favor of the proposal. Rules of Conduct at Public Hearings

## **COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**

Oral Comments. The Town Clerk will maintain a sign-in sheet at the public information desk for each person who wishes to make oral comments. Anyone who wants to do so must enter his/her full name and address on the sign-in sheet, in the spaces provided. ANYONE NOT SIGNING THE SIGN-IN SHEET WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ADDRESS COMMENTS TO THE TOWN BOARD. Questions. The Chairperson will entertain questions from the floor. Questions shall be for the sole purpose of obtaining information about the subject matter of the public hearing or clarifying its provisions. Questions shall not have the intent of provoking a debate between the questioner and the Town Board or any individual in the audience. Written Comments. The Town Board will accept written comments on the subject matter of the public hearing PROVIDED ALL WRITTEN COMMENTS ARE GIVEN TO THE CHAIRPERSON BY THE END OF THE PUBLIC HEARING.

## **PRESENTATION OF COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS.**

**Presiding Officer.** The Town Supervisor or designee will preside over the public hearing, and act as Chairperson. In his/her absence, the Deputy Town Supervisor or designee will act as the Chairperson.

## **GROUND RULES FOR THE PRESENTATION OF COMMENTS**

The purpose of a public hearing is to gather public comment on (subject of Public Hearing). The Board encourages all in attendance to offer comments and ask questions. However, a successful public hearing requires that some simple ground rules be followed. These ground rules will ensure that all in attendance are treated in a respectful and courteous manner, and that all who desire to speak will have the opportunity to be heard:

No one may speak unless recognized by the Chairperson for that purpose. Upon recognition, the person must identify him/herself by clearly stating his/her full name and address.

Anyone choosing to speak must address his/her remarks to the Town Board, and not to other members of the audience. Any debate between those "for" and those "against" the proposal must be strictly avoided.

Oral comments can generally be delivered in two minutes. If there are a large number of persons wishing to speak, the Chairperson reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to strictly enforce the 5-minute rule, so that all who wish to speak may have an opportunity to do so. The Town Board is here to listen to the public's comments, and to answer questions about the

Preliminary Budget. The Board is NOT here to express its own views or opinions thereon. The Board will NOT participate in a debate of the issues. We want your advice and assistance in coming to the proper conclusion on the issues involved. If you are in favor, simply tell us and give us your reasons why; and likewise, if you are opposed. No person has the right to demand an answer to a specific question from a member of the Board. As noted earlier, questions should seek clarification and information and should not lead to a debate of the issues. All questions are to be directed to the chairperson, who may either answer them or refer them to a Board member or the Attorney for the Town. The answer may be deferred and subject to further review or study and answered at a later date. No person may speak a second time until everyone who wants to speak has spoken.

No member of the public or Town Board shall engage in any demonstration, booing, hand clapping, or otherwise disrupt the formality of the public hearing.

The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that these rules are followed.

ANYONE VIOLATING ANY OF THESE GUIDELINES WILL BE ASKED TO REFRAIN FROM DOING SO, AND MAY, IN THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRPERSON, BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE PUBLIC HEARING. SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING

Special town board meetings may be called by the supervisor at any time for urgent or lengthy issues or for any other important reason determined by the supervisor. Notice of special town board meetings and rules of conduct are the same as for public hearings.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

Executive sessions may be held only after an open meeting is convened and a motion to hold an executive session, identifying the area or subject to be considered in such executive session, is adopted by the majority vote in the open meeting.

Executive sessions matters are restricted to:

A matter which will imperil the public safety if disclosed.

A matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer.

Information with respect to investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would jeopardize effective law enforcement if disclosed.

Discussions relating to litigation.

Matters relating to collective negotiations under the Taylor Law.

Medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, re relating to appointment, promotion, demotion, discipline, or removal.



Preparation, grading, or administration of examinations.

Acquisition, lease, or sale of real property or securities when publicity would substantially affect the value.

Attendance is restricted to town board members and any other persons authorized by the board.

### **Minutes of executive session proceedings**

Summary minutes must be made of any final determination taken by formal vote, including the date and the vote thereon; however, such summary should not include any matter which is not required to be made public under the Freedom of Information Law. Such summary minutes shall be available to the public within one week from the date of executive session. If no formal action was taken in an executive session, then no executive session minutes need to be taken.

### **3. ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Inter municipal Shared Services Agreements.** The Supervisor is authorized to execute and the Town Clerk is requested to send Inter municipal shared services agreements to the same municipalities as previously following consultation with the Highway Superintendent.

**B. Prepayment of Certain Claims.** Certain invoices are regularly received by the Town and delaying payment of same for Board approval results in interest being charged to the Town, the Supervisor, as chief financial officer of the Town, is hereby authorized to prepay those certain regularly-occurring claims prior to the monthly Town Board meeting; and the Town Board, at its regularly-scheduled monthly meeting, will approve vouchers for said claims.

**C. Authorization to Publish Public Notices.** The Town Clerk is hereby authorized to publish and post all public notices as required by the Town Board in the Official Newspaper, Adirondack Daily Enterprise, and other local newspapers.

### **4. ADOPT ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 1: ACCEPT ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS** WHEREAS, the Town Board has reviewed the preceding organizational items and finds such items acceptable; NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Franklin Town Board accepts the organizational items as set forth above.

Those Voting Aye:

Supervisor Dorothy Brown  
Councilman Leo Demong  
Councilman Richard Jarvis

Those Voting Aye:

None

### **5. OFFICIAL UNDERTAKING.**

The Town Board has approved the procurement of a blanket undertaking from the LaBarge Agency, Inc., which is duly authorized corporate surety covering the officers, clerks, and employees of the town. Such approval assures that this blanket undertaking indemnifies against losses caused by the failure of officers or employees to faithfully perform their duties or by their fraudulent or dishonest acts. Motion (L.Demong-T.Bartiss m/s/p) ALL AYE

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2: ACCEPT OFFICIAL UNDERTAKING**

WHEREAS, the Town Board has negotiated with LaBarge Agency, Inc. for procurement of a blanket undertaking through NYMIR, which is duly authorized corporate surety covering the officers, clerks, and employees of the town; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Franklin approves the purchase of such blanket undertaking which assures that this Undertaking indemnifies against losses caused by the failure of officers or employees to faithfully perform their duties or by their fraudulent or dishonest acts. The Clerk is directed to file same with the county clerk. The elected officers of the Town of Franklin hereby execute this undertaking as follows:

WHEREAS, Dorothy Brown of the Town of Franklin, County of Franklin, New York, has been elected to the office of SUPERVISOR of the Town of Franklin; and

WHEREAS, Leo Demong, of the Town of Franklin, County of Franklin, New York, has been elected to the office of COUNCILMAN of the Town of Franklin; and

WHEREAS, Richard Jarvis, of the Town of Franklin, County of Franklin, New York, has been elected to the office of COUNCILMAN of the Town of Franklin; and

WHEREAS, Donald Hamm, of the Town of Franklin, County of Franklin, New York, has been elected to the office of COUNCILMAN of the Town of Franklin; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Bartiss of the Town of Franklin, County of Franklin New York has been elected to the office of COUNCILMAN; WHEREAS, Roger P. Symonds, Sr., of the Town of Franklin, County of Franklin, New York, has been elected to the office of TOWN JUSTICE of the Town of Franklin; and

WHEREAS, Jacques DeMars, of the Town of Franklin, County of Franklin, New York, has been elected to the office of SUPERINTENDENT OF HIGHWAYS of the Town of Franklin; and

WHEREAS, Lauren LeFebvre has been elected to the office of Town Clerk of the Town of Franklin; NOW, THEREFORE, we as respective officers above, do hereby undertake with the Town of Franklin that we will faithfully perform and discharge the duties of our office, and will promptly account for and pay over all moneys or property received as a Town Officer, in accordance with the law; and This undertaking of the TOWN SUPERVISOR is further conditioned upon that he will well and truly keep, pay over and account for all moneys and property, including any special district funds, belonging to the Town and coming into his hands as such Supervisor; and This undertaking of the TOWN JUSTICE is further conditioned upon that he will well and truly keep, pay over and account for all moneys and property belonging to the Town coming into his hands as such TOWN JUSTICE; and This undertaking of the TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR is further conditioned that she will well and truly keep, pay over and account

for all moneys and property coming into her hands as such Town Clerk/Tax Collector; and The Town does and shall maintain insurance coverage, presently with American Alternative Insurance Group, in the sum of \$20,000.00 plus additional \$350,000.00 for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, \$50,000.00 for the Town Supervisor and \$50,000.00 for the Town Justice to indemnify against losses through the failure of the officers, clerks and employees covered thereunder faithfully to perform their duties or to account properly for all monies or property received by virtue of their positions of employment, and through fraudulent or dishonest acts committed by the officers, clerks and employees covered there under.

Those Voting Aye:

- Supervisor Dorothy Brown
- Councilman Leo Demong
- Councilman Richard Jarvis

Those Voting Aye:

None

CLOSE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING/OPEN REGULAR MEETING-5:45PM

**3. SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:** Balances on hand as of Dec. 31, 2020

**General Fund**

Checking	\$28,648.94
Savings	\$225,532.56
Historian	\$3,039.88
Kt. Mt SRF	\$2,057.85
Cemetery RF	\$5,606.92
CLASS	\$24,918.01
Kate Mt. CLASS	\$46,650.12

**Highway Fund**

Checking	\$137,313.61
Savings	\$41,677.40
Cap Proj. HW	\$49,143.93
CLASS	\$410,808.50

**Landfill Clos. CR**

Checking	\$2,072.66
CLASS	\$13,059.78

**Fire Protection**

Checking	\$6,624.08
CLASS	\$11,716.70

**Capital Proj Bldg**

CLASS	\$912.32
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(Bartiss-Demong m/s/p) All Aye

**REVIEW/APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 9, 2020 MINUTES** -Approved as presented.

(Jarvis-Demong m/s/p) All Aye

**APPROVAL OF CLAIMS**

The board audited and approved the following claims:

**Dec 30, 2020**

<b>General Fund</b>	Abstract 13	Claims 263-270	\$5,597.09
<b>Highway Fund</b>	Abstract 13	Claims 220-235	\$29,257.30
<b>Pre-Pay General</b>	Abstract 13	Claims 40-41	\$456.70

**January 13, 2021**

<b>General Fund</b>	Abstract 1	Claims 1-21	\$239,299.84
<b>Highway Fund</b>	Abstract 1	Claims 1-6	\$5,302.92
<b>Fire Protection</b>	Abstract 1	Claims 1	\$1,644.00

((Bartiss-Demong) All Aye

**HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent DeMars submitted the following written report:

1. Plowed and sanded when needed
2. Had men out several times to cut trees as needed
3. Ongoing beaver issues
4. PESH yearly reports were finalized and a copy was given to Supervisor Brown
5. Numbers were forwarded to the book keeper(Richard Meagher) that he needs annually (Fuel, gas, propane)
6. 284 for general repairs
7. 284 for paving of 2 spots on Fletcher Farm Road
8. I spoke to Bloomingdale fire chief (Kevin Woodruff) and informed him that the area where the dry hydrant is, on the bottom of Sugar Bush Hill, should be looked at as that area may be problematic for fire trucks to access due to unstable and slanted ground.
9. Gas& Fuel sheet given to Town Clerk.

**RESOLUTION #3 284 AGREEMENT FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF HIGHWAY MONEYS** On a motion by Councilman Bartiss, second by Councilman Demong, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Franklin Town Board does hereby approve the expenditure of up to \$96,527 for primary work and general repairs of approximately 67.33 miles of town roads, up to \$120,131 for permanent improvements on approximately 4752 feet of town road starting at Franklin Falls and ending at the intersection of Cold Brook Road and Fletcher Farm Road, and DOES FURTHER RESOLVE to approve the expenditure of up to \$66,041 for permanent improvements of approximately .5mi of Fletcher Farm Road.

Those Voting Aye:

Supervisor Brown  
Councilman Demong  
Councilman Bartiss  
Councilman Jarvis

Those Voting Aye:

None

## NEW BUSINESS

**A. Bigelow Road** - The continued dumping on Bigelow Road was discussed as was NYS Highway Law with respect to the classifications of Abandonment, Seasonal and Closed. The Town Clerk and Highway Superintendent informed those present that this subject has been brought up numerous times in the past 20 years. The Highway Superintendent and Town Clerk will provide all information researched on this topic to the board for consideration.

**B. Gate for Highway Garage** - Discussion was held regarding the security of the new garage building, property, contents, equipment, etc. For security, safety and discouragement of trespassing, the Town Board approved the installation of a locking gate.

### **RESOLUTION #4 APPROVAL OF GATE INSTALLATION AT GARAGE**

On a motion by Councilman Demong, second by Councilman Bartiss, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Franklin Town Board does hereby authorize the Highway Superintendent to research, select and arrange for the installation of a locking gate at the entrance to the Town of Franklin Highway Garage Property.

Those Voting Aye:

Supervisor Brown  
Councilman Demong  
Councilman Bartiss  
Councilman Jarvis

Those Voting Aye:

None

## OLD BUSINESS

**A. Garage Re-Build Update** - Supervisor Brown informed the board that the project is near completion. Delivery delays have occurred causing completion delays. The target date has been extended to late January or early February.

**B. DASNY** - no update

**C. CDBG** - no update

**D. Waterfront Revitalization Grant** - Supervisor Brown stated the Town of Franklin has provided input to ELON regarding a plan for improvements at Kate Mt. Park. No further assistance from the Town has been requested.

**E. Assemblyman Jones Funding** - no update

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**A. Cemetery** -The committee submitted the following written report:

### **Town of Franklin - Cemetery Report for 2020**

#### **Town of Franklin Cemeteries**

Vermontville – 7936 St Hwy 3, Vermontville

Merrillsville – From St Rt 3, turn left on Co Rt 26 - .06 miles

Franklin Falls (shared with St. Armand) – from St Rt 3, turn on to Fletcher farm Rd, turn rt. at Franklin Falls Rd. about 2 miles

Basin – Franklin Falls Rd .6 miles from bridge at Franklin Falls powerhouse – cannot be seen from road

Amidon – single grave - From Fletcher Farm rd., rt on Franklin Falls Rd. .05 miles

Stickney family plot – From Rock St. turn right on Stickney Pt Rd/Camp Road for about 1 mile – rt side in woods

Williams – a single marker – From County Route 26, take the Thatcherville rd. about 3 miles – will be on the right between road and river.

Since this is the first yearly report (that I know of) which has ever been completed, let me start by saying what happens during any “normal” year:

### **Spring/Summer/Fall**

As soon as weather permits, we remove any old decorations/debris from each of our cemeteries.

Every Spring (week leading to Memorial Day), we place about 200 American flags at Vermontville, Merrillsville, Franklin Falls, and Basin Cemeteries into brass flag holders. At times, we need to straighten the metal posts of holders that have been bent by the mower. In the past, the town Supervisor will order the flags before Memorial Day upon our request.

If someone requests a flag/marker be place for them, we will ask for proof of military service, such as a DD214 (DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, generally referred to as a "DD 214", is a document of the United States Department of Defense, issued upon a military service member's retirement, separation, or discharge from active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, e.g., U.S. Army, of military service.)

When we remove the flags after Veteran’s Day, Rev. Eric Olsen collects them for proper disposal – (Col.) Rev. Olsen is a retired army Chaplin. He currently is pastor of the Lutheran and Methodist churches in Saranac Lake, as well as for NYS DoC and the local VFW. We do not remove the Firemen Flags – that is taken care of by the local departments.

This year, the town hired Bruce Sawyer, a stone mason and owner of Pine Haven Cemetery Service (518) 354-3241. He and a helper cleaned some stones in Union Cemetery (Vermontville). Due the immense work and cost involved in repairing and cleaning, we were only able to have 3 old stones repaired and cleaned - LENNON plot (left side of cemetery). Another one was by struck by the cement truck which Mr. Sawyer also repaired. He lifted the large FLETCHER stone (right side of cemetery) that had fallen off its base. He replaced the base, graded the ground so the water would flow away from the stone and put the stone back on the new base. We would highly recommend Mr. Sawyer for any more work we do at any of our cemeteries. Generally, town cemetery rules require that family plot owners are responsible for the maintenance and repair of headstones.

We received a call for a burial in Franklin Falls Cemetery, but it was on the St. Armand side. We contacted Cy Ellsworth – cemetery supervisor for St Armand. He was unaware that the Franklin Falls Cemetery was still an active cemetery. We gave him the information of the young lady that had contacted us. He had flags that were donated by VFW which he gave to us to use when we placed the flags in the spring. St. Armand also had the cemetery resurveyed to confirm town lines.

Throughout the year, we receive request from families to help find graves and some will ask for pictures of the headstones for their genealogy records. For instance, we received a call from the Granddaughter of Amell Picke. She was working with Plattsburgh Memorials to get a headstone for her grandfather. She lives in NJ and asked us to place a marker where the stone was to go. We contacted Plattsburgh Memorial to let them know of the location and placed a yellow flag with the PICKE name on the back.

## **BURIALS**

### **1. Procedures**

When we receive the burial record/notification from Bernie Cushman (he is the one who opens/closes the grave in this area) or funeral director – we keep a copy for our records and give the original to Lauren Lefebvre, Town Clerk. We DO NOT handle the checks/cash payments for plot(s), but we direct them to send a check to Town of Franklin Cemetery Fund. Once the plot(s) is paid for, we issue the “deed” for said plot.

We receive calls from companies that manufacture stones, monuments, etc., such as Plattsburg Memorial. They tell us who they are setting a stone for, we establish they have the right cemetery and then place a flag/marker. This system works very well for both parties.

Although there are some that call from out of state, we generally deal with Fortune-Keough Funeral Home (Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake), M.B. Clark Funeral Home (Lake Placid, Champlain, and Rouses Point), Brown Funeral Home (Plattsburgh area) and Hamilton Funeral Home (Moores, Keeseville, and Peru). We have written letters to the funeral directors in the past on our request that we be notified before a burial takes place in any of our cemeteries, however, there are numerous times that we have not been contacted.

### **2. Communication**

We are supposed to be contacted for a burial (full or urn) whether in a family/existing plot or a newly purchased plot. There is really nothing in place to make sure this happens – Some directors (Fortune-Keough) and Bernie Cushman are generally good about notifying us. However, there are still some that refuse to let us know when they are going to open a grave.

I think the biggest issue is when there is an existing family plot that “everyone knows where it is”, they do not feel it is necessary to call us. However, we cannot keep accurate records if we do not know about a burial. Maybe a completely new system needs to be created for better accountability from everyone involved.



### 3. Winter Burials

We also learned this year, unless it is a private cemetery, burials can be done all year long. Our concern came from a burial December 2016. The family was adamant about the burial taking place even though the temperatures were well below freezing and there was snow on the ground. The burial did take place during the winter, but sadly the dirt that was removed for the burial froze and could not be moved until spring. It was not a good sight.

This year, the same situation occurred. We wanted to wait till spring, but Mr. Cushman explained the new rules were due in part to equipment that exists today that can dig up frozen ground. Lauren Lefebvre looked it up on-line and was able to confirm it as per NYS rules. The family decided to wait until spring, but we will keep it in mind in the future. As per Dept of NY State – Division of Cemeteries - Winter Burials: No cemetery is allowed to close for the winter and burials must be made in the winter weather permitting. An additional charge may be made for snow removal or penetration of frost based on the actual additional charge to the cemetery.

#### BURIALS FOR 2020

Vermontville - 3 full burials, 2 cremation

Merrillsville -

Franklin Falls

#### CURRENT CONCERNS:

1. We do not get contacted by all funeral homes before a burial takes place
2. We often get notified after the fact
3. We do not receive burial records regularly – we need to request them with calls, emails, etc.
4. There is a problem at Franklin Falls Cemetery – the hill on the right side looking from the road (near the tree line on the town of Franklin side), is being torn up by people using ATV, etc. in spring/summer/fall and sledding in the winter. Maybe a simple wood fence could be built at the top of the hill to keep people away. I think it could easily be a liability if someone gets hurt.
5. Vermontville – repair of main road (u-shaped paved road) – heaves and bumps in road are getting worse and makes it difficult to maneuver

#### IN THE FUTURE:

We would like to see

- The Cemetery Rules and Regulations (including costs of plot(s)) added to the Towns Web site. St. Armand has added it to their web site. It eliminates a lot of confusion and everyone can have easy access to information.
- Vermontville – Removal of flower box/loading ramp that is next to the shed. The soil can be used to fill in the sunken graves Repair of paved road first before new one is added – gravel has been added in the past, but it just washes out with the rain
- Use of Cemetery Mapping software to better organize all aspects of custodial duties including Cemetery Location maps - plots(open/reserved/sold/used), deeds, cremation, or full burial, etc.
- A fence added to the front entrances of Vermontville and Merrillsville – to keep people from plowing and hitting/destroying headstones during winter
- Fund raisers done to raise money to replace metal markers with a small headstone – the metal markers are getting destroyed by the mowers
- Getting the local boy scouts (or similar type group) involved in headstone cleaning project – possibly an eagle scout project??
- Better accountability from funeral homes on notifications when a burial is to take place
- Franklin Falls Cemetery - find a way to keep people from using all-terrain vehicles and sledding (in winter) on the hill
- Both my phone numbers to be added to the website. I work evenings – I can be contacted day or night.

Any further questions – Please Do Not Hesitate to reach out to us 518-891-1943 or 518-354-9447

Thank you,

Timothy D Goff, cemetery custodian(bravis63@gmail.com)

Susan M Goff, deputy custodian (dragonladytwin@gmail.com)

**B. Recreation** - Councilman Bartiss suggested local artisans, such as painters, sculptors, gardeners, etc may be interested in displaying their creativity at the park. Councilman Demong encouraged every to travel to Chatteguay to see their multi-use recreational building.

The committee submitted the following written report:

#### DeBar Mt. Complex Draft Unit Management Plan (UMP)

Refer to the December 2020 board meeting minutes report and The Franklin Flyer newsletter for general background information. A paper copy of the draft UMP will be left at the Vermontville Town Hall for detailed review; please use and leave at the town hall for other interested persons and call ahead to Lauren for available times the doors will be open and wear a mask.

#### Schedule of Events:

- Jan 19, 1:30 and 6:00 pm, virtual public hearing on the draft plan. See DEC and APA websites for connecting links and link to on-line draft UMP.
- Feb. 10, 5:30 pm, Franklin town board meeting, discuss board recommendations and comments on the draft UMP.
- Feb. 12, written comments on draft UMP deadline, send by email to DeBarComment@apa.ny.gov or by mail to NYSDEC, Steve Guglielmi, Div. of Lands and Forests, PO Box 296, 1115 NY-86, Ray Brook, NY 12977.

#### Potential areas of focus/concern:

- Kate Mt. Trails: Draft plan from Guglielmi shows potential for trail heads at Tyler, Sinkhole, CR 60 and Kate Mt. Park. Does town have preference(s) on each trail head?4
- DeBar Lodge: Located in town of Duane, should Franklin provide recommendation or be silent?
- Existing Facilities: Are proposed actions for identified problems included in the 5 phased implementation plan?
- Proposed new facilities: Are the listed new facilities what the town desires?
- Implementation phases: Does the town agree with the proposed phase of implementation? Dick and Leo welcome board and resident comments before the Feb. 10 town board meeting. Recreation Committee will send this information to residents who have volunteered to assist town in the planning and development of Franklin Outdoor Recreation opportunities.

### **C. Newsletter-Lauren stated a late March Newsletter is tentatively planned**

## **OTHER**

**Broadband**-Councilman Demong inquired to the status of expanding broadband availability in unserved areas of the Town of Franklin. Councilman Bartiss stated the Town Board was provided with a confidential "build-out plan" in 2018/2019 when renegotiating our franchise agreement with Spectrum/Charter/Time Warner. The Broadband Committee, at that time, found the plan to be lacking. Councilman Bartiss worked with the company and submitted a plan on behalf of the Town that would better address the lack of high speed broadband in most unserved areas of the Town of Franklin. There has been no official communication between the Town of Franklin and the cable company since the franchise agreement was signed.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, Supervisor Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:25.

Respectfully submitted, Lauren LeFebvre, Town Clerk

Click here to see [past minutes](#)

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### **Town of Franklin**

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