

**BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN PARK
BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026**

A work session of the Borough Council of the Borough of Franklin Park was held on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 7:41 p.m. at the Municipal Building, 2344 West Ingomar Road, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237. The meeting was also held virtually via remote audio and video conferencing.

Council President Palled called the meeting to order.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Laura Czekaj, Second Vice President.....present
Jiang Li, Vice President.....present
Brian S. Malkinpresent
Curtis Neilpresent
Uday Palled, President.....present
Venu Paruvellipresent
Junior Councilperson Ishani Aluguvellipresent
Mayor Cristen Fiffikpresent

BOROUGH ENGINEER:

John Valinsky, LSSE Civil Engineers and Surveyors.....present

SOLICITOR:

Robert Max Junker, Babst Callandpresent

STAFF:

Zach Brower, Recreation Program Director.....present
Gary Bucuren, Superintendent of Public Works.....present
Rege Ebner, Finance Director/Treasurerpresent
Zach Filous, Borough Managerpresent
Jim Huff, Manager of Golf Course & Parks Facilities.....present
Cathy Krummert, Borough Secretarypresent
Aron Leach, Police Chief.....present
Andy Nock, Assist. Bldg. Insp./Fire & Tech Official.....present
Tim Phillips, Building Inspector/Zoning Officer.....absent

AUDIENCE: 1

OLD BUSINESS:

- CityScape Wireless Communications Master Plan final draft – Council and Mayor received a copy of the final draft for review. Council will provide their final questions and comments at the January 21st pre-meeting.

INTERVIEWS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL – Borough Council interviewed Katrina Kelly-Pitou and William Kelly for vacancies on the EAC. Motions will be added to the January 21st regular meeting to appoint both individuals to the EAC.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA REVIEW:

- Mr. Junker reviewed the agenda items and provided background information and procedures for the newly elected officials.

**BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN PARK
BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026**

STAFF REPORTS:

Report by Max Junker, Borough Solicitor

- Hartman Farms Plan – As a result of litigation, the Borough is holding seized funds from the developer. Last month Council discussed and agreed to keep approximately \$4,000 for unpaid inspection fees under escrow and will return the remaining funds to the HOA to complete some repairs that were not done by the developer. Mr. Junker drafted a standard stormwater facilities operation and maintenance agreement with the HOA that was provided to Council. He will also discuss the draft agreement with Mr. Phillips and Mr. Bucuren.

Report by Rege Ebner, Finance Director/Treasurer

- He will begin providing written reports in February.
- The Liquid Fuels Audit was completed for 2023 and 2024 and there were no findings. He provided an explanation of liquid fuels funds and allowable expenditures.
- The auditors will be here in two weeks to begin the annual financial audit.
- They are getting payroll and benefits up and running for the new year, and Mrs. Krummert is working with Mrs. Dattilo on the benefits.

Report by Gary Bucuren, Superintendent of Public Works

- He returned to work today from medical leave and will provide a written report next month.
- They have been working on the Bellwood Drive stormwater project, and it is about three-quarters complete.
- They have been working on trucks, equipment, and signs, and they have been salting and plowing. It has been a snowy December, and they have used about 1,800 tons of salt. During years with heavier snow and ice, they put down approximately 4,500 to 5,000 tons of salt.
- They will be collecting Christmas trees for recycling.
- Weather permitting, they will be working on basins and prep for spring projects and paving.

Report by Zach Brower, Recreation Director

- Summer camp registration opened today, and registration is ahead of last year.
- There will be new eco and sports camps over spring break and specialty camps will be provided on days when there is no school.
- He has updated the fee schedule for facility and field rental fees.
- He is planning for the Easter Egg Hunt.

Report by Jim Huff, Manager of Golf Course & Parks Facilities

- The golf course is quiet due to the winter weather.
- Parks employees have been doing snow removal and tearing apart mowers for maintenance and repair.
- When the weather breaks, they will be working to finish the retaining wall on Field #4 in Blueberry Hill Park, so it settles for spring. They will then level the field and put up the fencing in time for the spring baseball season.

Report by John Valinsky, Borough Engineer

- The Blueberry Hill Park Roof Replacement Project is complete, and LSSE has issued a recommendation for final payment.

Report by Aron Leach, Police Chief

- He looks forward to working with everyone.
- He discussed donations received by the police department for the drone program.

MANAGER'S REPORT DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Blueberry Hill Park accessible playground – We received a grant from Allegheny County in the amount of \$205,000 to replace some 1990s playground equipment in the Blueberry Patch. The grant was less than requested, so the Borough will need to find additional funds to complete the project. Last month we received unpaid Fish Run tap in fees from MTSA totaling \$183,000, and Mr. Filous requested to use that money to complete the project this year. Our expense would then be \$85,970. The playground equipment is from the 1990s and is a safety hazard. The project total is \$474,000. Council discussed and agreed to use the tap in fee money to move forward with the project.
- Blueberry Hill Park trail bridges – We received an Act 13 Greenway Trails Recreation Program Grant in the amount of \$50,000. We had requested \$460,000, so Mr. Filous is working with LSSE to scale back the project.
- Reis Run Road – Residents want sidewalk connectivity from Reis Run through Field Club Drive to Old Orchard Park. The one impacted resident at the corner of Reis Run Road and Field Club Drive does not want to pay for the installation or maintain the sidewalk. Mr. Filous needs direction from Council to proceed and pursue grants for the project. Council discussed and Ms. Czekaj will contact the property owner to discuss the issues they have with the sidewalk installation before Council makes a decision.
- Stormwater Projects
 - Montgomery Road Project – We received a grant through Allegheny County to redo a detention pond and some piping. The project was delayed and should begin in the spring.
 - Bellwood Drive Project – We added some infrastructure to prevent flooding.
 - Bear Run and Fish Run MS4 Projects for stream restoration – A developer has finally deeded 12 acres of land that we need to move forward with the Fish Run Project. We were going through the eminent domain process, but it now seems we will be settling with the property owner to move forward with the Bear Run Project once all of the permits are issued.

Staff members and engineer left the meeting at this time.

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS – Council discussed and agreed to appoint the following:

Planning Commission – Mr. Paruvelli

North Hills COG Delegate – Ms. Czekaj

North Hills COG Alternate – Mr. Palled

Allegheny County Boroughs Association Delegate – Mr. Palled

Council Committees – It was noted that subcommittees of Council are appointed by the Council President. Council members were asked to let Mr. Palled know what committees on which they would like to serve, and he will prepare the assignments.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- **Mr. Paruvelli** asked about the process to address resident requests or concerns, and Mr. Junker and Council reviewed the usual process.
- **Mr. Neil** discussed resident comments, complaints, and requests that he heard during campaigning that included some needed improvements on Wexford Run Road.
- **Dr. Li** asked how we can take action to make sure that we have more surplus in cash reserves and monitor spending. The Borough should provide general financial information for residents to view on the website. Council discussed and agreed to begin to provide this information and make it a priority.

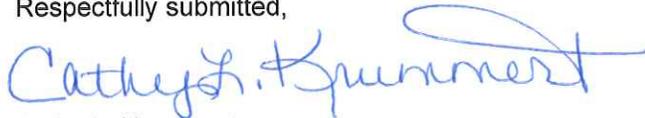
**BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN PARK
BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026**

- **Ishani Aluguvelli, Junior Councilperson** congratulated the new officials and asked when Council would make a decision regarding the EAC candidates. It was noted that Council recommended appointing both residents at the January 21st meeting.
- **Mayor Fiffik** thanked everyone for the warm welcome noting that she looks forward to working with everyone. She has been working with Chief Leach and will be swearing in the new officer tomorrow morning. She appreciates the suggestions discussed earlier regarding how to respond to residents questions and complaints.
- **Mr. Palled** congratulated and welcomed the new officials, and he thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve as President of Borough Council. He provided some suggestions for using the microphones in the meeting room and suggested that Council and Mayor attend the ALOM Spring Educational Conference.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – An executive session was held to discuss litigation and property acquisition, Eminent Domain Code litigation (Karabin), and Oakleaf Lane MOU litigation.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy L. Krummert
Borough Secretary