

**BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN PARK  
BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026**

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A work session of the Borough Council of the Borough of Franklin Park was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 7:00 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 Uday Palled called the meeting to order.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

Laura Czekaj, Second Vice President.....present  
Jiang Li, Vice President.....present  
Brian S. Malkin .....present  
J. Curtis Neil .....present  
Uday Palled, President.....present  
Venu Paruvelli .....present  
Junior Councilperson Ishani Alguvelli .....absent  
Mayor Dennis E. O'Keefe .....present

**ENGINEER:**

Dave Kovac, LSSE Civil Engineers and Surveyors .....present

**SOLICITOR:**

Robert Max Junker, Babst Calland .....present

**STAFF:**

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

**AUDIENCE: 2**

**OLD BUSINESS: None**

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA REVIEW - Mr. Junker reviewed the agenda with the following discussions:**

- **Antonelli Indemnification Agreement** – This motion is related to PennDOT's policy that they are not responsible for enclosed surface water drainage facilities in the PennDOT right of way, and it is the municipality's responsibility to maintain them even though we need to apply for a permit from PennDOT to dig up the road and get to it. When there is new construction, as in this case of a single-family residence, and the pipe is installed for the first time, PennDOT will not sign an HOP agreement with a private property owner because they want the municipality to be the one they are dealing with and who is responsible for the pipe. PennDOT has a form Indemnification Agreement between the Borough and the property owner acknowledging that the Borough will be a co-applicant on the HOP. The homeowner will be responsible for following the plans and doing the construction. Because this is recorded against the property, this agreement runs with the land. If something goes wrong with the pipe, it would be the property owner's responsibility. We have made these agreements previously as necessary.

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- Deerfield Estates Lot 329 Subdivision – The developer is subdividing one large parcel into two lots located next to the Baptist Church. Mr. Palled asked if the Borough is legally obligated to approve the application, and Mr. Junker stated that as long as the application meets the requirements, they are entitled to an approval within 90 days. Mr. Palled asked if we could push the developer to complete the sidewalk connection between Deerfield Estates and Taylor Ridge Apartments. Mr. Junker noted that this could be brought up with the developer when they request a bond reduction or the annual renewal of development. Council discussed, and Mr. Phillips will contact the developer and his engineer to remind them of the required sidewalk connection.

**REVIEW OF BOROUGH PENSION PLANS** – Jason Staley of Schneider Downs provided investment reports and reviewed the performance of the General Employees' and Police Pension Plans and answered questions. Mr. Staley reminded Council that Schneider Downs cut their investment management fees by a little over 20% effective 1-1-26.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

Report by Max Junker, Borough Solicitor

- He is still trying to coordinate a meeting regarding the Hartman Farms Plan stormwater issues.

Report by Gary Bucuren, Superintendent of Public Works

- Road Salt – They have approximately 1,500 ton on hand with more snow expected this week. We have purchased slightly under 2,000 tons and have 1,800 tons on order. We have used approximately 3,800 tons so far this year. We are still having a hard time getting salt deliveries and they are coming in extremely slowly. We like to end the year with a full salt dome (approximately 3,000 tons), and we have another month and a half of snowfall.
- Capital Purchases 5-year plan – He would like to order a large truck to be delivered in 2027. It was included in the Capital Purchases Plan and the cost is \$226,467. Council agreed to add the motions to the regular meeting agenda. Mr. Bucuren noted that in 2025 Council authorized the purchase of a large truck to be delivered in 2026.
- Resident complaints after recent large snowfall – He received complaints regarding mailboxes and driveways blocked with snow, but it is not possible for Borough personnel to clear all of them. The guys did the best they could with the heavy snowfall. He suggests that residents wait until the snow stops to clear driveways. He also received some complaints regarding snow piled up in one spot in cul-de-sacs, but there is no other place to put it when plowing. There were many compliments, and Public Works was commended for the good job during the large snow event.
- Sidewalk clearing following snowfall - Sidewalks must be cleared within 24 hours. Building/Zoning tries to be lenient during a large storm, but they will begin enforcement this week and commercial businesses will be a priority.
- Nevin Drive water break – Mr. Malkin noted that West View Water Authority had opened up the road to fix a water main break and the road is sunk in and needs some patch put in. Mr. Bucuren noted that WVWA should come back and fix it property, but he will see what we can do in the meantime.

Report by Tim Phillips, Building Inspector/Zoning Officer

- There will be no Planning Commission meeting this month.
- The Zoning Hearing Board will consider one appeal for a property on West Ingomar Road. Mayor Fiffik disclosed that the applicants are her next door neighbors, and her husband is representing them as their counsel. Mr. Junker stated that if the matter is discussed further, the Mayor should recuse herself, and future packet information regarding the hearing should be sent out separately.
- Mr. Phillips noted that as of January 1<sup>st</sup> the UCC has changed codes from the 2018 volumes to the 2021 volumes. The International Property Maintenance Code and the International Fire Code are not completely a part of that change. He requested Council authorize the Solicitor to revise the ordinance and repeal the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code and International Fire Code and revise the ordinance to make the 2021 volumes the code of the Borough so there is no conflict.
- House on Wexford Bayne Road that has been under construction for years – Mr. Phillips noted that the permit will be expiring, and the matter will be discussed further in executive session.

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

- He received the Golf Outing contract from Cranberry Highlands for the Scholarship Golf Outing to be held in July, and it has been placed on the regular meeting agenda for approval. He stressed that we need as much participation, sponsors, and prize donations as possible to make it a successful event.
- Mr. Palled asked if the purchase of new golf carts previously authorized would be paid out of the Golf Course funds, and Mr. Huff confirmed.

Report by Dave Kovac, Borough Engineer

- LSSE is preparing the bid documents for the road maintenance seal coating (tar and chip) for a bid opening in late March.
- Mr. Filous asked about the status of the Northmont Farms Dam Emergency Response Plan. Mr. Kovac indicated that he would check with Mr. Wingrove.

Report by Aron Leach, Police Chief

- Mr. Neil mentioned a recent incident with an aggressive driver and asked if Brandt School Road is a targeted enforcement area. Chief Leach noted that they do a lot of traffic posts, and it is heavily patrolled. However, it is a hard road for enforcement because it is difficult to pull out with the large number of cars on the road. He encouraged drivers to call 9-1-1 if they have an issue with another driver.

Mr. Ebner, Mr. Bucuren, Mr. Brower, Mr. Huff, and Mr. Kovac left the meeting.

**MANAGER'S REPORT DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- Bear Run MS4 Project – All of the easements and settlement agreements have been executed. We issued payments to the Karabins for settlement and issued payment into court for Spirit Realty. The Council President just signed our permit application for that location, and it will be submitted tomorrow. Mr. Filous, Mr. Junker, and Mr. Wingrove had a meeting with PENNVEST regarding the application process. PENNVEST is requiring that we have all permits in hand before we apply for funding. We will need to wait out the 6-9 month permit process before we can apply for funding, and it will take another quarter at least before it would be awarded. The realistic timeline of construction for either project will be 2027.
- Fish Run MS4 Project – We received the secondary property that has been recorded. Mr. Filous is in the process of trying to get a right of entry into the property from Shadowbrook Drive.
- Blueberry Patch Playground Equipment – The Costars contractor is willing to offer a discounted rate on freight if we sign a contract sooner rather than later. They have a slow beginning to the year, and they are trying to incentivize some projects. Once we execute the grant agreement, we will move on it to try to get the reduced rate. The cost would be \$15,000-\$20,000 less.
- Matterhorn MS4 Project– We will be issuing the Notice of Termination to close out the project.
- Aurora Drive is a private road, and the property management company has reached out to ask if Council would consider acceptance of the road once they make required improvements. Mr. Filous informed them that an official letter would need to be signed by the owners. The property owners would need to make a lot of improvements before the Borough would consider acceptance.

**MRM DELEGATE & ALTERNATE** – Council discussed and agreed to appoint Mr. Malkin as the Delegate and Dr. Li as the Alternate for the MRM Workers' Compensation Pooled Trust and the Property and Liability Trust. Their names will be added to the motion on the regular meeting agenda. The delegate or alternate may attend the annual meetings or sign a proxy vote. The MRM Trusts enable Pennsylvania municipalities and authorities to pool their resources so they can cost-effectively meet their workers' compensation, property and liability insurance requirements.

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**DATA CENTERS DRAFT ORDINANCE** – The Land Use Committee and staff discussed and drafted a proposed ordinance using a model ordinance. The ordinance protects residents, but it is not overly exclusive. It would be a conditional use and must come before Council for approval. Data Centers will be permitted in the oil and gas overlay district. If we do not designate an area for this type of use, they can be located anywhere in the Borough. The ordinance will need to be forwarded to Allegheny County Economic Development and the Planning Commission for comment. Council discussed and will review the ordinance further before taking action. A revised map will also be prepared and distributed.

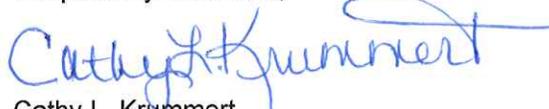
**REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

- **Mayor Fiffik** is acclimating to the position. The Local Government Academy classes have been very useful. She will attend the ALOM Conference, and she is joining the State Mayors Association for educational resources and networking. She will be meeting with Fire Captain Bob Jarvis and EMS Chief Chris Dell. She has been asked if she wants to continue the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, and she is looking for more information.
- **Ms. Czekaj** asked if anyone else had anything to add about the snow response or perspectives, good or bad, from residents. Mr. Filous pointed out that it is Borough policy to replace a mailbox only if it is hit directly by a plow. If a mailbox is knocked down through the snow removal process, the Borough is not responsible for repairs. The weight of the large volume of snow naturally causes problems. Staff met with first responders in advance of the recent snowstorm to make sure they could get to where they need to be. We tried to be as proactive as possible. Residents helped the plowing efforts by not parking on the roads.
- **Mr. Palled** reminded everyone about the emergency drill scheduled on February 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at the municipal building.
- **Mr. Neil** asked if the Borough needs to do anything since the Post-Gazette has announced that they are shutting down in May. Mr. Junker noted that it is a matter of concern with few good solutions, and we are continuing to monitor the situation. We can talk to the officials in Harrisburg to potentially amend the rules requiring advertising in a newspaper of general circulation. We have heard that the Tribune Review will begin a print publication once a week, but that will be difficult because everyone will be trying to advertise on that one day. We have started looking at what rural communities have done.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – An executive session was held to discuss personnel matters and the Yochus potential litigation.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy L. Krummert  
Borough Secretary