

Village of Franklin
Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2025
7:00 pm

Mayor Paul Turpin called the regular monthly meeting of the Village of Franklin Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, September 9, 2025 in the town hall. Trustees present in Village Hall were Abby Flynn, Craig Miller, Lauren Whalen, Sarah Carter, Vickie Adkins, and Kendra Marcel.

Guest Hadley Turpin presented a speech, on behalf of the 2025 Franklin Royalty, to the Board of Trustees asking for a sponsorship to host a table or trunk at the annual Trunk-or-Treat event.

In addition, there were other guests present to express their concerns with selling the businesses. Darryl Smith said when he was Village President the Village had to borrow 1 million dollars and thankfully the Village had the income from each utility business so they could get the loan. Without the businesses they may not have been able to get the loan. Steve Trout said his concern is for some of the elderly in the community who are on fixed incomes and may not be able to afford the rates that a lot of large companies charge. Becky Dill said this year's electric bill was the highest she has ever seen. Mayor Turpin explained the Village has gone through several utility workers in the last several years. When Andy Fairless left the Village, Mayor Turpin thought Nick Speaks would want the utility supervisor position, but he did not. The sewer and gas systems are in good shape and needs minimal maintenance. However, the water system has pipes that are over 80 years old and will need more maintenance. Recently, the Village lost a million gallons per month for two months before finding two leaks. This type of damage is difficult to find. The leak cost the Village several thousand dollars which put the water business in a bind. Mayor Turpin said it would cost nearly 2 million dollars to replace the pipe in the water system. Mayor Turpin is specifically reaching out to Liberty to see if they would be interested and what they would offer for water, sewer, and gas. He is not interested in selling to multiple companies currently. Mayor Turpin also explained the Village is carrying a lot of overdue utility payments from month-to-month because of negligence to pay, on the customers behalf. Last month the Village was owed between \$8,000 to \$9,000 and this month it was near \$6,000. He added that it is not gas season yet which means those numbers will most likely be higher during cooler weather. Waverly recently raised their sewer and water rates because they are dealing with the same issue. The Village is still paying off \$490,000 from pipe that was laid in 2018. Mayor Turpin said he was hopeful someone from the community would come forward with ideas on how to fix some of the issues. Mayor Turpin said he is concerned because the Village is a small company and for it to continue running effectively there must be enough money to pay employees, bills, updates and maintenance, equipment, training, certifications, and more. The state also keeps implementing new mandates that make it difficult for small municipalities to keep running. Darryl asked if there were any grants available to help with the water system. Mayor Turpin explained the grant process the Village went through to get the water system moved further off Highway 104. It took a couple of years to finalize the process and by that time it costs several thousands more. The Village will look for grants, but the amount

of money is still substantial to the Village. Steve Trout asked if the gas companies would be responsible for some of the road maintenance because they will bring in very large equipment. Mayor Turpin said the Village has an ordinance which requests a bond so that if they tear up the roads, then they must pay for it. The Village is currently dealing with a similar situation with MCC. Trustee Lauren Whalen said she would assume it would be something that needs to be negotiated in the contract as well.

Lastly, Steve Trout and Becky Dill discussed the dangers of the willow tree at the corner of Prairie and Main. Steve said it about caused a wreck recently and Becky said she has been in a wreck because of that tree blocking the view.

Treasurer Susan Smith presented the Treasurer's Report for August. She presented each of the following: businesses profits & losses, current balances, year-to-date balances, and check details. Sarah Carter made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for August. Abby Flynn seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes and Abby Flynn-yes. The motion was carried. Vickie Adkins made a motion to accept the Bills Paid and To Be Paid for August. Kendra Marcel seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes and Craig Miller-yes. The motion was carried.

Clerk Ashley Turpin presented the meeting minutes from August to the Board of Trustees. Vickie Adkins made a motion to approve the minutes from August. Abby Flynn seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller-yes and Lauren Whalen-yes. The motion was carried.

Committee Reports:

There is no report from the utility supervisor.

Buildings, Roads, and Drainage – Mayor Turpin read a letter from Amy Lancaster, class sponsor from Franklin High School asking the Village to allow the school to host a parade for homecoming on September 28th. Abby Flynn made a motion to approve the homecoming parade on September 28th, using the same route at the 4th of July parade. Sarah Carter seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes and Sarah Carter-yes. The motion was carried.

Finance/Payroll – There is nothing to report from this committee.

Insurance – There is nothing new to report from this committee.

Personnel – Mayor Turpin asked if the Board wants to call the applicants in for interviews. If so, he would like for Nick Speaks to be present for the interviews. Mayor Turpin asked Trustees Abby Flynn, Vickie Adkins and Kendra Marcel to provide him with a date and time.

Utility Reconnect – Trustee Vickie Adkins shared an update with the Board. Last month there were 67 customers who owed over \$8,500.00. This month it is down to 46 customers with only \$5,800.00. It was a big reduction. She presented several ideas to the Board to help eliminate the number of customers who owe. Abby Flynn said she thinks the 26th through the 1st of the month should be a grace period before interest is applied. Then on the 9th the unpaid utility could

be shut-off. Raising the shutoff fee for users that are continually delinquent in \$25 increments can be applied, but will ask the attorney.

Utilities – Mayor Turpin said he went to Girard looking for someone from Liberty Utilities and he found the guy who came to the Village of Franklin 4 years ago. He said he would have someone reach out to Mayor Turpin. Mayor Turpin has not heard from anyone. He is thinking maybe the idea of selling the businesses to Liberty is not a good idea. Trustee Vickie Adkins did some research on Liberty and found the following customer consensus: excessive meter charges, locked out of their online accounts for several months, inaccurate meter readings, steep rates, and lack of service. She said overall it did not seem as if their customers were happy with the service they provide.

The Village received \$160,000 to return to customers from the Panhandle lawsuit, however they are now rescinding their agreement saying that the customers need to return the funds. The Village has not distributed the money because the dispute was not fully resolved. Mayor Turpin read the court dates regarding the case aloud and several are not until 2026. The final briefs are due March 23, 2026.

Old Business:

Mayor Turpin is going to meet with MacGuire next Monday to review the pictures of the water tank, along with their findings.

The lot next to The Green Wall has a 70-foot by 10-foot piece of land that does not seem to fall under the Village or Transitions owner, Shannon White. The Village will hopefully find out who the land belongs to later this month or early next month. Once that is finalized the pipe will be moved so it can be donated to the Lions Club.

The Franklin Fire Department wants to trade the whole Quonset Hut property for their current building. They will put their building down in the grassy area near Flat Landers Trailers, Inc. and eventually tear the Quonset Huts down. There are only two parties involved in the agreement. Both parties are working with their attorneys to move forward. Trustee Craig Miller asked if the Village would need to extend a section of Mill Street. Mayor Turpin said yes.

MCC sent a check to the Village for \$5,500 and deposited it. Their attorney talked with the Village's attorney. They will have a meeting with the Village before doing anything to make sure everyone is on the same page. Their attorney said the Village should have their check and permit. Mayor Turpin checked and there was no permit. He reached back out to MCC and found they sent a permit, but it was the wrong one. The permit sent was for the whole town. Mayor Turpin let them know and finally received the correct permit. The meeting should happen soon. They will be required to be 4 feet from the pipe, 4 feet on the other side of the pipe, and 4 feet under the pipe.

Nick Speaks was out all day on Saturday from 8am to 2:30pm fixing a water leak near the Road Districts buildings.

The sprayer in the field will be fixed when the crops are harvested.

New Business:

Abby Flynn made a motion to hold Trick-or-Treating in the Village on Thursday, October 30 and Friday, October 31 from 6pm to 8pm. Lauren Whalen seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes and Vickie Adkins-no. The motion was carried.

Abby Flynn made a motion to sponsor Hadley Turpin's Trunk-or-Treat event, in the amount of \$100. Lauren Whalen seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes and Lauren Whalen-yes. The motion was carried.

Mayor Turpin presented and read through the Appropriation Bill for the Trustees. Craig Miller made a motion to approve the annual Appropriation Bill for 2026. Kendra Marcel seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes and Abby Flynn-yes. The motion was carried.

Mayor Turpin read the letter from Animal Control to the Board. It is now \$1,982.50 per year, which is \$3.25 per person. Vickie Adkins made a motion to approve the revised agreement for the Animal Control Program. Sarah Carter seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes and Craig Miller-yes. The motion was carried.

Chris T. Bridges from Benton Engineering has agreed to provide sewer and water licenses to the Village of Franklin. It will cost \$1,200.00 per month to use Mr. Bridges license. If he is called to come to the Village of Franklin to provide services there will be an hourly rate that applies. Lauren Whalen made a motion to approve the Benton Engineering water and sewer contracts at \$1,200.00 per month for each utility. Craig Miller seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller and Lauren Whalen-yes. The motion was carried.

Mayor Turpin spoke with Nick Speaks yesterday and verified that he did not want the supervisor position. Nick told Mayor Turpin that if the Village did not have the gas system, he would be supervisor. Lauren Whalen expressed that she wishes he would step-up to help with water and sewer until the supervisor role is filled. Clerk, Ashley Turpin suggested adding to the job descriptions and expectations for future employees that the employee is required to fill-in when needed while filling other positions or while another employee is on vacation or leave.

Mayor Turpin said Auburn is willing to help the Village with the gas company. The agreement states the Village will pay \$100 per hour to use their employees' licenses for any paperwork, gas system repairs, or maintenance, etc. Sarah Carter made a motion to approve the Auburn gas agreement for \$100.00 per hour for gas services. Kendra Marcel seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Vickie Adkins-yes, Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes and Sarah Carter-yes. The motion was carried.

The Board is invited to the Morgan County Mitigation meeting on September 30th at 2 pm. Mayor Turpin read the invite aloud and said by participating the Village could earn possible funding opportunities for mitigation. Vickie Adkins volunteered to attend. Craig Miller made a

motion to participate in the Morgan County Mitigation meeting. Lauren Whalen seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Kendra Marcel-yes, Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes and Vickie Adkins-yes. The motion was carried.

Jake Mahan from Mahan Painting looked at the bandstand/gazebo in the park. It would need power washed, primed and paint costing \$2,800.00. Mayor Turpin also asked him if he knew of anyone who did roofing. Jake gave him some information and the gentleman will look at the roof in the spring so it can hopefully be done before the 4th of July.

Craig Miller made a motion to adjourn. Kendra Marcel seconded the motion. The voting was as follows: Abby Flynn-yes, Craig Miller-yes, Lauren Whalen-yes, Sarah Carter-yes, Vickie Adkins-yes and Kendra Marcel-yes. The meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.