

Florence, New Jersey
April 6, 2016

The Florence Township Council held a regular meeting on the above date in the Municipal Complex, 711 Broad Street, Florence, New Jersey.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Lovenduski at 8:00 PM. President Lovenduski led the Salute to the Flag.

A **moment of silence** was held to honor the two year anniversary of the passing of **Police Chief Alvin Scully**.

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: Notice was sent to the Trenton Times for information; posted on the municipal bulletin board; placed on the web-site on January 7th, 2016; and advertised in the Burlington Co. Times on January 3rd, 2016 and January 10th 2016.

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Paul Ostrander, Jerry Sandusky, David Woolston, Ted Lovenduski

Also present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie; Richard A. Brook, Township Administrator; Kelly Grant, Esq., Township Attorney; Joy M. Weiler, Township Clerk

Note: Thomas Sahol, Assistant Municipal Administrator, absent due to illness.

Mayor Wilkie said he wanted to present a **Proclamation for Relay for Life** because there were officers attending the meeting this evening. Florence FOP Lodge #210 was a co-sponsor of the event. He read the proclamation into the record and declared **April 30, 2016 "Paint Your Town Purple Day."** He encouraged residents to participate.

Mayor Wilkie read into the record a **Proclamation** naming Thursday, May 5, 2016 "**Day of Prayer in the Township of Florence.**" He said there would be a service at 10:00 a.m. on that day and Deacon Ron Schwoebel of the Parish of Sts. Francis & Claire would be officiating. He is a local resident who gives a lot to our community. Mayor Wilkie thanked Clerk Weiler for making this happen for so many years.

At this point Mayor Wilkie called for Police Chief John Bunce and **Patrolman Christopher J. Green** for the **Oath of Office**. Officer's Green's father held the bible while his family looked on. Mayor Wilkie Administered the Oath of Office.

Chief Bunce thanked the Mayor and Council and the township administration for addressing the needs of the police department. Chief Bunce stated that Officer Green will be a great asset to the department. He went through a pretty grueling background process. Also, he did very well in the Camden County Police Academy.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

MINUTES

Sandusky made a MOTION; seconded by Woolston to approve the following minutes. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

- Township Council Closed Session – March 9, 2016 & March 16, 2016

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

It was the MOTION of Woolston; seconded by Ostrander to receive and file the Tax Collector's Water & Sewer Report and Court Administrator's Report for March. Roll call vote – All ayes. Motion Carried.

It was on the MOTION of Sandusky; seconded by Ostrander to approve the **Treasurer's Bill List**.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE None at this time.

APPLICATIONS:

- A. On-Premise Merchandise Raffle, Florence Civic Association to benefit Relay for Life, American Cancer Society
April 30, 2016, FHS Athletic Stadium, 11:00am-11:00pm

It was the MOTION of Sandusky; seconded by Woolston to approve Application A.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

Public Hearing and Adoption of the 2016 Municipal Budget

Mayor Wilkie said he noticed in the paper what other towns have been doing to balance their budgets. They have been raising taxes, laying off employees and coming up with creative ways to try and balance the budget. Florence "bit the bullet" many years ago and has been providing low cost, essential services. The tax rate is staying the same and the levy is actually going down by \$48,000. There will be a Road Program this year. There has been a Road Program for the last three or four years. The bids were received and the township is able to do more work than originally anticipated. There were no lay-offs. Resources were identified to be able to add a full time Property Maintenance Inspector to the Code & Construction Office.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

Mayor Wilkie said when he took office, the township was already committed to technology softwear upgrades in the Tax and Water & Sewer Departments. It is more efficient and residents are able to pay their bills on-line. Residents are also able to see their payment history. The amount of uncollected taxes has gone down over the last few years. He gives a lot of the credit to the software and to the department for their hard work.

There were also expansions this last year in the Recreation Department. The registration process had been the same for twenty years - print out a form and fill out. Now registration can be done on-line. This saves time and resources. It also helps the Recreation Department create a database to be able to communicate with the participants and their families and it is a way to get feedback.

This budget does not raise taxes and keeps things stable. The township got past the hump of the high debt service that it had for the last four years. Florence is reinvesting in the community with bond ordinances that were put into place. The township has acquired some properties for the beautification of the township. The progress is obvious on Hornberger Avenue. The brush has been cut back about thirty feet from the road. It looks much nicer. There were properties on Railroad Avenue that the township purchased in order to correct the blight.

There is a budget that puts a lot in place and doesn't hurt anybody and it actually helps the community. By keeping it stable, hopefully, there will be some progress in different areas.

Mayor Wilkie noted there was a **Boy Scout** in the audience, **John Boracci** who is working on his **Eagle Scout Award**. Two years ago the township purchased the Friday property with Open Space funds. The property will eventually be used by the Scouts. Now the bike path can be extended to the Tall Pines development.

Administrator Brook noted for the record there is information on the township website about the budget and information concerning debt service. The best advantage is that the Mayor and Council worked together to create a budget that was best for the municipality. They always work hard to improve the quality of life for the residents. That means everything.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to open the **public hearing of the 2016 Municipal Budget**. Roll call vote – all ayes.

Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was the Motion of Sandusky seconded by Ostrander to close the public hearing of the 2016 Municipal Budget. Roll call vote - all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The meeting was opened to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was the motion of Ostrander, seconded by Sandusky to close the public comments. Roll call vote - all ayes.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-83

**Adopt Municipal Budget
Township of Florence**

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-84

**Authorize the Director of Water & Sewer and the
Chief Financial Officer/Qualified Purchasing Agent to
Prepare Specifications and Obtain Bids for
15% Sodium Hypochlorite Solution - Bulk**

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-85

**Authorize Purchase of Two Chevrolet Tahoe Vehicles,
Cooperative Pricing System Purchase**

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-86

**Authorizing Refund of Certain Overpayment
Water & Sewer Department**

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-87

**Resolution of the Township of Florence, In the County of
Burlington, New Jersey Approving Certain
Agreements, By and Between the Township and First
Florence I Urban Renewal, LLC, Related to the
Undertaking of a of a Redevelopment Project on
Block 148.06, Lot 2 Within the Township**

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-88

**Award the Contract for
Florence Township CDBG 2015
Hamilton Avenue & Railroad Avenue Sidewalk Improvements
To: S. Batata Construction
238 Ernston Road, Suite 1 R
Parlin, NJ 08850**

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-89
Authorizing a State Contract Purchase (#A85580)
67 LED Light Fixtures for Energy Efficient Upgrades
at the Municipal Building
Griffith Electric Supply Company, Inc.
5 Second Street, Trenton, NJ 08611

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-90
Authorize Refund
Use of FAAD Building Fee
Due to the Event Cancelled

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-91
Authorizing the Issuance of a Duplicate Tax Sale Certificate
Pursuant to N.J.S.S. 54:5-52.1

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-92
Award of Administrative Services Contract, Tax Office
To: J.H. Services, Inc.

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-93
Resolution Establishing the 2016 Temporary Capital Budget

It was the MOTION of Ostrander; seconded by Sandusky to approve Resolution Nos. 2016-83 through 2016-93.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

ORDINANCES

**ORDINANCE NO. 2016-06
AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FLORENCE
AMENDING CHAPTER 65A OF THE FLORENCE TOWNSHIP CODE
TITLED CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECKS TO
REPEAL A PORTION OF THE CODE RELATED TO INTERIM APPROVALS
AND TO ADD A REQUIREMENT TO WEAR AND DISPLAY AN ID CARD
WHILE IN PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES
(2nd Reading) (Public Hearing & Adoption)**

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston, to open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 2016-06.

Mayor Wilkie said when the ordinance went into effect, as soon as someone was physically fingerprinted, a grace period began that allowed them to coach before the results were received. At that time, it took a while for the results to come in. Now it doesn't take that long, it's almost immediate. There is no reason for the grace period.

Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to close the public hearing.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to adopt Ordinance No. 2016-06.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2016-07
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT FOR TAX
EXEMPTION WITH ROEBLING GROUP, L.L.C. FOR
PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1301 HORNBERGER AVENUE,
BLOCK 126.2, LOT 1.02
(2nd Reading) (Public Hearing & Adoption)**

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 2016-07.

Mayor Wilkie said there was a disagreement between the owners. They resolved it and would like to clean up the property and obtain a CO. The town was willing to do what was agreed to years ago and that was to phase in the taxes on the building. Taxes on land are never waived.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

Joe Csik, 45 East Fifth Street, asked if the owner was still responsible for finishing the building? He was assured the building would be completed.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to close the public hearing. Roll call vote – all ayes.

It was the Motion of Woolston, seconded by Ostrander to adopt Ordinance No. 2016-07.

On the Question:

Council Member Sandusky asked if there could be monthly updates regarding the progress at the site? Administrator Brook agreed to provide a monthly update to Mayor and Council.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2016-08
ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF FLORENCE, IN THE
COUNTY OF BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY TO ENTER INTO A
FINANCIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP AND
FIRST FLORENCE I URBAN RENEWAL, L.L.C. FOR CERTAIN
PROPERTY WITHIN THE ROUTE 130
REDEVELOPMENT AREA
(2nd Reading) (Public Hearing & Adoption)**

Mayor Wilkie said this was the site of the old Superfresh warehouse on Cedar Lane. This is subdivided from the property by a company called Covington. They have Planning Board approval for a 577,000 sq. ft. facility. They will be paying a dollar amount in lieu of taxes over the next twenty years. If the value of the property increases, the required payment would also increase.

Administrator Brook said the land taxes are still required to be paid. Under the PILOT, they would pay almost \$9.5million over twenty years. That, coupled with the other PILOTS, is what is helping the Mayor and Council do more in the community, especially the road programs, eliminating blight, making improvements to the parks and other projects. It is an incentive, along with expedition of the land use approval process that help encourage businesses to come to Florence Township.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 2016-08. Roll call vote – all ayes.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to close the public hearing. Roll call vote – all ayes.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to adopt Ordinance No. 2016-08.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

ORDINANCE NO. 2016-09

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FLORENCE, IN
THE COUNTY OF BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY,
PROVIDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF POLICE VEHICLES
FOR THE TOWNSHIP, AND APPROPRIATING**

**\$140,000 THEREFOR, AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$133,000 IN GENERAL
IMPROVEMENT BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP TO
FINANCE THE SAME**

(1st Reading) (Public Hearing & Adoption 4/20/16)

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to approve Ordinance No. 2016-09 and set the public hearing and adoption for April 20, 2016.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

ORDINANCE NO. 2016-10

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FLORENCE
BY WHICH THE TOWNSHIP BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE
BURLINGTON COUNTY ENERGY AGGREGATION PROGRAM**

(1st Reading) (Public Hearing & Adoption 4/20/16)

Assistant Administrator Sahol said the legislature in New Jersey adopted a law that allows for an aggregation of energy. If everyone puts their buying power together and puts it on the market, the utility companies find it difficult to not offer a better deal. Burlington County has taken the initiative and has asked each municipality if they would like to participate and join in the Energy Aggregation. It has been successful elsewhere. Plumstead Township began doing this about four years ago and it has been working for them. Mayor Wilkie said they were one of the first ones to do it. The best part is that for the residents it gives them the chance to realize savings. Assistant Administrator Sahol said basically this enrolls Florence Township and all of its residents into the program. There will be some savings. There is also an option to opt out. The municipality is doing this for everyone's benefit.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to approve Ordinance No. 2016-10 and set the public hearing and adoption for April 20, 2016.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2016-11
AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE COMPENSATION OF CERTAIN OFFICIALS AND
EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FLORENCE
(1st Reading) (Public Hearing & Adoption 4/20/16)**

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to approve Ordinance No. 2016-11 and set the public hearing and adoption for April 20, 2016.

On The Question:

Mayor Wilkie explained the ordinance reflected conversations that were held while the budget was being drafted.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

REPORTS

Committees, Boards and Officers:

Council Member Sandusky said he spoke to Assistant Administrator Sahol already, but he was concerned about the many abandoned properties and their upkeep now that spring is coming. He asked about letting the banks know that the township will not tolerate the high grass. He saw in the newspaper that Woodland Township had an ordinance that they were passing, that is what he would like to see. He asked if Florence Township could get a copy of the ordinance? Clerk Weiler informed him this evening that she has reached out to Woodland Township and will provide when received.

Council President Lovenduski said with the addition of Michael Perna in the Code Enforcement Office, the banks are aware they won't get away with much. He is very quick and diligent. He chases down the banks and makes sure they do comply.

Assistant Administrator Sahol said the township received documentation through the Mayor's Office, of a New Jersey Banking Association. It is a group of banks about 150-strong. They had indicated that they compile foreclosure lists for all of their members. They would be happy to act as a clearing house for information when municipalities hit the brick wall. Mr. Perna has been working with them.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

Administration

Mayor

Mayor Wilkie called for **John Boracci** to come forward. Mayor Wilkie said John is in the process of becoming an Eagle Scout. Recreation Coordinator Marty Eckert had e-mailed John's proposal to him. Mr. Eckert spoke to Council previously about putting a map or directory throughout the park. John has proposed to do that as part of his **Eagle Scout project**. Mayor Wilkie said when he first saw the proposed display, he thought it had already been done, but John told him he needed the approval of the township to move forward with it.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to approve the project. Roll call vote - all ayes. Unanimous approval.

John asked who would call the "Call Before You Dig" number when he installs the signs? Mayor Wilkie said Mr. Eckert would work out all the details with him. Assistant Administrator Sahol said he and Mr. Eckert would work with John on his project.

Mayor Wilkie said there were a number of activities coming up this weekend. **Softball** will be having its **Opening Day** at 10:00 a.m., the parade is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. **Baseball** is having its **opening day** the following weekend. The **Blue & Gold Banquet** is this Saturday, 3:30 p.m. at Riverfront School. It is the ceremony for the Cub Scouts moving up to Boy Scouts.

On Sunday at the West Third Street Firehouse the **Florence Historical Society** will be hosting it's **Open House** from 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. They have some nice pictures on their Facebook page.

Next Wednesday the Mayor, Administrator Brook, Assistant Administrator Sahol and Mr. Eckert will be at the Mount Laurel Hotel. Burlington County is working with the **South Jersey Economic Center**. They will be there representing Florence Township. They will be presenting the Route 130 Redevelopment Plan and the Roebling Steel Site Plan and they will be marketing the community to developers.

A contract for the first phase of Hornberger Avenue has been awarded. The grant will fund to Station Road and the township is funding from there to Parrish Lane. Next year it will be to Seventh or Eighth Avenue or possibly further. The second phase will be done next summer.

Last week Burlington County announced the **Route 130 Study**. Twenty years ago there was also a study that included Florence. He was fortunate enough to be on the committee. They are issuing a new redevelopment plan that extends farther north to include Mansfield, Bordentown City, Bordentown Township and Fieldsboro. The study helped generate revenue and support from the county when it came to the Roebling Steel Site. Mark Remsa liked the facility, and through the study and support from Burlington County the township was able to get to the federal government. Also, water and sewer was run along Route 130. Because of that there is now development there. There are many jobs coming. Mr. Remsa will be attending the Council Meeting of May 4 to give a short presentation.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

Administrator

Administrator Brook thanked everyone concerning the budget. He was glad to see it was resolved in favor of the residents this year. He thanked the Mayor and Council for their efforts and working together so cooperatively.

Assistant Administrator

Assistant Administrator Sahol said the basketball courts at Veteran's Park have been well used and there is a lot of interest and a lot of activity there. There were some discussions about providing lighting. He ran some numbers and spoke to a couple contractors to see if it was possible to get some limited lighting. There are activities all around where the fields are lighted, but the basketball courts are dark. For a very reasonable price the township would be able to do some really nice lighting out there. It would be attached to the Public Works facility lighting so that it could come on at dusk but it wouldn't necessarily come on unless it was needed. It would be constructed in such a way that if they were there and they wanted to continue to play they would be able to. There would be a switch and the lights would come on for a certain period of time and then go off. After a certain time it wouldn't be available. Mayor Wilkie said the court was built but for whatever reason no lights were installed. He wanted to get an idea of how the Recreation Committee felt about it and the only questions were from one person and they were technical in nature. Now he wanted Council's opinion. All were in agreement to move ahead with the lights.

Public Comments: Open to the Public

Joseph Csik, 45 East Fifth Street, asked besides just requiring grass be cut at abandoned homes, could the township also require any repairs be made that are needed. Mayor Wilkie said that is what Mr. Perna is currently doing. It is property maintenance, not just the grass. There is an anonymous tip line for people to report properties that are not being kept up. The goal is to keep everyone safe. If there are financial issues, the township is willing to work with people.

Talaya Loftin, 1005 West Fourth Street, asked if the lights at the basketball courts could be expanded to include the field hockey field. Council President Lovenduski said the cost would be exponential to do that. Mayor Wilkie said it wouldn't be bright enough to be safe and he wouldn't want the children to be hurt. Ms. Loftin said field hockey practice has to stop early because there isn't any light. Mayor Wilkie said it was his understanding that when it gets to that point the girls practice in the outfields of the softball and baseball fields. Ms. Loftin said that wasn't functional for the girls. Mayor Wilkie said the township is not in a financial position to light the fields, that is something the leagues have done on their own.

Ms. Loftin asked about the basketball courts at Maplewood Homes. She said she can tell the kids till she is blue in the face to stay out of trouble but if there is nothing to replace that with they are just standing around. They have nowhere to play. They are not old enough to walk to the lit courts. Mayor Wilkie said there is the RD Wood tot lot that will have the safety surface. She said the kids are too old to go there. There is nothing for them to do.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 4/06/16

Mayor Wilkie said the township did not own Woodlawn Park or R.D. Wood Park. Once the township did, it would be able to invest in the parks. The township does not have control over Maplewood Homes. The basketball nets were given to the executive director. He suggested going to the Housing Authority meeting and express her concerns about the nets there.

Administrator Brook said as the township progresses through the year, it would look at its facilities, especially the ones that the town will be acquiring from Griffin Pipe, to see if there is a way to expand activities for children who live in that area. Ms. Loftin said there is nothing for the children to do. Mayor Wilkie said he had to disagree, there are many programs for children in the township. Ms. Loftin said there are only things for children to do if they have money. She works two jobs and can't afford food, so she knows what the families are going through. The kids just wandering around and downtown has gotten worse.

Council Member Sandusky asked if **Maplewood Homes** is federally funded? He asked if the Housing Authority could apply for grant money to provide some type of activities for the development? Mayor Wilkie said they have. When he was one the board from 2001-2005, there was a summer program providing food to the children. The garage was built as an area for the summer program. Council Member Sandusky said Maplewood Homes is not that far from the R.D. Wood field. He asked if that was too far for the children go? Ms. Loftin said it wasn't. She had a kick ball tournament there over the summer with the kids. She said to do things in Florence, there needs to be insurance. She wanted to start a field hockey program and she was told she had to be badged and provide insurance. It is not easy to do things and work with the Recreation Committee. Council President Lovenduski explained that if she ran the program through the league, it would have been covered. He said she would need to go through the proper channels and work with the recreation coordinator.

Ms. Loftin said she has been trying to organize Hip Hop Healthy in the township and it was not easy to get cooperation from the recreation coordinator. Mayor Wilkie said right now the director was being pulled in many directions and he is trying to put everything together. Mayor Wilkie said all of the recreation leagues are working on putting programs together for the middle aged kids. There are new initiatives.

It was the Motion of Woolston, seconded by Ostrander to close the public comments. All ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

8:54 PM MOTION of Sandusky; seconded by Woolston to adjourn to Closed Session. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy M. Weiler, RMC/MMC

Township Clerk

/aek