

Florence Township Council Regular Session 10/15/25

Florence, New Jersey
October 15, 2025

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 Frappolli at 7:00 p.m. Council President Frappolli led the Salute to the Flag. A moment of silence was held for former Council Member and longtime Township resident Louis Bontya who passed away. Administrator Sahol said a few words; Lou served on Town Council from 1988 to 1991, he was very active in the Historical Society, he raised two children in Roebling and he was instrumental in Florence Township developing its first property maintenance and housing codes. He served the community very well and he will be missed. Council President Frappolli stated that every time he ran into Lou he was always talking about the Township in some manner.

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: Notice was posted on the municipal bulletin board on January 3, 2025; published in the Burlington County Times on January 12, 2025, placed on the Township website and given to the Courier Post for information.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Frank Baldorossi, John Fratinardo, Nicholas Haas, Talaya Loftin, Joseph Frappolli

Also Present: Mayor Kristan I. Marter; Thomas A. Sahol, Township Administrator; Robert Wright, Esq., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Session of October 1, 2025
- Executive Session of October 8, 2025

Motion of Haas, seconded by Loftin to approve the minutes. Voice vote – All ayes.

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

- Township Clerk's Monthly Report for September 2025
- Court Administrator's Monthly Report for September 2025
- Tax Collector's Monthly Water & Sewer Report for September 2025
- Tax Collector's Monthly Tax Report for September 2025

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to approve the financial correspondence. Voice vote – All ayes.

Motion of Haas, seconded by Fratinardo to approve the **Treasurer's Bill List**.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Fratinardo, Haas, Loftin, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

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REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

APPLICATIONS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Haas to open the public comment portion of the meeting. Seeing no one wishing to be heard it was a motion of Haas, seconded by Fratinardo to close public comment. Voice vote – All ayes.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-195 Extend Agreement for Animal Control Service

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-196 Refund Boat Ramp Fee

Motion of Baldorossi, seconded by Fratinardo to approve Resolution Nos. 2025-195 and 2025-196.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Fratinardo, Haas, Loftin, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-24 Amend Chapter 53 Establishing Regulations for the Display of Parking Permits for Use of the Municipal Boat Ramp (2nd Reading & Public Hearing)

Motion of Baldorossi, seconded by Fratinardo to open the Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 2025-24. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, motion of Haas, seconded by Fratinardo to close the Public Hearing. Voice vote – All ayes.

Motion of Baldorossi, seconded by Loftin to approve Ordinance No. 2025-24.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Fratinardo, Haas, Loftin, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-25 Authorize Lease Between Florence Township and Florence Township Yacht Club Regarding the Lease of Certain Municipal Lands (2nd Reading & Public Hearing)

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Motion of Loftin, seconded by Haas to open the Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 2025-25. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, motion of Haas, seconded by Fratinardo to close the Public Hearing. Voice vote – All ayes.

Motion of Baldorossi, seconded by Haas to approve Ordinance No. 2025-25.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Fratinardo, Haas, Loftin, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-26

Prohibiting Short-Term Rentals and Commercial Amenity Rentals in Residential Zones (Intro. & 1st Reading) (2nd Reading & Public Hearing on 11/5/2025)

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Loftin to approve Ordinance No. 2025-26.

Council Representative Loftin stated that she was contacted by the Airbnb's public policy team and asked if anyone has reached out to the Administrator? The Administrator stated that it does not surprise him that an industry is reaching out to ask Council to not do such a thing as to regulate that industry. She asked if we should have a meeting with them? Township Solicitor Wright stated that they are welcome to come to the Council meeting on the 2nd Reading and Public Hearing to state their position so that the entire Council would be present.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Fratinardo, Haas, Loftin, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS

On behalf of the Environmental Committee, and regarding the whirlybird improvements, Council Representative Loftin asked who owns the land behind and surrounding Cream O Land? Administrator Sahol explained that the Turnpike, Cream O Land and the County has right of way along Cedar Lane when you get further from the Turnpike's overpasses so it is a combination. Going the other way, Conrail and the railroad owns the rest. She also asked what would be done for further erosion and can a pedestrian pathway be put along the whirlybird for safety? Administrator Sahol explained that professional engineers are designing this with the proper grading, seeding and stabilizing. There is probably a certain angle that is acceptable depending on the soil types and conditions and run-off potential but it has to be approved by the Burlington County Soil Conservation District, that is the agency that will be involved in the review. The contractor will have to follow the design and put in performance standard bonds so if they do have any erosion issues until it is fully established then they will have to correct those. It is definitely not something that the Turnpike Authority will allow to happen.

Council President Frappolli asked if it has ever come up at some point of putting a walkway over Route 130 for the students and others navigating to the school. He stated that there are many kids that still do walk to or from school. Administrator Sahol explained that part of the reason you see the walkway where you do in places like Cinnaminson is because you have really heavy density populations on either side of the road whereas here it is commercial. He recalled when the school was built, the conversation was had about pedestrians going to the school and the school's answer was that it is a bus only school and that there

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wouldn't be any children walking to that high school. The municipality didn't have control over the school placement. Council President Frappolli stated that not everyone has a ride to or from home, they don't have the convenience of having someone who can pick up or drop off and there are many children from different parts of the community that have to walk. Mayor Marter stated that bikes would not work with an elevated walkway because of the stairs. Council President Frappolli stated that there are no late busses for any athletics, those children have to get home however they can.

Council Representative Haas explained that two new businesses have opened in town over the last month. The Leaf & Bean, a coffee and cigar bar on Front Street by Rocco's Pizza and the House of Packs which is a trading card store in Mallard Creek and they are working on getting those on the website. Mayor Marter stated that Leaf & Bean is having a Grand Opening on October 25, 2025 at a time to be determined.

Council President Frappolli stated that he ran into the owner of the old Johnson's store and asked him why he has not sold that store. He said he was told by realtors that you are better off having a business there at the time of sale because the price goes up if it's being utilized and then you sell it. He also mentioned that he had the little store next to the hardware store and he didn't sell that until he had someone in there.

Council President Frappolli reported that the Library Association will be hosting a dedication of the plaque of present and past Trustees on Tuesday, October 21st at 7:00 p.m. The Trustees have been working on getting recognition for so many who have volunteered so much of their time. He also announced that on Friday, October 17th at 6:00 p.m. is the homecoming game for the high school against Bordentown. The championship baseball team for 1985/1986, football for 1985 and basketball of 1986 and the coaches are all invited back and there is a reception to follow at the Florence Legion Post 194.

REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION

Mayor

Mayor Marter reminded everyone that the Pennsylvania/New Jersey Turnpike Bridge Commission meeting to discuss the new bridge that they are looking to build to replace the current bridge is Thursday, October 16th from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Municipal Building. The format will be similar to the last meeting; professionals will be around the room with stations and different materials and things and attendees can talk to them and ask questions about what the plan is. She also mentioned that this is the last Council meeting in October and the last meeting before the election.

Administrator

Administrator Sahol shared the site plan for the PFAS building to include elevations and explained that the location is where Council wanted it to be. It is a lot better than they feared, it is in line with what is existing. He explained that there will be a 40 foot tower and it is a split faced block building. He thinks that within the next couple of weeks they will be ready to have this in final review internally for the fall. We are going out to bid sometime in the February/March timeframe. Council Representative Baldorossi asked if the building will be fenced in. The Administrator explained that the building is going to serve as its own security because otherwise we will have to take a lot of the parking lot away in order to create a buffer between the fence and the building. It is a masonry building with steel roll up doors, so you are not going to get in it but anything control related like piping and the tower will be fenced in.

The Administrator explained that the Railroad/Amboy Avenue Road Program is moving along and they started pouring concrete. Council Representative Baldorossi asked if there is a reason it was delayed. The Administrator stated that the concrete subcontractor got caught up mobilizing other locations and got stuck on a job and didn't pull off in time so we are working really hard to get them back up into the timeframe that we anticipate so we can get asphalt laid, which has to be laid this year.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Field House Renovations

Marty Eckert explained that we received the updated specifications and mapping diagrams regarding the field house project and we have some grants associated with that. This project will be done in phases. Phase 1 includes the work to level the floor and, in addition to that, the former locker room from the garage is going to be expanded for ADA compliance and will be gutted and set up as a single use handicapped accessible restroom. He shared a map of what Phase 1 will look like. He explained that the shower stall and wash basin will be upgraded because, in speaking with the police, fire and emergency management in the event of an emergency, if we need to mobilize in a short period of time to get them sheltered in place, this building will suffice. And the plumbing is already there so it makes sense to renovate and make it accessible. He explained that the drains were sealed years ago and water and sewer tried to open them back up but they can't and we weren't going to use drains anyway, the floor is going to have a slight elevation and a very faint pitch in front of each of the doorways to prevent water from getting in the building.

Council President Frappolli asked Mr. Eckert to explain beyond recreation the things we could do with this building. Mr. Eckert explained that in the initial grant application it was important to include as many opportunities for public use, sports, the emergency element as needed, the police and fire department could use it for training, scouting events, National Night Out, community outreach, flu clinics, vaccination clinics, etc. That was all in the original grant application in 2021 and was all part of the agreement process.

Mr. Eckert thanked Council Representative Haas for his time and help. He had made suggestions and helped create a spreadsheet of questions and/or thoughts and then as these go back to the engineering firm and they create updates he can check them off to show that the plans reflect our questions.

Council Representative Loftin asked if there is anything that he feels that Council should know about this project to date. Mr. Eckert stated that he just wants to educate himself. He has questions about how payments are made and things that he has never done before. He is looking at it basically from a project management standpoint. He stated that there were questions referencing the drains but we are not going to maintain the drains. Somewhere in the plans it didn't spell it out exactly what the key had stated for electrical so he wants to be sure that when that goes out for potential bid he is correct at what he is assuming and it is accurate for the bidders.

Mr. Eckert stated that if everyone is in agreement pending any adjustments to the plans, the next step would be to prepare a bid. Administrator Sahol said that once it is explained to Council and Council gets to see what is proposed and has a chance to review it and understands that professional engineers designed it then there is an indemnity that comes along. Council has already authorized to proceed with the project so Mr. Eckert will prepare and work with the Township Clerk on dates for the bids and Council will see it next after the bids have been received and the Township Engineer makes a recommendation as far as who the bidder is.

Council Representative Loftin asked if there has been any discussion about having a kitchen area where they could sell prepared foods? Mr. Eckert stated that it had not been mentioned and he is unfamiliar with it from a gas and electric standpoint or the Burlington County Department of Health regulations. Administrator Sahol explained that if you want to try to create a kitchen under today's design standards you are probably dealing with ventilation systems as well as suppression systems so it might be something that you might provision for in the future and reserve a spot. You might look at steamer tables and things that are not permanent. Council Representative Haas stated that anything that is going to be "in place" is going to be required by the building code. If you are just bringing in an electric hotplate or a sterno, you have to check with the Fire Code/Fire Marshal but at least then you are not triggering the fire code, it would just be

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a matter of what you need, fire extinguishers, etc. If you want to create any type of kitchen or some type of appliance in there it is automatically going to trigger building code.

Council Representative Baldorossi asked what the chances are to use those bathrooms from the inside of the building? Mr. Eckert explained that in the past when a previous group had looked at it, the floor level from the garage surface to the restroom surface is not the same. It would require additional concrete within the building to create a ramp type of situation so it would be higher. And with the way the door would have to be placed, one side would be accessible and the other side would not. And because of the way the beam comes down and where the floor jams are for the toilets, the whole bathroom would have to be reconfigured and jackhammered out. He thought all of the plumbing was cut in the former locker room but it was not. In speaking with Kent Jones of the water and sewer department, he did say that the building has age to it and when that was done, the people that are here now were not here then, so we may want a water service connected to that once the plumbing is in place.

Council Baldorossi asked if they can start utilizing the building after Phase 1? Mr. Eckert stated that after Phase 1 the floor will be level and then painting inside will start along with different amenities for safety and clean up. He said the edging inside the walls on each side has a curblin that runs the whole length and we absolutely do not want kids falling into that curb. So, almost like a hockey rink they would install a half wall that comes up and has padding around it along the floor length on each side so that way if you have kids playing volleyball or whatever it is, they are not hitting anything with a solid surface and it is not changing the integrity. Once we know where we stand with Phase 1, at the same time he will be exploring the next step and probably looking at other bids to keep things moving. He explained that we did get \$375,000 of the \$500,000 and he was able to extend the \$125,000 remaining.

Council Representative Haas mentioned on the plan that it is showing the bathrooms in the corner as “demo” and he wanted to make sure that gets updated. He also mentioned with putting in the new bathroom and doing the plumbing, in the second phase you are doing HVAC and heating and you want to make sure to have that demo’d and then installed right away. You don’t want to be doing that over the winter in case those pipes freeze, you don’t want to have to redo that. Also, Council Representative Haas advised Mr. Eckert to make sure he gets all of his answers done and the drawings and specs updated before going out to bid.

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Haas to approve moving this project along to go out to bid.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Fratinardo, Haas, Loftin, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

Council Representative Loftin said she remembered a survey going out for all of the parks and asked Mr. Eckert if anything was discussed about the design for the Housing Authority playground since the last time he was in. Mr. Eckert thanked her for the reminder and stated that he received the Railroad Avenue drawings in 3D and sent them to Council. He had gotten some tentative drawings for Roebing Park but had not received anything for the remaining playgrounds. He will follow up with the rep so he has something to share. He explained that he does not know much about the federal side as far as the Housing Authority park but there may be opportunities in place to support that. He stated that from a scouting standpoint they are always looking for projects and there is enough space there for something like a garden or relaxation area.

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Council President Frappolli explained that the Recreation Committee asked for a more centralized flag in the middle of the recreational complex. The one that is used now is blocked by the trees, over above the Public Works garage. Mr. Eckert stated that it had come up a few times in recent years and again more recently. He explained that when you consider that complex and all of those areas, a centralized flagpole could be placed at the edge of Veteran's parking lot in between the football and the soccer fields and playground. There were talks about individuals interested in making a donation or covering the expense of it. Administrator Sahol stated that he can see if it is something that can be budgeted for. First you get a design and submit it, the engineer will take a quick look, construction gives the approval based on the engineer's scale, then it gets installed. If Council is interested, we can meet with a flagpole company and they will know from looking at the aerial if there is a central point and how high it has to be. Mayor Marter stated that solar can be used as far as lighting goes, it is efficient enough now where you can have a bright enough light up towards to pole. Administrator Sahol mentioned the concession building for baseball/football. Mr. Eckert explained that there is a flagpole in the outfield of both Muchowski and Coates fields.

Council President Frappolli stated that there have been a lot of disturbances of parents at athletic events all over the country. So far we have been pretty good, however one of the volunteers on the Recreation Committee voiced concerns about being out there by themselves when something happens and it shouldn't be on those volunteers to tell someone that they have to leave the premises, etc. They are volunteers and many are female and they are requesting police presence during these games. They understand that they can call if needed, but they would feel more comfortable with some security. Administrator Sahol explained that he had had a conversation with the Chief shortly after the last Recreation meeting and he had indicated that they do it as often as they can and had a willingness to make sure the officers are familiar that, especially during these peak periods that they would frequent a little more often than not. He referenced the Chief's report from September and the amount of activity that occurs that could keep them from patrolling these areas. Mr. Eckert stated that it is a challenge because volunteers are not an authority. He said the Recreation Committee was asking if it is appropriate to ask to have an officer on duty and have the area of the municipal complex in the rotation in the event there is not an active matter for them to attend to, and could a staging area be on the complex for visual purposes.

Council Representative Loftin asked if this would be part of the Community Policing program. They had asked for more presence at the playground and she feels that this would be another place that we need police presence. Administrator Sahol explained that community policing is more where they are out and trying to make contact with individuals and, periodically they do an event. He agreed to speak to the Chief to see if there is something they can do to maybe engage with the parents and the children at an event like that and also provide presence.

Council Representative Loftin asked if there is an update for the implementation of the Edmunds system for the purchase orders. She recalled back in August when the auditors were in, the CFO said that it would take a month for everyone to be trained and she asked if the training had been done. Administrator Sahol explained that when we last spoke it was the end of August and he had mentioned that Michelle was away at the GFOA conference and when she got back she was going to start rolling that out, which she has. He stated that everyone is abiding by the rules of the purchase order system, even the ones who have not been trained yet. Regardless of where we are with that, he has not seen any purchase orders that do not coincide with the right time as far as the purchase itself.

Council Representative Loftin also stated that she followed up with Mr. Steele regarding his property and he said that he called Ted Lovenduski and was still waiting for him to follow up. The Administrator explained that Ted Lovenduski and Mark Lodato, the Township Engineer, had intended to go out there and walk the lines with him but it had rained. They will be reaching out to him to schedule that. Council

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Representative Loftin stated that she will follow up with him and let him know that he should be hearing something within the next week or so.

Council Representative Loftin asked for an update on the police building. Administrator Sahol explained that was a schematic design that we all looked at. Regarding the actual full blown design, they have to write the proposal and continue with the process Administrator Sahol requested an update of the next step in the process so he can inform Council as to what takes place next and he is waiting to hear back from the architect.

NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

BOARD OF HEALTH

None at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

Council Representative Loftin stated that On the Wings of Love Church will be doing a food giveaway on October 16th from 12:30-2:30 p.m. They are asking that if anyone needs food to bring their own bags and ID is required. She believes they have taken over the food pantry from the Methodist Church on Broad Street. Marty said he will try and stop by during his lunch because when we do receive donations, we have to be able to filter them. Mr. Eckert asked if anyone knows anything about Holy Assumption, if they are having renovations and if they discontinued their food bank. Council President Frappolli stated that he believes they have a water and sewer problem there and he thinks it is at a standstill and he doesn't know if it is operating right now. Council Representative Fratinardo stated that is not operating right now but that the people can go to St. Mary's in Bordentown.

Mr. Eckert explained that in the past they talked about donations that they have received and how to filter them through the public as best they can. They have had those concerns where the pantries are down, some people who aren't as mobile can't get out of town to get things so having the one on Second Street is great. He met with the Superintendent of Schools and discussed the programs that the school district is going to do and they may be a housing area. We only have so many spaces here to stage things so working with the school district will be another outlet and they work closely with the families.

Council President Frappolli asked how to make that communication to our residents and community knowing now that Holy Assumption is down and that this one is functioning. Mr. Eckert stated that recently he came across a one-sheeter with food and personal care products listed from Bordentown City and they also included surrounding areas. For example, we could mention St. Mary's which is within a fair distance, and Catholic Charities in Burlington City and the food pantry on Route 130 in Burlington Township. He stated that he was not aware until recently that the library is collecting food so when we have a need we can direct people there as well. And then there is obviously the people who can't get out or don't drive. Mr. Eckert stated that we are working on the township calendar now and we always have the opportunity to add an insert so we can come up with a one-sheeter for that as well. Council discussed getting something out on our website, social media pages and posted in the municipal building and any local businesses that are interested in having them as soon as a layout is prepared and verified for accuracy.

Council Representative Haas inquired on postage costs and asked if we could do a newsletter every six months. Administrator Sahol stated that it would be an estimated cost of \$12,000-13,000 a year.

Mr. Eckert explained that the pickleball project is going really well. In September, we did the excavation and replaced the base in-house. The asphalt went down so there is a full asphalt surface that has to rest for

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a period of time. In the meantime, he was out with Dave Wright of Public Works assessing our stock of fencing and posts and anything needed to put materials together to fence that area. In order to do the acrylic coatings, a certain temperature needs to be maintained so that will have to be pushed until early spring. In the meantime, to suffice for the grant, we do have all of the materials on order for spring so we can exhaust the grant and we are right on target with everything. That is the only open item that won't be finished by the close of the year but the grant will be fully expended at that point. He stated that the project is going well and he has received positive feedback.

There is a month left for fall sports. Sprinklers, irrigations and all of those things will close out once the programs conclude and winterizations will take place. He will coordinate that with Water and Sewer. Recreation basketball registrations are open and there is a full board for that program. The recycling center is good; Joe Carroll and Rich Belcher do a great job. He is anticipating within this next week to hear back from the Mayor's Wellness Committee Grant that he applied for to see if we make out ok with that. We have a lot of things coming up for the holidays and he shared dates with Council. He stated that he reached out to the American Legion about Veteran's Day and ordered wreaths for that event. As flyers are created, he will make sure Council gets those.

Council Representative Loftin asked how the basketball numbers are looking. Mr. Eckert said that registration just opened a little more than a week ago and the numbers are coming in fast. The league has been expanded between Florence Township, Burlington Township, Burlington City, Edgewater Park and we may get some girls programs through Northern Burlington and Delran as well. The biggest goal was to make sure that we allocate gym space. We are making sure that each of these towns are doing their part to free up gym space to not inundate our school. Last year was a good learning year for the new board and this year they are ahead and mapping and planning everything out so he is looking forward to a good season.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Haas to open the meeting up to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion of Haas, seconded by Fratinardo to adjourn. Voice vote – All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
/js