

Florence Township Council Executive Session 3/8/23

Florence, New Jersey
March 8, 2023

The Florence Township Council held a executive session meeting on the above date in the Municipal Complex, 711 Broad Street, Florence, New Jersey. Members of the public were invited to attend the meeting in person or electronically via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Garganio at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Salute to the flag.

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: Notice was posted on the municipal bulletin board on January 8, 2023; published in the Burlington County Times on January 8, 2023, placed on the Township website and given to the Trenton Times for information on January 10, 2023.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Nicholas Haas, Kristin Marter, Paul Ostrander, Bruce Garganio

Also Present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie; Stephen Fazekas, Township Administrator; Thomas J. Hastie, Jr., Esq., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

PRESENTATION BY AMERICAN LEGION POST 39

Mayor Wilkie introduced Commander Anderson of the American Legion Post 39. Commander Anderson presented the Police Department with a check in the amount of \$1,500. Chief Boldizar stated that it is his honor to accept the check on behalf of the Police Department and thanked the Legion for their support. Mayor Wilkie also thanked the Legion for their continued support and commitment to the community.

FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Garganio opened the meeting to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, a Motion was made by Ostrander, seconded by Marter to close the public comment portion. Voice vote – All ayes.

BUSINESS

A. Chief Brian Boldizar – Review of Handicap Parking and Boat Ramp Fees

Chief Boldizar explained that the boat ramp fine has been increased to try and prevent people from “taking the fine” instead of paying for the permit. He also explained that no on-street handicap parking spots have been issued since 2003 and there are only two active spots at this time. Six applications were denied in 2022 and two denied so far this year. He is recommending Council remove Section B from the Code regarding on-street handicap parking where it states “without negative impact on traffic flow or reasonable parking for other properties in the neighborhood.” In the Village most residents have two cars and no driveway and there would be no parking for anyone if handicap parking spaces are issued. His advice in addition to removing Section B is to not issue any further spaces going forward. Council agreed.

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Administrator Fazekas stated that Burlington County passed their resolution for no parking on Florence Columbus Road, no parking signs have been ordered and they will be installed soon.

Council Representative Marter voiced her concern to Chief Boldizar about truck speeds on Front Street and tractor trailers crossing the yellow line when they go around the curve on West Front Street by DC Fabricators. Chief Boldizar explained that they have a new proactive officer who is focusing on all of those issues/problems. Administrator Fazekas stated that he had a meeting with Joe Brickley and it was discussed that Delaware Avenue/Front Street from Route 130 all the way to the township line will be a no passing zone. The County Engineer is already working on this.

President Garganio asked if it would make sense to have a speed hump in that area to slow traffic around that turn? Administrator Fazekas stated that, because of the speed the County denied it but when the pedestrian crossing is installed to connect the walking trail to IPT West we are going to try to install some sort of raised crosswalk to try and slow them down there.

Chief Boldizar explained that, as of February 28th there were 3,664 calls for service, 66 arrests with 58 being adults and 8 juveniles, there were 521 motor vehicle stops just in February and 1,026 for the year with 944 summonses issued and a total of 50 motor vehicle accidents. The K9 officer had two good hits with one resulting in a firearms arrest and the other in a meth arrest. Our proactive officer ran 27 details, issued 83 motor vehicle summonses, 15 local ordinances and made 11 arrests. In his commercial vehicle assessment, he issued 31 summonses for abandoned on private property which is what is written up by Wawa where they park in the no parking zone, for parking prohibited he wrote 13, for left turns prohibited he wrote 2, 2 for air pollution and improper parking resulted in 1 summons. He also impounded 3 vehicles and handled 3 motor vehicle collisions.

The investigative bureau handled four active investigations, had 7 investigative backgrounds, 24 firearms backgrounds, 8 permits to carry and 3 Megan's Law registrations. They are investigating people stealing the grave markers at Holy Assumption Cemetery and Cedar Hill Cemetery where bronze markers were removed from the graves that are marked for the Veterans and the Firemen. They are currently investigating the burglaries at the Scout House on Potts Mill Road, they have assisted with a domestic violence incident where the subject was charged with numerous arson related offenses as he attempted to set his residence on fire using a makeshift incendiary device and flammable liquids. They are investigating mail fraud where people are stealing envelopes that have checks in them, washing the checks and reissuing them for larger amounts. And they assisted the Burlington County High Tech Crime Unit in executing a search warrant.

There was a CDS overdose, two arrests for possession of firearms to include hollow point bullets and an extended magazine, an arrest for aggravated assault with weapons and terroristic threats, an arrest for meth and distribution of CDS and one arrest for impersonating a police officer. And last month the officers put 21,951 miles on their vehicles.

Mayor Wilkie stated even with all this police activity, Florence Township is still near the top of the safe community list. Chief Boldizar agreed with Mayor Wilkie and added that this type of activity is happening everywhere right now, not just here in Florence.

ACTION

RESOLUTIONS

- A. 2023-61, Approving the Corrective Action Plan in Connection with the Audit Report Year 2021
- B. 2023-62, Emergency Temporary Appropriation

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It was a Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to approve Resolution No. 2023-61 and 2023-62.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Haas, Marter, Ostrander, Garganio
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

Mayor Wilkie stated that we received notice that the contractor is moving forward installing the lighted crosswalk at Olive Street and Cedar Lane. This is part of the Road Program from last year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Garganio opened the meeting up to the public at this time.

Seeing no one wishing to comment, Motion was made by Ostrander, seconded by Marter to close the public comment portion. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Resolution 2023-63 Resolution Authorizing the Mayor, Township Council and Support Staff to meet on Closed Session and Authorizing the Exclusion of the Public from that Portion of the Meeting Dealing with Specific Issues Requiring Non-Public Discussions:

Attorney Client Privilege – Roebling Steel Plant

Personnel – Police Department

It was a Motion of Haas, seconded by Ostrander to adjourn to Closed Session at 7:22 p.m. where no action will be taken. Voice vote – All ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:10 p.m. on a Motion by Ostrander, seconded by Haas. Voice Vote – All ayes. No action was taken. Motion of Marter seconded by Baldorossi to Adjourn. Voice vote – All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
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