

Florence Township Council Regular Session 7/5/23

Florence, New Jersey
July 5, 2023

The Florence Township Council held a regular 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. Council President Garganio led 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; Thomas J. Hastie, Jr., Esq., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Acting Administrator/Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Clerk; Ted Lovenduski, Administrative Assistant

Absent: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Closed Session of June 21, 2023

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

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to approve the following correspondence.

- Municipal Treasurer's Cash Reports for May 2023
- Municipal Treasurer's Budget Reports for May 2023
- Treasurer's Bill List

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

Florence Township Council Regular Session 7/5/23

REGULAR CORRSPONDENCE

None at this time.

APPLICATIONS

- A. Renew Transient Merchant License – Jarhead Johnny’s
- B. On-Premise 50/50 Raffle for the Florence Twp. HS Marching Band Booster Club at 1050 Cedar Lane, from 7 pm to 9 pm on August 25th, September 8th and 22nd, October 20th and 27th, November 3rd, 10th and 17th and from 10 am to 4 pm on October 28th, November 4th, 23rd and 26th, 2023
- C. Off-Premise 50/50 Raffle for the Florence Twp. HS Marching Band Booster Club at 711 Broad Street, at 7 pm on December 1, 2023

Motion of Baldorossi, seconded by Ostrander to approve the application. Voice vote – All ayes.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

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

RESOLUTIONS

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-140
Authorize Refund FAAD**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-141
Award Local Road Program to Richard T. Barrett Paving Co., Inc.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-142
Reestablishing a “Green Team” to Develop Recommendations and to Advise the Mayor and Council on the Implementation of “Sustainable New Jersey”**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-143
Appoint Nancy L. Erlston as Burlington County Joint Insurance Fund Commissioner**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-144
Renew ABC License, Dr. Lou’s Place, LLC**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-145
Refund Overpayment, Water & Sewer Department**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-146
Lead Grant Assistance Program**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-147
Renew ABC License, Vito in Florence, LLC**

Florence Township Council Regular Session 7/5/23

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-148
Appoint Privacy Officers**

Motion of Haas, seconded by Ostrander to approve Resolution Nos. 2023-140 through 2023-148.

Council Representative Marter asked if Resolution No. 2023-146 has to do with lead paint and having the funds to be able to provide an inspector to go in and check to make sure there is no lead and would that person would be hired as an employee or a third party. Ted Lovenduski explained that a third party would be brought on at this time and there will be an RFP to make it a shared service or something along those lines. The state is offering some money to put funding in place. It will become part of the CCO process for rentals mostly and there are two ways to go about it. It can either be lead free or to seal it.

Council Representative Marter asked if the current employee who deals with rentals and the housing piece of it to make sure things are up to code can be trained or certified? Ted Lovenduski, stated that the training is pretty extensive.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

ORDINANCES

None at this time.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS

None at this time.

REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION

Mayor

Mayor Wilkie spoke about the carnival and how it originally started with the museum as a possible fundraiser but the museum didn't have enough volunteers to manage it so the Recreation Director was brought on as a point of contact.

Recreation Director Marty Eckert explained that one of the things that Mayor and Council impressed upon him was that the carnival was a positive way to bring the community together. Everyone spoke about the Holy Assumption days and the tradition and the sense of community and that was something that we were cognizant of and, once we took the lead, the biggest task was to make sure that we maintained the responsibility of the financial side. A lot of people on social media asked where the money from the carnival goes and why we don't have certain things and different ideas were suggested. It's not done as a fundraiser it's done as a means to bring the community together in a positive way and we have been fortunate to have great success in that. It is a collective effort from Administration to Police, EMS, Fire, Public Works and Water and Sewer and different volunteers that get involved. The ride company had committed to picking up 50% of the costs for our Police and EMS coverage, and that is the main financial piece that we ever contend with but we do earn a percentage based on the agreement with the carnival company so what we close out with at the end offsets our side of the commitment and it basically zeros out in that sense.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 7/5/23

Any overage that we do have helps us pay for any bands or characters or other niceties that we are able to add. We don't do it in terms of making money but we do not want it to end up costing the town in any way possible so it has been very successful in that way. At the end of the day to be able to report no incidents and no injuries then you did a good job. And the weather worked out for everyone and was a positive benefit for us.

Mayor Wilkie stated that this was the best year ever and even in the best year you are not making money because, not included in the report is the staff that is there every night which is a couple of thousand of dollars added on. This is a service that the town provides and it gives people time to come out and enjoy. Organizations in town have the opportunity to participate and make a little money. The carnival provides a reasonably priced night out for families who might not be able to afford a trip to an amusement park.

Mr. Eckert explained that barricades were placed to discourage people attending the carnival from using 8th Avenue for parking. The Police and Fire Police did a great job of directing residents into the parking lot at Roebling Elementary and the overflow lot between Roebling Elementary and the Charter School. People had mentioned also to have more local participation and it was put out there to try and encourage people to get involved. One of the other things that was discussed in the past it is very unique for a municipality to take on a carnival. The ride company had explained that they work from Georgia up to New York and across to Ohio and then they work their way back down and they had said over the years that it is very seldom that you see a municipality get involved.

Administrator

Acting Administrator Erlston explained that Florence Township has been awarded two grants. One is a \$225,000 NJDOT grant for Railroad Avenue, Peace Street and Amboy Avenue. And in February Senator Singleton's office reached out to all of the municipalities in Legislative District 7 for fiscal year 24 budget requests and we put in 4 different items that we thought would be a fit. Senator Singleton was able to secure \$500,000 for the Recreation Center and Public Works project.

Mayor Wilkie explained that we already have NJDOT money for Hornberger Avenue and now we have an additional \$250,000 to look at that area and what improvements can be made for the community next year. In addition to just paving roads, there will be sidewalks, traffic calming and parking on Hornberger Avenue for the residents there and also a solution for where to put recycling buckets because right now they are just sitting out front where they can.

One of the reasons we didn't move forward with that this year is because the Water and Sewer Department is scheduled to install a new main that will take the sewage from Norman Avenue down to the Hornberger Avenue pump station, that is going to be across the street, and then the sewage will head over to Rte. 130 to the Mallard Creek pump station. That will be happening this year so they have to cut in Norman and Hornberger Avenue and the following year we will be able to pave.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Request to Extend Sunday Alcoholic Sales Hours

Mayor Wilkie explained that Municipal Clerk Erlston reached out to Burlington City, Bordentown City and Mount Holly and surrounding communities that have Sunday alcohol sales and Burlington City is from 9 a.m. to 2 a.m., Bordentown City is from 11 a.m. to 12 a.m. and Mount Holly is 8 a.m. to 1:15 a.m.

Council Representative Marter stated that she pulled from code books of neighboring towns and Bordentown City's code states Sunday sales start at 9 a.m. Clerk Erlston explained that she reached out to the Clerk in Bordentown City because there was some confusion and she was the one who had

Florence Township Council Regular Session 7/5/23

confirmed the 11 a.m. start time. Council Representative Marter further explained that Bordentown Township has sales from 10 a.m. on any day of the week, Burlington Township is 10 a.m. on Sundays, Chesterfield Township starts at 10 a.m., Willingboro Township starts at 11 a.m. and Mansfield Township starts at 12 p.m.

Council Representative Baldorossi suggested to start sales at 10 a.m. until 2 a.m. This would make the closing hours consistent throughout the week. This only pertains to the retail consumption licenses in the township, it would not affect the clubs or the Legion. Council agreed to extend Sunday alcohol sales from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. Clerk Erlston verified the hours and confirmed that it is specifically for the 33 consumption licenses and she will have the ordinance ready for introduction next week with adoption at the first meeting in August.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Review of Draft Lighting Ordinance – Environmental Commission Resolution EC-2023-02

Council Representative Marter explained that the Environmental Commission met with the engineers and put this ordinance together in order to try and have some consistency within our lighting ordinances and regulations within the town and try and do as much as we can to meet the dark skies initiative in order to try and keep from having too bright lighting when we are looking at commercial entities. The engineering firm was brought in and they went through it, made some changes and it has been approved by the Environmental Commission.

Mayor Wilkie stated that if Council is ok with how it is presented, it will get referred to the Planning Board for their input because it is a Land Use ordinance that needs their approval. Council agreed.

Council Representative Haas asked if this is for construction only or redevelopment only or a combination of the two? Council Representative Marter stated that it came up in the Environmental Commission and she is assuming it is going forward however we can certainly look at whether we want to do anything with retrofitting and, as things get upgraded, do they need to then change their bulbs in order to be able to meet the initiative? She can certainly take that back to the Environmental Commission but her understanding is that it is going forward. Ted Lovenduski explained that it states that if anyone does upgrades on more than 25% they fall under the scope. And it also states that for a private single-family home the homeowner needs to conform to the general requirements stipulated so it does have an impact on residents. Council Representative Haas states that it does say 25% or more on the existing outdoor lighting fixtures and asked about renovation in general and whether or not you have to upgrade internally. Council agreed to get clarification. It will be sent to the Planning Board to be discussed.

B. Review of Proposal for Water and Sewer Rate Study

Mayor Wilkie explained that we lost a revenue source with Bonduelle/ReadyPac shutting down. And then with the work that needs to get done with PFOAs it has been a number of years since we have had a rate study and he does not remember the last time we raised rates so he is looking for Council's approval to get this study done and we can plan what would be necessary to meet the different obligations over the next five years.

Council Representative Marter asked if there have been any talks of a tenant for the Bonduelle building and whether or not they can just hang on to their lease for three years and leave that building empty with no water usage? Mayor Wilkie explained that none have been confirmed yet and that Bonduelle is under contract for the next three years but they are going to be moving away from operations and just utilizing the facility and that they can leave it sit for that time period.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 7/5/23

Council Representative Garganio asked for a timeline when this study will be done. Mayor Wilkie stated that he believes it will take a couple of months to pull things together.

BOARD OF HEALTH

None at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Garganio opened the meeting to the public.

Michael Muchowski, 1337 Maple Avenue, asked if there is anything planned for the Nation's 250th Anniversary and suggested maybe sponsorships or fundraising and it may be something to put on the radar if so. He also recommended if the true intent to extend the Sunday alcohol sales is brunch, perhaps limit those few hours to table service only this way it is not for people to come in to the bar just to have a drink. This way you get the benefit of expanding the ordinance but having it meet the intended purpose. Council discussed table service only from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. Solicitor Hastie stated that he will look into the legality of that.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, it was a motion of Ostrander, seconded by Marter to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice vote – All ayes.

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Resolution 2023-149 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:

Litigation – NFI – Wainwright Property

Contract Negotiation – Roebing Steel Plant

Weiss Project – Rte. 130 and Cedar Lane

It was a Motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to adjourn to Closed Session at 7:41 p.m. where no action will be taken. Voice vote – All ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:48 p.m. on a Motion by Ostrander, seconded by Haas. Voice Vote – All ayes. No action was taken. Motion of Haas seconded by Marter to adjourn. Voice vote – All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
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