

**Florence Township Council Regular Session 10/18/23**

Florence, New Jersey  
October 18, 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, Kristan Marter, Paul Ostrander, Bruce Garganio

Also Present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie; Michael J. Muchowski, Township Administrator; Thomas J. Hastie, Jr., Esq., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Clerk; Ted Lovenduski, Administrative Assistant

Absent: None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Regular Meeting of September 20, 2023

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to approve the minutes as submitted. 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

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**FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to approve the following correspondence.

- Tax Collector’s Affidavit of Tax Bill Mailing
- Tax Collector’s Monthly Tax Report for September 2023
- Township Clerk’s Monthly Report for September 2023
- Court Administrator’s Monthly Report for September 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

**REGULAR CORRSPONDENCE**

None at this time.

**APPLICATIONS**

- A. Renew Transient Merchant License for Rocha and Saito Catering, LLC
- B. On-Premise Merchandise Raffle and On-Premise 50/50 on December 1, 2023 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at 69 Main Street, Roebling, for the Florence Twp. Memorial HS Parent Organization
- C. On-Premise Merchandise Raffle and On-Premise 50/50 on December 10, 2023 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at 69 Main Street, Roebling, for the Florence Twp. Memorial HS Parent Organization
- D. On-Premise Merchandise Raffle and On-Premise 50/50 on April 26, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. at 1050 Cedar Lane for the Florence Twp. Memorial HS Parent Organization

Motion of Marter, seconded by Ostrander to approve the applications.

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 Haas, seconded by Marter to close the public comment portion. Voice vote – All ayes.

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**RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-201  
Approve Payment Estimate No. 2 & No. 3 for Public Works Fuel Station  
REVISED**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-202  
Authorizing Refund of Tax Overpayments**

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to approve Resolution Nos. 2023-201 and 2023-202.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

**ORDINANCES**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2023-17  
Amending and Supplementing Chapter 2 of the Township Code to Add Additional Fees  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Public Hearing and Adoption)**

Council President Garganio opened the meeting up for public comment at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard it was a Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to close public comment. Motion of Haas, seconded by Ostrander to approve Ordinance No. 2023-17.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

**ORDINANCE NO. 2023-18  
Bond Ordinance for Improvements to Hornberger Ave., Roebling Ave.,  
Peace St., Amboy Ave. and Pond St.  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Public Hearing and Adoption)**

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

Don Kamienski, 10 McCay Drive asked for clarification on which Railroad Avenue this ordinance references. Mayor Wilkie explained that this is Railroad Avenue in the Village of Roebling and that Railroad and Amboy Avenues are both going to get repaved, they have not been done since 1988-89 and we are doing this at the same time as Hornberger Avenue with grants.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard it was a Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to close public comment. Motion of Marter, seconded by Baldorossi to approve Ordinance No. 2023-18.

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Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS

Council Representative Marter asked about the Council meeting notes that Mayor Wilkie had mentioned at a previous meeting stating she wasn't able to find anything on the website. Mayor Wilkie explained that it was just supposed to be news and he was able to get it done once but has not been done since.

Council Representative Marter asked about the lighting issue off of Cedar Lane across from the high school and whether or not this was going to meet the lighting ordinance. If it was going to have to go back to the Environmental Commission and time is of the essence because you can not carry an ordinance over to the following year, it needed to get to the Environmental Commission for their October meeting which was cancelled due to no activity. She asked where are we now because we missed that meeting.

Mayor Wilkie explained that at this point in time his recommendation is that Environmental can look at it in November. He does not think it is going to happen this year and it is going to have to wait until January. There is not enough time in the timeline for Environmental to look at it in November (2<sup>nd</sup>), Council would have to introduce on November 8<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Board then has a meeting after Thanksgiving so it could be adopted in December but it will be close. He thinks there needs to be more conversation with Environmental as to what they want. Public Service stated that they can't give us a yellow or amber light and he recalls that is what the Environmental Commission wanted when they were first discussing this. That is just not something that Public Service provides.

Council Representative Marter stated that she went ahead and moved forward with a meeting with Film Ready New Jersey in order to become certified as a film ready town. Some requirements are that we have to designate a film ready liaison official, ordinances and things need to be in place and the fire and police departments will have to be involved if we want to pursue this. Photographs will be taken, or we can take them ourselves, of at least 15 locations in our town and each one has to have at least 10 photos. They don't necessarily have to be the museum or some ornate beautiful place in our town, they are looking for anything that could fit into a movie. There are things that we have to do on our end to make anything that they do work within our town. She asked Council if we want to move forward with becoming certified stating that everything is on their website including samples of ordinances and we can even get to the point where residents can upload their own homes if they want to participate. They would be paid a stipend for anything that is used.

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Administrator Muchowski mentioned reaching out to the municipalities that are currently certified to get some feedback. Council President Garganio stated that we could also have our legal team take a look at the ordinances that are out there that we would have to adopt to make it work to make sure there are no major conflicts and then send it to Economic to have them look it over that way we are moving on all sides of it.

Council Representative Marter stated that if we want to get into the January cohort which is the promotion that goes out, they want us to try and get this done by December 1<sup>st</sup>. They said that they would work with us because it is short notice in getting it done if we need more time, but the goal is to be able to get the things in place to get certified. It is not a long list of things and there are samples of everything that we need so she is going to be sending all of that information to Administration to coordinate.

Council Representative Marter also explained that it was brought to her attention that during shift change for Amazon there are cars that come through the jughandle by Wawa on Route 130 and get into the left turn lane and line up between the cars that are sitting in the lane that goes straight and when the light changes, they merge into the straight lane and the cars sitting in the straight lane get stuck waiting through another light cycle. She thinks there is a need to have other officers there to monitor that situation.

Council Representative Marter asked last week about the water rate survey and she asked again this week where that stands. Administrator Muchowski explained that they are finalizing the draft which he will review. She stated that on January 31<sup>st</sup> we were made aware that Ready Pac was leaving and it was brought up in a February meeting that they were looking for someone to fulfill the last 3 years of their requirement in that location. She is not aware of a new entity in there, Ready Pac is not using the water they were using and there was no replacement that is going to use that much water. If we are going to have this significant drop in water which is obviously going to mean that we are not going to make the revenue that we normally make that means that we are going to have to raise rates at some point in order to be able to compensate for that. She asked why is it that it is now October with four meetings left and nothing has been done about this since January that and it is unfortunate that we didn't start it sooner.

Mayor Wilkie explained that he learned about Ready Pac when he got the notice about the people losing their jobs. They were our top user but we had other sources of revenue to go into it. One of the things that pushed the issue for the rate study was the PFAS issue and the estimate of \$20 Million to fix it. All that required work to be done in order to do a study and government takes time. He explained that there has not been a rate study to his knowledge during his time of 12 years. There were increases on the excess usage but we have been able to keep our basic rate the same since 2013 so now is the time to have a rate study done.

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### REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION

#### Mayor

Mayor Wilkie explained that he was not able to honor our centenarian because she was in the hospital. He is waiting to hear back from the family so we can get the proclamation to her. He also mentioned that the Roebling Museum is going to unveil the mill yard signs at 9am on Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>. Local Historian Don Jones will be doing the unveiling. Then they will have their Touch a Truck activities starting at 10am.

The Fall Festival was moved to October 28<sup>th</sup> due to weather and the next Council meeting is on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### Administrator

Administrator Muchowski stated that six engineering firms submitted PFAS proposals but they have not been reviewed in totality. Some parameters were added to get us some engineering cost estimates and potentially construction cost estimates. Some did do exactly that while others gave projections but didn't give a final recommendation of one system over another because they recommended some further testing onsite of water or soil quality, etc. to incorporate. The two major systems were the granulated active carbon and ion from a cost perspective and they fit into the exact range of costs that we have been told, \$11 Million to \$30 Million. A panel of eight will independently evaluate and consult, go back to the firms, ask questions and get clarifications. It is just a gathering of information to help make a decision of what avenue is the best one to go down to try and tackle this. One of the requirements is PFAS experience which varies because none of them have a tremendous amount because it is relatively new. In essence, it is a filtration system and they have all demonstrated different systems.

At some point the state is going to ask the game plan. We are looking at the one well and the overall plant treatment but as more and more information becomes available, the concern is how utilities like ours are going to handle it and the economic impact it is going to have. We are trying to keep rates stable but we are getting hit with something that now adda \$15-30 Million worth of debt as well as the regular operations that are required.

Council Representative Marter asked why the financial responsibility isn't on the state if they mandate it? Council President Garganio explained that they may do something but ultimately it is up to the municipalities to figure out. Council Representative Marter asked what the penalty is for non-compliance. Administrator Muchowski stated that there will ultimately be an administrative court order.

What we are trying to show are the steps that we are taking and hopefully we can get to a reasonable point, where if we treat that well and we continue to meet and exceed or be below the limits, we can convince them that we are in compliance. We understand that this is their position but now as more and more information is coming to light about the program that really was not fully understood from a cost standpoint, are there going to be programs put in place to help municipalities to absorb this burden? This is a lot of money to try to come up with when you are trying to come up with money for the other things that needed. A lot of towns may be forced to sell their utility to the American Waters of the world.

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Administrator Muchowski stated that there is some thought-provoking information within the documents as to approaches and he thinks we may have to treat that one well and then look at the options as we move forward. It is \$1.5 Million versus \$15-18 Million and we are doing the investigation for the ultimate end result of what would be the best system after we do further testing within these proposals for engineering numbers associated with preliminary studies and then final design and engineering. We have a guideline of what some of those costs would be estimated at even though we don't know at this point with some of the proposals which system they are proposing. It may be something that we won't fully know until we view that preliminary testing. One of the conversations was, do we need another block building at \$4 Million or is it better to have a glorified pole barn, etc. There are other conversations that we can have to include the best way to tackle it in the most cost effective manner.

Council Representative Marter stated that the community needs to be aware of what is going on because many of the residents do not come to meetings or read the minutes they just get this letter from us. She thinks the letter from Council ahead of time will help, this way the public knows that we are below the requirement.

Council President Garganio asked if there are any wells that have zero PFAS? Administrator Muchowski stated that just the one well was high and that they are pulling some sort of a level in all of them. Council President Garganio stated that the other thing we may want to consider especially if we are paying this type of money is to figure out about dropping another well into the ground. It probably wouldn't be a bad idea to do some sort of a test pouring to see if it is clean or if there is a problem as we move forward because who knows what we will be pulling out of the ground. It might be part of this filtration system that we can actually treat whatever is going to be in the new wells.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### A. Request to vacate alley between 28 and 32 Third Avenue, Roebing

Mayor Wilkie shared a photo of the property requesting to vacate the alley along with other houses in the area that have driveways. Council Representative Marter asked what steps that the homeowner would have to take to make this happen, assuming they are going to have to have a survey and have the property transferred because they are gaining property that is not on the tax map and on their deed. Council President Garganio stated that this would change everything to include their taxes because their lots would get a little bit bigger. They discussed leaving it up to the homeowners as to whether or not they want to. Council agreed to move forward with the Resolution for approval at the next meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### A. Tree Removal Replacement Ordinance Draft for Review

Ted Lovenduski spoke about the ordinance explaining that it is part of the new stormwater regulations and that every Tier A municipality for stormwater is required to have a tree ordinance. He shared the State's version of the ordinance and explained that Council can alter it as they see fit but that this is the minimum of what they are asking. He asked Council to review it and make any changes but he just wanted them to be aware that this is coming. It has to be

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done before the end of the year and can be introduced in January. As long as it is done before the next stormwater report.

The new stormwater regulations were implemented in June and it is set in tiers as to which each applies. They have not finalized this so they can't expect us to pass it if they haven't finalized their sample. As long as we meet the minimum requirements, we are fine. This ordinance pertains to front yards and it limits the number of trees that you are able to take out in a period of time (5 years). There are some municipalities that do have the ordinance that carries into the backyards. You can only take so many trees every 5 years but you have to get a permit to do so.

Council President Garganio asked what this does to a developer that is going come in and take out a whole field? He understands that they have to do a tree study and tell us what they are but asked if this will supersede that? Mr. Lovenduski explained that it can protect us from someone doing exactly what happened at Seventh Street and Route 130 where they clear cut that entire field. They would have to do a replacement somewhere and this also allows us to move the trees.

Administrator Muchowski explained that over the last month and half or so he has been working in conjunction with Ted Lovenduski, Dave Wright and Public Works as there is a lot of documentation for stormwater management now and, if we are going to take a look at this ordinance we should also take a look at where we want trees planted. We need to get away from the typical street tree and, whatever we incorporate we need to have a new vision of trees and where we want them.

President Garganio asked what department is going to handle the permitting and processing of every front yard tree in the community? Mr. Lovenduski stated the Shade Tree Commission will be in charge of this.

### B. Work Order Presentation

Sue Zitzman of Colliers Engineering spoke about the work order system they proposed to the Township. She has been with the firm since 1999 and she runs the GIS (Geographic Information Systems) division. She went over some of the details of what the work order system is able to do. She explained that they do GIS mapping and also asset management with the mapping. The program they are recommending they have been implementing for municipalities and counties in New Jersey since 2008 and a lot of those clients are still using this system.

She explained that the program is for service requests and work orders but can do many other things. The product can be configured for the components that you want to use but typically municipalities start off with service requests and workorders. It is enterprise GIS which means it is on the web so if you are not in the office your field and office staff will be able to access workorders, service requests, maps and different layers within the map. There is also a mobile application for staff to assign workorders as well. The program is called View Works and it is built on top of what is called ESRI which is the GIS software that they use. They don't have a lot of competition and many municipalities all over the U.S. use the software.

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She stated that her group collected all of the stormwater data which is one of the layers within this GIS program. They are also working on the tax maps and Burlington County has a lot of public data that can be consumed in here that you would not need to create because it is already created and it can be added. The first step is having good data in the system because this is all map based. You are creating workorders and service requests off of these assets, like an address, a tree, a stormwater inlet, whatever it may be, in the system and you will be able to look at it visually.

Focusing on operation and maintenance workflows is one task that they will be doing. They will meet with staff, look at how public requests are done, the assignment of work currently, there are various areas where they can do management within the system and just do workorders like stormwater management and doing the outcall inspections that are required in the New Jersey MS4 permit, the water system management, sanitary sewer, manholes, piping, tree maintenance, roadway management and planning and zoning compliance.

She shared with Council what the program looks like and how the workorder system works and explained that you can search an address and it keeps a running list of how many workorders have been on that property over the years. The workorders are based on task and they get assigned to the appropriate staff member in the field. The basic goal is to improve efficiencies and because you have a digital workflow for a lot of your processes, you will be able to look back in time to see what was done.

She explained that the program works with Microsoft, Apple and Android products and they recommend using iPads. The way it would work is someone would call to report a problem and the person who takes those calls would have the system open, get the address and any other pertinent information, drop a point on the map or go right in to create a workorder. They have to give you enough information to know what the problem is and connect to the department based on the activity. On the back end, it will automatically go to someone based on the activity, it will show up on their dashboard that there has been a service request, that person will determine whether or not a workorder has been created or they just go check it out. It will determine what needs to be done, they can cut a workorder off of the detailed service request and they will be able to assign it to someone. You can tell them when it needs to be done, save it, they get notified and now it is in the system. When the person performs it in the field with their iPad, it'll come up on their list, they open it, it gets done and then they close it and move on.

The engineer's office would manage the day-to-day entry. She stated that they could have the Township up and running within three months. The contract would be year to year and you would own the software and all the data. When the tax maps are done, pdfs of the tax maps and the parcels will be in the system. It is \$55,000 for the initial set up and you are outright buying the software and, moving forward, the maintenance and support fee is 20% of the software fee and the hosting fee is annual at \$12,000 a year.

Council President Garganio stated that he thinks this is a great program that pushes us forward but there has to be major expectations from our leadership in making sure the system runs through or it will get lost.

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**BOARD OF HEALTH**

None at this time.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

None at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council President Garganio opened the meeting to the public.

Bryan Hewitt, 1080 Grove Street, asked if the workorder system has to be done on iPads or can it be done on any tablet device and if this has any off-line data syncing capabilities to pull data into the software itself so that if you are going into the field you have access to things? Sue Zitzman explained that Microsoft, Android and Apple products are all compatible with the program on the mobile side. She explained that an example of that is that you have to at least be able to receive your workorders so you need to be synced at some point. If you are offline once you come back on it will re-sync back to the system and the database that handles the workorders will re-sync.

Mr. Hewitt asked if there is any historic data from other townships that is available to look through certain types of assets that may be similar so, rather than having to wait an extended period of time to understand the complexity of certain assets, there is availability with the data from other townships to see how they are managing certain assets and how long certain things are lasting? Ms. Zitzman explained that it would have to go through an OPRA request with the towns because the data is theirs. Mr. Hewitt asked if there are any plans to update any of the software or another version in the works? Sue explained that View Works does full updates at the last quarter of each year and their staff will do the updates once they are given access to them. They are not the designers of the software; it is a commercial off the shelf product and the people who manage and design the View Works software do releases. The user interface is coming directly from View Works, they do not modify it at all, it is all off of the shelf.

Mr. Hewitt stated that looking at the software he heard her mention that they had some issues with buy-ins from other townships and there are definitely screens that didn't look that intuitive to him and he is curious if there is any control over the interface because, to him if there is not buy-in to a software it usually also means that it is not good software for the person using it. If the person using it picks it up and understands it rather quickly without extensive training it doesn't really need to be a buy-in they just need to pick it up, understand it, it works and when people have to be told repeatedly to use it, as a software developer he doesn't really believe it's a buy-in issue he thinks it is in interface and user issue because if it was helping them and making their job easier, they would use it. Ms. Zitzman explained that every town is different and some need it to maintain their daily operations, some are used to how they have always done it and do not like change, that is why you really need to have good leadership to push this forward to keep everyone engaged.

Mr. Hewitt recommended that whomever is reviewing this to at least look at some competing software available. His opinion is when looking at the screens it didn't seem very intuitive to him and it sounds like there is not much control to modify or change things which could be an

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issue with certain employees that are having issues or would prefer things to be laid out in a different way. He recommended talking to some townships that have had those buy-in issues, not just ones who stopped using it but potentially ones that had the issue and resolved it just to learn from them because he thinks solely talking to one handpicked client might not be the best option.

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

**ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION**

Resolution 2023-203 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:

Contract Negotiations – Weiss

It was a Motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to adjourn to Closed Session at 9:07 p.m. where no action will be taken. Voice vote – All ayes.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Council returned to the Regular Meeting at 9:28 p.m. on a Motion by Ostrander, seconded by Haas. Voice vote – All ayes. No action was taken. Motion of Marter seconded by Haas to adjourn. Voice vote – All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC  
Township Clerk  
/js