

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/20/23

Florence, New Jersey
December 20, 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; 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 Session of November 1, 2023
- Regular Session of November 8, 2023

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

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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

- Township Clerk's Monthly Report for November 2023
- Tax Collector's Report of 2023 Tax Sale
- Tax Collector's Monthly Water & Sewer Report for November 2023
- Tax Collector's Monthly Tax Report for November 2023
- Treasurer's Bill List

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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

REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Letter from Roebling Historical Society dated December 11, 2023 thanking the Township for helping with the Christmas in Roebling event.
- B. Police Chief's Monthly Report for November 2023.

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to receive and file the correspondence.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

APPLICATIONS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Jerry Sandusky, 717 Cooper Street, asked about the sign at Wilkie Park and whether or not it is going to go back up. Mayor Wilkie explained that it is being replaced during construction which will be happening this spring. Mr. Sandusky suggested that a lavatory facility with running water would be nice there in the future with more use in our growing parks.

Bryan Hewitt, 1080 Grove Street, stated that when someone purchases a new property in town to fix up and installs a new heating system, they go through the process to get permits, have everything inspected and the Township comes in to make sure that the heating system works before getting approvals. However, he noticed that after all of this, in order to sell the property it is always demanded that a heating system certification be submitted. He understands a certification for water systems and things of that nature but it doesn't make sense to him that they need to get another piece of paper filled out when they have already paid for the permits, had everything inspected and the Township signed off that the system worked fine. It seems a bit odd to him that you would pay the Township to inspect and then have to get it inspected again with a third party. He stated that it would be nice to have that requirement waived.

Council President Garganio stated that it makes a lot of sense and if it is something that you have already done and it hasn't been occupied and it is sitting there right after permit then maybe there is a timeline or something that can be implemented.

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

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RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-229
Approve Change Order No. 1/Final and Final Payment No. 5
for 2022 Road Program

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-230
Approve Partial Payment No. 4 for 2023 Local Road Program

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-231
Authorizing Refunds of Certain Tax Overpayments

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-232
Canceling Taxes on Property Owned by a Totally Disabled Veteran, Blk. 156.09, Lot 10

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-233
Approve Payment Estimate No. 5 for Contract for Public Works Fuel Station

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-234
Transferring Certain 2023 Budget Appropriations

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-235
Cancel Utility Appropriation Balances

In regards to Resolution No. 2023-234, Council Representative Marter asked what is being transferred and why? Ted Lovenduski explained that municipal government only allows budget transfers in November and December each year and this is typically done because there are excess funds in certain line items that are being transferred over to items that are insufficient in funds.

Motion of Haas, seconded by Ostrander to approve Resolution Nos. 2023-229 through 2023-235.

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.

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REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS

Council Representative Ostrander wished everyone Happy Holidays and stated that he enjoyed his last twelve years serving. He expressed his appreciation to the voters for giving him the opportunity and feels as though they moved the Township forward. He wished the new Mayor and Council members the best of luck and said that if they just do what is in the best interest of the Township, they will be ok.

Council Representative Marter explained that the Turnpike Authority did say that there was some roadway lighting that was out at the time of the rollovers but noted that all of those rollovers were during daylight hours so that was not the cause. They did mention that they are going to add additional signage for that ramp in order to try and slow the trucks down before they get to the bottom. She also met with Burlington County Engineer Joe Brickley about the bypass. The County is taking that on themselves and they have also taken the lead on the Route 130 Rite Aid intersection/Florence-Columbus Road reconstruction which should make it happen sooner. They spoke about weight restrictions on Front Street and, once that bypass is in place we will have the ability to weight restrict from around the 800 block of Foundry Street in order to then stop the trucks from going past DC Fabricators. They will still be able to come in through Front Street with a bill of lading even with that weight restriction but we have a no turn ordinance which will then make them have to go back out through Burlington Township.

She also stated that she met with the mayor of Burlington Township and they discussed a letter of support for them to be able to weight restrict their side of Bustleton Road and putting a no turn ordinance on River Road for the trucks coming out of warehouses so they will have to leave on Dulty's Lane. She asked Council to go forward in writing a letter of support for Burlington Township because they are just as interested in helping to protect our residents as we are in helping them. Council agreed to put a letter of support together.

REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION

Mayor

Mayor Wilkie explained that Lou Borbi worked with our planner and came to a final agreement on the design for the Heritage Trail signs which were authorized by Council a few months ago. Mark Remsa confirmed the installation of the signs on the Heritage Trail with the County, they just need to identify where and those costs will be responsibility of the Township.

Mayor Wilkie explained that there was a deficiency on the bid for the expansion of the Police Department so it will be held until next year. There were two different pricings in the bid and the bidder has not returned our Solicitor's calls so they are waiting on clarification on that.

Mayor Wilkie stated that it has been an honor and a privilege to be the Mayor for the last 12 years and a pleasure serving with everyone. He wished everyone luck and success in the future.

Administrator

Acting Administrator Erlston spoke on behalf of the incoming Mayor and Council, all of the employees of the Township and the residents of the town and thanked Mayor Wilkie, Council President Garganio and Council Representative Ostrander for their many years of dedicated service. She voiced her appreciation for everything that they have done for the town stating that

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they have always kept the best interest of the town in their hearts and presented each with a plaque for their service.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Council President Garganio stated that he has served with a lot of really good people on multiple levels and the one thing he has always found with Florence Township is that at the end of the day in this town, most of those who serve stay friends. People are here to genuinely make a difference for this community. This is a different kind of place. When you look at politics in the world, it can be nasty. He wished everyone luck as the year goes on stating that it is a great thing and then can do a lot of wonderful things and make a difference in people's lives. If you go in with the right attitude and you try to make the right decisions, you are not going to make everybody happy but if you can walk away with your evenings and your votes and you're doing what you know is right for the town, you let the chips fall where they may. He thanked everyone for coming out stating it has been a wonderful run.

NEW BUSINESS

A. PFAS Update

- Draft PFAS Meeting Minutes
- Example Executed PFAS Administrative Consent Order

Mayor Wilkie explained that the meeting with the NJDEP seemed to go much better than their phone conversation and they seem to be working with us. As seen in the written report he highlighted that we do not have to do a separate mailing and it can be put in with the bill and things of that nature.

BOARD OF HEALTH

None at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Garganio opened the meeting to the public.

Bill Berry, former Mayor, 17 Challander Way, highlighted some great moments in his life and public career with the outgoing Council Members and Mayor. He wished Mayor-elect Marter much success stating that the more successful she is, the more successful the community will be. He shared a statement by his predecessor in his final meeting: "you are only opposites twice every four years" and stated that we always come together for the better of the Township and he is thrilled that is what we do.

Al Jacoby, 911 Wallace Avenue, congratulated the Mayor and two Council Members stating that Mayor Wilkie has been the President of the fire company and, when they merged three fire companies and two rescue squads into one building, it wasn't easy for most, but Mayor Wilkie got them through and he is still active and still President and they appreciate him.

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John Fratinardo, 4 Yockus Lane, stated that Council President Garganio was instrumental on Council for getting many recreation areas to include the expansion of Marter Park because it was his recommendation with the money leftover from the suit against the County. And, if not for him, we would not have these things.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motion of Ostrander seconded by Haas to adjourn. Voice vote – All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
/js