

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

Florence, New Jersey
December 6, 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, 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: Paul Ostrander

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Session of October 18, 2023
- Closed 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 Baldorossi, seconded by Haas to approve the following correspondence.

- Court Administrator's Monthly Report for October 2023
- Tax Collector's Monthly Tax Report and Monthly Water & Sewer for October 2023
- CFO's Cash Reports and Budget Reports for October 2023
- Court Administrator's Monthly Report for November 2023
- Treasurer's Bill List

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

REGULAR CORRSPONDENCE

A. Monthly Report from Police Chief Brian Boldizar for October 2023

Motion of Marter, seconded by Haas to receive and file the correspondence. Voice vote – All ayes.

APPLICATIONS

- A. Off Premise 50/50 Raffle on April 21, 2024, at the Riverfront School, 500 East Front Street, Florence, NJ 08518 at 3:00 p.m. for Florence Township Student Performing Arts Booster Club
- B. Night at the Races, On-Site 50/50 Raffle and On-Site Merchandise Raffle on January 20, 2024 at the Florence Township Community Center, 60 Main Street, Roebling, NJ 08554 from 5:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight for the Florence Township Civic Association to benefit Boy Scout Troop 3

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

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Don Kamienski, 10 McCay Drive, asked about the roundabouts mentioned on the agenda and where they are located. Mayor Wilkie explained that there is a bypass being proposed by Burlington County in the Haines Industrial Center and they are the two roundabouts mentioned. They are proposing a roundabout at Daniels Way and John Galt Way and in Burlington Township at Neck Road at Dulty’s Lane.

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

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-217
Approving Compensation for Board Members of
the Florence Township Fire District No. 1

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-218

**Canceling Taxes on Property Owned by
a Totally Disabled Veteran, Block 165.04, Lot 5**

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-219

Authorizing Refund of Certain Tax Overpayments

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-220

Canceling Tax Overpayments Less Than \$10.00

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-221

**Setting the Hours for Sale of Alcoholic Beverages for Consumption
On-Premises For New Year's Eve Sunday, December 31, 2023**

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-222

Cancel Taxes on Property Owned by a Totally Disabled Veteran, Block 107, Lot 4

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-223

**Approve Current Estimate No. 7 – Final for Sewer Treatment Plant,
Sludge Dewatering Screw Press Upgrade**

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-224

Approve Partial Payment No. 3 for 2023 Local Road Program

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-225

**Approve Submittal of Grant Application and Execute Grant Contract with NJDOT for the
Railroad Avenue Resurfacing Project**

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-226

Transferring Certain 2023 Utility Budget Appropriations

Motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to approve Resolution Nos. 2023-217 through 2023-220.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-19

**Adopting Chapter 71 of the Township Code – Film Making
(2nd Read, Public Hearing and Adoption)**

Motion of Marter, seconded by Haas to approve Ordinance No. 2023-19.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

Council President Garganio opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, a Motion of Baldorossi, seconded by Marter to close the Public Hearing.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-20
Adopting Section 91-87.1 Lighting Standards for Non-Residential Uses
(2nd Read, Public Hearing & Adoption)

Motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to approve Ordinance No. 2023-20.

Council President Garganio opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, a Motion of Marter, seconded by Baldorossi to close the Public Hearing.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-21
Supplementing Chapter 129 of the Township Code Entitled “Taxation”
(2nd Read, Public Hearing and Adoption)

Motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to approve Ordinance No. 2023-21.

Council President Garganio opened the Public Hearing. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, a Motion of Marter, seconded by Baldorossi to close the Public Hearing.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS

Council Representative Marter mentioned that she was contacted by a resident about parking and noise levels at the Community Center during larger events. This past weekend it got a little hot inside the building so they had opened up the doors to cool it down in there but then the music was loud and it went on until about 11:00 p.m. She spoke to Marty Eckert and he is trying to come up with ideas to let the community know what is going on and have it be more community friendly. It is a great venue but we don’t want to end up having all of the residents mad. Council discussed different options to alert the public of the schedule of events.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

Council Vice President Haas explained that at the last Economic Development meeting of the calendar year they received the Economic Development Inventory, which has a list of properties that could be redeveloped. It was the first time they were able to look at it and he passed it along to the Clerk to be shared with Council at the next meeting.

REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION

Mayor

Mayor Wilkie thanked the Township staff for getting the building decorated and ready for the tree lighting ceremony. He reminded everyone that Saturday, December 9th is the tree lighting in Roebling sponsored by the Historical Society.

Mayor Wilkie also paid tribute to Richard Dennison, who passed away recently. In his obituary they asked for donations to the town for a sign in his honor. We have received a few donations. However, several years ago, Council implemented a process to name streets after veterans who had lost their lives fighting for our country. We still have a few veterans to honor before we consider moving on to other deserving citizens. Mayor Wilkie stated that the donations will be returned and if Council chooses to honor Mr. Dennison in the future the town would cover the cost of producing and installing the street sign.

Administrator

Administrator Muchowski stated that they are starting a dredging project from Philadelphia to Trenton and, one of the contractors, Seaward Marine Corporation, identified our boat ramp area and yacht club pier, more specifically, as an advantageous spot for them to enter the water. They do shift changes at 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. A few members of the Yacht Club reached out to let advise the township of this and Administrator Muchowski explained that approval for this needs to come through the Township. He said that he called the representative for Seaward Marine and they are supposed to send him preliminary information that they have done in other towns, certificates of insurance and such. Basically, they want to use the pier, they are going to fabricate a ladder that will go to a floatable barge so that they can bring their crew boat in and do the shift changes.

Mayor Muchowski said that he advised Seaward Machine that there may be review fees required. The review would be through our engineers but any costs would be their responsibility. He also mentioned that they need to get NJDEP approval and, whether they get that or we just get the go-ahead, we are not putting ourselves in any sort of jeopardy of violating any permitting or anything associated with what we have in place. Some of the equipment started rolling in today and he spoke to Chief Boldizar because there will be overnight parking where it is technically not permitted. The completion date, by contract is sometime in March so they will be out of there before we put our floating docks in.

Council President Garganio recommended that we ask for something in return for the use of the dock, maybe do something around the Yacht Club, some improvements or something like that. There should be some value back because there is an inconvenience for them. Council agreed and Administrator Muchowski stated that he and Ted Lovenduski will start coordinating that.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

Division of Law

Solicitor Hastie explained that the Township had received bids on November 28th for the trash contract. He reviewed them for sufficiency and compliance with the law but unfortunately one of the mandatory things that can not be waived or cured was left out so that leaves us no option but to reject bids and rebid. There is a 60-day window on a trash bid. The contract we currently have is already up and it had already been extended for 3 months. Clerk Erlston had a resolution to reject all bids and Council agreed to approve it.

Motion of Marter, seconded by Baldorossi to approve Resolution No. 2023-228 to Reject All Bids for Solid Waste Disposal Services and Authorize a Rebid.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Wilkie shared the request from Burlington Township for Neck Road in Burlington Township and Springfield Township between Old York Road and Columbus Road, and Burlington-Bustleton Road between Neck Road and Florence Township. When the high school was built, the County and State approved no truck traffic on Cedar Lane and he is assuming that is when Bustleton Road was restricted in Florence, but it was never restricted in Burlington Township. To get it enforceable, they need our approval. He believes that Columbus Road is already restricted because of the landfill so this would further put those restrictions in place. Burlington Township is looking for our support because it will benefit our community as well as the residents in that area.

Council Representative Marter stated that she met with Joe Brickley and discussed all of this. The one thing that she was trying to get her arms around was the idea of weight restricting Front Street without having a way for them to turn around once they got past the bypass. There are actually more warehouses on our side of the bypass than there are on the Burlington Township side so she asked how it is really going to help us. He said that we can force all of the trucks from that side of the bypass to have to use the bypass and if they go past it and they continue in our direction, even though they will end up on Front Street, we can weight restrict at that bend near DC Fabricators. They will have plenty of warning that they are going into a weight restricted area and if they go through that then we have the right to be able to fine them.

Council Representative Marter relayed that she also discussed the idea of a no turn ordinance with Mr. Brickley so that trucks are not turning towards Florence. That was a little bit of a pushback before with Burlington Township with being able to enforce it since they don't have police down there all of the time. He said that the County can actually put in that Ordinance, it doesn't have to be Burlington Township. She also asked for a timeframe and he said that the you are probably looking at construction in 2025. They talked more about the Route 130 corridor and the changes there and there is so much to be done so that probably won't start until 2027. Tying this in to that bypass means this won't get touched for two years and, do we want to wait

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

two years because this whole thing is also protecting our residents too? Do we push Burlington Township to put the no turn ordinance in on River Road which would then eliminate half of the trucks? We can't stop what is coming in because we are not weight restricted but it will at least give us fewer trucks until whenever the bypass is completed. She put a call in to Mayor Green to sit down with him and look at the map and try to get an idea as to what is best to try and protect all of our residents. The goal here is to help the residents and that is what this will do. She is waiting to hear back from Mayor Green and see what he says.

Council President Garganio stated that if we can get something like that that helps as an interim step and, as the bypass comes through which is the main fix, it will allow us to weight restrict from DC Fabricators up to where Railroad Avenue comes in. It would probably be a year construction before it all gets done it will be several years before completion so there will be some relief if we can get it done. An ordinance and some signs could be done in a month and, with the knowledge that the bypass is coming, it isn't like those trucks are being dumped on there forever.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Review County Roads and Truck Prevention

Mayor Wilkie shared with Council a review of the roads that would be included in the request from Burlington Township to prevent truck traffic on County roads. Mansfield Township and Bordentown Township would both be needed to help on that end when it comes to Route 130. And Burlington Township would be needed to help on their end.

Council President Garganio asked if this could be tacked on to the application being submitted to the County with Burlington Township? Mayor Wilkie stated that he knows that conversations were being made directly with the State as part of the Route 130 study last year and that is where he was getting traction. He suggested that Florence take the lead next year and put the application together. Before Mark Remsa left as County Planner, he had already put a plan in place for the County and, unfortunately the Commissioners or Freeholders at the time did not approve it to direct it where traffic was supposed to be going in the County. It can easily be resurrected if the town wanted to pursue that to start those conversations.

Solicitor Hastie explained that under the NJDOT regulations there is a fairly significant engineering analysis that would have to be done. Their concern is that if you are taking trucks off of the road, where are they going and also weights, roads, curves and all of those traffic impediments that you want to demonstrate as to why it is not suitable for trucks. And then at the state level they essentially examine your reports, efficiency, the evidence, things of that nature but as part of that application you also need a letter of consent from any other neighboring municipality that the road runs through. That is why Mayor Wilkie stated that you will need Bordentown, Mansfield and Burlington Townships.

Council President Garganio stated that there are probably enough traffic studies between all of the different warehouses and what has been constructed to maybe knit it together to where you don't have to recreate the wheel.

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

Council Vice President Haas mentioned the intersection of Old York Road and Columbus Road at the blinking light there and how that intersection is going to get increasingly worse with the opening of the new NFI warehouse. Administrator Muchowski stated that he reached out to Joe Brickley regarding that intersection. Council President Garganio recommended having a conversation with the County about turning that into a traffic light.

Mayor Wilkie spoke about the application to NJDOT Local Freight Impact Fund and explained that the first request to come in was for the Daniels Way bypass. The County is looking to move forward with Florence-Columbus Road and Route 130 improvements. They are two separate items and he recommended Council do both.

Lastly Mayor Wilkie spoke about Florence-Columbus Road and Route 130 road improvements and whether or not anything we own is in the right of way. Right now, the assessor took a quick look and we don't seem to have anything of any concern. The initial conversation was we were actually going to take the lead on buying the land with the idea that once the project was done we would then be able to sell what wasn't being used. According to the last version that is out there, there is nothing for us to sell. The County needs to take the lead, we don't own anything other than what is abutting to that which is on Brown Boulevard. We own both sides, one is preserved and the other side is not. He doesn't know that they are getting into that area but we should make sure in our letter we state that it is cautionary and is not available. He recommended being cooperative because this project needs to move forward.

BOARD OF HEALTH

None at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Garganio opened the meeting to the public.

John Fratinardo, 4 Yockus Lane, mentioned the 45 mph speed limit on Old York Road and the area by the light on Florence-Columbus Road to the border. He stated that cars are traveling at excessive speeds. He stated that, besides weight restrictions he thinks the speed needs to be considered there as well.

Tony Hagen, 204 Boulevard Street, asked for a description of the filmmaking ordinance. He also asked about the lighting standards and if that covers upward glare? Mayor Wilkie explained that both of those ordinances were already published and are on the Township website where he can read the details and they have now been approved. Council President Garganio added that it does include the upward flare. And the film ordinance is basically to have preparations in place for Florence and Roebling so we can be ready to welcome the film industry if they are looking for a location to film. Council Representative Marter further explained that we also provided 10 locations and residents can also upload pictures of their homes if they want to be involved in any kind of movie making as well as we had to provide them with resources locally that would be available if they were to come here and do any kind of filming in town. They are putting out

Florence Township Council Regular Session 12/6/23

their cohort in January and the next one won't be until summer so we really wanted to push to make sure this happened now so that we would at least be on that first listing in case there are any movie opportunities. The town really benefits from a financial standpoint when you are looking at businesses and what they need in order to do movies that we can provide them.

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

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Resolution 2023-227 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: PFAS

It was a Motion of Marter, seconded by Haas to adjourn to Closed Session at 7:58 p.m. where no action will be taken. Voice vote – All ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:17 p.m. on a Motion by Haas, seconded by Marter. Voice Vote – All ayes. No action was taken. Motion of Marter seconded by Baldorossi to adjourn. Voice vote – All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
/js