

## **Florence Township Council Regular Session 04/03/24**

Florence, New Jersey  
April 3, 2024

The Florence Township Council held a regular meeting on the above date in the Municipal Complex, 711 Broad Street, Florence, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order by Council President Baldorossi at 7:00 p.m. Council President Baldorossi led the Salute to the Flag.

Council held a brief moment of silence for Marilyn Loiacono who was a dedicated Trustee of the Library Association and a volunteer for 25 years. She passed away on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: Notice was posted on the municipal bulletin board on January 7, 2024; published in the Burlington County Times on January 7, 2024, placed on the Township website and given to the Trenton Times for information on January 7, 2024.

### **ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Joseph Frappolli, John Fratinardo, Nicholas Haas, Talaya Loftin, Frank Baldorossi

Also Present: Mayor Kristan I. Marter; Thomas A. Sahol, Township Administrator; Robert Wright, Esq., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

### **Burlington County Engineer Presentation – Traffic Improvements**

County Engineer Joe Brickley updated Council on the proposed traffic improvements on Florence-Columbus Road to include the addition of a traffic signal just north of Florence-Columbus Road on Route 130, adding a roundabout on Florence-Columbus Road outside of the Birch Hollow development and a possible jughandle for cars crossing over Route 130 onto Delaware Avenue. He explained that the objective is to control truck traffic to the extent possible. Council asked some questions to gain clarification and expressed concerns about the plan as it is presented. Mr. Brickley agreed to present their concerns.

Mr. Brickley also explained the changes projected for Daniels Way and John Galt Way. Council again expressed their concerns with the plan provided. The main concern is getting the trucks off of Front Street and Delaware Avenue and ways to go about doing that. He asked Council to send their comments but explained that not all of the concerns will be addressed/solved. There will be opportunities for Mayor and Council as well as the public to make comments as they are moving along and they will do what they can.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Executive Session of March 13, 2024
- Regular Session of March 20, 2024

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Haas to approve the Minutes. Voice vote – All ayes.

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**FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Motion of Frappolli, seconded by Haas to approve the following correspondence. Voice vote – All ayes.

- Tax Collector’s Water & Sewer Monthly Report for February 2024
- Tax Collector’s Annual Report of Taxes Not Collectible for the year of 2024
- Tax Collector’s Monthly Tax Report for February 2024
- Township Clerk’s Monthly Report for March 2024

Motion of Haas, seconded by Fratinaro to approve the **Treasurer’s Bill List**.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Frappolli, Fratinaro, Haas, Loftin, Baldorossi
  - NOES: None
  - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

**REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. Memorandum from Tax Collector, Christine Swiderski regarding 2024 Tax Sale
- B. Letter from Sons of the American Legion, Francis W. Robbins Squadron 194 Requesting Permission to Close Portions of Broad Street and Sixth Street on Saturday, June 15, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for the Annual Car Show

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

**APPLICATIONS**

None at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Phil Wilgus, 662 Delaware Avenue, mentioned the need to stop the trucks crossing over Route 130 on Delaware Avenue. He also stated that, with the plan as presented, emergency vehicles will not be able to make a left or right coming out of town so emergency vehicle response time will suffer. He stated that they are supposed to abide by all traffic laws.

Ryan Pagodin, 595 Delaware Avenue, stated that, as far as reducing the ability to make a right or left turn is going to further choke the traffic up. He thinks a weight restriction on that road is the best idea despite the financial burden it will put on the town. He asked about Cedar Lane as an alternate route where, if Delaware is weight restricted the trucks can use that instead. Or the possibility of making Railroad Avenue a dead end. Mayor Marter explained that if we were to dead end Railroad Avenue, that would cause a problem for the Amazon workers who use Railroad Avenue to access Route 130 and would increase traffic on the whirly bird.

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

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**RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-86**

**Reappoint Philip Drangula as Coordinator Office of Emergency Management**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-87**

**Approve Payment #2 for Waterworks Playground & Wilkie Park Improvements**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-88**

**Authorize Lease Agreement with Florence Historical Society for  
Use of West Third Street Firehouse**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-89**

**Authorize Preparation of Specifications & Obtain Bids for Radio Read Frequency Water Meters**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-90**

**Authorize Preparation of Specifications & Obtain Bids for 15% Hypochlorite Solution-Bulk**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-91**

**Authorize Refund Tax Overpayment**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-92**

**Authorize Tax Collector to Process Estimated 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Tax Bills**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-93**

**Authorizing a Fee for Mailing Tax Sale Notice**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-94**

**Authorizing Electronic Tax Sale**

Motion of Frappolli, seconded by Loftin to approve Resolution Nos. 2024-86 through 2024-94.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Frappolli, Fratinaro, Haas, Loftin, Baldorossi
  - NOES: None
  - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote– Motion carried

**ORDINANCES**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-04**

**Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and Establish a Cap Bank  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Public Hearing & Adoption)**

Motion of Frappolli, seconded by Haas to open the Public Hearing portion of the meeting. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a Motion of Haas, seconded by Frappolli to close the Public Hearing.

Solicitor Wright explained that there is a 2 ½% cap on increasing your appropriations and, by passing the COLA Ordinance, it allows you to go to an extra 1%. It also allows you to carry any difference between that 3 ½% and the percentage that you utilize and you can carry that forward up to 2 years.

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Motion of Loftin, seconded by Haas to adopt Ordinance No. 2024-04.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Frappolli, Fratinardo, Haas, Loftin, Baldorossi
  - NOES: None
  - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote– Motion carried

### **REPORTS OF COMMITEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS**

Council Representative Haas stated that the Economic Development Committee put together two draft letters, one for occupied businesses and one for unoccupied. Marty Eckert, is going to look those over prior to coming before Council for approval. Mr. Eckert is also putting together poster boards for redevelopment sites in June. He also stated that Subculture Brewery is celebrating their one-year anniversary on April 13<sup>th</sup> so they will have a few events going on. And there are 150 vendors already scheduled for the Street Fair at the Roebling Museum on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

Council Representative Frappolli mentioned that the Library Association reached out to Administrator Sahol and he agreed to meet with them as a group. There are several concerns that the Library Association has regarding some of the grounds around the facility, etc. He thanked the Administrator for getting back to them and also thanked the fire company for the books provided at the Easter Egg Hunt.

### **REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Mayor**

Mayor Marter read a Proclamation for Arbor Day into the record. She also mentioned that on April 20<sup>th</sup> Florence is having an Earth Day cleanup around the Township. Council Representative Frappolli explained that these are community service opportunities for students and suggested in the future perhaps bringing students in to serve in the capacity of some of the people in the township and partner with them and teach them about the different jobs. Council Representative Loftin stated that she has offered a spot for a permanent position on the Environmental Commission to a student in the school district but they want to have a meeting to discuss the details of the position first before making the official announcement.

Mayor Marter stated that there will be a listening meeting scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup> in order to bring members of the Township together with the community. This is for Township employees like the Director of Public Works, the Chief of Police and other representatives here within the township to listen and hear what the community has to say. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. at the Community Center in Roebling and everyone is welcome.

Mayor Marter mentioned a question on the Facebook page where a subscriber had not been getting email updates from the website. Administrator Sahol explained that it is automatic and they should receive a notification any time there is a change or addition to the page but only if they are subscribed to receive the notifications.

#### **Administrator**

Administrator Sahol explained that the Burlington County JIF awarded Florence Township as one of three communities that excelled in the area of safety for employees. He gave credit to David Lebak who was the Safety Director in 2023 when that work was judged. Jessica Brickner has taken over for Dave and has had her first meeting and did a very nice job with that meeting which was attended by the county as well as our insurance company.

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Administrator Sahol also explained that there will be a substantial amount of information in the next packet regarding what is coming for an action-packed year ahead for Florence Township. There will be the Street Fair in Roebling at the Museum, Patriotic Day, the carnival, the Police and Fire Youth Academy, National Night Out, Fire Safety Week in October and we will be bringing back the Mayor's Cup this year.

He mentioned that about 8 minutes after the Easter Egg Hunt ended this past weekend, there was a fire and Mayor Marter thanked our Fire Department as well as neighboring towns that came to help. It is her understanding that the family has moved in with other families and stated that it was a big loss, not just for the family that had the fire themselves but also for the neighbor that had to be rescued. She acknowledged that we have a tremendous team here.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Council Representative Loftin asked for an update on the website. Mayor Marter explained that the website has been moved over to our current IT company and now we are starting to be able to work with them to make changes. She has pages of issues to get through and that will be the next project to get worked on and agreed to have an update for Council at the next meeting.

Council Representative Loftin asked the Township Solicitor for a follow up on a question that was asked in February regarding Ready Pac and whether or not there was a limit or penalty for going below the water rate. Administrator Sahol stated that it is not contractual and there is a section in the ordinance that doesn't even reference the name of the company. The ordinance basically states that there are volume thresholds and once you reach a certain threshold your rate is reduced. When the usage dips below the threshold the user no longer qualifies for the reduced rate. The ordinance, as it is written does not provide for penalties.

She also asked about the cannabis ordinance and where that stands. Administrator Sahol said he has a proposal prepared by the Township Planner to move forward with the actual information that is needed so that Council can contemplate what his recommendations are. He is comfortable in the thought that before we get into the summer months, we should be able to have Council deciding on where to go and getting ready to introduce these ordinances.

Council Representative Haas asked about the PFAS Request for Proposal (RFP). Administrator Sahol explained that they will be wrapping that up this week to include some of the comments that Council had made in their review and some of the things he has learned after having read a lot more. Within the next week to ten days he will work with the Township Clerk and the QPA on determining the milestone dates.

Council Representative Baldorossi asked about the park signs. Administrator Sahol stated that they have not been installed yet but Marty Eckert was able to get signs free of charge that include the State statute and certain language that is used to be enforceable. He is going to ask Marty to send an email out so Council can see what those look like.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None at this time.

### **BOARD OF HEALTH**

None at this time.

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**MISCELLANEOUS**

Council Representative Loftin mentioned that the new trail that has been extended past the church downtown gets flooded from the street to where the church sits. She is asking if there is any way to remedy that, maybe plant some trees in honor of Arbor Day that can filter up some of that water so it doesn't sit and pond. Administrator Sahol agreed to take a ride by after the meeting. Council discussed different ways to help remedy the problem among others along the entire walking path.

Council Representative Loftin also asked that something be done at the end of the path where the State has posted that the area is contaminated, and can that area be blocked off at the river? She stated that the fencing is still there and there looks to be dumping because there are more containers that were not there before and it is a hazard. Administrator Sahol agreed to take a look.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council President Baldorossi opened the meeting to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a Motion of Haas, seconded by Loftin to close public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion of Haas, seconded by Fratinardo to adjourn. Voice vote – All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC  
Township Clerk  
/js