

Florence Township Council Executive Session 4/10/24

Florence, New Jersey
April 10, 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.

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice was posted on the township website and published in the Burlington County Times and Trenton Times on January 7, 2024.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Joseph Frappolli, John Fratinardo (via Zoom), Nicholas Haas, Talaya Loftin, Frank Baldorossi

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

Absent: None

FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Baldorossi opened the meeting to the public.

Ricky, 744 Morris Court, stated that his cricket team is having an issue regarding the use of the R.D. Wood field in Florence. He stated that they have been using the field for two years on Saturday mornings for tournaments and another team has come in this year requesting to use the field. That team has very few, if any, players that are Township residents whereas his team is made of mostly Florence residents. They had gone in front of the Recreation Committee on Monday, April 8th and it was decided that his team can only use the field from 4pm-7pm on Saturdays. Ricky stated that cricket is not played in the late afternoon so the time offered does not work. They would like to have use of the fields all day on Saturdays.

Administrator Sahol explained that this should be sent back to the Recreation Committee and allow both sides come in with a designated official from each side to present the facts. He stated that he is aware that both sides were asked to produce financial records and he does not think they were ever received. He thinks the committee did the best job that they could with the information that was presented to them

Council Representative Loftin asked if there is anything in writing allowing a team having a certain percentage of players from the town to have some sort of home field advantage? The Administrator explained that we have a use requirement stating that greater than the majority have to be in the community but that does not mean that every team in the league has to have 51%.

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Council Representative Haas stated that he thinks each team should present the facts up front via email and they should go before the Recreation Committee again once everything is received and reviewed. Council Representative Baldorossi suggested holding an emergency Recreation meeting because the next meeting is not scheduled until the first Monday in May and the season will already be well underway.

Michael Muchowski, 1337 Maple Avenue, asked how, if one team was using the field on Saturday and the other on Sundays, an educated decision made as a Recreation Director and Committee without even knowing the facts of the local team roster? If we are saying we are relying on the Rec Committee to make that type of decision, the expectation is that the work would be done up front and presented so that both sides could have had equal treatment. He stated that Mayor and Council has the ability to fix that as you are making those decisions. The expectation is that the Recreation Committee is going to make these decisions and that groundwork should have been completed and not just now being researched.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, a Motion was made by Haas, seconded by Frappolli to close the public comment portion. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

BUSINESS

Mayor Marter asked for clarification on the difference between the types of meetings, Executive Session vs. Workshop meetings. Administrator Sahol explained that the Executive meetings do not necessarily have all of the formalities and reports from the different departments. This is where if you have agenda items, you would add those under Business. For instance, in the future we are going to have cannabis conversations which would be placed under the workshop portion of a meeting so that you are not worried about formalities like adoption, introduction, ordinances, etc. The first and third meetings of the month are your action meetings, for the action items.

Council discussed the road program and the different roads in town that have and have not been paved. Council Representative Loftin stated that it would be beneficial to review the infrastructure especially water and sewer lines. Administrator Sahol agreed to get some aging history on some the infrastructure.

Mayor Marter reminded Council that Thursday, April 11th is the first Listening Session at the Community Center at 7:00 p.m. She discussed the intention as well as Council's involvement explaining that this is for the residents of the community to have an opportunity to speak directly to the department heads within the Township, the Chief of Police, Water and Sewer, Public Works, Administration. People that they typically do not have an opportunity to speak with if they have issues within their community or questions that they need answers to. . Public notice was given for the meeting but we don't have an agenda. It is basically a casual sit down just to talk.

Solicitor Hastie explained that you are not meeting in private, you are meeting in public so you do not have to have an agenda and you do not have to take official meeting minutes. Administrator Sahol stated that you just want to make sure that it is just "listening" you do not want to give the public the idea that there are any decisions being made because if three Council members are present, the other two are discounted from the opportunity.

Mayor Marter mentioned that Opening Day for baseball and softball is on Saturday, April 13th. The coaches and players are meeting at the church parking lot at the corner of Walnut and Second Street in Florence at 8:45 a.m. for the parade and vendors will be set up at the fields. She also mentioned that the brewery Subculture Artisan Ales is having the one-year anniversary this weekend on Saturday as well.

Council Representative Loftin mentioned that there is an event on Friday, April 12th at the Woodlawn and Olaff baseball fields from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to replace the old basketball nets and to add bases to

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the softball fields. Mayor Marter mentioned that Florence Township was chosen by a group called Good Deeds through the County Corrections to come in to our town and do those improvements.

Mayor Marter also mentioned that there was an issue on the corner of Olive and Delaware Avenue where one of the manhole covers was sitting a little low so that every time a truck or car would go over it, it would vibrate the pipe of the homeowners that live there. She spoke to the Administrator and, even though it is a county road, our Water and Sewer department was allowed to go ahead and do the repair. She read a message from the homeowner into the record commending the work that was done. She passed the information along to let them know that they did a great job.

Council Representative Frappolli asked how monies are allotted by the Recreation Committee and if it is a set amount? Administrator Sahol explained that the individual organizations submit an estimated budget for any expenses that they may need to cover financially that are beyond the scope of what they fundraise or that they handle themselves. Those monies are put into the budget which are line items under the Recreation Department that will show you each of the programs funding levels.

Administrator Sahol offered to have a snapshot of the history of the recreation funding and a discussion at a future Workshop with the Recreation Coordinator for anyone who would like to discuss this and Council agreed.

ACTION

Resolutions

- A. 2024-96, Amending 2023-208 Authorizing Application for Legislative Grant from NJDCA
- B. 2024-97, Authorize Filing of Municipal Finance Grant
- C. 2024-98, Emergency Temporary Appropriations
- D. 2024-99, Requesting Permission for the Dedication by Rider for Accumulated Absences Liability Trust Fund Required by N.J.A.C. 5:30-15
- E. 2024-100, Support for Burlington County Resource Recovery Facility WQMP Application to New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Motion of Frappolli, seconded by Haas to approve Resolution Nos. 2024-96 through 2024-100.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Baldorossi opened the meeting to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, a Motion was made by Haas, seconded by Frappolli to close the public comment portion. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion of Frappolli seconded by Haas to Adjourn. Voice Vote – All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
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