

Florence, New Jersey
May 7, 2014

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 Lovenduski at 8:00 PM. President Lovenduski led the Salute to the Flag.

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: Notice was sent to the Register News for information; posted on the municipal bulletin board; placed on the web-site on January 9, 2014; and advertised in the Burlington Co. Times on January 12, 2014.

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Paul Ostrander
Jerry Sandusky
David Woolston
Ted Lovenduski

(Frank Baldorossi was absent due to traffic from work.)

Also present:

Richard A. Brook, Township Administrator; Thomas A. Sahol, Assistant Municipal Administrator; Joy M. Weiler, Township Clerk

(Township Solicitor absent.)

MINUTES

Sandusky made a MOTION; seconded by Ostrander to approve the following minutes. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried.

- Township Council Regular Sessions – April 2, 2014 and April 16, 2014

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

It was on the MOTION of Woolston, seconded by Ostrander, to receive and file the Tax Collector's Report for Tax and Water & Sewer for March; also, the Police Captain and Township Clerk's Reports for April. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried.

It was on the MOTION of Sandusky; seconded by Woolston to approve the **Treasurer's Bill List**.

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Upon roll call Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: Baldorossi Motion carried.

REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

APPLICATIONS

- A. Social Affair: South Jersey Tourism Corp. at Roebling Museum
May 17, 2014, 12pm – 4pm

It was the MOTION of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to approve the application.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: Baldorossi Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joseph Csik, 45 East Fifth Street, said he spoke to the EMT's about the fees for ambulance services. He was glad to learn that senior residents are not held responsible for balances after insurance companies pay. He praised the EMT's for coming and talking to his friend who was upset about a bill. He would like to see something distributed to the senior community to make them aware so they don't worry about the bill.

It was the MOTION of Ostrander, seconded by Woolston to close the public comments.

Roll call vote - All ayes.

PUBLIC HEARING ON 2014 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Overviews of the budget were distributed to the public. Mayor Wilkie said the Local Purpose Tax Rate will remain the same for the third year in a row. There is a Road Improvement Program this year after not having one for a few years. A contract for the work was awarded a few weeks ago. This past winter was rough on the streets in town. The street sweeper broke and a new one is coming in.

This budget creates a financial situation that puts the Township of Florence on the road to taking care of some items that are necessary. It is putting money toward some much needed equipment. The two main dump trucks were purchased in 1989. They will need to be replaced within the next couple of years.

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Regarding the Water and Sewer Department, the Cedar Lane water tower has been painted. Regular maintenance is required to prevent having to do major repairs.

There are fewer employees than there were a few years ago. There has been some modernization in terms of software. The Tax and Water & Sewer programs have been replaced and the financial operating system has been upgraded. Payments can be made on-line and tax information is also available via computer.

The budget was able to be balanced because of the township's tax collection record. A municipality is responsible for collecting all the taxes and distributing to other entities such as the school district, fire district and the county. If someone does not pay their taxes the township is still required to make these payments. The collection rate last year was better than 98% and because of that, there is not as much money required for the Reserve for Uncollected Taxes.

The Mayor said the Debt Service is at a high number for the next two years but will drop off the third year. Funds from the PILOT programs and building up a surplus allowed the township to not have to raise the tax rate this year. The goal for next year is to keep it stable as well. When the debt drops off, the township will be able to better manage some of the programs in the community. Also, in Water and Sewer the debt won't drop of as much, but the obligations are met. The township needs to plan to make sure items are maintained so the town does not have to react to issues, but rather is being proactive.

The budget will bring on additional police officers. The department has been down in numbers since 2010 when the budget crisis kicked in. It is not a massive increase but it is maintaining the programs that are already in place.

Council President Lovenduski opened the meeting to the public regarding the 2014 Municipal Budget.

John Lauricella, 3 Applegate Drive, said he knows expenses such as salaries and wages are fixed, but he questioned other expenses such as in Water and Sewer where there was a large increase in spending.

Administrator Brook said some of it is Debt Service. A good bit of it is projects the municipality is taking on with cash instead of going out and bonding. There are some trucks that are being replaced. The Emergency Squad Building on Hornberger Avenue is being demolished and there are funds for a new police car in the budget. There are funds for significant upgrades at Water and Sewer. The Debt Service for Water and Sewer will not start to drop off until the year 2018. Over the next few years there will be some projects that will be debt service related. An example is upgrading the Sewer Plant. If it is not done, the township will have a moratorium placed on it and there would be no new development, commercial or residential. The Cedar Lane water tower was just inspected inside and probably in five years, but no more than ten, the tower will need to be taken out of service again for work on the interior.

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The Township will also need another well in five to seven years. The purpose is to balance the Debt Service with the appropriations so the township does not end up being cash poor. If possible, projects should be done with cash rather than incurring significant amounts of Debt Service that is not manageable.

Robert Fitzpatrick, 204 Wilbur Henry Drive, asked if the township receives any revenue from Waste Management?

Mayor Wilkie explained the township received a 20-year bond payment that is in essence paying for the Public Works building. The payment is part of a settlement reached in 1999 or 2000.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked how much the township receives in a year? Administrator Brook said he does not have the exact figures in front of him but estimated the total of the bond is close to \$2 million. The township submits a bill to Waste Management twice a year. Waste Management pays it and the township makes the payment to the bond holders. The Mayor said the payments are about \$100,000 a year.

The background of the settlement was explained. Administrator Brook said Florence Township spent a large amount of money on fighting the landfill and the litigation did not go well. It was in the town's best interest to settle.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if the township would have any recourse if the landfill made any more changes? Administrator Brook said the settlement only covers approvals the landfill had at the time of the settlement. If they try to do something such as build an incinerator or expand the landfill close to the river, the township would be able to fight it.

It was the MOTION of Woolston, seconded by Sandusky to close the public comments. Roll call vote - all ayes.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-90

**Adopt Municipal Budget
Township of Florence**

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-91

**Approve Final Reimbursement and Acceptance of Work
2013 Burlington County Park Development Grant**

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RESOLUTION NO. 2014-92

**Approve the Public Display of Fireworks for
Florence Township's Patriotic Celebration Day**

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-93

**Resolution Authorizing the Township of Florence to
Enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement**

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-94

**Authorizing the Public Sale of Township Owned Vehicles
(Motor Vehicles which came into possession of the Florence Township Police Department
through abandonment or failure of the owners to claim)**

It was the MOTION of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to approve Resolution Nos. 2014-90 through 2014-94.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: Baldorossi

Motion carried.

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. 2014-05

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FLORENCE, COUNTY OF BURLINGTON,
STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO CREATE A UTILITY EASEMENT ACROSS
BLOCK 75, LOTS 6 & 12 FOR THE PURPOSE OF
INSTALLING AND MAINTAINING MUNICIPAL
WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE
(2nd Reading) (Public Hearing & Adoption)**

It was the MOTION of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to open the meeting to the public regarding Ordinance No. 2014-05. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was the MOTION of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to close the public hearing. Roll call vote – all ayes.

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Assistant Administrator Sahol said this ordinance establishes a utility easement over an existing water and sewer line on some private property that runs from **Spruce Street** east behind three or four homes that front **East Third Street**. The ordinance establishes the easement that allows the utility department to maintain the line.

It was the MOTION of Sandusky, seconded by Woolston to adopt Ordinance No. 2014-04.

Upon roll call Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: Baldorossi

Motion carried.

REPORTS

Committees, Boards and Officers

Mayor Wilkie said there is a **Softball Movie Night** planned at Muchowski Field on Friday night if the weather holds out.

He said Sunday is Mother's Day and he extended a **Happy Mother's Day** to all the mothers.

There is **Fire District** meeting on Monday and **Darnell Taylor** will be honored for his brave actions saving a family. Council will honor him on a separate occasion.

May 17, 2014 is **Free Yard Day**. **Post 194** is holding a **car show** on that day also. It will be on Broad and Sixth Streets.

Administrator: Nothing at this time

Assistant Municipal Administrator

Assistant Administrator Sahol said the township received a \$196,000 grant that it applied for last year for **Phase II of the Boulevard repaving**.

He said he and Mayor Wilkie have been discussing putting signs on Municipal property that was recently acquired. It would make people aware that the township is preserving open space outside of farmland preservation. Mayor Wilkie thinks this will eliminate some confusion that has occurred regarding township owned property. The money was approved by the voters to be allocated to open space preservation and this shows that it is being used.

Presentation of Proclamation to Clerk Weiler

Mayor Wilkie said he had a surprise for Clerk Weiler. She has been doing her job for a long time and keeping track of everyone and making everything run smoothly. He joked that the township finally got something past her. He presented her with a proclamation honoring her **25 years of service**. It coincided with **Municipal Clerk's Week**.

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Mayor Wilkie read the proclamation into the record.

Mayor Wilkie presented Clerk Weiler with the framed proclamation and flowers. She thanked everyone for honoring her. She said that “it is a pleasure to work for Florence Township.” She thanked everyone again and said she was really touched.

Division of Law: Nothing at this time.

Division of Engineering: Nothing at this time.

Division of W & S Utilities: Nothing at this time.

Unfinished Business: Nothing at this time.

New Business:

Mayor Wilkie said next week is **Fallen Officers Day**. The flags will be lowered at the Municipal Building and at the Veteran’s Memorial near the Municipal Building. They will be kept down through the next day because the FOP Lodge 210 will be honoring a local fallen officer on that day.

Clerk Weiler said the **Housing Authority** sent a letter recommending **Ritchard Woolston** be reappointed to the Housing Authority. He has been on the board for many years. It is a 5 year Council appointment.

It was the MOTION of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to approve the appointment.

Upon Roll Call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Ostrander, Sandusky, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: Baldorossi

ABSTAIN: Woolston

Motion carried.

Board of Health: Nothing at this time.

Miscellaneous: Nothing at this time.

Public Comments: Open to the Public

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

Mr. Lauricella said he saw an article about a homeless shelter proposal being discussed in another municipality. He said 1,100 people are homeless in Burlington County. He asked how many were in Florence Township?

Assistant Administrator Sahol said there was a survey performed by the Human Services Department of Burlington County around three months ago. The survey was meant to identify the homeless in the community.

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It was interesting that it came back as zero for Florence Township. That means that people who were made homeless have been placed, but there is nobody literally living on the streets or day to day does not have a true place to reside.

Mr. Fitzpatrick said he understands that sometimes government's hands are tied regarding the landfill. His are not tied. He has done some research and he has been in contact with Dave Watts of Waste Management and said he is very helpful. Mr. Fitzpatrick contacted the NJDEP. He was told the odors were coming from Garelik Farms. Mr. Fitzpatrick told the gentleman he spoke to that he wanted information regarding the odors he is detecting. The gentleman at the DEP contacted the DEP in Pennsylvania and he was told they would not take any complaints from New Jersey regarding the landfill. He said new legislation from the federal government regulates air quality affecting other states. He said he is working on going to the federal government with his complaints about the Tullytown landfill.

Administrator Brook said that he wanted the opportunity to comment on **Clerk Weiler's** proclamation. He stated that in the spring of 1989 his life was changed for the better when Clerk Weiler called him and asked if he would consider coming to Florence. He appreciates working with Joy, and said she is a top professional and a wonderful person. Everyone appreciates the great job she does.

He thanked Aimee Kuc, an employee in the Clerk's Office, for helping with the proclamation.

It was the MOTION of Woolston, seconded by Sandusky, to close the public portion of the meeting. All ayes.

8:37 PM MOTION by Ostrander; seconded by Sandusky to adjourn. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

8:37 PM: Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

JOY M. WEILER, RMC/MMC
Township Clerk

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