

Florence Township Council Regular Session 2/4/26

Florence, New Jersey
February 4, 2026

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 Frappolli at 7:00 p.m. Council President Frappolli led the Salute to the Flag.

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: Notice was posted on the municipal bulletin board, published in the Burlington County Times, and placed on the Township website on January 11, 2026 and given to the Courier Post for information.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: John Fratinardo, Frederick Gabriele, Talaya Loftin, Gina Sullivan, Joseph Frappolli

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- January 7, 2026 Reorganization Meeting
- January 14, 2026 Executive Work Session

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to approve the minutes. Voice vote – All ayes.

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

- Tax Collector's Monthly Tax Report for December 2025
- Tax Collector's 2025 Annual Statement of Receipts
- Tax Collector's Monthly Water & Sewer Report for December 2025

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Gabriele to approve the financial correspondence. Voice vote – All ayes.

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Sullivan to approve the **Treasurer's Bill List**.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

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REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Police Chief's Monthly Report for December 2025

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to approve the correspondence. Voice vote – All ayes.

APPLICATIONS

- A. On-Premise 50/50 and On-Premise Merchandise Raffle for the Florence Township Memorial H.S. Parent Organization on May 1, 2026 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at FTMHS, 1050 Cedar Lane, Florence Township
- B. Social Affair Permit for American Legion Post 194 for A Night at the Races on March 20, 2026 from 6:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. at 601 Broad Street, Florence

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Sullivan to approve the applications.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Loftin to open the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice vote – All ayes.

Robert Pagodin – 595 Delaware Avenue, asked Council to change or alter the use of the public boat ramp for out-of-town and out-of-state users due to the volume of people who are utilizing it. There are some people coming in from out-of-town, particularly day passes or they're not getting a pass at all and having full access to the facilities and they are getting away with it. He asked if it was possible to do away with day passes or out-of-town usage all together and possibly increase the revenue generated by seasonal passes for out-of-town usage. He stated that \$40 for an annual permit is very reasonable in his opinion for use of the facilities so he does not see a need for a \$10 day pass. He understands that the police are busy handling other things but maybe some more revenue can be generated by enforcing or making it a little more of a priority to enforce some of the violations. He also stated that there is not a lot of room for parking and it stays pretty full because Florence is one of the cheaper boat ramps. Bordentown has a cap, they only issue so many permits. And if you don't get your pass you have a mandatory court appearance and, in some cases, he believes they even tow the vehicles.

Administrator Sahol explained that we do online issuance now so they can get any pass after hours and not have a permit to affix to the vehicle but they are in the system that shows that they have paid and are given authorization until they get the actual sticker in the mail. So there could be vehicles down there that have already gone through the process without the sticker but the police have the records and they can check those. He also mentioned that our boat ramp is under Green Acres and, if you are in the State of New Jersey, Green Acres requires that you can not exceed double what a local resident pays which puts us at \$80 for out-of-town, in-State residents. He does not believe that Green Acres says anything as far as the regulation and how you can charge out-of-state but our charge is \$500 for the annual permit.

Council Representative Loftin asked the Administrator to see where we are comparatively in relation to other towns and Council Representative Fratinardo also asked him to check how much revenue we get from day passes.

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Anthony Nutter – 230 Norman Avenue, stated that we can't keep people out of the area, but the problem is that Bordentown is "residents only" and we are seeing people from Trenton and further South and they have had altercations with elderly members there and that is a big problem. We are extending the courtesy of use of "our ramp." He said they know the police are busy and they can't be there all of the time but when they are called, they come.

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

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-55

Approve Change Order No. 1 and Partial Payment No. 6 Final for 2023 Local Road Program to Richard T. Barrett Paving Co., Inc., Trenton, NJ

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Loftin to approve Resolution No. 2026-55.

Administrator Sahol explained that the 2023 Road Program is well over having been completed in 2024. Once Colliers Engineers, which was the engineer at the time, were satisfied that the work was completed, Barrett was authorized to submit their billing and this is the final bill for that final project in the amount of \$35,273.63. He explained that this is road program bonding and the full amount for the project was encumbered against the bond and this just authorizing the final payment for the project.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-56

Authorizing the Approval of the Fiscal Year 2026 Temporary Capital Budget

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to approve Resolution No. 2026-56.

Administrator Sahol explained that there is a temporary capital budget in place and whenever you incur additional debt you have to make a modification to that temporary capital budget to show that there is some additional debt revenue being added and this resolution authorizes that change in the anticipation that you are going to advance the ordinance tonight for the PFAS update.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

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ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-02

Providing for Design and Construction of Additional Treatment for the Township's Potable Water System and Related Improvements, Appropriating \$12,200,000 in Water and Sewer Utility Bonds or Notes of the Township to Finance Same (Intro. & 1st Reading) (2nd Reading, Public Hearing on 2/18/26)

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Loftin to approve Ordinance No. 2026-02.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS

Council Representative Fratinardo asked if there is any idea when the construction over the Turnpike on Old York Road will be finished. The Administrator stated that he received an email from the County and they indicated that the Old York piece at the Turnpike overpass should be done on the 18th and then they will immediately shift to the north side.

Council President Frappolli stated that there have been requests regarding problems with the lights at the softball fields and asked to have that looked into to help rectify that situation there. The Administrator stated that the league can certainly do that as long as the contractor provides us with their insurance and license information. When those lights were installed by the league years ago, it was done with the understanding that the municipality would pay the electric costs and that the leagues would take the responsibility of the maintenance. He said whatever contractor they choose, the township will be happy to work with them and make sure that they can meet the necessary requirements of our JIF.

REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION

Administrator

Administrator Sahol explained that a special meeting had been planned to take place at the end of February and is no longer taking place because it is not necessary at this time. We are going through a process now with the DEP and still making some additional reviews and they will potentially be asking for some additional information with regard to our PFAS project. He is not quite sure what that timeline is going to be until we get through their next review period.

He provided Council with a detailed spreadsheet, as requested, regarding the snow clearing ordinance and other communities nearby and asked if Council wanted to discuss it briefly or hold it for a workshop item on the next agenda. Council agreed to add it to the workshop agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Council President Frappolli stated that someone approached him about the whirlybird improvements and the foot traffic there and asked if the County or State has considered doing something from the actual rail line on Route 130 creating a safe walking path so that people wouldn't have to walk on the highway. Administrator Sahol said that it was a topic many years ago and the fact that the train station is there does

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not necessarily mean that you have to put in infrastructure to get to it, unfortunately. It's considered a drive up station, not a walk up station. Whitesell had agreed that they would allow the town to have an easement across their property from the old exit where the turnpike used to come out all the way to John Galt Way where the second parking lot is for transit if the town was able to get the funding necessary and create a path. And the town did price it out many years ago and Whitesell did give us a 10 or 20 year right to do such a thing as that. He would have to see where it stands today but, at the same time it would be entirely on the town to do that.

Frappolli asked if this is something that might appear in some kind of grant program in the future. The Administrator explained that we have done Safe Streets and Paths and Transit in the past and they will do that when you own the property but they won't do it when there is an easement across private property like Whitesell so that wouldn't work.

Council Representative Gabriele asked how far that would be and would the Township be responsible to take care of it. The Administrator explained that they try to tell people that it is not that much further to walk to the Roebling station safely on pedestrian sidewalks than it is to the Florence station South on the railroad tracks. We have had 3 fatalities on those tracks. Council President Frappolli asked that, seeing that they are going to be doing some upgrades in a few months, would there be some way to tie something in for the pedestrians to keep them off of the highway. Administrator Sahol said that we would have to own the land in order to put in the improvement so it would be entirely on the town. He said he is excited to see what the Turnpike improvement is for the whirlybird, the widening, the pulling back the guardrails, hopefully some additional lighting but those plans do not include sidewalks.

Council President Frappolli stated that he is often asked about what we are doing about ratables. He asked if we should have an Economic Development Committee and have a Council member on that board and see if we can actively get some people associated with the business community. He said that the optics are that we are doing nothing.

Mayor Marter stated that she contacted surrounding towns and no one else has an Economic Development Committee. She said that it is listed on Bordentown's website but there are no minutes or meetings, etc. In theirs they have specific requirements of who is on the board it is not just residents. She explained that our Economic Development Committee had write ups for the current businesses in order to promote their business but that Marty did most of the legwork on the committee, we didn't have a real good turnout. She stated that she attended so many of these meetings and the agenda and minutes never changed, to the point where it didn't make sense to use up volunteers that weren't doing anything and then just putting additional work on Marty when the actual committee was not actively involved. She said that we can resurrect the committee but it would be a matter of who is going to take responsibility and then to do something with it.

Council Representative Sullivan stated that she thinks an Economic Development Committee demonstrates that our town is open for business. We could get someone from the EDA here to talk about different programs that would work for businesses or that would work for us as a community. We could also get people from the SBA here, we could have a business expo in town, we could look at other towns that surround us and look at the fact that they don't have an economic committee but the one thing that they do have is economic development. She thinks we need to have a committee in place to have these discussions and promote our town. She attends Chamber events as part of her work and she sees other towns there but she has never seen Florence at any sort of Chamber event. She thinks we need to start promoting ourselves and agreed to head up that committee.

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Council Representative Loftin asked what authority they would have, say if a business owner doesn't want to change the building, how would we enforce them to revamp or offer it to a business to come in if they don't want to do anything. She used the laundromat next to Rocco's as an example, stating that it is a huge eyesore and if we want to bring people in to open a business how does that get enforced, how do we make the owner of the laundromat change that? Solicitor Wright explained that he does not have a lot of experience with successful economic development commissions or committees, but he pointed out the difference between the two. A committee's role is to do outreach, plan events, etc. to try to attract new businesses and is an arm of Mayor and Council. Some of the problems with that is that if the committee itself does not have guidance then it often dies off and is not very effective. A commission, on the other hand, is a more formal body that generally has more powers and acts on its own as opposed to advising the Town Council and Mayor. In any of the towns that he represents has he never seen a successful Economic Development Commission. It might be a more effective body in a larger city but the only place he has seen a successful committee that is similar to Florence Township is Pitman, they have some really energetic individuals on that committee that encourage the development of their downtown area. Mayor Marter mentioned finding out when their next meeting is to attend. Her goal was to find a town nearby and see what it is that they are doing because ours wasn't successful.

Administrator Sahol mentioned going back out on social media and asking people to submit the leadership forms and outline what their interest is and bring the committee back with one Council representative which would be very helpful. He stated that he would also like to attend a Pitman meeting.

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to appoint Council Representative Sullivan as the Council representative to that committee. Voice vote – All ayes.

Council Representative Loftin asked if the walking paths will be plowed. Administrator Sahol explained that the position that the town takes is that recreational amenities are seasonally available and, when available, people can enjoy it again. Another big issue is, you may actually create more of a slipping hazard because you can not control icing on those paths and it is much easier to have a surface like there is now.

Council President Frappolli stated that, under the circumstances, our people are out there working and opening up roads and some of the roads are still with ice on them and because they are small to begin with it is hard for two cars to pass because of ice buildup and, until we get some relief with some sun and warmer weather we are going to continue to have that problem. We have to do the best we can and be as patient as we can and hopefully Mother Nature will help us out a little bit. But, under the circumstances, our staff did and are doing a great job.

BOARD OF HEALTH

None at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Loftin to open the meeting up to the public at this time.

Joseph Bogdovics – 260 Norman Avenue, spoke regarding the safety of the people crossing over Route 130 to go to the light rail station. He always thought that there should be a light rail station midway between Roebing and Dulty's Lane, especially now with all of the warehouses and the foot traffic. They have a pedestrian stop in Burlington City on Broad and High Streets and he thinks it would be a good idea to have a pedestrian stop and propose it as a safety hazard to prevent people from having to cross over the highway.

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Anthony Nutter – 230 Norman Avenue, stated that one concern that people had when he ran for Council was the economic development of the town and he is glad Council Representative Sullivan is stepping up to take care of that. He also mentioned the warehouses and stated that maybe we can make an appeal to people to say that the warehouses are here, they are not bad, they are bringing in traffic and foot traffic but they bring in the ratables. He thinks the public needs to know these things and maybe that is a part of the economic development goal.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, it was a motion of Loftin, seconded by Sullivan to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Resolution 2026-54 Resolution Authorizing the Mayor, Township Council and Support Staff to meet in Closed Session and Authorizing the Exclusion of the Public from that Portion of the Meeting Dealing with Specific Issues Requiring Non-Public Discussions:

- Discussion of litigation related to Affordable Housing, possible acquisition of real property, and matters of attorney client privilege

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Sullivan to adjourn to Closed Session at 8:04 p.m. where no action will be taken.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinaro, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

ADJOURNMENT

Motion of Fratinaro, seconded by Loftin to Adjourn. Voice Vote – All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
/js