

**Florence Township Council Executive Session 01/12/22**

Florence, New Jersey  
January 12, 2022

The Florence Township Council held an executive session 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 electronically, in person attendance was not encouraged.

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 7, 2022; published in the Burlington County Times on January 9, 2022, placed on the Township website and given to the Trenton Times for information on January 9, 2022.

**ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Nicholas Haas, Kristan Marter, Paul Ostrander, Bruce Garganio

Also Present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie, Stephen Fazekas, Township Administrator; Kelly Grant, Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

**FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES OF PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Garganio opened the meeting to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, motion was made by Ostrander, seconded by Haas to close the public comment portion. Voice vote – all ayes.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Letter from Florence Township Environmental Commission regarding future use of Block 154.01, Lot 3 in Burlington Township

Mayor Wilkie explained that this is regarding a 14-acre piece of land on River Road and it is a request to ask Burlington County, Burlington Township or the State to preserve this land in order to get it off of the market. He discussed scheduling a meeting with Burlington Township regarding weight restrictions and a bypass road and this request should be included in that meeting. Administrator Fazekas agreed to schedule this meeting.

- B. 5-Year Tax Abatement Transfers-New Owners-Harkins Plaza & 1301 Hornberger Avenue

Administrator Fazekas stated that Harkins Plaza has been sold to Robert Weiss. The section of Harkins Plaza where Matakas Jui-Jitsu is located still has two years left on the original 5-year abatement. The second property that has recently been sold is 1301 Hornberger Avenue. That property also has two years left on the 5-year abatement. Administrator Fazekas stated that he had consulted with the solicitor and, when a building under a PILOT gets sold, continued tax abatement must be approved by Council, there is no stipulation in the law for the 5-year abatement. Administrator Fazekas spoke to the Township

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Solicitor and it is best to pass a Resolution to allow these two abatements continue for the two additional years that will make up the 5 year abatement period. If Council agrees it will be added to the agenda for the next meeting. Council agreed.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### A. Update on new fuel system

Ted Lovenduski explained that the current location of the fuel tanks is very close to our new water plant and should be relocated. The new location will be between the Public Works building and the recycle center. There will be one way in and one way out. It will have two pumps, two 6,000 gallon tanks with a ladder and will have a larger canopy than it has now so when you are filling up you will be out of the weather. Everything is designed to accommodate the large fire trucks and school buses and it will include the fuel pumps, the dispensing system, security as far as, there will be fobs and a code number so that we will know what vehicles get what fuel, how much and who got it. We are still waiting on getting all of the pricing together. There is a problem sourcing some of the materials due to shortages and supply chain deficits. Because it is a larger canopy and all of the posts are in the center, they wanted to test the soils to be sure we are stable enough. The center posts make egress a lot simpler.

Council Representative Ostrander asked if it was big enough to add solar panels to the canopy. Mr. Lovenduski explained that he is unsure what the weight restrictions would be. With the three poles in the center, the balance will be compromised if we add too much weight. Mayor Wilkie added that, if you want to add solar, the Public Works building would be a much better structure for solar due to its size.

#### B. 2022/2023 Roadway Projects

Mayor Wilkie explained that the main focus this year is West Second Street going from north of the Boulevard. Winter Street from Second to Front had been done at some point but you can definitely see the section from Front to the alleyway is in very deplorable condition. He recommends that we do that whole area and then go up Second Street to Broad. While Winter to Spring may not be in that bad of condition, you can see some breakage and cracking so there is work that needs to be done there. And it is in very bad shape from Spring to Broad. There is a lot of concrete work that needs to be done, some of the sidewalks there are over 100 years old.

On Iron Street there is an area that needs work and on West Fifth Street from Spring to Church needs to be done. The engineer design for the bike path from Eyre Street to Walnut, does not include any of the design work once you get past Sixth Street nor does it address the issue that once you get past Walnut right now it stops when you are heading east. That needs a little more design work there. We are getting over \$1 Million in Covid relief funds and, if it is used towards outdoor recreation, playgrounds, bike paths, etc., we can utilize that instead of the Bond Ordinance for a bike path as we had planned.

Mayor Wilkie is asking for a blessing from Council for the 2022 roads. We need to get West Second Street paved with the areas mentioned, West Fifth Street from Spring to Church and then the Iron Street piece. Also included is Richardson Street, Woodlawn Avenue, Fourth Street, Pine Street, Park Street and Fifth Street but he thinks this may not be able to happen this year. There are talks about adding parking at the Woodlawn ballfields for the residents of that area. A survey like the one that was done for the RD Wood Tot Lot will go out to residents for feedback on the Woodlawn ballfields.

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The other area to be addressed this year, is Main Street from Second to Fifth Avenues (Hornberger Avenue side). Once that is completed, that will, in essence take care of the village streets. Those roads have been updated over the years. Proposed for 2023 is Railroad Avenue, Amboy Avenue, Peace Street, Pond Street and Norman Avenue.

Mayor Wilkie explained that he told the engineer about a month ago that he wants to make the area from Railroad Avenue to the bridge more pedestrian friendly. He would also like to create parking, if it is possible, in front of the apartments there for the residents. The Township owns the property there and he is thinking if we shift Hornberger Avenue, change the direction of the traffic a little bit, and maybe create an island it will make it more pedestrian safe for the 120 homes there. He has given the idea to the engineer and is waiting to see what he comes back with.

Project Freedom is going in on the other side of the bridge so there is going to be work going on in that area. If they can design from the bridge to the railroad tracks, we can try and clean this up and also change some of the lighting. He noticed that the power poles on the righthand side coming into town are all they have there for lighting. He recommends putting in nicer lighting along with other ideas to move forward into 2023.

Regarding the bike path, Mayor Wilkie stated that the engineers need to come with a design of how we are going to handle the connection of Walnut to Spruce. The railroad tracks are no longer there and the Township now owns that property. He stated that traffic calming devices are also important to add in that area. That would also be a project for 2023.

We have been notified by the county that they are going to be overlaying Bustleton Road from the Presbyterian church to the Burlington Township line. That is typically just an overlay, they won't end up doing any more than that. Also, Ninth Street and Wilbur Henry are being completed this year through the Transportation Trust project. And Potts Mill Road will be getting repaved once the weather breaks.

Administrator Fazekas stated that he and the Treasurer sat in on an American Rescue Plan seminar and there have been some changes by the federal government. Now we have to wait for the state to see what the state is going to put on it. The American Rescue Plan is geared toward outdoor activities to encourage those types of things but you cannot pave roads with it.

Council Representative Marter asked about a skate park. Mayor Wilkie explained that discussions have taken place over the years and it was turned over to the Recreation Department but things like what and where have to be discussed on a serious level.

Council Representative Marter asked if there is any space at the municipal complex to put a skate park seeing as how it is in close proximity to the Police Department and Emergency Squad so it seems like a good location on this side of town. She has heard people ask about Roebling Park because it is so big but that is pretty far from all of the amenities where we can keep an eye on it. A lot of people are worried about kids being out there late at night, etc. Now that we have these additional funds, it may actually be a possibility.

Mayor Wilkie stated that first we need to figure out where we want it and then we can figure out how we can do it.

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**ACTION**

**A. APPLICATIONS**

1. Transient Merchant License, Divine Caterers, Shelly Bland
2. Girl Scouts Request Use of Township Park for Cookie Booth

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

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

**B. RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION 2022-46  
AUTHORIZING REFUND OF TAX OVERPAYMENT**

**RESOLUTION 2022-47  
APPROVE PARTIAL PAYMENT NO. 4  
FOR POTTS MILL ROAD PHASE II**

**RESOLUTION 2022-48  
APPROVE PARTIAL PAYMENT NO. 2  
FOR POTTS MILL ROAD PHASE III**

**RESOLUTION 2022-49  
APPROVE CHANGE ORDER NO. 4  
FOR WATER TREATMENT PLANT PHASE II**

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to approve Resolution Nos. 2022-46 through 2022-49.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

**C. MINUTES**

1. Executive Session 12/8/2021
2. Regular Session of 12/15/2021

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to approve the minutes as submitted. Voice vote – all ayes.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

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D. FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

1. Treasurer’s Bill List

Motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to approve the **Treasurer’s Bill List**. Voice vote – all ayes.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Melanie Mieczkowski, 1000 West Fourth Street, asked about the paving of her street and the water lines and whether they are the lines that go into the houses or just the lines in the street? Mayor Wilkie explained that it would be both, they would be looking at the main to see if there are any issues and the residents would be given notice in case there was anything that they had planned on their water line service because there is a 5-year moratorium.

Bryan Hewitt, 1080 Grove Street, stated that regarding the skate park, he had gotten some feedback from a few residents that go to skate parks in other towns and some of the things everyone suggested is that it should be in an area that gets a fair amount of sunlight because there are issues with skate parks in other towns with puddling after it rains. Skate parks tend to have ramps and bowls that collect water so he is recommending a location with the least amount of shade to dry everything out.

Mr. Hewitt also stated that regarding the insurance, skate parks generally have a lower incident rate than other types of recreational activities so it should be covered under any type of general umbrella policy that the township may have. Regarding security, it has been suggested that wherever it is, it has the ability to be locked up at night with fencing. People suggested that some of the other skate parks in other towns that did not have fencing around them were more prone to vandalism but the ones that get locked up at night didn’t have nearly as many issues.

Mr. Hewitt asked Mayor and Council if there was any additional information or a timeline for finding out the funds that the EPA is going to be utilizing for the mill, what those funds may be for specifically or how much or the extent of what we may be getting out of them?

Mayor Wilkie stated that what was in the press release is pretty much what we have. There were three projects being designed, one or two were not even approved and they just needed funding. One was the mill yard where the fly wheel is, his understanding is that includes the funding to clean them up and put a pathway around that. They have done the design and they are hoping to use the money there. They will then also put a pathway down from Second Avenue so there is access to the river. Five or six years ago when the park was completed, we wanted to be able to have some access to easily get down there so that area was getting cleaned up. It talks about well monitoring which you have already seen in that piece.

Mr. Hewitt asked if there is anything that residents can do with engaging our Senators or anyone else who may have a more direct line of communication with the EPA and federal government?

Mayor Wilkie stated that the EPA website has links to the superfund sites and the Roebling site they continue to look at that information. You can reach out to the EPA contact from the site.

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Mr. Hewitt also asked, in reference to a statement made at an earlier meeting, about starting committees to do various things around town and if any of those committees were set up and what they may be? Council Representative Marter explained that this was in reference to Mark Remsa when he said about putting together a community or resident committee in order to make decisions on what types of things we want at the mill. This is the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and they will be doing the study for that which would include public comment.

Mr. Hewitt asked if there was a way to get activities or groups together at the waterfront and interact with government in an organized manner? Mayor Wilkie explained if there was an organization or group of residents that want to get together and want to do something, they can reach out to the Township Administrator to put a plan together.

Mr. Hewitt also asked if there has been any news or movement on the two NFI projects? Council President Garganio stated that they have postponed the land use applications and asked for an extension of time to make their presentation to the boards. They are supposed to go before the Zoning Board in February.

Motion of Haas, seconded by Ostrander to close the public comment portion. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to go into Closed Session at 7:45 p.m. No action, other than adjournment, will be taken after the closed session. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to adjourn. Voice vote – all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC  
Township Clerk  
/js