

Florence Township Council Executive Session 4/13/22

Florence, New Jersey
April 13, 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 in person or electronically via Zoom.

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 19, 2022, placed on the Township website and given to the Trenton Times for information on January 19, 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; Robert N. Wright, Jr., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

- Honoring the Unified Basketball Team for winning the State Championship

Mayor Wilkie congratulated the team on a job well done. He read the following Proclamation into the record:

“WHEREAS, *The Unified Champion Schools (UCS)* program is aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting systems-wide change while supporting the mission of The Special Olympics. Using sports as it’s foundation, this three-component model, offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip young people with tools and training to create sports, classroom and school climates of acceptance. This enables students with disabilities to feel welcome and are routinely included in, and feel a part of, all activities, opportunities and functions; and

WHEREAS, *the UCS* mission is accomplished by implementing inclusive sports, inclusive youth leadership opportunities, and whole school engagement. The program is designed to be woven into the fabric of the school, enhancing current efforts and providing rich opportunities that lead to meaningful change in creating a socially inclusive school that supports and engages all learners and can be customized to fit the needs of each individual school while maintaining the mission; and

WHEREAS, *the Florence Township Memorial High School (FTMHS) Unified Basketball* program was established in 2019. This year’s 2022 season record was 2-6, and the tournament record was 3-0. FTMHS Unified Basketball played 3 tournament games at

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Hunterdon Central HS where they defeated West Morris HS and Cherokee HS in the first two rounds and winning the tournament finals against Ewing HS 31-29; and

WHEREAS, the *FTMHS Unified Basketball* team is directed under the leadership of Head Coach Shannon Pennock assisted by Advisors Mary Byrne and Sirena Paiva. The team is comprised of the following student athletes: Sincere Johnson, Grace Sullivan, Andrew Wirth, Paul Kardos, Griffith Kyeremeh, Jesse Ross, Donovan Testa, Barone VanKline, Chloe DiPaola, Izayah Cross, Tyronn Cross, Jakeem Rouse, Malachi Hampton, Grace Price and Jacob O'Hare, along with Team Managers; Jason Diggs, Gianvanna Youmans and Qaseem Segars.

THEREFORE, I, CRAIG H. WILKIE, MAYOR AND THE MEMBERS OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL of the Township of Florence, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, hereby call upon the residents of Florence Township to take this opportunity to congratulate *The Florence Township Memorial High School Unified Basketball Team* on their Championship Win.”

Each team member was presented with a copy of the Proclamation and a team photo was taken with Council.

Council President Garganio mentioned that he would like to possibly have a sign installed in the Township commemorating their championship win like was done in the past for other State Championship teams.

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, a motion was made by Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to close the public comment portion. Voice vote – all ayes.

BUSINESS

A. Update on Infrastructure Bill Meeting with Congressman Kim

Mayor Wilkie explained that he, Council Representative Marter and Administrator Fazekas attended a meeting with Congressman Kim regarding Safe Streets for Front Street and they discussed the potential of the bypass through the Haines Center. They also talked about the Florence-Columbus, Route 130 intersection improvements which had been discussed the year before in which Florence-Columbus Route 130 was an earmark for them and that those earmarks ended up getting pulled away. It was sent off to the county office for the engineer and the county planner to review and they spoke to the Congressman's Office and he got confirmation today that it is not part of this program. Mayor Wilkie sent the information regarding the infrastructure bill over to the Roebling Museum on Friday because it looked like it was more programming and not bricks and mortar because they highlighted two items that were more for the community.

Council Representative Marter stated that she spoke with Ben Giovine because the deadline Friday had to do with community projects and he did say that the infrastructure project that we are most concerned about with the bypass as well as the Florence-Columbus Road project is on the state's list and it would end up coming through the state. He stated that they are starting to put the monies out there as to where they are actually going to go and they would advocate for us in order to try and make sure that this is on that list. Mr. Giovine stated that a meeting will be scheduled for Congressman Kim to come out and see the intersection and the location for the bypass, as well as the amount of traffic that comes through Front and Delaware. He also mentioned that we should take a deeper look at this community program and

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really dive into it because he said there are monies in there for things we may already be doing that we can then put in for grants.

Council Representative Marter said the Mr. Giovine mentioned a few community-oriented policing services (COPS) like our DARE program or things that we do with the police department that may be able to be covered under some of these grants. They also have State and Tribal Assistant Grants (STAG) which have to do with grants for wastewater, infrastructure and drinking water and maybe there is something there where we can get some monies to help with any issues we may have with our sewer plant. Mr. Giovine also talked about sewer lines and sewer pipes and whether they would be lined or they need to be replaced. Council Representative Marter said we only have until Friday but it might be a good idea to see what projects we have slated that we may be able to received grant money for.

B. 2001 Route 130, Request to Transfer 5-Year Abatement

Administrator Fazekas explained that there is a 5-Year Abatement on the current building at 2001 Route 130. It is not currently occupied and the owners are in the process of selling the building and are requesting that the 5-Year Abatement be transferred to the new owners. A resolution needs to be passed in order to do so and it will be added to next week's agenda.

C. Township Sidewalks

Administrator Fazekas said that the bids were opened for the Community Development Block Grant. Pricing for everything has gone up drastically and the price of concrete has almost doubled now. We have a lot of sidewalk projects in town that are beyond what Public Works can handle. They can handle a block or two but a couple of our developments are 25-30 years old now and we are having a lot of problems from the trees that have been planted between the sidewalk and the curb. We are going to have to remove sections of sidewalk, remove the tree roots and put new sidewalks in. We have had an ordinance in place for a few years for the sidewalks and curbs but also for small paving jobs we would need on the streets somewhere. Administrator Fazekas asked Council for an ordinance for about \$250,000 and Section 20 costs for the sidewalk jobs. Ted Lovenduski has been working on this for a couple of months and we have been getting prices and, again, prices for these projects are ranging anywhere from \$50,000-100,000 and we know we are going to have future projects come up as well. In the ordinance there will not only be the money for the project but also for the engineering and design and things like that. Administrator Fazekas asked Council if this could be put on the agenda for next week for first reading. Council agreed.

Council Representative Marter asked if Council's email addresses could be added to the website so the public can contact them directly with their concerns. Mayor Wilkie explained that it has always been up to Council whether or not they would like their contact information on the website. The information email address has always been included on the website to keep members of Council from getting hit with a lot of spam and 99% of the time it is an issue that can be easily resolved in the office. If Council would like emails to be included on the website that is their choice but it was a policy decision to stop the spam. Council agreed that they would like email addresses added to the website at this time.

ACTION

None at this time.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Garganio opened the meeting up to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to comment, motion was made by Ostrander, seconded by Haas to close the public comment portion. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 2022-86 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 – Negotiations – Roebing Steel Plant Site – RFP/RFQ and Negotiations - Block 141.01 Lots 5 and 6 Hornberger Avenue.

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to approve Resolution No. 2022-86 and adjourn to Closed Session at 7:22 p.m. where no action will be taken. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:34 p.m. No action was taken. Motion of Ostrander seconded by Haas to adjourn. Voice vote – all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk