

Florence Township Council Regular Session 8/3/22

Florence, New Jersey
August 3, 2022

The Florence Township Council held a regular 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 Wilkie; Stephen Fazekas, Township Administrator; Robert N. Wright, Jr., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Session of July 13, 2022

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

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to approve the following correspondence and the Treasurer's Bill List.

- Court Administrator's Monthly Report for June 2022
- Municipal Treasurer's Cash Reports and Budget Reports for June 2022
- Police Chief's Monthly Reports for May 2022 and June 2022
- Township Clerk's Monthly Report for July 2022
- Tax Clerk's Monthly Report for July 2022
- Treasurer's Bill List

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

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REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Letter from Florence Township Yacht Club requesting a boat ramp fee waiver for participants of the Catfish Tournament on September 17, 2022 and request that the event be promoted on the electronic sign on Front Street.
- B. Letter from Florence Historical Society requesting permission to have an Open House in the 3rd Street Firehouse on Saturday, September 24, 2022 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Regarding the Catfish Tournament, Administrator Fazekas explained the ramp fee has been waived in past years. Administration is recommending not to have the event promoted on the sign, however, because that is not the intended use for the sign. This year's Tournament is in memory of Charles Bauer.

A Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to approve the Correspondence.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

APPLICATIONS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Thomas Floyd, 8 Church Street, asked if the Township has an ordinance to prohibit smoking in the parks. Mr. Floyd stated that since marijuana has been decriminalized, he has noticed an uptick in the amount of smoking in the parks, particularly marijuana. He stated that numerous times in the past few weeks he has encountered people smoking in the park and in parked vehicles in the park. He went on to say that there was a gentleman on the bench smoking marijuana while he and his children were walking to the recreation tennis clinic. He spent an hour over the weekend cleaning up trash in the park and picked up more than 120 pieces of litter associated with cigarette smoking and marijuana use. He said that he feels that our parks are nice open spaces to enjoy the playgrounds, the courts, the river, to get exercise and clean air and he has not seen that much in the past few months so he is feeling nervous that the attraction of our parks is going to be a place to smoke pot instead of the intended use. He is asking for Council to consider a smoking ban in the parks like other townships and our beaches, where it seems to work well there.

Mayor Wilkie stated that the Township does not currently have an ordinance in place and tobacco is prohibited where there is recreation use. Township Solicitor Wright explained that instead of a smoking ban, which you see on the beaches and other places, other towns have addressed it like open alcohol and prohibit the use of cannabis in any public spaces which would include public buildings as well as the parks. He would recommend pursuing that to include more than just the inhaling of cannabis but also extend to edibles and other intoxicants in the parks. Mayor Wilkie asked about individuals in their motor vehicles in the parks. The Solicitor stated that they can be seen as violating ordinances if they are in the parks, but there are issues with the Attorney General's guidelines on when you can stop somebody for the use of marijuana and, in a situation like that, he is pretty sure that would not be probable cause to confront the individual at that time. The laws are restrictive of what we can do. With Council's approval, something will be drawn up and discussed at a future meeting.

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Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a motion of Haas, seconded by Marter to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice vote – All ayes.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-152
Authorize Lien for Property Maintenance Issues, Block 50, Lot 5

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-153
Approve Renewal ABC License NPH Florence LLC

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-154
Approve Renewal ABC License Vito in Florence, LLC

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-155
Release Two Performance Bonds, 2001 Route 130 Associates

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-156
C.O. No. 5 and Current Estimate No. 16 Water Treatment Plant, Phase 2

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-157
Partial Payment No. 1 for Wilbur Henry Drive Resurfacing & Paving

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-158
Approve Renewal ABC License Dr. Lou's Place

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-159
Approve Water & Sewer Payment Plans

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-160
Reappoint Registrar of Vital Statistics, Jenise Silinsky

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-161
Recognizing Holy Assumption Church on their 100th Anniversary

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-162
Cancel Taxes on Property Owned by Totally Disabled Veteran, Block 17.01, Lot 5

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-163
Cancel Taxes on Property Owned by Totally Disabled Veteran, Block 155.13, Lot 5

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-164
Extension of Time for Payment of Tax Bills

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-165
Authorize Appointment of Conflict Public Defender

Regarding Resolution #2022-164 Administrator Fazekas explained that we have to do an extension so the tax bills for the 3rd quarter will get mailed out on or near August 18th and the updated due date is September 12, 2022.

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Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

ORDINANCES

None at this time.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS

Council Representative Haas thanked the Police and Fire Departments and EMS for the Youth Emergency Services Academy. He said there was a great turnout with 33 kids attending and everyone seemed to really enjoy it.

He also mentioned that the Economic Committee subcommittee met last week to start talking about how to promote businesses that are local and he will have more information to Council at the next meeting.

REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION

Mayor

Mayor Wilkie stated that the Youth Academy is a great program with its continued commitment to our youth. He also mentioned National Night Out and what a great program that is put on by our Police Department. None of these programs would have happened at the level that they are without Council's commitment with funding.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Township Website

Administrator Fazekas explained issues with the search feature on the website are still being worked on. He also stated that some issues we have been having in our Zoom meetings over the past few weeks have been discussed and worked through. We looked into other options for Zoom and if we continue to have issues that we cannot control we will move forward with upgrades.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Expansion Project Police Department

Mayor Wilkie explained that the municipal building is over 40 years old and over that time things have changed. Chief Boldizar explained in detail that there are now 3 female officers and a female clerk so there is a need for a female locker room. The male locker room and the file room are just about maxed out and there is no juvenile room which is a requirement. The evidence area is also maxed out and currently the breakroom is combined with where the officers do their reports, which does not work. The Sergeant's office is not large enough to support the need, the Detective's office is too small for the three detectives and there is currently no server room.

Every 5 years they have to apply to Department of Corrections for exemptions for the cells, they should have a draw through where you can pass either food through or be able to handcuff through them which they currently do not have. Prisoners have to be walked past all of the administrative offices in the front which is unsafe for the staff and civilians. And, regarding the Sally Port, when search warrants are conducted, it is now required to be on video at all times so to have that enclosed would be great.

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Joe McKernan, of McKernan Architects of Cherry Hill, gave a brief presentation outlining the changes that are being proposed to make the Police Department more functional and give them more space to accommodate their needs. He stated that the Police Department is over 150% undersized for today's needs and, in the 35 years he has been doing this, he has never had any department over 150% undersized. He and the Chief have been working closely over the last few months and they have developed a few schemes. Putting an addition on to an existing facility is a little more complicated than building a new facility. He presented Council with the projected changes that will be made to the existing facility to bring it up to today's needs and standards. 4,760 square feet will be added and it will address all of the needs that the Chief had mentioned. It should take about 10-12 months for renovations and trailers can be utilized during that time.

Administrator Fazekas stated that this is a big project but it is something that is needed to bring the department up to date for the next 40 years and not just for the needs of today. The old Public Works garage and the old Squad Building are options for temporary space as well. They are going to continue to meet to work out the details and he is asking for approval from Council to proceed forward. Council indicated approval.

BOARD OF HEALTH

None at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a motion of Ostrander, seconded by Haas to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice vote – All ayes.

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

- Resolution No. 2022-151 Resolution Authorizing the Mayor, Township Council and Support Staff to meet on Closed Session and Authorizing the Exclusion of the Public from that Portion of the Meeting Dealing with Specific Issues Requiring Non-Public Discussions: Personnel – Police Department
Personnel – Administration
Attorney Client Privilege – RFP/RFQ Roebing Mill Site
Attorney Client Privilege – Application of NFI Real Estate, LLC
(ZB#2021-03 – Lounsberry Tract)

Motion of Haas, seconded by Baldorossi to adjourn to Closed Session at 7:51 p.m. where no action will be taken.

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Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

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

ADJOURNMENT

Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:32 p.m. No action was taken. Motion of Marter seconded by Ostrander to adjourn. Voice vote – all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
/js