

Florence Township Council Executive Session 3/11/26

Florence, New Jersey
March 11, 2026

The Florence Township Council held an executive 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 6:00 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 on March 8, 2026, and placed on the Township website on March 5, 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; Thomas J. Hastie, Jr., Esq., Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Gabriele to open public comment. Voice vote – All ayes.

Rob Jennings – 256 4th Avenue, came before Council again to discuss garbage collection and snow removal. He stated that after the last snow there was trash in the alley from the animals getting into it and from being out for so long. He explained that his wife contacted the Township and she was told that it was their responsibility to clean it up, which they were in the process of doing. But someone had called back and he felt as though their response was not appropriate. Administrator Sahol agreed to reach out to Mr. Jennings to discuss the issue and the details surrounding it. Council Representative Gabriele asked if it was someone from the Township he spoke to or if it was someone from the trash collection company. Mr. Jennings was not sure.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, a Motion was made by Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to close the public comment portion. Voice vote – All ayes.

BUSINESS

A. Water & Sewer Department 2026 Budget Discussion – Kent Jones and Jeff Smith

Administrator Sahol explained that he thought it was important for Council to be able to hear what some of the lines are related to in the Water & Sewer Department budget. He asked Kent Jones and Jeff Smith to explain and if Council would like clarification on any area in particular they can do that. Council President Frappolli asked if there are any concerns that either of the gentlemen have or anything that they feel definitely needs attention now or in the near future. Mr. Smith explained that, on the water side, he does not believe that they made any real changes from the last few years other than what was appropriated a few weeks ago for the PFAS building.

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Council President Frappolli asked how we are making out with those inspections. Administrator Sahol explained that the engineer that is handling PFAS is waiting on treatment works approvals from the DEP as well as the requirement of the iBank, the loan program that we are working with, who also has to give authorization before it goes out bid. So we are in a holding pattern with regard to putting that out to bid even though the design is complete.

Administrator Sahol also explained that we are in a holding pattern with Tall Pines as well waiting on approvals from the DEP. The department is going to take that work on versus going out to bid which is a tremendous amount of savings.

Council Representative Loftin asked if there are any other projects that they are working on. Mr. Smith explained the need to focus on the headworks. Administrator Sahol explained that what is going to happen first is we are going to be looking for proposals from engineers who will be suitable for this to discuss with the Township the process of interviewing the staff, looking at the current design, the language, how old the system is in the way that we can best handle the input from the public and, once you select that engineer, they are going to have to do a massive amount of investigative work to redesign the entirety of the front of the plant. Jeff said it is probably right along the same scale as the PFAS building. The Administrator said we could be looking at a half a million dollars potentially for a design and specification and when we talk about the actual project, we are at multi-millions of dollars.

Council Representative Loftin asked if they would say that this is priority one, and asked if there is anything more important than the headworks. Mr. Smith said there is not anything more important than what is on the burners. Mr. Jones explained that the system was in place in 2000 but the headworks was put back in place of what was already there, it didn't get an upgrade of something better. Mr. Smith explained that this means that those screws predate 2000 and, if the screws give out, it will be a very big problem. Council President Frappolli asked how we can look to fund that. The Administrator explained that we have a finance official coming in next week to discuss the budget. He wants to engage that professional team so that we can do a capital ten year outlook for the municipality and we can look in the current fund and also the utility fund for any of these knowns. We can start to look and see what our rate structure is doing. We have a basic idea as what our PFAS looks like so we can advertise that out over a number of years what the payments will be. Basically we need to put an accounting team and financial projection team in place to take a really good ten year projection of where we will be and see if we are ever going to have to do a rate increase. We want to avoid doing that at all costs, we want to phase these projects in so that as we have debt falling off you have new debt coming on so you scale it. That is why we did the mortar beds, they preserved those screws for 8-10 years. We wouldn't want to just go and change that for the short term, that has to be done as part of a whole project so it is going to be an ongoing maintenance issue.

Council Representative Loftin asked about the Main Street Pump station. Administrator Sahol stated that Main Street is the last of three projects that started in 2021. It was the Main Street pump station, Hornberger Avenue pump station and a forced main that runs from Hornberger to Mallard Creek. Two of those projects are done but Main Street is not, it began in 2021 and was financed in 2022. Main Street forces the waste all the way to the corner of Delaware and Oak where the gravity system takes over. It is a workhorse, it takes the waste from the entire village. This is something that we have already prepared to pay for and he will be looking for a resolution next week authorizing the engineer to go out to bid.

Mayor Marter asked where we are with the Potts Mill Road extension that we have a grant for. The Administrator stated that it is still in between the engineer and himself as to what has to get approved and it is currently before the State Historic Preservation Office. Because that is federally directed funding, we have to hit every one of those pieces and answer all of those concerns. Lionel Galipot from Alaimo's office is championing the project and they just communicated a few weeks ago and satisfied more of the concerns from

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the EPA who the grant is from so hopefully within the next month we will get over the final hurdles and get that project out to bid to connect Potts Mill Road along the storefronts towards the veterinarian up to the fire hydrant by the cemetery on Route 130. Mayor Marter asked how that will be impacted when they put in the new intersection and widen Route 130. The Administrator said that it is not unusual to go over and encompass utility infrastructure, it will basically be buried beneath the highway.

Council Representative Sullivan asked when they anticipate the headworks will need to be started and Mr. Jones said whenever everything is in place to get it started. Mr. Smith stated that even when you start that process, it does not happen overnight.

Mr. Jones stated that everything other than what has been discussed has been ok. He said he has some issues with Cumberland Farms because they have a treatment plant now that they test once a week and they beat their numbers. But we test on the side to check them and they exceed sometimes and it shows because there will be a lot of foam. They don't have the treatment they are supposed to have in place so we have issues.

Council President Frappolli asked in the overall budget if they have had many changes or highlights that they would like to discuss. Mr. Jones stated that this is the operating budget they have been going with. He explained the blowers listed in the budget and the quote he received to change out the three blowers that are in there. He said he leaves the money in the budget so if they were to lose a blower, there is repair money to get that fixed and keep it going.

Council Representative Loftin asked the Administrator if he would rate the headworks above the police station in terms of priority. The Administrator explained that they are separate, because they are two different budgets. You are not bonding in your current fund and you are not taxing for anything at the plant it all comes out of the rate payer whereas the Police Department comes out of the tax levy.

B. Safety on the Agenda – Joe Henry, Hardenbergh Insurance Group

Administrator Sahol explained that each year we put safety on the agenda and we discuss a current topic and he introduced Joe Henry of Hardenbergh Insurance Group. Mr. Henry spoke about service dogs and emotional support animals and the types of services and protections they provide their owners and he also explained the laws. He also added that the Florence Township Safety Committee does a great job, all of the departments are represented which is rare and it is a very active committee.

C. Public Works Representative – Snow Plowing

Council President Frappolli explained that Council invited Public Works Superintendent David Wright and Ted Lovenduski to give a report on the department and, due to the challenging winter with snowfall, they have all been entertaining questions and Council would like an overview on how it was handled and what the plan is going forward. Mr. Wright explained that the main goal is to keep roads open for emergency purposes. Another goal is to get people to and from work safely and to keep those main roads open. They tried to get it back to the curb as much as possible, but it is not always possible. He explained a little about how deep the manpower is, who plowed and where, how many were shoveling, etc.

Council President Frappolli asked what his response would be to people who are asking that we do something with trying to move cars. He said there is no place for them to park or move their vehicles. Mr. Lovenduski stated that there are 60+ cars on every block and we don't have any place to put those cars. Council Representative Sullivan mentioned that in Bordentown City they posted no parking for 8 hours during the day and people shuffled around filling in spots where people might have already left for work and you would have to do one block on one side and one block on another and one in the middle so it breaks up a bunch of people

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within one block trying to find parking. She thinks it makes sense to try to make an attempt in trying to clear it. Mr. Lovenduski stated that we would have to figure out how to implement something like that, it would be difficult because we have to get the information out to everyone when their section of the block is going to be cleared. It would also have to be a day or two after the storm because we don't have enough people to post. But the biggest issue would be communication.

Administrator Sahol stated that a much more integrated announcement system is needed that will hit every type of technology. He said he met with a company called GoGov and he wants to implement that this year and believes it will help us go a long way. He also said that there are only two ways to make people not park on the street within certain periods and that is with the temporary no parking signs which have to be posted by 3:00 p.m. the day before in order to enforce, or odd/even days like Bordentown does. He thinks that is why it works with Bordentown because they have those periodic days that they can use for snow purposes not just street sweeping purposes. We might have to work a hybrid schedule in order to tackle that where maybe we do an odd/even type thing and we can use it not only for snow but for leaf collection, etc.

Council Representative Sullivan asked how often they clean the streets in the village. Mr. Wright explained that they used to do it once a year but this year they are doing it three times due to the new stormwater regulations, the whole town will be cleaned three times a year now. Council Representative Gabriele asked if they do work out a schedule for parking by day could it be added to the township calendar each year. Mr. Lovenduski said he thinks that would work for the sweeping because they have already been discussing the best ways to go about the sweeping schedule and the most efficient way to do it is that may be posting the entire community.

Council President Frappolli asked if there are any projects Public Works has coming up. Mr. Lovenduski explained that the guys with experience are going to do a job a lot faster and right now, if they could do sidewalks consistently, that would save us a lot of money but we need the men to do it and that is where we lack. We have inlets we have to clean for DEP, stormwater stuff, failed inlets, there is a basin we have to tend to, etc. Administrator Sahol stated that along with the manpower limitations plus two people being out on medical type issues, we also have vacancy in the department from 2025 that we have yet to fill along with a departure in February so the department is actually down two more people. We are carrying them in the budget for the purpose of filling those positions this year and that is still a recommendation coming out of the department, that they need to get quality help with the ability to plow and take on the projects we have coming up.

Mr. Lovenduski discussed the recreational fields stating that we have taken on over 100 additional acres of fields within the past ten years. Council President Frappolli mentioned that at the Recreation meeting they mentioned using Woodlawn Field and he asked if that is something that is on the schedule and Mr. Lovenduski confirmed that. Council Representative Loftin asked if there is a plan for parking there and Mr. Lovenduski explained that parking is a part of the CDBG grant application.

ACTION

A. Resolutions

- 2026-65, Endorsing the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan
- 2026-66, Adopting an Affirmative Marketing Plan

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Sullivan to approve Resolution Nos. 2026-65 and 2026-66.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli

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- NOES: None
- ABSENT: None Unanimous vote – Motion carried

B. Ordinances

- 2026-03, Affordable Housing Ordinance Amendment
(2nd Reading & Public Hearing)

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Gabriele to open the Public Hearing.

The Township's Affordable Housing Planner, Marybeth Lonergan explained that her firm prepared this ordinance to implement the amended Fair Housing Act and the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls as well as the Department of Community Affairs most recent regulations in December 2025. This ordinance will be replacing the entirety of the Township's affordable housing regulations and it is consistent with the Master Plan. She explained that this is the last document adoption and she congratulated Council on getting through the fourth round.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, it was a motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to close the Public Hearing.

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Sullivan to approve Ordinance No. 2026-03.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
 - NOES: None
 - ABSENT: None Unanimous vote – Motion carried
- 2026-07, Amending Chapter 132 Trees
(Introduction & 1st Reading) (2nd Reading a Public Hearing 4/1/26)

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Sullivan to approve Ordinance No. 2026-07.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

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

C. Letter from Florence Township Volunteer Fire Co. #1 requesting use of Wilkie Park on Sunday, March 29, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Gabriele to open the meeting to the public at this time. Voice vote – All ayes.

Don Cammus – 580 E. Sixth Street, stated that he believes the Public Works Department does a stellar job and people need to get out there themselves and clean up some of their own yards and stop complaining.

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Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, a Motion was made by Loftin, seconded by Fratinaro to close the public comment portion. Voice vote – All ayes.

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Resolution 2026-67 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:

- Contract Negotiations – Redevelopment

Motion of Fratinaro, seconded by Gabriele to adjourn to Closed Session at 7:28 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

Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion of Fratinaro seconded by Sullivan to adjourn. Voice vote – All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
/js