

**Florence Township Council Regular Session 3/18/26**

Florence, New Jersey  
March 18, 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**

- Closed Session of March 11, 2026
- Regular Meeting of March 4, 2026

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

**FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

- Court Administrator’s Monthly Report for February 2026
- Tax Collector’s Monthly Report for February 2026

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

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Gabriele 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

**REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE**

None at this time.

**Florence Township Council Regular Session 3/18/26**

**APPLICATIONS**

- A. On-Premise 50/50 for the Florence Township Football Association during the carnival on May 27, 28, 29 & 30 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Nyikita Field, 10<sup>th</sup> & Hornberger Avenues, Roebling
- B. On-Premise 50/50 for the Roebing Museum on April 25, 2026 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Roebing Museum, 100 Second Avenue, Roebing
- C. On-Premise 50/50 and On-Premise Basket Raffle for the Florence Township Civic Association to benefit the Florence Township Softball Association on April 25, 2026 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Muchowski Field Concession Stand, 711 Broad Street, Florence
- D. Off-Premise 50/50 for Florence Township Civic Association to benefit the Florence Township Softball Association on May 3, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at Muchowski Field Concession Stand, 711 Broad Street, Florence
- E. Off-Premise 50/50 for the Kiwanis Club of Bordentown on May 30, 2026 at 8:00 p.m. at Subculture Artisan Ales, 11 West Second Street, Florence

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Gabriele 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 Loftin, seconded by Gabriele to open the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice vote – All ayes. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinardo to close public comment. Voice vote – All ayes.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-68**

**Authorize Township Water & Sewer Engineer to Prepare Plans, Specifications and Solicit Bids for Repairs to the Main Street Pump Station**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-69**

**Authorize Mayor to Sign Weiss Development TWA Extension**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-70**

**Authorizing a Lien Against Private Property to Cover the Costs of Securing an Unsafe Structure**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-71**

**Authorize Refund of Certain Water and Sewer Overpayments**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-72**

**Approve Fireworks for Patriotic Celebration**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-73**

**Authorizing the Public Sale of Township Owned Property – Abandoned Vehicles**

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Gabriele to approve Resolution Nos. 2026-68 through 2026-73.

**Florence Township Council Regular Session 3/18/26**

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

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

**ORDINANCES**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-05  
Amending Chapter 2 Entitled “Fees” Section 2-2 Entitled “Schedule A”  
Boat Ramp and Designated Trailer Parking Areas Fees  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and Public Hearing)**

Motion of Fratinaro, seconded by Gabriele to open the Public Hearing. Voice vote – All ayes. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinaro to close the Public Hearing. Voice vote – All ayes.

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Sullivan to approve Ordinance No. 2026-05.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

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

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-06  
Fixing the Compensation of Certain Officials and Employees of the Twp. of Florence  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and Public Hearing)**

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Fratinaro to open the Public Hearing. Voice vote – All ayes. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a Motion of Gabriele, seconded by Fratinaro to close the Public Hearing. Voice vote – All ayes.

Motion of Sullivan, seconded by Fratinaro to approve Ordinance No. 2026-06.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

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

**REPORTS OF COMMITEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS**

None at this time.

**REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION**

**Mayor**

Mayor Marter mentioned that on March 21<sup>st</sup> SIWA will be at the Community Center preparing meals and packaged non-perishables coordinating with several of the housing developments within the community to provide these items. They are also working alongside Amazon who has donated a considerable number of items. And the Recreation Department is planning a drive thru event early in April to facilitate outreach for interested residents within the community.

## **Florence Township Council Regular Session 3/18/26**

The Mayor explained that she put together a list of backgrounds that would make sense for the Economic Development Committee which will be shared to the website and stated that a few Citizen Leadership Forms have already been received. Council President Frappolli asked the Mayor what backgrounds she has in mind for the committee and the Mayor explained that the goal of the committee is to help members as well as bring people into the town to help the businesses that are already here and to draw more business into town so they are looking for people who have a business in town, someone that has a background in banking, someone that has a background in commercial real estate, etc.

She also met with Council President Frappolli and Council Vice President Loftin and they asked that she give an update as to where we are and what we have accomplished in the last 2 years. She explained how the fund balance had been depleted and we had to put out a \$0.03 tax increase and how this year we are back to normal and we are looking at a typical increase that you would see in any town. She said that when they met with Assemblyman Balvir Singh a few weeks ago, he asked how the budget was going and she told him that we are looking at a 1 ½ cent increase this year and he was surprised because he said the typical increase is 2 cents so we are doing really good. She explained that our fund balance is healthy and in as much as it was in 2022, which was the last time we had a fund balance like that. She thinks Council did a really good job righting the ship without taking away any services.

She also explained that the Rite Aid intersection and the bypass are moving forward. The County put together an MOU with the NJDOT in order to work together on the Rite Aid intersection, whereas before the State passed it to the County and the County did not know where the funding was coming from and there was no agreement put in place and now that is all working out. The River Road bypass is supposed to go to bid this spring with construction starting in the fall, they have already gotten the DEP approvals and that is also moving forward.

The Mayor explained that Council passed a cannabis ordinance and we have our first retail store planned on Route 130 and they are hoping for construction by the end of the year. We have gotten grants for two new parks, one for \$175,000 for Riverside Avenue in Roebing and one for \$165,000 for the Railroad Avenue tot lot. We received grant money to restore our tennis courts but because we had space and money still available, we were able to build pickleball courts as well. We have a grant to extend the watermain loop for Potts Mill Road so the people at the one end of Potts Mill Road will have public water rather than having to be on well water. The resurfacing of Railroad and Amboy Avenues was completed through a grant from Senator Singleton's office. Phase I of Broad Street has been completed and Phase II is getting ready to start, which were also funded by grants. We got a \$750,000 grant awarded for sidewalk improvements and repairs that has been underway. We took the PFAS plant from proforma to choosing an engineer to design and now we are at the process of funding and getting that out to bid.

Regarding Tall Timber, the Mayor explained that we have water and sewer design approved with the work beginning this year in order to provide them with sewer lines. The Main Street Pump Station is designed and will be worked on and done this year as well. Through Recreation, we added a book drop at the recycling center, we added the Fall Fest and we changed the direction of the Community Center, it is now solely used to provide different types of township events and exercise classes for residents. She also stated that we are one of only six towns that went through our fourth round of Affordable Housing without getting challenged by the State. She explained that the first two years were really rough as far as what we needed to do to get us back on track fiscally but, not only did we do that, but we also accomplished all of these other things in that same time period.

## Florence Township Council Regular Session 3/18/26

Council President Frappolli applauded the work of our Administrator, Mayor and the rest of Council. He remembered coming in that first day and it was bleak and he asked the question of what happens if we don't pass this budget that called for all kind of high increases and he was told basically we are going to default. We worked through that and have gotten back to where we are and he loves hearing the fact that our fund balance is in good standing again.

### Administrator

Administrator Sahol stated that Congressman Conaway is going to be hosting a Town Hall event in our community on April 2, 2026 from 7:00 –8:30 p.m. and, as soon as the information comes out from his staff, it will be added to our website and social media.

- Riverbank Drive Erosion

The Administrator introduced Mark Lodato from our engineer's office to speak about what they recognize to date and some corrective action. He also stated that this is not a project that we have to go out and secure any funding or financing for, it will be handled through our Capital Fund.

Mr. Lodato explained that about 6-8 months ago, a resident that lived on Riverbank Drive reached out regarding an issue where there is a section of townhouses that back up to Township owned land along the river bank. Essentially the backyards closer to those townhouses were more or less gradually receding over time. He and Ted Lovenduski went out to inspect the site and it was very apparent. The determination of the cause of this was the soil in the ground in this area being very saturated so every time it rained the ground couldn't absorb any more water so it would run off from the townhomes toward the river and slough off and erode away this embankment.

They looked into a few remedies to fix this. One was to install yard inlets in the backyards to concentrate the water that would run off to be collected into the storm sewer. They did some preliminary surveys to see what the elevations were and that wouldn't have worked out. They believe the most cost effective way to do this that will also address the problem is to use geotextile for soil stabilization. Essentially this is a fabric that would lay over top of the soil that will stabilize and prevent the erosion delay. At several points along the fabric there are tiebacks which are essentially anchor rods that dig into the earth and hold it into place. The geotextile will bind to the embankment and the soil and make it into one structure and then the anchor rods will hold everything in place into the earth. The length of those depends on design but they have not gone for the full design yet. That is the plan and the proposal as far as how to remedy this moving forward.

He further explained that they have to survey the bottom of the slope closer to the river for DEP purposes and apply for fresh water and coastal zone general permits due to the proximity to the Delaware River. They have to have an additional survey completed for both of those permits, develop construction plans and put it out to bid. Then inspection services to inspect the construction when it is completed and, once that area is stabilized and maintained, it should be permanent.

The Administrator explained that the next step would be for Council to pass a resolution authorizing an engagement of the professional service as well as the beginning of an ordinance.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 2026 Budget Discussion

Administrator Sahol introduced Anthony Mannino, a professional engaged to work with our CFO periodically and he is one of the experts in the field. Mr. Mannino explained in great detail the 2026 budget. The way that the budget is structured, there are a lot of regulatory hoops that we have to jump through so

## Florence Township Council Regular Session 3/18/26

in order to figure out what we can do for 2026, we have to look at 2025. We can't anticipate any more revenue in in 2026 than we collected the prior year

Mr. Mannino explained that we have two budgets that we work with, the Current Fund and the Water Utility Budget. The Current Fund is broken down even further into the Inside Cap Appropriations and Outside Cap Appropriations. On the Inside Cap we are limited as to how much we can increase per year. These are the departmental expenses, salaries and other expenses. Outside Cap appropriations are more fixed, more statutory in nature – debt amortization schedules, bond anticipation notes, etc.

Mr. Mannino said that for the appropriation cap we start with the prior year's Inside Cap appropriation. If you don't have the increases in the Inside Cap appropriations your ceiling is lowered. We want those increases in there so we have a higher ceiling. Then we have an automatic 2% increase that we are allowed by the state. This is for cost of living and the cost of doing business. There are also additions allowed by the state, for example, new constructions. This can be added to the prior year's balance. In addition, we have the Cap Bank available from prior years. We are allowed to bring that into the current year to be utilized as an additional increase if we need it. We can also add a COLA rate increase which allows a 1.5% increase. So, when we add all these things together the total maximum appropriations inside cap that we can have is \$1.4 million. What has actually been proposed in the 2026 budget is \$1.35 million. This leaves \$456,337. which will go into the Cap Bank balance for the next two years. The appropriation cap law focuses on the appropriation expense side.

We also have the tax levy cap law. The starting point again is the previous tax year. This is where we need the small incremental increases in taxes year after year. To keep fund balance at a level where it is manageable by the municipality. If you have zero increases the ceiling is artificially being kept low. Again, we start with the tax levy from the previous year, \$7,475,364.33. The is a cap of 2% increase on the tax levy amount. There are also certain exemptions and allowances and once they are all added in the maximum allowed to be raised by taxation is \$7,711,804.47. We are proposing \$7,708,072.74 to be collected in taxes in 2026.

Mr. Mannino spoke about General Capital Surplus. At the end of each year Finance and Administration sit down and go over every project line by line and cancel projects that are completed or no longer needed. We cancel those balances into the Capital Fund Balance that can be used to offset debt service costs. In 2025 we cancelled \$400,000 into the Capital Fund Balance; in 2026 we are cancelling \$800,000. This money isn't done in one lump sum. It is amortized into a 3-5 year life. This way we are not bringing in a huge influx that we can't duplicate next year.

Our Total Revenues budgeted in 2025 was \$15,915,545.97; we actually collected \$16,177,330.08 so we beat our target a little bit. In 2026 we are proposing \$16,455,139. He spoke about receipts for delinquent taxes. Every year we hold an annual tax sale and through this sale we can recoup and receive most if not all of the delinquent taxes.

Mr. Mannino spoke about Appropriations. A lot of the increases are from Health Insurance costs, union contracts, Social Security, gasoline and electric. We do not have a lot of control over these increases. He spoke about debt. We have Bond Principle, Bond Anticipation Notes, Interest on Bonds and Interest on Notes. We don't have anything in Bond Anticipation this year. The State requires that you have a principle pay down on the BAN's on the third anniversary. We took out a BAN in 2025 so the first principle pay down will be in 2028. Right now we are just paying the interest.

The Capital Improvement is for the downpayment of Bond Ordinances. We have budgeted \$50,000. This is for down payments on Bond Ordinances. It can also be used to fully finance a capital ordinance.

## **Florence Township Council Regular Session 3/18/26**

The Budget has to be balanced so the revenue has to equal the appropriations. Any appropriations that are not expended at the end of the year automatically goes into Reserves. In 2025 we authorized \$15.9 million and used \$14.9 million. The \$992,000 went into Reserves and rolls into the 2026 budget for 2025 bills that are still coming in. The 2025 budget is kept open for one year. Any money left over after one year is added to the Fund Balance. It is important to keep the fund balance healthy. You don't want to use more of the Fund Balance than you can regenerate within the year. From beginning of 2024 to the end of 2025, a 2 year period, we gained \$500,000 in fund balance.

Mr. Mannino spoke about the Utility Budget. In 2025 the budget was \$7.75 million, in 2026 we have budgeted \$8.2 million. There is also fund balance in the Utility Budget. In 2024 the Utility was not self liquidating. The township had lost a large water user and was forced to use Fund Balance to fill the hole in the Budget. From the rate increase in 2024 the Fund Balance has regenerated and the utility is again self liquidating. We no longer require downpayments for bonds.

Mr. Mannino said that every year we are required to submit a Capital Budget looking 6 years out. This isn't set in stone and can be updated periodically.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Marter explained that there was an opening on the Shade Tree Commission. She appointed Mark Babula, who works in the Public Works Department and currently works with the Shade Tree Commission so it would be great to have him on board as a liaison and coordinator.

### **BOARD OF HEALTH**

None at this time.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Council Representative Loftin mentioned that there is an exposed water valve off of Front Street on Woodlawn Avenue. The Administrator agreed to look into that.

Mayor Marter mentioned that the trees were planted along the path downtown.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Loftin to open the meeting up to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was a motion of Fratinardo, seconded by Loftin to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice Vote – All Ayes.

### **ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION**

Resolution 2026-74 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, possibly acquisition of real property, and matters of attorney client privilege.

Motion of Loftin, seconded by Sullivan to adjourn to Closed Session at 9:09 p.m. where no action will be taken.

Upon roll call, the Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Fratinardo, Gabriele, Loftin, Sullivan, Frappolli
- NOES: None

