

MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 30, 2020 - VIRTUAL MEETING

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a special session on Monday, November 30, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. via electronic communication.

Council President Norgalis read the following announcement:

Notice of Meeting

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT OF NEW JERSEY, ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS SPECIAL MEETING WAS PROVIDED ON NOVEMBER 25, 2020, IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 ET SEQ. AS AMENDED TO PERMIT PUBLIC BODIES AS THEREIN DEFINED TO CONDUCT PUBLIC MEETINGS BY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION OR OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, AND WITH WRITTEN NOTICE AND ELECTRONIC NOTICE PROVIDED TO THE COURIER NEWS AND THE STAR LEDGER POSTING ON THE WEBSITE AND THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND FILING WITH THE TOWNSHIP CLERK.

On call of the roll, the following Council members were present:

Councilman Michael Kirsh
Councilman Allen Kurdyla
Councilman Timothy Ring
Council Vice President Filipe Pedroso
Council President Howard V. Norgalis

Also Present:

Matthew C. Moench, Mayor
Michael Pappas, Township Administrator
Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator
Chris Corsini, Township Attorney
William Burr, Acting Township Engineer
Linda J. Doyle, Township Clerk
Grace Njuguna, Deputy Township Clerk

Council President Norgalis led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

On motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the meeting was opened to the public.

Members of the public wishing to address the Council on any matter will be allowed two minutes to speak, unless there are unusual circumstances.

Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator advised the public on the various ways they can be heard as follows:

- ⇒ Use raise hand feature to give audio comments
- ⇒ Use Q&A feature for written comments

No comments were received and no one wished to be heard.

On motion of Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Kirsh, the public comment portion was closed.

Presentation

UNIVERSAL ROAD ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION

Mayor Moench thanked the Council for their support in allowing this meeting to be held. He also thanked the staff that assisted in preparing this road assessment presentation including Michael Pappas, Township Administrator, Thomas Genova, Director of Municipal Services, Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator, Scott Maroldo, Director of Office of Constituent Relations, William Burr, Acting Township Engineer and Chris Corsini, Township Attorney.

Mayor Moench explained that the purpose of this presentation is to help the Council and residents understand the why, how and when questions that pertain to the road infrastructure in Bridgewater. He added that the Council, at the beginning of the year approved the hiring of Pennoni Associates to conduct a Road Assessment plan which will provide a comprehensive, holistic approach on how to tackle our roads.

Acting Township Engineer Burr stated this road assessment process was designed in order to assess the condition of our roads, give each road a ranking and then take those results and rely on them to craft a road improvement program.

Megan Todaro, EIT of Pennoni Associates described the process of conducting the study which included driving every Township controlled road in Bridgewater and taking images every 10-feet. They then used the artificial intelligence platform, Roadbotics, to assess each segment of roads and applied a numerical 1-5 rating (1 being the best, 5 being the worst) along with an accompanying color (green being the best and red being the worst). This data was then integrated with an interactive map which clearly shows the condition of each roadway.

Following the presentation by Pennoni, Acting Township Engineer William Burr described how the Township is proposing to utilize this data to create an effective and efficient road plan. He proposed to the Council, dividing the Township into six (6) road improvement sub-regions. The road projects in these sub-regions would be bid as packages for both the engineering work and construction. This tactic will ensure not only that every area of the Township is seeing roadwork every year, but it will lead to increased efficiency for the Engineering Department and cost savings while utilizing economies of scale with the packaging of several roads within one bid package.

Township Engineer Burr explained we will focus on the worst roads in the Township while also taking a hard look at the surrounding roads in the

immediate area that may not be in as dire need, and are unlikely to be standalone reconstruction projects in the near future.

Deputy Township Administrator Wells Winegar then described the resident facing deliverables that the Township is working on which includes, as its centerpiece, a standalone website that will allow residents the ability to access the interactive map to see how their roads compare to others in the Township and will also become the primary hub of information regarding current and future road projects in Bridgewater. The target date for the release of this site is by the end of the 2020 calendar year.

Mayor Moench concluded the presentation by discussing with the Council a financing plan for the next 5 years. The Mayor asked the Council to consider committing to \$8 million per year in road capital spending (approximately \$2.5 million more, on average, per year in comparison to the previous 5 years). The Mayor indicated that the investment would convey the following results for the Township:

- The reconstruction of all roads rated 3.5 and above (Red and Orange)
- The reconstruction or resurfacing of approximately 30% of the roads rated 2.5 to 3.49 (Yellow) by taking the neighborhood approach
- Approximately \$500,000 per year in preventive maintenance in order to protect the Township's investment on more recently improved roads
- Approximately \$1 million per year for the milling and resurfacing of roads through the County Co-Op

Both Mayor Moench and Acting Township Engineer Burr indicated that following this five (5) year investment, the Township's worst and most expensive roads would be complete and the Township could then focus, more heavily, in preventative maintenance and milling and resurfacing projects that are far less costly and require less of an overall investment.

Mayor Moench further explained this plan will allow Administration to have a clear path forwards addressing the Township's infrastructure and it brings us one step closer to the fruition of the promise he made when taking office back in January. Just like many of the roads in Bridgewater did not crumble overnight, the problem will not be fixed overnight but the residents of this community deserve a thorough and transparent plan that sets realistic yet aggressive goals and this plan will accomplish just that.

It was confirmed that the road study was only conducted for those roads that Bridgewater Township owns and maintains. The County and State also owns and maintains some roads. Additional roads are owned and maintained privately by residents or groups of residents.

It was further confirmed that the residents can access, by end of year, a website that will be a one stop shop to access any information concerning up to date information on road progress and updates.

Council expressed their appreciation to the Mayor and administration for this presentation and for embarking on this journey to assess and repair our road infrastructure.

Adjournment

On motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Council President Norgalis, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:25pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Howard Norgalis
Council President