

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
DECEMBER 7, 2020 - VIRTUAL MEETING**

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session on Monday, December 7, 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 MEETING WAS PROVIDED ON JANUARY 3, 2020, WITH A SUBSEQUENT MEETING NOTICED ON NOVEMBER 18, 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 (joined at 7:40pm)
Council President Howard V. Norgalis

Also Present:

Matthew C. Moench, Mayor
Michael Pappas, Township Administrator
Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator
Christopher Corsini, Township Attorney
Thomas Genova, Director of Municipal Services
Christine Madrid, Director of Human Services
Linda J. Doyle, Township Clerk
Grace Njuguna, Deputy Township Clerk

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

Minutes

**NOVEMBER 23, 2020 - REGULAR SESSION, VIRTUAL ACCESS
NOVEMBER 30, 2020 - SPECIAL SESSION, VIRTUAL ACCESS**

On motion of Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Ring, the November 23, 2020 regular session minutes and November 30, 2020 special session minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote.

Council Reports

Councilman Kirsh

- Last Friday night, Bridgewater held its first annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony. This was a joyous community event.
- We will soon be having, on December 12th, a Hanukkah Menorah lighting. Due to COVID, this event will be limited to 25 in-person participants but will be broadcasted for all the residents to enjoy.
- There will be a Planning Board meeting tomorrow night. The sole case is the Center of Excellence which includes a 55K square feet fitness center building. The applicant is seeking Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval with some C-variances that principally revolve around parking.
- Councilman Kirsh stated that later this week, he will be meeting with Council President Norgalis among others for a shared services meeting to discuss our health services.

Councilman Ring:

- Participated in the first ever annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony. Councilman Ring congratulated Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator and Scott Maraldo, Director of Office of Constituent Relations for coordinating a successful first event.
- Attended a Local Emergency Services meeting to discuss COVID.

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Has an Open Space meeting scheduled for this Wednesday.
- Was scheduled to attend a meeting with the Community Block Grant Program but missed it due to a scheduling conflict. He has since followed up with Township Administrator Pappas and Kim Cowart for an update on the meeting.
- Was pleased to attend the first annual Christmas tree lighting and hopes that this and the Hanukkah Menorah lighting are traditions we can carry to the future in Bridgewater.

Council President Norgalis:

- Participated in the 2021 Budget review given by the Department Heads.
- Sponsored a Special Council meeting for Mayor Moench to roll out his plans for a 5 year \$40m plan for township road improvements.
- Acted as Master of Ceremony for the first Bridgewater annual tree lighting. He especially thanked the Green Knoll Fire Company for bringing all their equipment and SANTA.
- Attended the weekly OEM meeting.

Mayor's Reports

Mayor Matthew C. Moench

- Our health officials continue to provide up-to-date reports on the COVID-19 pandemic and make this information available on our website and

Facebook page. The numbers have increased but the cases are generally less severe, the duration is shorter and the number of hospitalizations are fewer. Numbers of fatalities have also decreased. Mayor Moench stated that administration continues to take the necessary precautions to protect both our residents and employees.

- Received great positive feedback concerning the Road Assessment program and thanked the Council for their support. Administration hopes to continue moving the process along in order to begin road construction as soon as possible.
- Thanked the Department of Municipal Services, DPW, and Department of Human Services for their efforts in organizing the first annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony. Mayor Moench thanked Council President Norgalis for emceeding that event and all that attended/participated. We hope to continue this into the future and build on it every year.
- The first Annual Hanukkah Menorah Lighting ceremony is scheduled for this Saturday but due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions, it cannot be done in person to the public but we will live stream it and hope everyone can participate virtually.

Proclamation PAUL CERNUTO, HIGH TECH LANDSCAPES, INC.

Mayor Moench stated he wanted to thank Paul Cernuto for all the services he has performed for Bridgewater over the years but specifically for helping to set the tone for an event that will become a staple in Bridgewater moving forward.

Mayor Moench read the proclamation as follows:

WHEREAS, Mr. Paul Cernuto is a life-long resident of Bridgewater Township and owner of High Tech Landscapes, Inc.;

WHEREAS, Paul built High Tech Landscapes from the ground up—he started the company after graduating from Bridgewater-Raritan High School in 1986 with just his lawn mower and his father's truck;

WHEREAS, Paul, through his own education, personal initiative and exceptional work-ethic, has since built High Tech Landscapes into a company of over 300 professionals, which can work on irrigation, landscape design and construction, arboriculture, outdoor lighting, and snow removal;

WHEREAS, when Paul heard that Bridgewater Township was in need of assistance in transporting a tree from Camp Cromwell to the municipal complex so that it could serve as a Township Christmas Tree, Paul instantly volunteered to donate the services of his company at no cost to the Township;

WHEREAS, that very same week, personnel from High Tech Landscapes safely and efficiently moved the tree from Camp Cromwell to the municipal building courtyard, where it now stands

WHEREAS, Township DPW personnel have since decorated the tree with several thousand lights;

WHEREAS, at 6:00PM, on Friday, December 4TH this tree will be ceremonially lit, and serve as the first ever Bridgewater Township Christmas Tree, available for all Bridgewater residents to visit and enjoy throughout the rest of the holiday season;

WHEREAS, none of this would have been possible without the generosity of Paul Cernuto and the proficiency of the personnel of High Tech Landscapes,

NOW THEREFORE, I, Matthew C. Moench, on behalf of the citizens and government of Bridgewater Township, do hereby express our profound gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Paul Cernuto for his generous contributions to our efforts to celebrate the holidays during this very challenging time, as well acknowledge the fact that we remain very proud that Paul continues to call Bridgewater Township his home

Presentation CAMP CROMWELL

Township Administrator Pappas stated the purpose of this presentation is to inform the Council and residents regarding the efforts that have gone forth this far on the Camp Cromwell property that Bridgewater acquired some years ago. There have been many varying opinions about what should and could be done on this property so this presentation is to advise on what has been done so far and what administration hopes to accomplish in the future. Administrator Pappas added that while there was discussion about making the property available for public use, it quickly became apparent that there were some safety concerns that need to be addressed before the property is ready for this.

Thomas Genova, Director of Municipal Services stated this 99 acres piece of land was previously used as a camp for the Boys Club. In 2019, there were two (2) separate demolition contracts and another for two (2) for pools that were demolished. We are now at the final phase of demolition where fifteen (15) buildings are slated to be demolished. The crushed concrete from this demolition will be used to backfill some of the foundation holes. What is left will be used for back filling of other DPW work including the parking lot. We do not anticipate that there will be an excess of the concrete.

Mr. Genova continued to explain that there is a very elaborate basketball facility on the site. Our plans are to fill all the open cracks on them in order to preserve that asset and make it usable. This will occur between January and February of 2021.

Mr. Genova further discussed the clearing of the trail system which includes a two mile loop around the property. After several storms, the existing trail that had been cut by DPW is overgrown with several large downed trees blocking

access. DPW will perform basic upkeep on the trail system and clear any large obstructions.

After demolition is complete what will be left are 4 buildings which include an indoor basketball facility, Performing Arts Center, dining hall and an office/welcome center. What we are looking to do is work with the Township Code Enforcement in order to assess each of these buildings to determine how to repurpose them.

Richard Shimp, Public Works Superintendent discussed signage noting the current entry way to the property is still marked with the name of the former organization. Our sign shop will create updated signage to reflect that Bridgewater owns the property and the property's Open Space designation. In addition, Mr. Shimp advised the buildings have been weathered up and there are weekly safety checks. Alarms for burglary and fire have also been installed.

Mr. Shimp further discussed trail connections noting that the Camp Cromwell proposed trail system has the potential to connect to the Middle Brook Trail, Buttermilk Falls, Chimney Rock Park and Crim Fields. A connection to the Middlebrook Trail can be achieved by making safe crossings from the property across Brookside Drive and Vosseller Avenue.

Township Administrator Pappas stated Administration has begun preliminary talks with external outdoor groups who may be interested in assisting with trail maintenance. The ultimate goal for next year will be to allow public access to the site for passive use and allow residents to enjoy the property. Administration and Municipal services are discussing a location for a potential parking lot but the grounds must first be safe before this property is ready for public access.

Christine Madrid, Director of Human Services discussed a review of existing parks master plan noting administration will conduct a review of the same as it was last updated in 2010. The purpose of this will be to determine what has been accomplished verses what is incomplete and to look at what has changed over time both as it relates to Camp Cromwell and all Township Park facilities. The results of this review will help to guide discussions of a Parks Master Plan refresh to help determine future uses.

Mayor Moench explained this is a long term project which has not moved for some time. We have a plan to protect what we have so that the assets are preserved and not deteriorating. We look to open the facility to the public in the near future.

Council thanked everyone involved on this project noting we are on a pathway

to success.

[A copy of the PowerPoint presentation can be found here.](#)

**Public
Comment**

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

Members of the public wishing to address the Council on any matter will be allowed to provide public input via electronic transmission with all comments to be read into the record, unless there are unusual circumstances.

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

- ⇒ Link for Public Comment Submission:
<https://bridgewaterocr.typeform.com/to/wtbqHzqr>
- ⇒ Use raise hand feature to give audio comments
- ⇒ Use Q&A feature for written comments
- ⇒ Text 908-912-4247 for written comments

There was a four (4) minute recess to allow the public additional time to submit public comment via the various ways discussed above. Council President Norgalis read the following title and advised the public the recess is also to allow them time to provide input on this item that is scheduled for public hearing and final action tonight:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR A SPECIAL EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION OF \$941,849.06 PROVIDING FOR THE FUNDING OF A DEFICIT IN OPERATIONS OF THE TOWNSHIP DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO COVID-19 WHICH IS ANTICIPATED TO BE EXPERIENCED BY THE TOWNSHIP IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

Following recess, on the call of the roll by Township Clerk Doyle, 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

Mark Neubauer, 46 Shady Lane, Bridgewater, NJ 08807 spoke noting he is also on

the Recreation Board and thanked everyone for the Camp Cromwell presentation. He stated that during the presentation, there was mention that as far as the trail system, we may be partnering with an extremal outdoor group organization for trail marking and maintenance. He asked which organization this is. As far as the existing sections of the middlebrook trail, he asked whether we are currently partnering with external organizations adding he sees this an opportunity for volunteering for our young people. Mr. Neubauer will be contacted by administration to address his questions in greater detail, especially due to his involvement on the recreation board.

Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator read the following resident comments into the record verbatim:

Christine Henderson Rose, 1725 Woodfield Road. In reference to item 12(b), the waiving of fees is restricted to 501 (c) 3 organizations, however, there are a number of non-profit 501 (c) 8 fraternal organizations and fire departments that provide a significant amount of service in the community. I encourage you to revisit the eligibility of organizations as stated currently in the proposed amended ordinance to include 501 (c) 8 organizations.

Council President Norgalis explained that 501c (8) organizations are fraternities and for those fraternities such as the Eagles, the Elks, Knights of Columbus that reside in our township, they will certainly be candidates for waivers of fees. Other organizations that basically have that same status but do not reside in the town and do not provide a direct benefit to the town but come into the township to simply use one of our facilities would not qualify. Councilman Norgalis further explained that a waiver of fees does not mean that the expense goes away but rather that it is distributed to the rest of the residents.

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

Public
Hearing &
Final Action
Ordinances

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR A SPECIAL EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION OF \$941,849.06 PROVIDING FOR THE FUNDING OF A DEFICIT IN OPERATIONS OF THE TOWNSHIP DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO COVID-19 WHICH IS ANTICIPATED TO BE EXPERIENCED BY THE TOWNSHIP IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

This will allow us to address this year's and next year's revenue deficit that has been as a result of the pandemic. Bond Counsel John Draikiwicz confirmed that we received a positive response from the Local Finance Board (LFB). Mayor Moench explained that the response from LFB signifies that we have met the

criteria to make application for special emergency bonding. Council appreciated the efforts of Mayor Moench for helping make this tool available not only in Bridgewater but also for other municipalities.

On motion of Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Kirsh, the foregoing Ordinance was proposed. The vote was as follows:

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye
Council Vice President Pedroso	Aye
Council President Norgalis	Aye

ORDINANCE #20-23 WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#20-12-07-294](#) is appended to the official minutes

**Introduction
of
Ordinances**

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING CHAPTER 126, SECTION 126-341 ENTITLED “PARKING OF LARGE VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS” TO CORRECT VARIOUS ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES OF LARGE VEHICLES PARKED WITHIN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Council President Norgalis stated our Ordinances currently regulate the manner in which large vehicles or trailers may be parked in residential zones. The Police Department recently discovered issues with enforcement and interpretation of the current ordinance. This Ordinance seeks to remediate these issue by repealing and replacing the Township’s current ordinance.

Michael Pappas, Township Administrator explained this Ordinance is an effort to protect the contractors who reside in the Township and whose vehicles are parked in residential areas so as not to be in violation. The original intent of this Ordinance was to prohibit the parking of large tractor trailers in residential areas.

Administrator Pappas further explained that once this is considered, being it affects our Land Use ordinances, it will then be directed to the Planning Board which will determine if our determination is consistent with the Master Plan.

On motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the foregoing Ordinance was proposed. The vote was as follows:

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye

Council Vice President Pedroso	Aye
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [**#20-12-07-295**](#) is appended to the official minutes

Linda J. Doyle, Township Clerk read the following report:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the said pending ordinance be passed on first reading and advertised as required by statute fixing the 21ST day of December, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. prevailing time on said day as the time and the Bridgewater Township Municipal Court Chambers at 100 Commons Way or in compliance with Executive Order via virtual access which a subsequent link will be made available via the agenda and website in said Township as the place for hearing and final action.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Clerk shall forthwith post on the bulletin board in the Township Municipal Building at 100 Commons Way, a true copy of said ordinance and make copies available to members of the general public and spread the same upon the minutes of the meeting.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk forward this ordinance to the Bridgewater Township Planning Board for their meeting to be held December 8, 2020, to review and prepare a recommendation.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 94 ENTITLED "FEES" SECTION 94-3 ENTITLED "WAIVER OF FEES" TO INCLUDE CONDITIONS REGARDING WAIVING FEES FOR 501 (c) (3) AND 501 (c) (4) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER.

Our current Ordinances have allowed for waiver of fees for non-profits including 501(c) 3 and 501(c)4. This Ordinance seeks to amend and revise the Township's current ordinance to add conditions to granting a waiver of fees for nonprofit organizations. Only organizations having 501(c)(3) designation shall be eligible to receive a fee waiver. Organizations designated 501(c)(4) shall be ineligible for fee waivers. In addition, the organization must perform nonprofit services directly benefitting the Township to be eligible. Council will retain authority to determine waiver eligibility.

On motion of Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Kirsh, the foregoing Ordinance was proposed. The vote was as follows:

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
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Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye
Council Vice President Pedroso	Aye
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [#20-12-07-296](#) is appended to the official minutes

Linda J. Doyle, Township Clerk read the following report:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the said pending ordinance be passed on first reading and advertised as required by statute fixing the 21ST day of December, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. prevailing time on said day as the time and the Bridgewater Township Municipal Court Chambers at 100 Commons Way or in compliance with Executive Order via virtual access which a subsequent link will be made available via the agenda and website in said Township as the place for hearing and final action.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Clerk shall forthwith post on the bulletin board in the Township Municipal Building at 100 Commons Way, a true copy of said ordinance and make copies available to members of the general public and spread the same upon the minutes of the meeting.

Resolutions

2021 STAVOLA QUARRY OPERATING LICENSE

Thomas Genova, Director of Municipal Services explained that Stavola brothers acquired this property in 1977. The Township adopted a Quarry Ordinance and as part of that, Stavola was required to provide a reclamation program which they have done since 1980. They have been before the governing body every year in December to renew their license since then. Mr. Genova explained he has had conversations with Thomas Branch of Stavola who confirmed there are 20 years remaining for quarry operations. What they are doing is the final phase of mining on the westerly corner which is closer to the residential area and has a 150-foot mining limit with a 100-foot buffer to that residential area. We propose to renew the license based on Chapter 124, however they must update their reclamation plan prior to 2022 relicensing. In addition, in accordance with our ordinances, they must also appear before the Planning Board to discuss not only quarry operations but also present an updated reclamation plan.

On motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the foregoing resolution was proposed. The vote was as follows:

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Kurdyla	Aye

Councilman Ring	Aye
Council Vice President Pedroso	Aye
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#20-12-07-297](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING BUDGET TRANSFERS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 APPROPRIATIONS
IN THE AMOUNT OF \$199,200.00 IN THE CURRENT FUND**

This resolution will allow us to move monies from accounts that it was not expended to the current fund where it can be used for other purposes. It was confirmed that this is a resolution we do every end of year to reallocate funds.

On motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Pedroso, the foregoing resolution was proposed. The vote was as follows:

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye
Council Vice President Pedroso	Aye
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#20-12-07-298](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER'S
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

It is important to have an official social media policy being we are very active in social media. It also helps our DCA best practice.

On motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Ring, the foregoing resolution was proposed. The vote was as follows:

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye
Council Vice President Pedroso	Aye
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#20-12-07-299](#) is appended to the official minutes

EXTENDING SUNDAY HOURS OF OPERATION FOR PLENARY RETAIL DISTRIBUTION LICENSES INCLUDING WEGMANS MARKETS, SPIRITS OF THE VALLEY, KRISHA BEVERAGE AND BUY BEST WINE AND LIQUORS ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20 AND SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2020

Craig Franklin, General Manager for Wegmans explained they have made this request for many years for their customers. Sundays are traditionally their busiest days. Wegmans is requesting that as a convenience to their customers, the hours to sell liquor be extended to allow holders of Plenary Retail Distribution Licenses to commence hours of operation at 9 a.m. on Sunday, December 20 and Sunday, December 27, 2020.

Council President Norgalis stated that although he normally would not vote affirmatively, this year, due to COVID -19 constrains and for those residents that need to shop early, he will make an exception.

Councilman Kirsh suggested that our Ordinances be amended to allow early sale of alcohol for our residents so that they do not have to go to other towns that allow for earlier sales and in order to help our local businesses.

Councilman Kirsh explained that while this is a necessary adjustment, he supports a more thorough review of our Ordinances that would support early sales in order to support our residents and allow for a business boost for Bridgewater businesses.

Councilman Pedroso opined that Bridgewater is a standalone town and did not feel we have to do what other towns are doing. He added he is not convinced there is enough reason to make time adjustments.

On motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Kirsh, the foregoing resolution was proposed. The vote was as follows:

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye
Council Vice President Pedroso	Nay
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#20-12-07-300](#) is appended to the official minutes

**Closed
Session**

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Bridgewater Township Council that this body will now hold a closed meeting to discuss the following:

PERSONNEL - POTENTIAL LITIGATION
CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS - SOMERSET REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER

When and if the matters discussed become public record, this will be made known to the public at that time.

The public is excluded from said meeting and further notice thereof is dispensed with all in accordance with Sections 8 and 4a of the Open Public Meetings Act.

On the motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, Council convened in closed session at approximately 9:11 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#20-12-07-301](#) is appended to the official minutes.

On motion of Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Ring, the meeting reconvened to open session at 10:15 p.m. and adjourned immediately thereafter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Howard Norgalis
Council President