

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 11, 2011 VIRTUAL MEETING**

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session on Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. via electronic communication.

Council President Pedroso 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 FEBRUARY 8, 2021, WITH A SUBSEQUENT MEETING NOTICED ON JANUARY 11, 2021, 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 Howard V. Norgalis
Councilman Timothy Ring
Council Vice President Allen Kurdyla
Council President Filipe Pedroso

Also Present: Matthew C. Moench, Mayor
Michael Pappas, Township Administrator
Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator
Christopher Corsini, Township Attorney
Linda J. Doyle, Township Clerk
Grace Njuguna, Deputy Township Clerk

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

Minutes

FEBRUARY 1, 2021 - REGULAR SESSION

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, the February 1, 2021 regular session minutes were moved for approval and carried on the following roll call vote:

Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Norgalis	Aye

Councilman Ring Aye
Council President Pedroso Aye

Council Reports

Councilman Kirsh

- The Planning Board met earlier this week and provided a preliminary and final site plan approval for four (4) homes on Old York Road. There was extensive conversation about drainage and other considerations at the site but it was the view of the Planning Board that with certain necessary restrictions and other commentary, the proposed site plan should be a positive asset to that neighborhood.

Councilman Ring:

- Earlier today, he attended the town's Emergency Management Council/Local Emergency Planning Committee Meeting. This was the first meeting of the year and included updates from each of the disciplines in attendance. Every four years, the town is required to update their Emergency Operations Plans and supporting annexes and 2021 is our year to complete an update. We must submit our updated plan to the County and State by this summer, for approval.
- Bridgewater's own, Lt. Col. Thomas Bob Vaucher departed on his final flight this past Sunday. Bob was not only an American Hero for his efforts during World War II, but his fingerprints are all over much of what Bridgewater is today. In fact, this meeting might very well not be taking place, were it not for Bob's efforts years ago to change the town's form of government to what we have today. Bob was a fighter and advocate for his town, but he was also a kind hearted, caring individual.
- I know that we are going to be speaking some more about Bob in a little bit, but I wanted to take a moment to extend my deepest sympathies to Bob's family- Donna, Yvonne, David and Suzanne, who are all attending this evening's meeting.

Councilman Norgalis:

- Bob Vaucher will be dearly missed as he has a marvelous fabric of this township for many years.
- Councilman Norgalis stated he is an executive board member of the centerbridge I Senior Living Center. He reported that after some very diligent work by the center staff, they were able to get the two (2) centerbridge buildings to attain state health department approval as a congregate housing development and therefore qualified to receive state sponsored COVID-19 vaccine through Walgreens. Walgreens was able to

issue the first vaccine to every resident who wanted one which was a little more than 99% of the residents in both houses.

- The Martin Luther King Center has received a street sign on Prince Rodgers Avenue which will include their telephone number. Our current ordinances do not permit telephone numbers to be placed on signs but in this case an exception was made for a great and worthy cause.
- Attended a Somerset county governing official's virtual meeting where Anthony V. Cava, President/CEO of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset was the guest speaker. He reviewed the history of the pandemic from March last year and spoke candidly about the need for diligence until we achieve herd immunity which is when 70% of the population will have received the vaccine. He professed that through the next year, he will wear a mask while travelling. When asked about indoor dining, he stated that he and his wife have no intention of dining anywhere indoors except with family members until possibly the third (3rd) quarter.
- The Township's tax collector has reported that the collection rate for property taxes are at 99.3% which is a truly excellent report.

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Was in agreeance with the comments provided by council regarding Bob Vaucher. For the many years he has been on the Council, Councilman Kurdyla stated he has witnessed Bob's comments multiple times as he cared about the township very much adding we all have a better township because of his involvement.
- Thanked the Public Works staff for doing a great job during the recent snow storm. While it takes time to clear the roads due to the amount of snow we received, the job was well done.
- Councilman Kurdyla also thanked the EMS for continuing to service the township well despite the snow storm.

Council President Pedroso

- Will provide his report with regard to Bob Vaucher during the reading of the proclamation later in this meeting.

Mayor's Reports

Mayor Matthew C. Moench

- Thanked the Public Works Department for all their hard work last week noting it was a long week for them due to the challenges associated with

moving the snow given the amount that we received. Mayor Moench reminded the residents that if they have concerns about certain roads, they should contact the township directly adding that posting concerns on social media is not a reliable way to get action for the roads. The Office of Constituent Relations or the Public Works Departments are the best points of contact.

- Mayor Moench stated we will continue to use contractors for events such as the recent snow storm as this is the most cost effective method to supplement our teams.
- We continue to report on the information received from the county with regard to COVID-19. The number of cases continue to decrease. The biggest challenge at the moment is the supply of vaccines as the shipment to the County has been approximately 700/week.
- The regional center partnership meeting was this week. The main item was having the partnership fund a hiring staff to evaluate rules governing incentive grants. This was opposed as it was opined this is something the County should have taken on. Mayor Moench added the freeholders are elected to lead the County wide efforts and that burden should not fall on Bridgewater, Somerville and Raritan.
- On tonight's agenda is the restructuring of a bond ordinance which is a way of refunding our current debt and will save us hundreds of thousands of dollars over a period of years. Although it will have an immediate effect on our budget, it will help us in the future.

Proclamation

IN MEMORIAM OF THOMAS R. "BOB" VAUCHER

Council President Pedroso discussed the many accomplishments of Mr. Vaucher noting that he first met him approximately 20-years ago while he was serving on the Zoning Board. Bob was a regular and would provide input on many zoning applications that he felt impacted the quality of life for the residents.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Bob Vaucher passed away at 102 years old. He had numerous war recognitions and his contributions to the Country are enormous. Further, his contributions to aviation history and the Nation during World War II are extensive and monumental. Bob had a massive role, influence and impact in Bridgewater's history and development.

Council President Pedroso added that since 1950, when Bob moved to Bridgewater to the same house he occupied until his passing, Bob was a staunch

activist for Bridgewater's quality of life and improving the Township. Through Bob's vision and service, Bridgewater established its Police Department, the Bridgewater-Raritan Board of Education, the town's first high school, the Raritan Valley Community College, and Bridgewater's current form of government.

Council President Pedroso offered it will be worthy to name the Municipal building "The Bob Vaucher Administration Building" due to his immense contributions to the township. He added he has created a webpage in honor of Mr. Vaucher and encouraged everyone to look at it and if they have any information they would like included should reach out to him. Council President Pedroso also showed a video in honor of same.

Mayor Moench stated Bob has been an integral part of the country and for Bridgewater Township adding what amazes him the most was that Bob was active for his entire life. He was involved in local government/politics all his life and hoped that every member of the community whether serving on an elected role or on a volunteer capacity continues to look at someone like Bob as a true example of what it means to be dedicated to your community and community service.

Mayor Moench read the following proclamation from the Mayor and Council.

WHEREAS, Thomas R. "Bob" Vaucher passed away on February 7, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Bob recently celebrated his 102nd birthday on December 3, 2020 with his friends and family; and

WHEREAS, Bob was a resident of Bridgewater Township for over 70 years, buying a home on Foothill Road and raising his family there; and

WHEREAS, prior to moving to Bridgewater, Bob was a decorated World War II veteran and over the course of the war, Bob flew 117 combat missions, and earned two Distinguished Flying Crosses, five Air Medals, eight Battle Stars, and 13 wartime commendations and citations; and

WHEREAS, throughout his many years as a Bridgewater resident, Bob has been instrumental in both the formation and the preservation of the Bridgewater Township in which we are now privileged to live, work and raise our families including, the establishment of a Police Department, the Bridgewater-Raritan Board of Education, the town's first high school, the Raritan Valley Community College, and the Township's current form of government; and

WHEREAS, Bob was a ceaseless advocate for his community and has impacted the lives of so many in Bridgewater Township; and

WHEREAS, Bob serves a shining example for Bridgewater Township residents and officials, as his life was a clear representation of what an individual, who lives their life passion and dignity, can accomplish; and

WHEREAS, Bob's passing will be felt deeply in Bridgewater Township but his legacy will live on for generations to come; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Matthew C. Moench and the Bridgewater Township Council do hereby proclaim and mourn the passing of Thomas R. "Bob" Vaucher and hope that his memory will serve as an enduring call for future community activists who wish to better the lives of their neighbors

Councilman Kirsh stated while he did not know Mr. Vaucher too well as he met him at the very last years of his life, the impact Bob had is evident. He expressed he was pleased that we honored Mr. Vaucher while he was still living. He added he is in support of naming the municipal building after Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Bob Vaucher.

Presentation

LINDA MEAD, D&R GREENWAY GIFTING

Councilman Ring stated that Bob had made a commitment to his longtime friend, John Wemple, to ensure that the Wemple property would be forever preserved. When this property was slated for development, Bob mobilized the residents and fought to get the property preserved by raising almost \$2M. The Wemple property was subsequently renamed, and is now known as the Vaucher Revolutionary Preserve at Steele's Gap. The sign signifying the new name was donated by D&R Greenway, which had helped to acquire the land from a developer.

Councilman Ring introduced Linda Mead, President and CEO of D&R Greenway Land Trust, the nonprofit organization.

Ms. Mead stated it's been a privilege to work with Bridgewater on the Wemple tract. She recalled how she had first met Vaucher before he turned 100 noting he had come to the firm's Princeton headquarters to speak with D&R Greenway about the Wemple property. She was amazed that he could sit there and speak so distinctly about both the property and his late friend John Wemple.

Ms. Mead stated that from that meeting, they began a journey which culminated in the acquisition of the property, with seventy seven (77) neighbors making monetary contributions, and many other firms joining in the effort, thanks to

Vaucher's inspiration.

Ms. Mead further stated it is an honor to bring a special painting and present it to the township. She introduced James Fiorentino who made the painting noting he has won many awards both nationally and internationally and was on ABC for the work he was doing with watercolor painting and it is an honor to be able to bring this special painting he created.

Mr. Fiorentino stated he has painted many important people, including baseball star Ted Williams, astronaut Buzz Aldrin and Congressman John Lewis, and he puts Vaucher "up there with all of them." He said he hopes his original Vaucher painting will travel to various galleries over the next few years, and that it will one day be displayed in the National Portrait Gallery in Washington DC to portray the history of Bob.

Fiorentino also said that Vaucher's family already possessed a limited edition version of the painting. He had finished the work a week before Vaucher became ill and was able to show it to him electronically via Zoom.

Mr. Fiorentino stated it was his honor to gift the Vaucher portrait which pictures the retired military man seated on the porch at his long-time Bridgewater home, situated across from the Wemple property which is shown in the background.

Mayor and Council expressed gratitude and appreciation for the gift.

**Public
Comment**

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.

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, the meeting was opened to the public for comment.

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

- ⇒ Link for Public Comment Submission:
<https://bridgewaterocr.typeform.com/to/XG6BK5fg>
- ⇒ 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 link/portal provided.

Following recess, on the call of the roll by Township Clerk Doyle, the following Council members were present:

Councilman Kurdyla
Councilman Kirsh
Councilman Norgalis
Councilman Ring
Council President Pedroso

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

Family of Bob Vaucher - Thank you very much for your kind words about our father Bob Vaucher.

Donna Lazarick - Thank you all for your kind words and prayers for Bob and his family. We are blessed to have them in our lives this many years. Know that he was satisfied with the 24-7 love this past two (2) weeks in his beloved home. He cared deeply about Bridgewater and very much appreciate its history and recognition of his efforts. Special thanks to Linda Mead, D&R Greenway and James Valentino for the special recognition. Mark your calendars for a celebration of life on August 15th. August 15th is the 76th anniversary of the end of WWII and it will be complete with a WWII formation flyover.

Cathy Franco, 766 Weemac Road, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Hoping that during the discussion of the refinancing of the bonds that the details of the current bond interest rates vs the new bond interest rates will be identified in order to better understand why Mayor Moench stated that the refinancing will save the township money - as it also seems as we will be paying a “refinancing” fee. Hoping to be able to have more details on how this will all “shake out”.

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

**Public
Hearing &
Final Action
Ordinances**

AN ORDINANCE RENAMING CLEVELAND DRIVE TO RIDGEVIEW TERRACE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 40:67-1(k)

Motion for continuance of Public Hearing and Final Action until March 1, 2021, due to publication error.

On motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the foregoing Ordinance was moved for continuance until March 1, 2021. The vote was as follows:

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

Introduction
of
Ordinances

REFUNDING BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE REFUNDING OF CERTAIN GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$11,500,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$11,500,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING THE COST THEREOF

Township Administrator Pappas invited Anthony Inverso, our financial advisor to provide more information on this matter.

Mr. Inverso stated this Ordinance is for the refunding of the 2012 bonds and explained as follows:

The 2012 Bonds were issued on April 18, 2012 in the original amount of \$17,278,000. \$10,493,000 of the 2012 Bonds are callable and will be refunded at an average interest rate of 3.3%. The average interest rate of the Refunding Bonds is projected to be 1.7%. Total debt service savings are projected to be \$677,145 (averaging \$56,429 annually through December 31, 2032), after payment of all costs of issuance. On a present value basis, savings equate to \$617,556 (5.89% of the 2012 Bonds refunded)

Local Finance law states that any refunding transaction must save the Township at least 3.3% of the bond being refunded. This saves almost twice that minimum threshold. The savings quoted are after any costs and fees associated with the refunding.

Bond Counsel Dreikowitz was also present to field questions and to provide input on this refunding bond ordinance including the tax laws associated with this type of refunding bond. If this is introduced tonight, the next step is to have a public hearing at the next Council meeting. After the decision is published on the newspaper, the ordinance will be effective 20-days after publication. It will take a few months to get this ready to formalize.

Mayor Moench stated this is one of the steps we are taking to reduce our debt and to ensure we merge our priorities both in the short and long term.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [#21-02-11-056](#) 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 1ST day of March, 2021, at 7:30 p.m. prevailing time on said day as the time and the Bridgewater Township Municipal Court Chambers at 100 Commons Way 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 Director of Finance will forward the Supplemental Debt Statement received this date electronically to the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs, Trenton, New Jersey.

Resolutions

COUNCIL PRESIDENT PEDROSO READ THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS BY TITLE THEN CALLED FOR A CONSENT MOTION.

AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER NO.1/FINAL CHANGE ORDER DECREASING THE CONTRACT PRICE FROM \$802,572.79 TO \$733,307.30 A DECREASE OF 8.63% OR \$69,265.49, AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROJECT, RELEASE OF THE PERFORMANCE BOND, ACCEPTANCE OF THE MAINTENANCE BOND, AND FINAL PAYMENT TO TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP. (22 FIFTH STREET, SOMERVILLE, NJ 08876) FOR THE BWT-6 (ARROWBROOK DRIVE, BROOKDALE DRIVE, SOUTH KNOB, TULLO ROAD, AND VALLEY VIEW ROAD) IMPROVEMENT

PROJECT, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2018 AND 2020 CAPITAL FUND

AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER NO.1/FINAL CHANGE ORDER DECREASING THE CONTRACT PRICE FROM \$241,717.90 TO \$236,228.09 A DECREASE OF 2.27% OR \$5,489.81, AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROJECT, RELEASE OF THE PERFORMANCE BOND, ACCEPTANCE OF THE MAINTENANCE BOND, AND FINAL PAYMENT TO TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP. (22 FIFTH STREET, SOMERVILLE, NJ 08876) FOR THE BWT-8 (BARRINGTON ROAD AND SUDBURY DRIVE) IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2020 CAPITAL FUND

AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER NO.1/FINAL CHANGE ORDER DECREASING THE CONTRACT PRICE FROM \$422,272.00 TO \$352,524.66 A DECREASE OF 16.52% OR \$69,747.35, AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROJECT, RELEASE OF THE PERFORMANCE BOND, ACCEPTANCE OF THE MAINTENANCE BOND, AND FINAL PAYMENT TO CCM CONTRACTING, INC. (336 ROUTE 22, GREEN BROOK, NJ 08812) FOR THE STANGLE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (ENTIRE LENGTH), FUNDED THROUGH THE 2013 CAPITAL FUND

AUTHORIZING DISBURSAL OF \$20,000 FROM THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND FOR RENOVATIONS AND REPAIRS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSE REPAIRS FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 30 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE TO SEVERE STRUCTURES OF 38 DELAWARE AVENUE, PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY 07055

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring the following resolutions were proposed. The vote was as follows:

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

THE RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED.

Copies of resolution [#21-02-11-057 thru #21-02-11-060](#) are 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 litigation.

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 Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, Council convened in closed session at approximately 8:50 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#21-02-11-061](#) is appended to the official minutes.

On the motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, the meeting reconvened to open session at approximately 9:10 p.m. and adjourned immediately thereafter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Filipe Pedroso
Council President