

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
MAY 17, 2021 VIRTUAL MEETING**

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session on Monday, May 17, 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 JANUARY 5, 2021, WITH A SUBSEQUENT MEETING NOTICED ON MAY 13, 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**

**MAY 3, 2021 - REGULAR SESSION**

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, May 3, 2021 regular session minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote.

**Council Reports**

Councilman Norgalis

- Our Muslim friends have celebrated the end of the month Ramadan.

- Next Saturday is the last Bulky Trash day for this season. Over the first two weeks, business has been light.
- Took part, along with Councilman Kirsh, in the Somerset County Monthly Governing Officials meeting where Board of Elections administrator Jerry Midgette talked about the evolving election process.
- Attended a County sponsored virtual meeting featuring a guest speaker from Green Spot Mobility who spoke about the installation of electric charging stations.
- Attended, along with Councilman Ring, the Quarterly Local Emergency Management Committee meeting chaired by Sgt. James Edwards.
- Attended, along with President Pedroso, a meeting to review timing for the bond rollover previously approved by the Council.
- Attended the First Annual Founders Day celebrating the Charter by King George II in 1749. Bridgewater was much larger at that time.
- Attended a meeting with Tom Genova and Scarlett Doyle to discuss modifications of the Tree Ordinance withdrawn, at Councilman Norgalis' request at the last meeting. It was a very successful meeting.
- Last Friday Michael Pappas and Tom Genova arranged for Councilman Norgalis to tour the two large sewerage pumping stations, Gilbride Road and Easy Street. The tour was given by long term employee Richard Boyer. Both stations are showing their age. Gilbride was built in 1985 and Easy Street was built in 1965. Councilman Norgalis stated he believed that it is time to engage an engineering firm, similar to our road projects, to provide an independent view of the "health" of these two facilities. Unlike roads, nobody sees these facilities but we need to ensure our residents can keep washing and flushing.

#### Councilman Ring:

- Was honored to attend the inaugural game of the NY Yankees new Double A affiliate, Somerset Patriots. Best of luck to the Patriots this year.
- Last week, Councilman Ring attended the quarterly Township Local Emergency Planning Committee meeting, hosted by the Township Office of Emergency Management.
- This past Saturday, Councilman Ring attended the Township's inaugural

Founders Day Celebration. Congratulations to the Township Office of Constituent Relations and Recreation Department for another successful event. Councilman Ring stated he looks forward to see this event grown over the coming years.

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Was not able to attend the Founders Day celebration due to a conflict with the State committee but recognized the effort to put together such a celebration. Bridgewater is to be celebrated!

Councilman Kirsh:

- The Planning Board did not meet due to a lack of agenda but will be meeting a week from tomorrow.
- Attended Founders Day. It was wonderful to gather in person in the company of his colleagues and the larger community. He added the courtyard is a good asset and was pleasantly surprised at how good celebrations are in that area.
- Attended the Somerset County Governing officials meeting. Jerry Midgette, Administrator of the Somerset County Board of Elections spoke with regard to upcoming elections. Councilman Kirsh advised the residents we are going back to in-person voting which will take place at our various locations. Sample ballots will soon be provided.
- The general election will be different this year and in the next few weeks, we will report some efforts we are taking to ensure there is an in-person voting location somewhere in Bridgewater as a convenience for our voters. There will be at least 10-days of early voting and at least five (5) locations in Somerset County and we are hoping that Bridgewater can be one of those locations.
- Had the pleasure of accompanying the final portion of our food donation to the Food Bank network of Somerset County put together by our Bridgewater staff in coordination with Bridgewater Soccer. The grand total donated by Bridgewater residents was over three thousand pounds of food and other household goods. Councilman Kirsh thanked the residents and hoped we can continue to extend generosity to those who are less fortunate.

Council President Pedroso

- Had the pleasure of emceeding the inaugural Founders Day event this past weekend. It was a beautiful day, everybody did a great job! Council

President Pedroso thanked Wegmans for their food donation and Mayor Moench for this community initiative.

- Had an initial meeting to determine whether we can continue public meetings at the courtroom in a safe manner and in a way that works properly for the public in order for the residents to participate. He will report back in the coming weeks.

## Mayor's Reports

Mayor Matthew C. Moench

- Thanked Council President Pedroso for emceeding the Founders Day event this past weekend. Founders Day was a way to expand the eco-blast flair into a wider range of activities. We were uncertain what the restrictions would be so we decided to start the tradition and hope to grow this into a premier spring event where our community can spend time together. Mayor Moench thanked the high school band for their performance. He also thanked Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator for his work on putting this event together.

## Proclamation 2021 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK

Matthew C. Moench, Mayor read the following proclamation:

**WHEREAS**, in communities across the country, Emergency Medical Service providers are a crucial public service; and

**WHEREAS**, members of Emergency Medical Service companies are ready to tirelessly assist in life threatening situations, and deliver hope to residents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week around the clock; and

**WHEREAS**, the Emergency Medical Services system, many of whom are volunteers consist of highly trained members of the public, first responders, paramedics, firefighters, police officers, emergency medical dispatchers, nurses, emergency physicians, educators, and administrators who work tirelessly to serve their community; and

**WHEREAS**, EMS rescue squads are often the first point of contact with citizens in need of medical assistance. Evaluating, communicating and transporting them to hospitals or treatment facilities without hesitation oftentimes under immense pressure that can take both an emotional or physical toll, on even the most experienced professionals; and

**WHEREAS**, the members of Emergency Medical Service teams engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to reinforce their lifesaving skills in real time scenarios; and

**Public  
Comment**

**WHEREAS**, it is not only appropriate to recognize the value of our Emergency Medical Service workers, but imperative to commend them on their service to the greater good of the community by designating Emergency Medical Services Week,

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Matthew C. Moench, Mayor of Bridgewater Township, do hereby proclaim the week of May 16 through May 22, 2021, as EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK.

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 the various ways they can participate as follows:

- ⇒ Link for Public Comment Submission:  
<https://bridgewaterocr.typeform.com/to/Hi2WalDE>
- ⇒ Use raise hand feature to give audio comments
- ⇒ Use Q&A feature for written comments
- ⇒ Text 908-912-4247 for written comments

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

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

Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator read the following resident comments which are on the record verbatim:

**William Skayhan, 19 Jeffrey Lane, Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

I would like to ask why the paving of Crim Road took place prior to PSE&G then proceeding to tear up the road and put in new gas lines. Once they were done,

the paving that was done to cover the dig isn't great. The first snow storm we have, the patchwork will most likely be torn up, the road will again be a disaster and the money spent pointless. Why wasn't this better coordinated by the town who had to be aware of both projects so as to prevent this?

**Cathy Haller-Franco, 766 Weemac Rd, Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

I have a few questions. My first question is where is our township's budget proposal? The school board has approved theirs. The county has at least proposed theirs. And yet our township has not yet provided any indication of the potential impact for taxpayers to our township. Prior to the current administration the previous administration would propose their budget in March (2019) even if the town council chose not to vote on it until August.

In addition - how will the township propose to spend the anticipated 4.3 million dollars in federal relief expected for our township related to COVID. I site as my point of reference the article in the newspaper

<https://patch.com/new-jersey/bridgewater/bridgewater-get-4-3-million-under-covid-relief-law>

And finally, I would like to know why the same phone number is being utilized by both the township for "text messages" for questions to the Bridgewater township planning board to text comments on the March 23, 2021 agenda and this phone number is identical to the phone number that is listed on the facebook page for "mayors for mainstreet" - Who is paying for this phone number? And why would a separate entity (Mayors for mainstreet) utilize a phone number potentially paid for by the township. Or why would the township be utilizing a phone number not sanctioned and paid for by the township?

In regard to question 3. I provide for your information the following exhibits  
<https://www.bridgewaternj.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/3-23-2021-PB-Agenda-1.pdf>

My next question would then be can all call/texts sent to this number be OPRA'd  
Thank you for your anticipated response to my concerns and questions.

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

Mayor Moench stated that with regard to the roads, they will be repaved. What we currently see is not how they will remain. We are also in the process of strengthening and updating our overall road opening Ordinance in order to protect the investments we are making to our road infrastructure. We are

discussing the main utilities to see if their five (5) year plan matches up with our (5) year plan and to make sure we are not paving roads that they are then trying to reopen.

With regard to the budget, discussions are ongoing and administration will soon present the budget to the Council.

With regard to the Mayor's main street, we utilize a google phone and we are proud to be part of Mayors for Main Street and continue to actively support that organization. We will handle the OPRA once received.

Council President Pedroso stated there was a hand raised and asked that the meeting be reopened to the public.

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

**Edward "Lefty" Grimes, 84 Hanover Road, East Hanover, NJ 07936**

He is a disabled rights and cannabis patients' rights advocate. He stated that we have a smoking Ordinance that affects cannabis patients. He offered that a cannabis patient should have the same rights as a patient taking oxycodone in a public setting. He stated an oxycodone patient sitting in courtroom would be able to take his medication while a person with a cannabis edible would be sanctioned. He opined we are treating cannabis patients differently from patients taking oxycodone. Mr. Grimes asked that Council consider the residents that are disabled and keep wheelchair patients in mind as they prepare Ordinances.

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

Mayor Moench asked that legal review our Ordinances to the extend of the concerns raised and provide council with a report as to whether said concerns can be covered. If so, council can make a policy decision on how to handle this in accordance with State law.

**Introduction  
of  
Ordinances**

**AN ORDINANCE REPLACING CHAPTER 126 (LAND USE), PART 11 (SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS), ARTICLE XXXVIA ENTITLED "REMOVAL AND PRESERVATION OF TREES," SECTIONS 126-278.1 THROUGH 126-278.12 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPANDING THE DEFINITION SECTION, DELINEATING ADDITIONAL EXCEPTIONS, SETTING FORTH THE PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING A PERMIT,**

**DELINEATING THE CRITERIA FOR TREE REMOVAL AND SETTING FORTH THE TREE REMOVAL APPLICATION FESS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH**

This is to update our tree Ordinance, set forth the procedure for obtaining a tree removal permit, delineate the criteria for tree removal and set forth the tree removal application fees. It will provide guidance not only to township residents but also to our staff/professionals.

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

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

**THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-136](#) 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 10th day of June, 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.

**Resolutions**

**APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - REGULAR MEMBER AND ALTERNATES: ANDREW FRESCO, REGULAR MEMBER, ALTERNATE 1, GARY LASPISA, ALTERNATE 2, KEVIN WROBEL, ALTERNATE 3, BRUCE BONGIORNO, ALTERNATE 4, JOHN GAYESKI**

Councilman Kirsh acknowledged the Zoning Board of Adjustment for their hard work. Mr. Gayeski has previous land use experience in another community and will be an outstanding addition to the Board.



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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-137](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AND THE BRIDGEWATER-RARITAN BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR 2020-2021 HAZARDOUS BUSING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$245,220.04**

This resolution will allow us to provide school busing for safety reasons to and from certain regional schools for pupils living within the Township. Mayor Moench stated we are required by law to provide this service.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-138](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A SITE ACCESS AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AND PUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC & GAS CO. TO PERMIT THE TAKING OF CERTAIN SOIL BORINGS WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL RIGHT-OF-WAY**

This resolution will allow for the replacement of certain gas lines. PSE&G is required to take certain soil borings within the municipal right-of-way in order to install said gas lines. Township Administrator Pappas stated notice will be provided to affected residents of the intent to perform this work.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-139](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING AWARD OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACT TO CHRIS BATTAGLIA OF BATTAGLIA ASSOCIATES LLC, 490 RIDGEFIELD TERRACE, FAIRVIEW, NEW JERSEY 07022 FOR PAYROLL PROCESSING SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000**

Township Administrator Pappas explained our paymaster resigned and due to the relatively short notice, this will allow our payroll system to continue without interruption.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-140](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING AN AWARD OF CONTRACT TO PHOENIX ADVISORS, LLC OF 625 FARNSWORTH AVENUE, BORDENTOWN, NJ 08505 TO PROVIDE INDEPENDENT ADVISORY SERVICES RELATED TO THE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION ACT (WIPA) IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000 FOR A TERM ONE (1) YEAR**

**AWARD OF CONTRACT TO REMINGTON & VERNICK ENGINEERS (3 JOCAMA BOULEVARD, SUITE 300-400, OLD BRIDGE, NJ 08857) FOR A LICENSED ENGINEER - WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION ACT (WIPA), IN THE SUM OF \$19,900.00, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2021 SEWER CAPITAL BOND ORDINANCE**

These resolutions will allow us to review our sewer infrastructure and the financial health of the overall system in order to provide us with tools to make decisions about our sewer system moving forward.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-141 and #21-05-17-142](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AWARD OF CONTRACT TO TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP., (22 FIFTH STREET, SOMERVILLE, NJ 08876) FOR THE STEEPLE CHASE LANE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (ENTIRE LENGTH), IN THE SUM OF \$301,742.07, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2020 CAPITAL FUND AND NJ MUNICIPAL AID GRANT**

Township Administrator Pappas explained this is for the entire length of Steeple Chase Lane and the price is quite competitive. He added that Top Line Construction has a reputation for performing exceptional work.

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 Norgalis	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye
Council President Pedroso	Aye

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-143](#) is appended to the official minutes

**SOMERSET COUNTY PATRIOTS REQUEST TO POSTPONE THE FIREWORK DISPLAY FROM TUESDAY MAY 4, 2021, DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER AND RESCHEDULE THE RAIN DATE OF MAY 8th TO FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 2021, TO HOST A CELEBRATION OF LIFE CEREMONY FOR OWNER STEVE KALAFER**

Councilman Ring requested that we add Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Rescue Squad to the list of people to receive notice of this resolution.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-144](#) is appended to the official minutes

**APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTE A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY UNDER THE NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION BOND ACT FOR PHASE 1 AND 2 OF THE HVAC SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROJECT AT THE BRIDGEWATER LIBRARY, 1 VOGT DRIVE, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,797,080.00**

Township Administrator Pappas explained this resolution will allow us to pursue the grant to replace the HVAC system at the Bridgewater Library. The township will match percent (50%) of the cost of the project.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#21-05-17-145](#) is appended to the official minutes

**Adjournment**

On the motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

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Filipe Pedroso  
Council President