

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
JULY 8, 2021 COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session meeting on Thursday, July 8, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers in the Municipal Complex, Bridgewater, New Jersey 08807 & via Live Online Broadcast.

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, BY SENDING WRITTEN NOTICE AND ELECTRONIC NOTICE 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. A SUBSEQUENT NOTICE WITH LIVESTREAM INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED ON JUNE 28, 2021.

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: 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

JUNE 21, 2021 - REGULAR SESSION

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the June 21, 2021 regular session minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote.

Council Reports

Councilman Kirsh

- Had the pleasure of attending the July 4th celebration at Middlebrook and proud of our Independence Day history.
- Attended the Somerset County Governing Officials meeting which was a joint meeting with Somerset, Warren and Hunterdon Counties at the

RVCC. Guest speaker Lisa Hibbs of Commercial Utilities Consultants discussed energy supply aggregation.

- The Zoning Board met in-person this week. The Planning Board was cancelled to a future meeting date.
- Announced that the Bridgewater Municipal complex will be one of the six (6) locations designated in Somerset County for early voting. This will be a great resource not only for Bridgewater residents but also for neighboring communities to be able to vote early and at their leisure.

Councilman Norgalis:

- Much has already been said about the Fourth of July celebrations in the town. I will simply say “happy birthday to us”
- Attended several financial meetings dealing with the refinancing of the bonds and notes which we will be dealing with under 11b on the agenda for tonight.
- The road work on Eisenhower Ave which must be completed before school starts in September has begun. It will involve sidewalk, curbing and sewer inlet work.
- The sewer installation on Old Farm Rd is also moving along.

Councilman Ring:

- Also attended the July 4th celebration at Middlebrook. He added this is one of our best hidden gems in Bridgewater noting it is through a special act of congress that the flag can fly there 24rs a day, seven days a week with the understanding that the declaration of independence is read each year.
- Also attended the joint Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties governing officials meeting at RVCC.

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Took the liberty of meeting with Police Chief Payne to discuss some questions he had regarding some traffic and road conditions at the Finderne section of the township. This will be addressed in the near future.
- With regard to the budget, he reached out to Mayor Moench with some questions regarding departments’ budgets and is pleased to report that all his questions were answered and is of the opinion that all is in order.

Council President Pedroso

- Was pleased that everyone was able to attend the July 4th celebration at the Middlebrook noting how special it is. The flag not only flies by order of congress but was also unfurled for the first time on June 14th of 1777 on the same grounds which makes Middlebrook a very special place.

- Attended an animal shelter meeting.
- The budget subcommittee met with administration to discuss the refunding resolution that is on tonight's agenda.
- Attended the Bridgewater Raritan High School graduation as his oldest daughter was graduating. Council President Pedroso added it was special that the graduates were able to have an in-person graduation and wished all of them the best in their future endeavors.

Mayor's Reports

Mayor Matthew C. Moench

- Township Administrator Pappas made report on behalf of Mayor Moench noting the council will consider a resolution tonight for the pavement preservation program. When Council approved the road program for 2021, roads that would not necessitate major reconstruction were part of the program. The entity that is being proposed for the Council to approve is under a state contract so the normal bidding process was not required. Administrator Pappas noted this is a very cost-effective program and the contractor is someone that our township engineer has a lot of experience with. He added administration is pleased to present this to the Council for their consideration.

Public Hearing & Final Action Ordinances

ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK FOR THE 2021 CALENDAR YEAR (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)

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

No one wished to be heard.

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

On motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, 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

[ORDINANCE #21-15 WAS ADOPTED.](#)

A copy of resolution **[#21-07-08-184](#)** is appended to the official minutes

**Public
Comment**

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

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

Jennifer Loughran, 716 Falcon Court, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Thanked the Council on behalf of her neighborhood for approving their road to be repaved adding that 80-families live there and their kids will be able to run and skateboard. She also acknowledged the town workers as they have been really professional and courteous and took time at one point to explain to their curious neighborhood kids the purpose of running a camera down their sewers.

John Archoleo, 1110 Washington Valley Road, Martinsville, NJ 08836

Talked about the sewer system noting it is a concern for many residents who wonder why they pay the same sewer tax amount as those residents with much bigger homes. Mr. Archoleo asked that something be done about the sewer tax to make it fair for those residents that have smaller homes.

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

Administrator Pappas stated we engaged an engineering firm to conduct an analysis of the sewer utility fee structure. They were to look at different scenarios and options which are being reviewed by our engineering staff and at some point, those options will be presented to the council for their consideration.

**Introduction
of
Ordinances**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 217 ENTITLED "AMBULANCES" TO MODIFY THE TERMINOLOGY USED TO DESCRIBE THE AMBULANCE SERVICES AND TO MODIFY THE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

Councilman Ring stated Bridgewater township is home to about a dozen nursing homes and long-term care facilities. Over the years, there has been challenges with the nature of the population of those facilities where some of the residents have been bed ridden and cannot get into vehicles. What has happened over the years is that these facilities would call 911 for an ambulance to send a patient for a routine medical test. This puts a burden on our volunteer squads which are in turn not available for true emergencies. This ordinance does not prevent these facilities from calling for true emergencies but it prevents them from calling for non-emergency situations while encouraging them to make arrangements for alternative transportation.

Councilman Ring stated the Township is party to a shared service agreement with RWJ Health Network, Inc. as an ambulance provider in the Somerset Ambulance Shared Service Alliance (SASSA). This Ordinance will allow us to modify the terminology within this Chapter to include said contracted ambulance services and to modify the penalties for violations in order to drive improved compliance with the health-care facilities.

On motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, 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 [#21-07-08-185](#) 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 19TH day of July, 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

AUTHORIZING BRIDGEWATER TAX COLLECTOR DARROW MURDOCK TO CONDUCT AN ELECTRONIC TAX SALE

Township Administrator Pappas explained this practice began last year due to the pandemic. This resolution allows Tax Collector Murdock to do this again.

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 [#21-07-08-186](#) is appended to the official minutes

RESOLUTION COMBINING BONDS AGGREGATING THE PRINCIPAL SUM OF NOT TO EXCEED \$5,935,000 AUTHORIZED BY TWO BOND ORDINANCES HERETOFORE ADOPTED TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST OF VARIOUS GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY INTO ONE CONSOLIDATED ISSUE OF BONDS AND PROVIDING FOR THE FORM, MATURITIES AND OTHER DETAILS OF SAID CONSOLIDATED ISSUE

Council President Pedroso explained this resolution is a refinance of debt. It is not incurrence of new debt but a restructure in order to take advantage of historical low interest rates.

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 [#21-07-08-187](#) is appended to the official minutes

RESOLUTION BYPASSING THE VACATION TIME CARRYOVER PROVISIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 26-31(B) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AND RE-EXTENDING SAME FROM JUNE 30, 2021 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021 IN CONSIDERATION OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE EMPLOYEES WHO WERE UNABLE TO UTILIZE THEIR ACCRUED VACATION CARRYOVER LEAVE AS USUAL

This item was removed from the agenda at the request of administration.

SUPPORTING THE PROPOSED NJDOT TEMPORARY DETOUR THROUGH BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP DUE TO REPLACEMENT OF THE BRIDGE DECKS OF THE NJDOT SOMERVILLE ROAD BRIDGES OVER ROUTE 78

Township Administrator Pappas explained DOT is preparing to repair a bridge and are requesting Council's endorsement as they will need to prepare a detour. More time is needed to respond to questions asked of Council.

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

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

REQUESTING PERMISSION FOR THE DEDICATION BY RIDER FOR BRIDGEWATER NATIONAL FITNESS COURT TRUST FUND REQUIRED BY N.J.S.A. 40A:4-39(b)

Township Administrator Pappas explained Council previously approved this resolution but the state required that additional information be included which is now captured in this version. Councilman Norgalis added this will allow residents to donate items to the township where normally they would not be able to.

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, 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 [#21-07-08-188](#) is appended to the official minutes

APPOINTMENTS TO THE PARK BOARD MELISSA FERRAO & ASHLEY SIKORA

Township Administrator Pappas stated Ms. Ferrao and Ms. Sikora were recommended by the Mayor. Councilman Norgalis and Councilman Pedroso acknowledged the residents willing to donate their time and services.

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, 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 [#21-07-08-189](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT AWARD TO A STATE CONTRACT VENDOR, ASPHALT PAVING SYSTEMS, INC., 500 NORTH EGG HARBOR ROAD, HAMMONTON, NJ 08037

**FOR THE 2021 PAVEMENT PRESERVATION PROGRAM (CHIP SEAL & MICROSURFACING)
IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$394,858.40 FUNDED THROUGH THE 2021 CAPITAL
FUND**

Township Administrator Pappas explained this is meant to extend the life of sixteen (16) roads that were previously constructed/reconstructed. It is not the traditional chip seal but chip seal with coating. Administration hopes work will begin soon and the neighboring residents will be advised best way possible that this work will soon be taking place.

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 Norgalis	Aye
Councilman Ring	Aye
Council President Pedroso	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#21-07-08-190](#) is appended to the official minutes

**Public
Hearing**

**2021-2022 RENEWAL OF PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION LIQUOR LICENSE NUMBER
1806-33-021-009, FOR MISH-J.O. INVESTMENT CORP. T/A GREEN KNOLL GRILLE 645
ROUTE 202-206 SOUTH, BRIDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY 08807**

Lisa Barata, Esq. of CSG Attorneys was present to represent Joseph & Lisa DiChiara, owners of the Green Knoll Grille (GKG). It was noted this public hearing had been postponed from June 21st to July 8th.

The matter in question concerns the annual 2021-2022 liquor license renewal for the GKG. Based on the police report prepared by Detective Russell Dunlop where public safety matters were noted, it was determined the annual renewal resolution needed to be readdressed.

It further was noted that Attorney Barata, Township Administrator Pappas, Township Attorney Corsini, Township Clerk Doyle, Police Chief Payne and Detective Dunlop had met to discuss the renewal and the conditions that may be considered for public safety at this facility. Based on that meeting, Attorney Corsini had prepared a draft resolution to be discussed during the public hearing. Attorney Lisa Borata together with Council reviewed and discussed the current fifteen (15) conditions to possibly amend, reduce and/or add conditions that would be relevant to employ public safety at this facility.

Council was not amendable to reduce any of the restrictions at this time but did

agree to readdress after ninety (90) days some of the conditions proposed to be removed.

Currently, the GKG has filed an ad-interim through the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and therefore continue to be in operation but it is anticipated that another draft resolution will be prepared by township Attorney Corsini which will include the conditions discussed tonight. This will be presented to the Council for their review and approval at the next Council meeting. The amended resolution will be made part of the official record of these minutes.

At the conclusion of this discussion Attorney Barata stated that she reserves the right, pursuant to discussion with her client, to appeal the township decision to the ABC.

**Closed
Session**

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

PENDING LITIGATION - Center of Excellence

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 Ring, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, Council convened in closed session at approximately 8:20 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#21-06-10-191](#) is appended to the official minutes.

On the motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the meeting reconvened to open session at approximately 9:40 p.m. and adjourned immediately thereafter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Filipe Pedroso
Council President