

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2021      VIRTUAL MEETING**

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in an emergency meeting on Friday, September 3, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. via electronic communication.

Township Attorney Alex Fisher read the following statement:

- 1. The normal notice requirements of the OPMA Law have not been met**
- 2. The nature of the urgency and importance that requires holding the meeting without giving the otherwise required notice is related to the aftermath of Hurricane Ida**
- 3. The nature of the substantial public harm likely to result if the meeting is delayed for the purpose of complying with the notice requirements includes road damage, debris, sewer issues**
- 4. Damages related to hurricane Ida is the reason why the need for holding the meeting could not have been foreseen at a time when the required notice could have been provided, or if it could have been foreseen, the reason why the required notice was not provided**
- 5. The time, place and manner in which any notice of the meeting was provided. The notice was sent out - The notice for an emergency meeting was sent to the courier newspaper, The Breeze, posted on township website, posted on the bulletin board and made available to the public**
- 6. Township Attorney Fisher made a statement that the meeting will be limited to the specific matter of urgency and importance for which the meeting was called which includes the aftermath of Hurricane Ida.**

Council President Pedroso read the following announcement:

Notice of Meeting

**THE NORMAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW REGARDING 48 HOURS' NOTICE HAVE NOT BEEN MET DUE TO LACK OF TIME AND SUBJECT MATTER; HOWEVER, NOTICE OF THIS EMERGENCY MEETING SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 3, 2021, AT 5 P.M. WITH VIRTUAL ACCESS INFORMATION**

**PROVIDED AND SENT ELECTRONICALLY ON SEPTEMBER 3, 2021, TO THE COURIER NEWS, BREEZE AND POSTED ON THE WEBSITE.**

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  
Christopher Corsini, Township Attorney  
Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator  
Linda Doyle, Township Clerk  
Grace Njuguna, Deputy Township Clerk

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

Mayor Matthew C. Moench stated Hurricane Ida has tremendously affected not only our community but many other communities around us. He sent his condolences to the families who lost their loved ones adding his thoughts are with those that have suffered in one way or another.

Mayor Moench advised the residents to take good pictures of any damages they may have incurred, call their insurance companies to see if those damages are covered and if they are not covered, residents should get in touch with FEMA for assistance. For those residents that have any yard debris (branches/tree limbs), our Township Yard Waste site is open. Mayor Moench added we are currently investigating providing curbside pickup for our residents or other options that would allow us to assist the public.

Some of our neighboring communities including Manville were severely affected and some residents have expressed interest in wanting to help. Mayor Moench stated he spoke with Manville's Mayor Onderko who stated they need cleaning supplies. Cleaning supplies kits are available and an announcement will soon go out on how to access these items. There will also be a drop box made available for those residents that want to donate supplies. In addition, a vigil will be held on Sunday evening in honor of those that have suffered as a result of hurricane Ida. More details will be provided later.

Sergeant Jamie Edwards, OEM coordinator, Police Captain Sean O'neil and Township Engineer Bill Burr were present and discussed the extent and nature of

the grave and extreme damage to our roads, infrastructure, sewer, bridges, utility poles etc. They also discussed some of the work that needed immediate emergent repair, what has already been done and the plan moving forward to mediate the situation. Public safety issues will be tackled first, we will then move quickly to removing debris.

Mayor Moench stated we hope that some of the repairs will be FEMA eligible although it is expected we may not receive those monies right away. The goal tonight is to get the funding to begin working on sewer repairs, repairs to those roads that pose a significant hazard to the public and then tackle the debris or bulky trash that needs to be removed quickly. Council will also need to approve the two vendors that will be working on the roads and the bulky trash.

Councilman Kirsh asked whether the proposals we have are the most effective, efficient and cost-effective way to deal with the effects of hurricane. Council was in agreeance that while we are uncertain whether this is the most cost-effective way we are unable to wait, these items have to be taken of timely.

Council expressed their condolences to the families of those that passed away as a result of this storm. Council President Pedroso thanked Mayor Moench for his leadership role and acting quickly and diligently. He also thanked those offering their services to our residents.

**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 Ring, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the meeting was opened to the public for comment.

Deputy Township Attorney Fisher advised that this being an emergency meeting, the public can only comment with regard to the matters listed on the agenda.

Any resident with additional comments was advised they can send in their comments via the methods displayed on the screen 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

There was a four (4) minute recess to allow the public additional time to submit public comment via the ways shown above.

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 stated there were residents with their hands raised:

**Curtis Kraut, 199 Adamsville Road, Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

He lives where Cucklesbrook crosses Adamsville Road. He stated they had significant damage as a result of the storm and their attempts to reach the police via 9-1-1 and the local police numbers were futile. He added there was no way to get a hold of anybody to block the street in order to prevent traffic from damaging property or cars getting stuck on the roads. He added there has been a chronic issue with obstructions accumulating within the brook which is a life safety issue. He asked that administration allocate funds and manpower to ensure these obstructions are removed.

Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator read the following public comments which are recorded verbatim:

**Marie Ibinoff, 85 Bond Street, Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

Can we get training as volunteers to learn how to fill out FEMA applications for residents? Can United Way accept for us to do that? I would love to volunteer to help do this as I see it as a big gap in reading various FaceBook posts.

**Hannah Scansaroli, Geiger Lane, Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

The roads are really bad on Fairfield, Westbrook and Sherlin/Running Brook Roads.

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

Mayor Moench stated we will review the roads and if they pose a public safety will be worked on immediately. We will be in contact with FEMA and if there are opportunities for residents to participate in any way, we will make that information available. Marie was asked to check back with the Office of Constituent Relations to determine if her request is an available option.

Mayor Moench acknowledged the issue raised by Mr. Kraut is life-threatening. When it comes to cleaning out drainage easements, it is not always as simple but as part of our immediate storm response, we will investigate that area in order to continue to ensure our residents are safe.

**Resolutions**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT PEDROSO READ THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS BY TITLE AND ALLOWED FOR DISCUSSIONS/QUESTIONS. HE THEN CALLED FOR A CONSENT MOTION.**

**AUTHORIZING AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR DAMAGES TO TOWNSHIP ROADWAYS AND SEWER SYSTEM AND RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE FROM HURRICANE IDA AND RELATED FLOODING, AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR BULK PICKUP OF ASSOCIATED STORM DEBRIS**

**AUTHORIZING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR HURRICANE IDA STORM AND FLOOD DAMAGE TO THE SEWER SYSTEM WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER**

**AUTHORIZING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR HURRICANE IDA STORM AND FLOOD DAMAGE TO STREETS AND ROADWAYS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER**

**AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER TO ENTER INTO AN EMERGENCY CONTRACT WITH VOLLERS EXCAVATING & CONSTRUCTION FOR HURRICANE IDA STORM AND FLOOD DAMAGE REPAIRS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER**

**AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER TO ENTER INTO AN EMERGENCY CONTRACT WITH INTERSTATE WASTE SERVICES FOR HURRICANE IDA STORM BULK TRASH PICK-UP WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER**

**AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER TO ENTER INTO AN EMERGENCY CONTRACT WITH TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP. FOR HURRICANE IDA RELATED EMERGENCY ROAD REPAIR**

On motion of Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the foregoing 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 [#21-08-23-224 thru #21-08-23-229](#) are appended to the

official minutes.

Mayor Moench thanked Township Administrator Pappas, the Office of Constituent Relations, Police and Office of Emergency Services for their work during this storm.

**Adjournment**

On the motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

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Filipe Pedroso  
Council President