

MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
May 2, 2022 COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session on Monday, May 2, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers in the Municipal Complex, Bridgewater, New Jersey 08807 & via Live Online Broadcast.

Council President Kurdyla 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 7, 2022, 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 APRIL 26, 2022.

On call of the roll, the following Council members were present:

Councilman Michael Kirsh
Councilman Howard V. Norgalis
Councilman Filipe Pedroso
Councilman Timothy Ring
Council President Allen Kurdyla

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

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

Minutes

JANUARY 13, 2022 - REGULAR SESSION
JANUARY 13, 2022 - CLOSED SESSION 1
JANUARY 13, 2022 - CLOSED SESSION 2

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, the above referenced minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote.

Council Reports

Councilman Kirsh

- Took part in the opening day for Bradley Garden Little Loop

- Attended the Bridgewater community day, done in conjunction with the JCC and other organizations
- As members of the budget committee, he and Councilman Pedroso will meet with the administration and finance in the next few days to discuss the 2022 municipal budget.

Councilman Norgalis (verbatim):

- Tonight, we honor the passing and legacy of Ross Stander for his many years of work on CRISIS (CRISIS will be explained by the Mayor). Ross and I talked about numerous things including our similarity of both being born in the Bronx and attending City College. He will be missed.
- In beginning the month of May we reflect on the numerous religious and secular experiences of the month of April. Two of the latter include April 22 Earth Day celebrated since 1970.
- The more prominent day worldwide is Arbor Day. In 1872 the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture adopted J Sterling Morton's resolution to create Arbor Day, a day set aside to plant trees. Prizes were offered to counties and individuals for planting properly the largest number of trees on that day. It was estimated that more than one million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day. Nebraska celebrates Arbor Day on the last Friday of April. All 50 states celebrate this holiday, although the dates may vary
- Took part in the opening day for Bradley Garden Little Loop. While one of my fellow council men reported his pitch only just got to the plate, mine did not even come near the plate being wide by 6 feet. I do not expect to be invited back to pitch next year.
- All Bridgewater residents and businesses served by Public Service Gas should by this time have received a letter from PSE&G indicating that there will be gas meter inspections in the coming months. If your meter is outside you do not need to be home. However, because of the large number of scams where nefarious individuals pretend to be utility workers be aware that all PSE&G employees must display picture IDs and should be using permanently marked vehicles, not just a magnetic sticker on the side of a truck. If you have any doubt or concern about the validity of a visit, ask for their business card and refuse access to your home or business.

Councilman Pedroso:

- Also attended the numerous events have been mentioned
- Wished all mothers a Happy & Health Mother's Day

Councilman Ring (verbatim):

- On April 23, 2022- I was honored to attend one of the opening day ceremonies of Bradley Gardens Baseball and throw out the ceremonial 'first pitch'.
- On April 27, 2022- Participated in planning meeting for the First Responders Monument being planned for our courtyard.
- This past Thursday, I attended the retirement ceremony for Captain Sean O'Neil of the Bridgewater Police Department. After 25 years of dedicated service to Bridgewater, I wish Captain O'Neil the best of luck in his future endeavors.
- This past Friday, I attended an Arbor Day celebration at Bel Air Park. Cub scouts heard from the Somerset County Agriculture and Natural Resources group on how to plant and take care of trees. Following that, an "October Glory Maple" Tree was planted.
- Yesterday, I attended the Spring Carinal, which the town co-sponsored with the JCC, at the Bridgewater Commons Mall.
- There have been no new applications heard by the Planning Board, with the next meeting scheduled for May 10. Tomorrow's Zoning Board meeting has been cancelled, with the next meeting scheduled for May 17, 2022

Council President Kurdyla

- Attended the Bradley Garden Little Loop opening day. Councilman Kurdyla extended his gratitude to all that supported this program. This year has the largest group of ball players and the largest group of young ladies participating since the onset of the program.
- Attended the retirement ceremony of Captain Sean O'Neil and thanked him for 25-years of dedicated service to Bridgewater township.

**Mayor's
Reports**

Michael Pappas, Township Administrator reported on behalf of Mayor Matthew C. Moench as follows:

At the last council meeting, a member of the public had made requests and

expressed concerns over Country Club Road traffic patterns and speeds. Administration had meetings with the Police, Engineering and Public Works departments to discuss this matter. After the meeting, they took a ride to that location and surveyed it in order to determine areas of concern.

Administration has determined there are a couple of devices that can track the speeds of vehicles which are currently being occupied in another part of the town and will not be available for a couple of weeks but once they are, they will be transferred to Country Club Road / Talamini to capture speeds and number of vehicles. Other considerations include posting a sign on the westbound side of Talamini that would simply state "Stop Sign Ahead".

A review of accident reports has been undertaken preliminarily over the last six years. Five accidents have taken place at that intersection; none of them have been related to speed, three of them were vehicles that were rear ended. Two were related to medical issues and one was an inexperienced driver hitting a puddle of water.

Township Administrator Pappas stated Administration will report back to the Council in approximately six-eight weeks, once they have had the benefit of a traffic study. One was conducted in 2020 and at the time, there was no recommendation for adjustment to speed.

Proclamation IN HONOR OF ROSS STANDER

Council President Kurdyla read the following proclamation on behalf of Mayor Matthew C. Moench:

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROSS STANDER AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, Ross Stander was born and raised in Bronx, New York before marrying his wife, Betty Stander and moving to Bridgewater in 1968; and

WHEREAS, Ross graduated from City College in New York City with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics, and continued his education at Brooklyn Polytechnic, where he received two Master's degrees in Physics and Business Administration; and

WHEREAS, Ross started his career in the semiconductor industry working at Sarnoff Labs and then RCA before owning and operating Tensor Metrix Corporation in Middlesex for 30 years, retiring in 2017; and

WHEREAS, Ross was the Chairman of CRISIS for 30 years, a community-based

environmental watchdog organization that oversaw the cleanup of the former American Cyanamid hazardous waste site in Bridgewater; and

WHEREAS, Ross's contributions to the environmental well-being of Bridgewater have been a bulwark for our local ecology; and

WHEREAS, Ross received EPA's prestigious Environmental Champion Award in 2016 for this work; and

WHEREAS, Ross remained on the frontlines of advocacy, fighting for a cause and a community he was passionate about; and

WHEREAS, to the regret and sorrow of all who knew him, Ross Stander passed away on April 11, 2022; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Mayor Matthew C. Moench, Council President Allen Kurdyla, Council Vice President Michael Kirsh, Councilman Howard Norgalis, Councilman Timothy Ring, and Councilman Filipe Pedroso express, in their individual capacities and on behalf of all residents of the Township of Bridgewater, past, present, and future, their gratitude and deepest sympathy to the Stander Family and join them in celebrating the life and achievements of one of Bridgewater Township's finest residents.

RECOGNITION OF SANGEETHA PUNNAM

Council President Kurdyla read the following proclamation on behalf of Mayor Matthew C. Moench:

WHEREAS, Sangeetha Punnam, a lifelong Bridgewater resident, exhibits astounding scholastic and community leadership abilities which have earned her widespread recognition; and

WHEREAS, Sangeetha attends Raritan Valley Community College & Somerset County Vocational & Technical High School in the Academy for Health and Medical Sciences dual enrollment program and is majoring in General Science/Pre-Health Professional; and

WHEREAS, Sangeetha volunteered with the Bridgewater branch of the Somerset County Library System for over 170 hours, earning the Gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award; and

WHEREAS, Sangeetha was honored as a Commended Student in the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program Last Fall; and

WHEREAS, Sangeetha is one of only 20 college students in the country to be named to the prestigious All-USA Academic Team, out of over 2,200 students nominated; and

WHEREAS, Sangeetha will be recognized during the American Association of Community Colleges' convention this month for her intellectual achievement, leadership and community and campus engagement, and will receive a \$5,000 scholarship; and

WHEREAS, Sangeetha stands as a shining example for Bridgewater students on what can be achieved with time and effort in education and community involvement; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Matthew C. Moench and the Bridgewater Township Council, do hereby proclaim on behalf of the citizens of Bridgewater, New Jersey, their congratulations and best wishes to you, Sangeetha Punnam, for your hard work and dedication in scholastics and community leadership that have led to your well-deserved recognition and awards.

Presentation

SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Thomas Genova, Director of Municipal Services was present and made presentation as follows:

As the Council is aware, I have been working on several projects involving the Sewer Utility with the ultimate goal of enabling the Sewer Utility to operate at the highest level. The Sewers and Sewage Disposal Ordinance is now several decades old and is currently going through a thorough review. It is my conviction that the proposed revisions to the Sewer Ordinance are vital to the Sewer Utility becoming self-sustaining.

The first proposed amendment is to update the Connection Fees to collect the actual cost. Pursuant to NJ Statute 40A:26A-11, connection fee costs shall include: All debt service paid by the Township to defray the capital cost of developing the system as of the end of the immediately preceding budget year, as well as Capital Expenditures made by the Township not funded by a bond ordinance or debt for the development of the system as of the end of the immediately preceding budget year. Thereafter, amounts paid to the Township by a public entity under a service agreement or contract which is not repaid to the public entity by the Township must be subtracted from the debt service and capital expenditure costs incurred by the Township to develop the system. The total accumulative costs to maintain the Sewer Utility infrastructure from 1962-2021 is \$30,014,955.60. This amount is divided by 6,612 which represents the Equivalent Dwelling Units added from 1962-2021. The net is the total connection

fee: \$4,539.

It is also important to note that as per the Statute, the connection fee shall be recomputed at the end of each budget year, after a public hearing is held. As you know, the Sewer Utility is incurring substantial expenses with pump stations renovations and emergency repairs. Inaction will result in the current users subsidizing the increase in costs.

Discussion:

The second proposed amendment is to establish Pass-through Fees for the portions of the Township that are served by sewer systems in other Townships. The neighboring towns are updating their sewer usage fees to reflect sufficient annual revenues to offset actual annual operation and maintenance costs. The residents in these areas would pay the actual costs charged by the neighboring Township. The current ordinance addresses this for areas that are served by Somerville whereby the Borough of Somerville bills users that utilize the Somerville conveyance system. The Township has the same agreement with the Borough of Raritan, however the ordinance needs to be amended to reflect this. A portion of the Township is also served by the Borough of Bound Brook's conveyance system. This amendment will memorialize the billing of these residents. Inaction will result in the current users subsidizing the increase in rates in these towns which will prevent the Sewer Utility from becoming self-sustaining.

Discussion:

The third proposed amendment is to eliminate the water-based method of billing for restaurants whereby the restaurants provide water bills for the previous 12 months as evidence of sewer usage. This method is outdated and very time consuming as it requires several employees to manually calculate each user fee. This proposed amendment will change restaurants to Unit billing with the option to install a sewer meter for commercial flows over 3,000 GPD. If a restaurant currently flows in excess of 3,000 GPD and utilizes water-based billing and can prove to the satisfaction of the Township Engineer that it would be infeasible to install a sewer meter, then it may continue with water-based billing.

Following the presentation, Mr. Genova fielded questions from the governing body.

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

**Public
Comment**

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, the meeting

was opened to the public for comment.

John Arcoleo, 1110 Washington Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Bound Brook sold their water system recently to American Water company and were guaranteed the rates would remain stable for two years and then not increase by more than 3% for the next few years. Mr. Arcolea wondered whether Bridgewater would secure a similar arrangement for Bridgewater residents. Township Administrator Pappas stated administration is going to aggressively pursue an appropriate adjustment for Bridgewater residents whose sewer utility is serviced by Bound Brook because the sewer lines in Bridgewater will continue to be Bridgewater Township's responsibility to maintain.

Mr. Arcoleo stated about 10% of the State gives senior citizens a discount of approximately 20% on sewer charges and wondered if Bridgewater has considered pursuing this possibility. He added that with the new proposed sewer fee, a fair number of residents with smaller homes will be at a disadvantage.

With regard to the recent death fatality of an 11-year old girl, Mr. Arcoleo offered that the people in the Finderne area need a park for their children as there are no adequate parks in that vicinity.

Cathy Franco, 766 Weemac Road, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

She stated the audio for the meeting is not available to the residents at home. Ms. Franco was advised this was being worked on.

Frank Mark Neubauer, 46 Shady Lane, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Suggested Bridgewater should institute a community garden given the hike in food prices noting it would encourage the community to come together and also allow for healthy eating.

George Bateman, 94 Catherine Lane, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Suggested that speed bumps would be helpful on Talamini and Country Club Roads.

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

Public
Hearing &
Final Action
Ordinances

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 216-13 ENTITLED "TOWING AND STORAGE FEE SCHEDULE" IN THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER SO AS TO UPDATE THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE CHARGES LISTED IN THE EXISTING ORDINANCE

Township Administrator Pappas provided the governing body with a comparison sheet showing our proposed fees and the fees of surrounding municipalities, noting they are comparable.

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

John Sciatic, 125 Foothill Road, Bound Brook, NJ 08805

He expressed concern over the raise in fees. Mr. Sciatic was advised the rates will benefit the tracking companies.

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

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

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

ORDINANCE #22-04 WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#22-05-02-132](#) is appended to the official minutes

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 175 (SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL) TO UPDATE CONNECTION FEES

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

Kathy Franco, 766 Weemac Road, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

She expressed concern over the 700% increase from \$550.00 to \$4,539.00 noting there are other fees that the homeowner is subject to when hooking up to the sewer, including the Somerset County utilities fees, permit fees etc.

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

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

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

ORDINANCE #22-06 WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#22-05-02-133](#) is appended to the official minutes

**Introduction
of
Ordinances**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 126-328 (YARD REGULATIONS) AND DELETING CHAPTER 126-321.5 (AAR ACTIVE ADULT RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT)

Township Administrator Pappas explained there have been a number of residents that have expressed interest in making modifications to their porches but have had to go to the Zoning Board. This modification, as proposed, is an effort to assist those residents which is the reason this is being proposed separate and apart from the overall comprehensive review of the Master Plan. Township Administrator Pappas stated this Ordinance as proposed has been endorsed by the Planning Board.

Councilman Pedroso expressed concern that this Ordinance is not zone specific adding he preferred that it was incorporated into the overall Master Plan.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [#22-05-02-134](#) is appended to the official minutes

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

BE IT RESOLVED, that the said pending ordinance be passed on first reading and advertised as required by statute fixing May 16, 2022 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 Township Clerk shall forward this Ordinance to the Bridgewater Township Planning Board for their meeting to be held on May 10, 2022 to review and prepare a recommendation.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LOCATION OF THE C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ZONE BOUNDARY LINE TO INCLUDE BLOCK 221, LOT 29, ALSO KNOWN AS 339 UNION AVENUE

Township Administrator Pappas explained this Ordinance will allow us to add a lot to the C-1 zone in order to assist in redeveloping that corner property that has been blighted for quite some time.

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

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

[THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.](#)

A copy of resolution **[#22-05-02-135](#)** is appended to the official minutes

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

BE IT RESOLVED, that the said pending ordinance be passed on first reading and advertised as required by statute fixing the 16th day of May, 2022, 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; and

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 this ordinance is being introduced based on a Master Plan Reexamination Report dated February 22, 2022; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk forward this ordinance to the Bridgewater Township Planning Board for their meeting to be held May 10, 2022, to review and prepare a recommendation.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 175 (SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL) TO REQUIRE BRIDGEWATER PROPERTIES SERVED BY THE BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK AND RARITAN TO SEWER CHARGES AS BILLED DIRECTLY BY THE BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK AND BOROUGH OF RARITAN AND REMOVE WATER-BASED BILLING OPTIONS

It was noted the purpose of this ordinance is to amend Chapter 175 Sewers and Sewage disposal to revise the sewer utility rate in accordance with the financial requirements of the Township's Sewer Utility.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [#22-05-02-136](#) 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 16th day of May, 2022, 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

RESCIND RESOLUTION NO. 22-04-21-114, ADOPTED BY COUNCIL APRIL 21, 2022 AND REPLACE AUTHORIZING FINAL PAYMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$302,929.00, RESULTING IN A TOTAL COST OF \$1,102,829.60 TO VOLLERS EXCAVATING & CONSTRUCTION (3311 US HIGHWAY 22, PO BOX 5297, NORTH BRANCH, NJ 08876) AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE EMERGENCY ROAD REPAIR PROJECT AFTER HURRICANE IDA, FUNDED THROUGH THE EMERGENCY BOND ORDINANCE & 2019 CAPITAL ROAD FUND

Township Administrator Pappas explained there is no change to the dollar amount; there was an error in the coding for the Ordinances where the funding comes from.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#22-05-02-137](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A DEVELOPER'S AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AND GIRALDI BUILDERS REGARDING PLANNING BOARD APPROVALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FOUR RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS ON NEWLY SUBDIVIDED LOTS

Township Administrator Pappas stated this is a developer's agreement for a small residential subdivision that was approved by the Planning Board.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#22-05-02-138](#) 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 contract negotiations.

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 Kirsh, Council convened in closed session at approximately 9:25 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#22-05-02-139](#) is appended to the official minutes.

On the motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the meeting reconvened to open session at approximately 9:50 p.m. and adjourned immediately thereafter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Allen Kurdyla
Council President