

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MAY 18, 2023 COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session on Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers in the Municipal Complex, Bridgewater, New Jersey 08807 & via Live Online Broadcast.

Council President Kirsh 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 10 2023, WITH WRITTEN NOTICE AND ELECTRONIC NOTICE PROVIDED TO THE COURIER NEWS AND THE BREEZE 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 Allen Kurdyla
Councilman Howard V. Norgalis
Councilman Filipe Pedroso
Councilman Timothy Ring (absent)
Council President Michael Kirsh

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

Councilman Norgalis led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

MAY 4, 2023 - REGULAR SESSION

On motion of Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the May 4, 2023 regular session minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote.

APRIL 20, 2023 & MAY 4, 2023 - CLOSED SESSIONS

The April 20, 2023 and May 4, 2023 closed session minutes were passed around for Council approval & signature.

Council Reports

Councilman Kurdyla

- Attended the Hankel Corporation visit yesterday. It was very interesting to see the improvements that Hankel has made to the buildings and the

devotion that they have to developing new products.

- Was very pleased and very proud to attend Senior Day for the Bridgewater LaCrosse team, where two of his grandsons were playing and his son coaches.

Councilman Norgalis:

- This coming Saturday will be the second and last day for the Spring 2023 season to use the Township Bulky Trask Drop Off program. Rain or Shine. If you miss Saturday which is open from 8am to 1pm the program will return in the Fall.
- The Bridgewater Commons Mall has a new owner who wants to "revitalize" the 35-year-old mall. Pacific Retail Capital Partners, based in Los Angeles, has acquired the 1.2 million-square-foot mall and the adjacent 94,000-square-foot Village at Bridgewater Commons. Pacific Retail is a very big player in the Mall business and will be seeking Township support in the coming months.
- Took part, along with Councilmen Kurdyla and Pedroso and Mayor Moench in the visit, to Henkel Corps. R and D facility on FINDERNE Ave. Henkel, based in Germany, is a world leader in adhesives.
- The Council received a very nice email from a resident who stated "I'm a resident of Bridgewater on Steeplechase Lane. On 4/15/2023 we had a sewage clog, and had a private company come out and they ended up opening our sewage line and had a volcanic sewage incident in my recently finished basement. They said that's just a risk and that they "fixed" the issue. On 4/29/2023 it all backed up again. This time I called the township as I was concerned the clog was further down the line by the street and expected to get the run around. I got the opposite. An officer was at my house within ~15 mins of my call and the sewage utility team was there in less than an hour and basically fixed the issue. Thank you, Bridgewater DPW.
- Attended the Somerset County 200 Club meeting held in Somerset. Over 30 valor awards were presented to police, fire and support staff. In addition, there were numerous Scholarships awarded. Abheek Dhara an applicant at the Bradley Gardens Rescue Squad was a Bridgewater scholarship recipient. The guest speaker was County Persecutor John McDonald.
- Attended the quarterly meeting of the Local Emergency Services Council.

Our request for reimbursement of \$800,000 in IDA storm damage is still awaiting FEMA approval as they continue to question some aspects of our road maintenance program.

- Councilman Norgalis stated he will participate in the upcoming Founders Day Celebration although it has already been postponed due to the threat of rain.
- Attended Senior day at the Bridgewater Raritan High School Baseball meeting where the thirteen (13) graduating senior and their families were recognized.

Councilman Pedroso:

- Attended the Somerset County Governing Officials Dinner. The guest speaker was Mayor Paul Moore who is also the President of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors. Councilman Pedroso opined this organization has a lot of resources available including support from Mayors across the state.
- Attended the Somerset County Regional Center Partnership Meeting.
- With regard to the discussion about the mall being purchased, Councilman Pedroso stated that a Courier News article reported one of the goals of the new company is redeveloping the mall into some other use or mixed use. The Courier News article gave a couple of examples of other projects that this company had done which included several hundred apartments.

One of the members of the Somerset County Regional Center Partnership is Troy Fisher, who is in charge of the Bridgewater Commons Mall. Councilman Pedroso acknowledged that Mayor Moench took the opportunity to inform Mr. Fisher that there is no appetite in Bridgewater Township for the mall to be converted into any type of apartment development, or any type of mixed use that would include apartments. Councilman Pedroso further emphasized he too would not support any apartments at the mall.

Councilman Pedroso thanked Mayor Moench for continuing to advocate on behalf of Bridgewater residents against overdevelopment and for protecting our quality of life.

Council President Kirsh

- Acknowledged that Council Vice President Tim Ring was absent due to a delay in business travels.

- The bulky trash drop-off was this past Saturday. Council President Kirsh stated he was pleased at the opportunity to speak and interact with several residents. He added the overwhelming sentiment was very, very positive.
- There has been activity over the last couple of weeks related to the budget, more on this during the course of the meeting.
- The Primary Election is scheduled for June 6th. Early voting is scheduled for June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, which is the preceding Friday through Sunday.
- Our next Council meeting is scheduled for June 8th. Council President Kirsh stated there may be a challenge and difficulty with our currently scheduled meeting on June 22nd because it is high school graduation day and we have two members that will be present at that graduation. He further discussed possible challenges with parking and traffic and concern that with the upcoming planning board meeting which involves the catalyst matter, residents will be forced to choose between attending our meeting or attending the high school graduation.

Council President Kirsh offered we anticipate that in place of both the June 22nd meeting and the July 6th meeting, we will instead meet on June 29th. Although more discussions need to be had, Council President Kirsh stated he wanted to give everyone as much advance notice as possible that there will likely be an adjustment in the June, early July Council Meeting schedule.

Mayor's Reports

Mayor Matthew C. Moench

Michael Pappas, Township Administrator reported on behalf of Mayor Moench

- Mayor Moench sent a letter to the CEO of the Pacific Retail Capital Partners, in which he expressed very clearly about the township's government, the administration, and the community's position that the mall is a commercial site.
- Founders Day is being rescheduled for some time in the latter part of June in anticipation of a washout on Saturday. The event will likely be on a Friday evening versus a Saturday afternoon. More information will soon be forthcoming.
- The senior center will be seeing some repairs to the parking lot tomorrow. There have been a number of challenges with potholes and public works will be taking care of that tomorrow. Administrator Pappas

offered it will not be a permanent solution to the need to resurface but this will address some immediate concerns.

- The repairs for the new and improved audio-visual system for the courtroom will begin no later than Monday of next week and perhaps as early as tomorrow.

Proclamation EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK

Council President Kirsh read the following proclamation, the four rescue squads were each presented with their own proclamation:

WHEREAS, emergency medical services (EMS) providers play a vital role in safeguarding the health, safety, and well-being of Bridgewater community members; and

WHEREAS, EMS personnel are an integral part of our local healthcare system, collaborating seamlessly with hospitals, fire departments, law enforcement agencies, and other community partners to ensure a coordinated response to emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the volunteer members of emergency medical services teams engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their life-saving skills; and

WHEREAS, the dedicated men and women who serve in the Bradley Gardens First and Rescue Squad, the FINDERNE First Aid and Rescue Squad, the Green Knoll Rescue Squad, and the Martinsville Rescue Squad demonstrate unwavering commitment, courage, and professionalism in delivering lifesaving care and critical assistance to those in need; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Bridgewater rely on the expertise and dedication of EMS providers, who are often the first to arrive at the scene of an emergency, delivering immediate medical care and initiating the critical chain of survival that saves lives; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to recognize the remarkable contributions made by Bridgewater's four Rescue Squads, acknowledge the sacrifices they make daily, and express our sincere gratitude for their steadfast diligence to improving Bridgewater's health and safety; and

WHEREAS, National EMS Week is celebrated annually across the nation, promoting public awareness of the invaluable contributions made by EMS providers and fostering appreciation for their exceptional service;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Matthew Moench, Mayor of the Township of Bridgewater, and the Township Council, do hereby proclaim May 21-27, 2023; Emergency Medical Services Week

All community members are urged to join us in recognizing and celebrating the vital role played by Bridgewater's four Rescue Squads in protecting and preserving Bridgewater's health and welfare.

BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2023 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Councilman Norgalis made motion to hold a public hearing on the 2023 municipal budget. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kurdyla and carried on the following roll call vote:

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

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-156](#) is appended to the official minutes

INTRODUCTION OF THE 2023 BUDGET AMENDMENT

Joe Sarno, CFO was present and offered there are some budget amendments that will have to be approved. In a three-year span, any municipality must receive approval from the Division of Local Government Services in two of those years. The other year is a self-review. We are in a state review this year. In that state review, the Division of Local Government Services has made recommendations for us which are in the form of the the budget amendments that have been presented to the Council. Since we had to do a budget amendment and we had a couple of grants come through as well, like the Municipal Alliance Grant and the Regional Center Partnership Grant, the Finance Department decided to bring those into the budget right now as opposed to doing a Chapter 159 later.

CFO Sarno further stated there is no change to the tax levy or the rate but rather a matter of changing different revenue pools versus different appropriations. Following the introduction of the budget amendment, there will be a public hearing of this amendment on June 8th. If that gets approved, Council can then move forward with the adoption of the 2023 budget on the same night.

On motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the 2023 Budget amendment was proposed for introduction. The vote was as follows:

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

THE 2023 BUDGET, AS AMENDED WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-157](#) is appended to the official minutes

Linda Doyle, Township Clerk read the following announcement:

BE IT RESOLVED, Council introduced the 2023 Budget Amendment on May 18, 2023. The public hearing and final action on the Budget amendment will be held on June 8, 2023 at 100 Commons Way, Bridgewater, NJ 08807 at 7:30PM

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

No one wished to be heard

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

**Public
Hearing &
Final Action
Ordinances**

AN ORDINANCE CREATING A NEW CHAPTER 30 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER ENTITLED "EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE" FOR THE PURPOSES OF CREATING SAID COMMITTEE

Township Administrator Pappas explained emergency services are a very important part of this community, and we have at least three members of the governing body who have been very active responders, emergency responders, fire service or rescue squad. Administration felt it would be beneficial to the delivery of that service to have an advisory committee of representatives from the various disciplines and members of the public to help advise the mayor and the council on these very vital services.

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

No one wished to be heard.

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

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

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

ORDINANCE #23-10 WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-158](#) is appended to the official minutes

**Introduction
of
Ordinances**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 126 (LAND USE), ARTICLE XXX (DESIGN STANDARDS), SECTION 126-241 (“STREET DESIGN STANDARDS”), SUBSECTION H (“NAMES”) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER SO AS TO CLARIFY STREET NAMING PROCEDURES

Township Administrator Pappas explained this Ordinance will put in place street naming procedures under the authority of the governing body and not the planning board.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-159](#) 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 8th day of June, 2023, 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

A SOMERSET REGIONAL ANIMAL SHELTER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT AS ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE TO JOAN FLYNN

Councilman Pedroso offered as the Liaison to the animal shelter, he would like an opportunity to have a conversation with Ms. Flynn to ensure she is the right candidate for the Animal Shelter Management Committee.

Council President Kurdyla offered he spoke with Ms. Flynn and is satisfied that she has the prerequisite business knowledge to do an outstanding job as a member of the Animal Shelter Management Committee.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-160](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 PURSUANT TO THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL TO BRIANA ROJAS, THE PURCHASER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED AT 111 SALVATORE COURT, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807

AUTHORIZING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 PURSUANT TO THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL TO LASHANA COTTINGHAM, THE PURCHASER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED AT 50 CAIN COURT, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807

AUTHORIZING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 PURSUANT TO THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE POLICIES

AND PROCEDURES MANUAL TO JALEEL HATCHER, THE PURCHASER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED AT 41 CAIN COURT, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807

AUTHORIZING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 PURSUANT TO THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL TO MARIACHIARA PASSAIACQUA, THE PURCHASER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED AT 407 STRULL COURT, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807

AUTHORIZING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 PURSUANT TO THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL TO LOSHANTH THIRUKULATHARASAN, THE PURCHASER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED AT 4306 RIDDLE COURT, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807

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

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

THE RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-15-161 thru #23-05-18-165](#) is appended to the official minutes

RESOLUTION REQUESTING NJDOT EXTENSION FOR ROLLING HILLS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Township Administrator Pappas explained this is a DOT funded project which needed extensive engineering design. There have been some questions about some right of ways that need to be assessed with some utilities that are being replaced in the area by the gas and the water company. This resolution will allow us to obtain an extension from DOT to give us adequate time to do our due diligence.

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

Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Norgalis	Aye

Councilman Pedroso	Aye
Councilman Ring	Absent
Council President Kirsh	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-166](#) is appended to the official minutes

AWARD OF CONTRACT TO TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP. (22 FIFTH STREET, SOMERVILLE, NJ 08876) FOR THE 2023-1 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WHICH INCLUDES THE BASE BID FOR THE ENTIRE LENGTHS OF BOYLE PLACE, DESOTA DRIVE, FOURTH STREET, FULTON AVENUE, MAIER STREET, RAILROAD PLACE, SECOND STREET, AND THIRD STREET, IN THE SUM OF \$872,445.49, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2023 CAPITAL ROAD FUND

AWARD OF CONTRACT TO TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP. (22 FIFTH STREET, SOMERVILLE, NJ 08876) FOR THE 2023-2 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WHICH INCLUDES THE BASE BID FOR THE ENTIRE LENGTHS OF BEEKMAN ROAD, DUVAL STREET, GALWAY LANE, HANCOCK AVENUE, SARGENT STREET, SHANNON ROAD, AND WEST SUMMIT STREET AND ALTERNATE BID FOR THE ENTIRE LENGTHS OF MCBRIDE WAY AND STUDDIFORD WAY, IN THE SUM OF \$1,158,834.99, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2023 CAPITAL ROAD FUND

AWARD OF CONTRACT TO ADG CONTRACTING CORP. T/A CROSSROADS PAVING (386 SOUTH STREET, SUITE 169, NEWARK, NJ 07105) FOR THE 2023-3 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WHICH INCLUDES THE ENTIRE LENGTHS OF CARLENE DRIVE, FLORAL DRIVE, FARMER ROAD, JULEO COURT, NORTH BRANCH ROAD, AND JUNIPER LANE (COUNTRY CLUB ROAD TO NORTH BRANCH ROAD), IN THE SUM OF \$1,263,133.80, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2023 CAPITAL ROAD FUND

Councilman Norgalis thanked Thomas Genova, Director of Municipal Services and William Burr, Township Engineer noting there have been extensive conversations regarding the Juniper Lane piece. He acknowledged that with this project, we are taking an inadequate street, which in some cases is only 13 to 15-foot-wide and widening it to meet a standard 20 foot wide.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-167 thru #23-05-18-169](#) is appended to the official minutes

APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTE A GRANT CONTRACT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE VAN VEGHTEN DRIVE AND SOUTH AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UNDER THE NJDOT LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS FUND GRANT APPLICATION

Township Administrator Pappas explained this is a new grant program that the NJDOT has announced which is at the absolute discretion for the Commissioner of Transportation to consider and award. Van Veghten Drive and the nearby roads are in the Finderne area and are badly in need of reconstruction. Administrator Pappas added we have already contacted the businesses in that area and have asked them to write letters in support of this application.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-170](#) 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 Kurdyla, Council convened in closed session at approximately 8:20 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#23-05-18-171](#) is appended to the official minutes.

On the motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the meeting reconvened to open session at approximately 8:25p.m. and adjourned immediately thereafter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda J. Doyle, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Michael Kirsh
Council President