

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
SEPTEMBER 21, 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, September 21, 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 (absent)  
Councilman Timothy Ring  
Council President Michael Kirsh

Also Present:            Michael Pappas, Township Administrator  
                                 Christopher Corsini, Township Attorney  
                                 Grace Njuguna, Deputy Township Clerk

Councilman Norgalis led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**

Minutes will be presented for Council action at the next regular scheduled Council meeting.

**Council Reports**

Councilman Kurdyla

- Nothing new to report

Councilman Norgalis:

- Recently attended a Patriot Baseball game as a guest of the Kalafer family and the RWJ Somerset Hospital Foundation. Even after Steve Kalafer's passing, his sons Josh and Jonathan carry on the philanthropic effort that their family has long been known for.
  
- This year, the autumn equinox also known as FALL will begin this Saturday, September 23, at 2:50 a.m. and will last until the winter

solstice on Thursday, December 21, at 10:27 a.m.

- Best wishes to our Jewish friends as they celebrate YOM KIPPUR this Sunday September 24th as the most solemn of Jewish religious holidays, as Jews seek to expiate their sins and achieve reconciliation with God.
- This Saturday, September 23 from 8am to 1pm will be the second and last bulky trash drop-off date for the Bridgewater Fall season. The location is 15 Polhemus Lane. Participants must have proof of Bridgewater residency available for display at the site entrance. No commercial vehicles, including rental trucks, are allowed.
- The township email system has suffered some issues over the last week which has caused delays in employees, including Council members, receiving resident emails. More to follow on that issue.

#### Councilman Ring:

- Spent some time at the bulky trash speaking with residents.
- Attended the Martinsville Community Center's community day.
- Attended the Chinese Association's light festival hosted by the Mall at the mall.
- Attended the Fall festival at the Al-Falah mosque here in Bridgewater.
- This Saturday is bulky trash day from 9am-1pm. The last car has to be in line by 12:30pm.
- There may be adverse weather this coming weekend, Councilman Ring asked everyone to be on the look out and to stay safe.

#### Council President Kirsh

- Attended the 9-11 remembrance ceremony. The weather was not cooperative so the ceremony was moved to the courtroom and the custom was followed where the six residents that lost their lives were remembered
- Attended a realtor round table that was hosted by Mayor Moench. This was an opportunity to have an open dialogue concerning Bridgewater. There are many challenges faced by realtors whose main concern is there aren't enough houses for sale. Generally, there is a housing crunch.

- Attended the Al-Falah fall festival. Expressed his gratitude for the very strong relationship Council has built with members of this organization.
- Attended the Greenman-Pedersen also known as GPI office opening on Route 22. They have done some meaningful and impactful transportation projects.
- Attended the reopening ceremony/ribbon cutting for the Lexus dealership. President Kirsh explained there was massive damage at that site and nearby locations from Hurricane Ida and therefore today was a great milestone for Lexus.

**Mayor's Reports**

Michael Pappas, Township Administrator reported on behalf of Mayor Moench

- Sergeant Jamie Edwards from the Police Department who is our OEM coordinator will be making a presentation to summarize some progress that we have made in interacting with FEMA and a couple of other comments that he will share.

**Proclamation ADULT DAY CENTER OF SOMERSET COUNTY**

Council President Michael Kirsh read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, the Adult Day Center of Somerset County was founded in 1976 as one of the pioneering day programs for older adults, dedicated to providing unwavering support to families in Central New Jersey, ensuring that no one is turned away due to disease progression or financial limitations;

WHEREAS, the Adult Day Center of Somerset County has consistently delivered a full day of purposeful activities tailored to meet the unique needs of older adults and individuals living with dementia-related illnesses, within a facility custom-designed for this special population, with a mission that extends to the care and support of caregiving family members;

WHEREAS, September 17th to September 23rd has been designated as National Adult Day Services Week, providing an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the valuable contributions made by the Adult Day Center right here in Bridgewater;

WHEREAS, the dedicated staff of the Adult Day Center of Somerset County have worked tirelessly with unwavering commitment and compassion to ensure that every member feels engaged, valued, and cherished, while also striving to ensure that their services remain affordable for all families, providing care at a fraction of the cost of commercial facilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Matthew Moench, Mayor of Bridgewater Township, along with the Township Council and our community, do hereby extend our deepest gratitude and honor the Adult Day Center of Somerset County for their outstanding dedication, service, and compassion towards older adults and individuals living with dementia-related illnesses, as well as their unwavering support for caregiving family members.

We commend the Adult Day Center of Somerset County for their tireless efforts in making a significant and positive impact on the lives of our residents. Their commitment, care, and passion are truly exemplary and deserving of recognition.

**Presentation FEMA SUBMISSION**

Sergeant James Edwards provided an update on damages related to tropical storm Ida noting that to date we have been reimbursed by FEMA under 1.9 million dollars in damages. We also have an additional \$800, 000 in damages to our roads which FEMA had initially denied however we have submitted an extensive appeal to that denial and are waiting for the outcome. The total amount we submitted was 1.9 million dollars for damages and FEMA has reimbursed us 1.45 million dollars. There is an additional \$122, 513 in management costs which we will be submitting shortly and FEMA will be reimbursing us for that. That cost may go up if we have a successful appeal for the \$800,000.

Administrator Pappas explained we have also sought the assistance of Congressman Kane to try and encourage FEMA to consider this. In addition, our partners at the Somerset County Office of Emergency Management and the New Jersey State Police have been appealing for us to FEMA so we are cautiously optimistic.

Sergeant James Edwards then explained September is National preparedness month and that the office of Emergency Management and the Police Department encourages all residents to review the emergency operation plan for their households. He offered residents can visit the Police Department website, the New Jersey office of Emergency Management's website, or FEMA's website for a template for a plan. He urged all residents to stay informed noting there is potential for a major rain event this weekend and as such, devices should be charged up. In case there is loss of power, residents should have flashlights with batteries in them. Residents should also monitor the latest forecasts and ensure they are registered with Bridgewater's emergency notification system called Nixle and opt in for emergency notification messages. They should also register with their utilities emergency notification system; JCP&L, PSE&G and New Jersey American water.

**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 Ring, the meeting was opened to the public for comment.

**Jennifer Loughran, 716 Falcon Court, Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, pending increment weather, Ingredient, a leading global ingredients solution company located in the Finderne area of Bridgewater, as part of a team building and volunteer parks stewardship effort will be installing a series of inclusive playground features at Chimney Rock Park. This is a wonderful community driven effort that would never have gotten off the ground had it not been for the engineering expertise, thoughtfulness and follow-through of Mr. David Vine. Mr. Vine is the leader of this project who did all the planning, purchasing and coordinating. The Parks Advisory Committee is so honored to have been invited to collaborate on this endeavor. They have been on the same page from the very beginning when they surveyed our playground equipment and quickly learned that there were very limited inclusive and sensory Play features in our parks.

Ms. Loughran appreciated the efforts of Melissa Ferreo who is an educator and an expert in the field of sensory and nature play whose contributions to this effort were amazing. During the planning process, they met with DPW and Mr. Fame at Chimney Rock Park to visualize the space and assure that there was enough room between features. While there, they recognized that the swing set had two infant swings so they decided to change one of the swings to an Adaptive swing that would make it accessible not only to infants or two-year-olds but also kids up to the age of twelve (12). Being that this was not part of the original budget, they put together a fundraising effort where the community responded overwhelmingly. within two days, they raised way more than was needed.

Ms. Loughran then asked for guidance from the administration about creating a dedicated fund to be used for our parks.

Ms. Loughran requested that the township considering donating a shade tree or two to this project because Chimney Rock gets a lot of sun and there's very little shade in the park area where we are putting in these features. She invited all to attend the event on October 2<sup>nd</sup> from 8:30am-3pm to see the effort.

**Cathy Franco, 766 Weemac Road, Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

She asked that Council consider allowing residents to comment publicly

remotely and that the time limit is increased from two (2) minutes to five (5) minutes as is done with school board meetings.

Ms. Franco asked when an invitation will go out to the public inviting them to participate in the Master Plan planning process and how the public will be invited to offer their suggestions.

Ms. Franco stated she appreciated the efforts of Jamie Edwards and the office of emergency management in trying to recover money for this township. She asked what has been done to address the flooding in the area of Graybar Drive and the homes south of Foothill which are south of Route 22 and subject to the cuckolds Brook flooding.

With regard to the short-term rentals ordinance, Ms. Franco stated it was drafted to only favor those residents living in the R-50 zone because all the members of the Council reside in the R-50 zone.

***Cynthia Freund, 1367 Coryell Drive, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920***

Stated that she is the Chaplin at the Somerville Elks and thanked Mayor and Council for the proclamation regarding Patriots week. She added that both her and her husband are members of the Americanism committee and they work hard to Foster Americanism and Patriotism among our members and among the community.

With regard to the proposed short-term rentals ordinance, Ms. Freund opined we are limiting the freedoms of people. She offered Council should look closely at the laws that were being broken rather than write more legislation. She added if what happened was that laws were broken, Council should enforce the laws and if there was bad behavior that was breaking existing laws, Council should work to enforce those laws rather than write more.

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

Council advised Ms. Franco that none of the Council members reside within the R-50 zone. As far as Graybar, we are limited by state legislation as to what we can do to Cuckold's Brook which extends beyond Gray Bar and all the way through Adamsville Road. It was noted that this governing body, including past and present administrations have not ignored the flooding problem in that area but that our hands are tied with what can be done. We would otherwise facilitate fines from EPA.

With regard to public comment, it was noted residents have to be present

during school board meetings in order to participate.

With regard to the Master Plan, Township Administrator Pappas explained we have started a very detailed plan to provide information to the public, referred to as master plan Mondays. There is an itinerary that has been coordinated by Ms. Mader and there are very specific plans to receive public input through various means and that will be announced in due course.

Introduction  
of  
Ordinances

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, CHAPTER 126 ENTITLED “LAND USE” BY ADDING A NEW ARTICLE XX TO BE ENTITLED “SHORT-TERM RENTALS”**

Township Administrator Pappas explained Council has had extensive conversations about this over the last several months. There has been considerable input from the public and because the most egregious scenario and location of where we are aware of violations of existing ordinances is in the R50 Zone, Administration has, through Township Attorney Corsini’s office, proposed this Ordinance to address that area. This will allow us to stop the bad behavior as a first step in the process.

Councilman Norgalis offered he will not be supporting this Ordinance because it is specifically allocating this to the R50 Zone. He added he would rather wait and spend the time to address the entire Township.

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

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

**THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.**

A copy of resolution [#23-09-21-255](#) is appended to the official minutes

Grace Njuguna, Deputy 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 5<sup>th</sup> day of October, 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.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Township Clerk forward this ordinance to the Bridgewater Township Planning Board for their meeting to be held October 3, 2023 to review and prepare a recommendation.

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, CHAPTER 206 “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC,” TO ADD THE PARK AND RIDE FACILITY (LOT 1, BLOCK 173) LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF MILLTOWN ROAD AND ROUTE 22 EAST TO THE LIST OF RESTRICTED PARKING AREAS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER**

Township Administrator Pappas explained the property in question has been a vacant parking lot that was originally envisioned to be a park and ride for commuter bus users. Due to a number of reasons it was determined that the ingress and egress did not allow for the safe passage of buses and so it has remained an empty lot. Lately, we have seen various trucks and/or tractor trailers parked there. This ordinance will allow the Township Police Department to enforce the prohibition of those vehicles.

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      | Absent |
| Councilman Ring         | Aye    |
| Council President Kirsh | Aye    |

**[THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.](#)**

A copy of resolution **[#23-09-21-256](#)** is appended to the official minutes

Grace Njuguna, Deputy 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 5<sup>th</sup> day of October, 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.

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 26 ENTITLED “PERSONNEL POLICIES”, ARTICLE 32, SICK LEAVE, OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER**

Township Administrator Pappas explained this is a proposed amendment to the sick leave ordinance. The state of New Jersey has asked every municipality to revise any existing sick leave Ordinance to adhere to State legislation. From the time that that legislation was enacted, the township has been following these procedures although the ordinance was not formally adopted.

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

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

**[THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.](#)**

A copy of resolution **[#23-09-21-257](#)** is appended to the official minutes

Grace Njuguna, Deputy 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 21st day of September, 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 Deputy 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**

**AWARD TO DATA CENTER WAREHOUSE (DCW), 23041 AVENIDA DE LA CARLOTA, SUITE 325 LAGUNA HILLS CA 92653 TO PURCHASE, SIX (6) GETAC TABLETS AND ACCESSORIES FOR FORD POLICE INTERCEPTORS TOTALING \$22,104.00, TO BE FUNDED THRU THE 2023 CURRENT FUND**

**AWARD TO MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS, PO BOX 161 WHARTON, NJ 07885, FOR MOBILE VIDEO RECORDING (MVR) EQUIPMENT FOR FOUR POLICE FORD SUV INTERCEPTORS TOTALING \$39,600.00, TO BE FUNDED THRU THE 2022/2023 CURRENT FUND**

Chief Mitzak explained that back in December of 2022, the Council authorized the Police Department to purchase six new police vehicles. These awards are for the equipment that is needed for those vehicles. The Getac Tablets are the computers used to run plates. The Mobile Video Recording (MVR) equipment are mobile video recorders that are in all the police cars that go simultaneously with body worn cameras.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED.**

Copies of resolution [#23-09-21-258 thru #23-09-21-259](#) are appended to the official minutes

**RESOLUTION FOR BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN NEW JERSEY CO-OPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY (ESCNJ), WHEREBY ESCNJ IS THE LEAD AGENCY # 65MCECCPS**

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#23-09-21-260](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF VARIOUS ITEMS (LISTED IN ATTACHED SCHEDULE) OF MUNICIPAL PERSONAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER THROUGH THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET IN THE MANNER OF A PUBLIC AND/OR INTERNET AUCTION**

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#23-09-21-261](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER TO BID AT THE SHERIFF SALE ON SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 FOR THE FORECLOSED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1108 PINHORN DRIVE, BRIDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY, ALSO KNOWN AS BLOCK 164.06, LOT 1108, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000) TO BE FUNDED THROUGH THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND**

Township Administrator Pappas explained this unit is within the stock of affordable lower-moderate-income housing units. We are pursuing the foreclosure in an effort to ensure that this property remains within the affordable housing stock. Administrator Pappas added if the township does end up purchasing this through the Sheriff's sale, we would then put it up for sale and expect to be able to obtain more than what we would end up paying. The mortgage is about forty-three thousand dollars and the amount that this property is permitted to be sold for is between \$92-93,000.

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      | Absent |
| Councilman Ring         | Nay    |
| Council President Kirsh | Aye    |

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#23-09-21-262](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF THE POLICE SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS (“SRO”) WITH BRIDGEWATER- RARITAN BOARD OF EDUCATION (“BOARD”) LOCATED AT 836 NEWMANS LANE, P.O. BOX 6030, BRIDGEWATER, NJ**

Township Administrator Pappas explained this is an identical resolution and agreement from what was adopted by Council in 2023 except a slight increase in the negotiated dollar amount.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#23-09-21-263](#) is appended to the official minutes

**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 Ring, Council convened in closed session at approximately 8:42 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#23-09-21-264](#) is appended to the official minutes.

On the motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Norgalis, the meeting reconvened to open session at approximately 9:10 p.m. and adjourned immediately thereafter.

**Closed  
Session**

Respectfully Submitted,

Grace Njuguna, RMC  
Deputy Township Clerk

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Michael Kirsh  
Council President