

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
OCTOBER 10, 2024 - COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session on Thursday, October 10, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers in the Municipal Complex, Bridgewater, New Jersey 08807 & via Live Online Broadcast.

Council President Ring 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 DECEMBER 21, 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 Michael Kirsh  
Councilman Allen Kurdyla  
Councilman Howard V. Norgalis (absent)  
Councilman Filipe Pedroso (absent)  
Council President Timothy Ring

Also Present: Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator  
Christopher Corsini, Township Attorney  
Juliana Coelho, Deputy Township Clerk

Councilman Kirsh led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**

**SEPTEMBER 19, 2024 – REGULAR SESSION**

On motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the September 19, 2024, regular session minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote.

**SEPTEMBER 19, 2024 – CLOSED SESSION**

The September 19, 2024, closed session minutes were passed around for Council approval & signature.

**Council Reports**

Councilman Kirsh:

- Councilman Kirsh spoke and welcomed those who attended the Annual Alzheimer’s Walk at Duke Island Park on September 21<sup>st</sup>.
  
- The Zoning Board met on September 24<sup>th</sup> to hear two residential cases from the Sunset Lake and Thomae Park areas.

- On October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Planning Board met to review the new cafeteria extension at Bradley Gardens School, as well as an extension of approval for a minor subdivision. However, most of the evening consisted of discussing the potential of designating the former Ethicon property as an “area in need of redevelopment”. He stated that in a vote of seven (7) to one (1), with one (1) abstention, the board agreed that the criteria were met to designate that property as an “area in need of development. He stated that the public was heard extensively, with several issues related to the project being raised, including but not limited to, environmental matters. Councilman Kirsh offered that ultimately, the decision to move forward with redevelopment to that property lies with the council.
- On October 7<sup>th</sup>, the one-year anniversary of the massacre in Israel, the JCC hosted a very meaningful and moving remembrance of the events that took place. Councilman Kirsh stated that the presence of security, the Chief of Police and Sherrif, contributed to a sense of safety and comfort for attendees.
- Councilman Kirsh stated he attended a Zoning Board meeting held on October 8<sup>th</sup>, where a case was heard regarding a fence on Sunset Ridge.
- Attended a meeting of the Somerset County Governing Officials Association. Jeff Booker spoke on options for health benefits for municipalities.
- Councilman Kirsh stated that we are in the midst of a food drive sponsored by Bridgewater United Soccer Club and the Recreation Department. There are currently 83 in-town soccer teams and 19 travel teams. Donation bags have been distributed and a tent will be set-up for drop-off approximately October 14<sup>th</sup> through October 20<sup>th</sup> in the municipal building courtyard.

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Attended and participated in the Annual Township Fireman’s Inspection on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Councilman Kurdyla stated that Bridgewater has a vibrant volunteer community that provides fire protection services to residents. He added that every piece of equipment was in outstanding condition.

Council President Ring:

- Council President Ring echoed the comments made by Councilman Kirsh and Councilman Kurdyla.

**Mayor’s  
Reports**

Wells Winegar, Deputy Township Administrator reported on behalf of Mayor Moench

- The township will be holding its Annual Halloween Event from 5:30pm – 8:30pm on October 30<sup>th</sup> which will be combined with the Police Department’s National Night Out, which had been postponed for inclement weather in

August.

- The township hosted an Open Space and Recreation Master Plan Workshop to gather input from staff and residents. For those who missed the workshop, an online questionnaire is available on the township website.
- Deputy Township Administrator Winegar announced that pink ribbons have been hung in the municipal courtyard and multiple township parks to raise awareness for breast cancer research. Proceeds from the initiative will benefit Dance for a Cure. He thanked Brooke Herbst and the high school cheerleaders for their participation.
- The township is partnering with the school district on a non-profit called "Not an Easy Fix" to hold four assemblies at the high school. These assemblies will feature dynamic presentations on the opioid epidemic.

**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.

- **Dan Zolinski, 715 Chimney Rock Road – Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

Mr. Zolinski expressed concerns about the lack of public discussion on the township's fiscal crisis. He emphasized the council's responsibility to adjust, approve, or reject the proposed budget and hold the administration accountable for financial decisions. Mr. Zolinski left a copy of additional questions with the council.

- **Joan G. Geiger, 154 Hillside Avenue – Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

Ms. Geiger commended the work of Superintendent and faculty of the Bridgewater-Raritan School District for ranking in the top 11% in New Jersey, 6<sup>th</sup> in the county and an overall top school in the country. She offered that the increase of school tax and full day Kindergarten enhance property values and is good for Bridgewater children's education. She encouraged residents to review the tax increases throughout town.

Following the Council meeting, Ms. Geiger sent an email to the Clerk stating she would like the minutes to reflect that her comments relating to the statistics she cited regarding the Bridgewater school came from articles by Brad Wadlow MyCentralJersey/Gannett News and the Patch.

Geiger expressed disappointment with Mayor Moench's comments on the "Real Talk" podcast regarding the BRRSD Superintendent and his endorsement of two Board of Education candidates. She advocated for collaboration among all stakeholders.

Geiger criticized the two-minute time limit for public comments at council meetings, suggesting that it's shorter than many other municipalities. She thanked Councilman Kirsh for his comments on the Israel events and Councilman Kurdyla for his comments on the fire departments. She also complimented the pink ribbons displayed for breast cancer awareness.

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

Ms. Franco criticized the two-minute limit for public comments and pledged to adhere to that time limit for each individual topic.

Regarding the Planning Board vote on the redevelopment plan, Ms. Franco noted that Mr. Kirsh's report was inaccurate, as there was an additional vote against the plan. She challenged Mr. Kirsh's assertion that the public had adequate time to be heard, stating that she was cut off during her attempt to make a suggestion and was told that it was not the appropriate time or place for such comments. She added that she has often felt unheard when offering suggestions for improvement on certain issues.

Ms. Franco inquired about the availability of the proposed Master Plan document for public review.

She questioned the decision to place the revenue from the proposed shopping mall liquor license in the general fund, suggesting that it should be allocated to law enforcement or education programs related to drunk driving, given the rising number of DWIs in Bridgewater.

Regarding the police blotter, Ms. Franco noted that the month of July is missing from the township website, although it is available on Patch and TheBreeze.

She reported that several political signs have gone missing from residents' lawns, with some thefts occurring in September. Franco expressed concern that these incidents were not reported on the police blotter.

Ms. Franco questioned whether the Council would follow the rules governing redevelopment, noting that a pilot project is only permitted for redevelopment. She expressed opposition to pilot projects, arguing that they negatively impact individual taxes for residents.

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

Ms. Loughran appreciated the comments regarding the Board of Education (BOE) and the referendum. As a BOE member, she enjoys collaborating with her colleagues and believes the Superintendent has done a fine job.

Ms. Loughran announced that the BR Skates Foundation is hosting its 3rd Annual "Skate for the Paws" event this Sunday from 11 AM to 3 PM in the municipal building parking lot. The proceeds will benefit the Somerset Animal Shelter, which is assisting animals displaced by recent hurricanes. Every year, "Skate for the Paws" helps find homes for the animals and raises money to care for others. Ms. Loughran emphasized the event's unique opportunity to recognize children's talents in performance and athletics. She noted that liability concerns prevent the use of tennis courts or hockey rinks as a skate park and requested the council's support for building a dedicated skate park in Bridgewater.

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

## Resolutions

### **CONSENT VOTE**

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

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING APPROVAL OF ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION N.J.S.A.40A:4-87 – BUDGET CHAPTER 159 FOR CLEAN COMMUNITIES**

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING APPROVAL OF ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION N.J.S.A.40A:4-87 – BUDGET CHAPTER 159 FOR OPIOID SETTLEMENT**

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

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

**THE RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED.**

Copies of resolutions [#24-10-10-246](#) and [#24-10-10-247](#) are appended to the official minutes

**AWARD OF CONTRACT TO FOVEONICS IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES INC. OF 99 GRAYROCK ROAD #103, CLINTON, NEW JERSEY 08809 FOR DOCUMENT SOLUTIONS UNDER THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY (ESCNJ) COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM #ESCNJ-22/23-11, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$140,000.00, TO BE FUNDED THROUGH SEWER-PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Deputy Township Administrator Winegar stated that this is a continuation of the Records Management Initiative through the Clerk’s office for the last couple of years. By digitizing the records, the township can be more efficient and effective when searching through archives. This year, the sewer files will be imaged.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-10-10-248](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF CONTRACT TO CIOCCA FORD, 215 US HIGHWAY 202, FLEMINGTON, NJ 08822 FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$206,364.50 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF TWO MASON DUMP TRUCKS VIA THE MORRIS COUNTY COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM CONTRACT # 15-C, ITEM #19 TO BE FUNDED THROUGH SEWER-CAPITAL**

Deputy Township Administrator Winegar stated that these vehicles are very versatile for the sewer department and beyond.

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

Councilman Kirsh	Aye
Councilman Kurdyla	Aye
Councilman Norgalis	Absent
Councilman Pedroso	Absent

Council President Ring                      Aye

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-10-10-249](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER #1/FINAL CHANGE ORDER DECREASING THE CONTRACT PRICE FROM \$287,790.00 TO \$280,590.00 A DECREASE OF 2.50% OR \$7,200.00, AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROJECT, RELEASE OF THE PERFORMANCE BOND, ACCEPTANCE OF THE MAINTENANCE BOND, AND FINAL PAYMENT TO CMS CONSTRUCTION, INC. (521 NORTH AVENUE, PLAINFIELD, NJ 07060) FOR THE CAMP CROMWELL DAM REMOVAL PROJECT, FUNDED THROUGH OPEN SPACE**

This resolution is to decrease the contract price from \$287,790.00 to \$280,590.00, which is a 2.50% decrease in the amount of \$7,200.00 to the contract amount based on an adjustment of estimated quantities to match as-built quantities.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-10-10-250](#) is appended to the official minutes

**AUTHORIZING MICHAEL PAPPAS, TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR AS THE AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL TO REPRESENT THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGWATER IN ALL MATTERS RELATING TO THE APPLICATION WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND THE NEW JERSEY INFRASTRUCTURE BANK FOR THE MIDDLEBROOK PUMP STATION PHASE 2 PROJECT, PROJECT NUMBER S340638-07 AND AUTHORIZING WILLIAM PANDOS, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER TO ACT AS THE AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBLE FOR DESIGNATING COLLABORATORS AND SUBMITTING ANY UPLOADED AND FINAL DOCUMENTATION FOR THE MIDDLEBROOK PUMP STATION PHASE 2 PROJECT, PROJECT NUMBER S340638-07**

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-10-10-251](#) is appended to the official minutes

**REIMBURSEMENT OF BUILDING CONSTRUCTION PERMIT FEES PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 94, SECTION 94-1 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$291.00 FOR ANTHONY WAGAR, A FIREMAN FOR MARTINSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Council President Ring stated that the township waives a portion of the building permits for the fire departments and rescue squads throughout town as a “thank you” for their service.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-10-10-252](#) is appended to the official minutes

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF ONE (1) NEW SPECIAL “SHOPPING MALL” LIQUOR LICENSE, PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 33:1-12.55, BY PUBLIC SALE AND PUBLICATION OF A NOTICE OF SUCH SALE AND THAT APPLICATIONS THEREFORE WILL BE ACCEPTED BY THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER**

Council President Ring advised that the township is allowed to move forward with this resolution based off the changes Governor Murphy signed last year in his attempts to reform liquor licenses.

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



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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-10-10-245](#) 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 potential litigation and redevelopment.

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 Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the Council convened in closed session at approximately 8:20 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#24-10-10-253](#) is appended to the official minutes.

On the motion of Council President Ring, seconded by Councilman Kirsh, the meeting reconvened to open session at approximately 8:28 p.m. and adjourned immediately thereafter.

**Adjournment**

On the motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Council President Ring, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Grace Njuguna, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

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Timothy Ring  
Council President