

MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
APRIL 3, 2025 - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Township Council of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, convened in a regular session on Thursday, April 3, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers in the Municipal Complex, Bridgewater, New Jersey 08807 & via Live Online Broadcast.

Council President Norgalis 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 10, 2024, 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 Filipe Pedroso
Councilman Timothy Ring
Council President Howard V. Norgalis (absent)

Also Present: Matthew C. Moench, Mayor
Michael Pappas, Township Administrator
Christopher Corsini, Township Attorney
Grace Njuguna, Township Clerk

Township Administrator Pappas led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

MARCH 20, 2025 - REGULAR SESSION

On the motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Ring, the March 20, 2025, regular session minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote.

MARCH 6, 2025 – CLOSED SESSIONS

The March 6, 2025, closed session minutes were passed around for Council approval and signature.

Council Reports

Councilman Kirsh:

- The Planning Board meeting scheduled for last week was cancelled.
- On March 25, 2025, the Zoning Board convened to hear two cases. The first application was for the Bridgewater Self Storage, located at the confluence of Route 28, Route 22, and Garretson Road. The applicant is seeking bulk and use variances. The second case involved Garmook Oil, situated on Finderne Avenue,

which seeks approval for the expansion of a pre-existing non-conforming use as a gas station and the addition of a food mart.

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Councilman Kurdyla stated that he does not have a report at this time.

Councilman Pedroso:

- Councilman Pedroso reported that he attended the New Jersey GOP summit, which included seminars, discussions with other politicians, and networking opportunities.
- Councilman Pedroso welcomed those in attendance at tonight's meeting.

Councilman Ring:

- Councilman Ring reported that he attended a retirement walk-out ceremony for Lieutenant John Cooper and extended his best wishes to the Lieutenant.
- He also attended a meeting with the school district administrator and members of the Board of Education to discuss shared concerns.
- Councilman Ring further stated that the EMS Advisory Committee convened this week.
- Earlier today, the Middlebrook Regional Health Commission issued a public health alert regarding potential measles exposure. Councilman Ring provided information on recommended actions for individuals experiencing symptoms.

Mayor's Reports

Township Administrator Pappas provided the following updates on behalf of Mayor Moench:

- **Town-Wide Garage Sale (Saturday, May 3, 2025):** A town-wide garage sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 3, 2025. Residents wishing to have their location featured on the township website can visit the site for inclusion.
- **Annual Spring Carnival (Sunday, May 4, 2025):** The Annual Spring Carnival will be held on Sunday, May 4, 2025, at the Bridgewater Commons Mall from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The township is sponsoring this event in partnership with the JCC.
- **"Can You Dig It" Event (Sunday, April 27, 2025):** An event titled "Can You Dig It" will take place at Chimney Rock Park on Sunday, April 27, 2025, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM to celebrate both Earth Day and Arbor Day.
- **PSE&G Gas Main Replacement Project:** Township Administrator Pappas reported that PSE&G is nearing completion of a significant gas main replacement project throughout the town. For any questions, concerns, or complaints regarding this project, residents can call 833-661-6400.

Swearing In

LIEUTENANT DANIEL HENNESSEY

Chief John Mitzak read the following statement:

Tonight, we gather to honor the exceptional accomplishments and celebrate the promotions of two remarkable individuals within our esteemed police force. It is with immense pride and admiration that we witness the elevation of Sergeant Dan Hennessey to the rank of Lieutenant and Officer Michael Leight to Sergeant. This evening represents a significant milestone in their careers, highlighting their unwavering dedication, tireless commitment, and exemplary service to the community.

Sergeant Hennessey, your promotion to Lieutenant is a true reflection of your outstanding leadership, work ethic, and positive influence. As you step into this new role, your responsibilities and sphere of influence will expand significantly. As Lieutenant, you will be entrusted with making pivotal decisions that impact on the safety and well-being of your fellow officers and the community we serve.

As you embrace the responsibilities of a police lieutenant, I have the utmost confidence that you will continue to lead with integrity, inspire those around you, and contribute even more to the safety and well-being of the Bridgewater Community. Your journey has been marked by dedication and excellence, and this next chapter will surely be no different.

Sergeant Dan Hennessey has served with honor, first in the United States Army as a Combat Medic. After his military service, he earned his bachelor's degree from Rutgers University in 2001. That same year, he graduated from the Camden County Police Academy, where he was honored with the Academic Award for achieving the top GPA. Hired as a patrolman with

Bridgewater PD in January 2002, Sergeant Hennessey quickly established himself as a dedicated officer, serving as a member of our Honor Guard, a Field Training Officer, and an EMT. He was known for his proactive approach on the road, making numerous arrests for drunk driving and earning the MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers) Outstanding Service Award.

Promoted to Sergeant in 2020, Dan supervised a patrol squad and was laterally transferred to the Traffic Safety Sergeant position in 2022. In this role, he oversaw fatal and serious crashes, managed several grant programs, and worked closely with township administration. Additionally, he became a Certified Conducted Energy Device Operator and a Resiliency Officer. Sergeant Hennessey has earned numerous awards during his 23-year tenure, including two Life Saving/CPR Awards, the Exceptional Service Award, and the prestigious NJ State PBA Valor Award.

It is my great honor to call Sergeant Dan Hennessey and his family—his wife Cheryl, son Danny, and daughter Kayla—up to join us for his promotion to Lieutenant.

Dan Hennessey was sworn in by Council President Pedroso, with his family and friends

present for the ceremony.

SERGEANT MICHAEL LEIGHT

Chief John Mitzak read the following statement:

Officer Leight, as you step into the role of Sergeant, you will embrace a new set of responsibilities and have the incredible opportunity to lead and mentor a team of officers. Remember, leadership at this level requires you to set the standard, lead by example, and always act with integrity. The responsibility you will bear to both your squad and the community is significant, and I have no doubt you will rise to meet the challenge.

Officer Leight's journey began when he attended Kean University and earned his bachelor's degree in 2011. He graduated from the Somerset County Police Academy in 2013, where he earned the distinction of Valedictorian. That same year, he began his law enforcement career with the Bridgewater Township Police Department. During his time in patrol, Officer Leight earned the CPR Life Saving Award and, in 2016, was recognized with the Life Saving Award for his heroic actions in rescuing a subject trapped in a fully engulfed car fire.

In 2018, Officer Leight was selected to be a Field Training Officer, personally training six new officers. In 2020, he transitioned to the Detective Bureau, where he worked on high-profile cases and conducted extensive background investigations for those wishing to join our department. His leadership continued to shine in 2022 when he applied for, was selected for, and joined the Somerset County SWAT team. Additionally, that same year, Officer Leight was elected by his peers to serve as the President of PBA Local #174, where he effectively liaised with the Bridgewater PD Command Staff and township administration.

After being transferred back to patrol in 2025 to re-acclimate with the team and prepare for his new role, Officer Leight has proven himself as a leader committed to the success and growth of this department. A 12-year member of our team, I am proud to invite Officer Michael Leight, along with his wife Caroline and daughters, Emma and Natalie, to join us as he is promoted to Sergeant.

It is truly a privilege to be here with you tonight to celebrate these outstanding individuals and their remarkable contributions. Both of you exemplify the best of what it means to serve and protect, and we look forward to the continued excellence you will bring to our department and community in these new roles.

Michael Leight was sworn in by Council President Pedroso, with his family and friends present for the ceremony.

OFFICER BRANDON PERALTA

Chief John Mitzak read the following statement:

I would like to begin by expressing my deepest gratitude to Mayor Matthew Moench and all of the council members for their continued support of the Bridgewater Police Department. Tonight, we have the honor of swearing in a new officer, Brandon Peralta, and none of this would be possible without the steadfast backing of our leadership. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to public safety and your dedication to this department.

Now, let me take a moment to share a little bit about Officer Peralta's background: Brandon currently resides in Jersey City with his girlfriend, Alicia. He is a dedicated police recruit at the Morris County Police Academy, where he is working hard to prepare for his career in law enforcement. Prior to joining our department, Brandon served for 10 years in the United States Air Force, specializing in physical security and law enforcement. His service to our country has equipped him with a wealth of experience and a strong foundation in public safety.

Brandon is also an accomplished scholar. He earned his associate's degree from the Community College of the Air Force, followed by a bachelor's degree from the University of Arizona in 2022, and a Master of Science from the University of New Haven in 2024. After his time in the Air Force, he worked for Amneal Pharmaceuticals and JP Morgan Chase, gaining valuable experience in both the corporate and security sectors. Brandon is set to graduate from the police academy this June, at which point he will be assigned to patrol duties here in Bridgewater.

Brandon, we are proud to have you join our department. We will provide you with all the necessary tools, training, and support to ensure that you have a safe and successful career. Your goal, like that of every officer here, is simple: Do your best every day for the community you serve and for your fellow officers and always strive to return home to your loved ones safely at the end of each shift.

Remember, you are the answer to someone's prayers. It's a privilege to serve the public, and I know you will uphold that duty with honor and dedication. I wish you nothing but health, success, and safety as you begin what will hopefully be a long and rewarding career as a Bridgewater Police Officer.

Now, I invite you, along with your father, Peter, who is a retired law enforcement officer, your stepmother Eunise, and your girlfriend Alicia, to come forward and be sworn in as a Bridgewater Police Officer.

Before we move on, I would like to quickly introduce the four officers who were sworn in back in January but were unable to be formally introduced until now. These officers are currently attending the police academy alongside Brandon. Please join me in recognizing: Jonathan Kwestel, Lawrence "LJ" Reboli, Elijah Barnwell, and Jake Savare. These four individuals, alongside Brandon, are doing an exceptional job at the academy, and we are eager to welcome them back to the department full-time upon their graduation.

Thank you all, and congratulations once again to Brandon and our new recruits.

Police Officer Brandon Peralta was sworn in by Council President Pedroso, with his family and friends present for the ceremony.

Proclamation

2025 NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Councilman Filipe Pedroso, read the following proclamation

WHEREAS, children are both our most vulnerable members and our greatest hope for the future, helping to shape the path forward for Bridgewater; and

WHEREAS, positive childhood experiences—such as loving caregivers and safe, stable, and nurturing relationships—can help mitigate trauma and reduce the negative effects of adverse childhood experiences, promoting the social, emotional, and developmental well-being of children; and

WHEREAS, childhood trauma can have lasting psychological, emotional, and physical impacts throughout an individual's lifetime, often influencing future generations; and

WHEREAS, children who live in families with access to concrete economic and social supports are less likely to experience abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, preventing child abuse and neglect is possible through the collaboration of families, advocates, child welfare professionals, educators, healthcare providers, community and faith-based organizations, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and local, state, and national governments; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the need to prioritize children by investing in prevention initiatives such as home visiting programs, family-strengthening policies, economic supports, and community-based child abuse prevention programs at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, CASA SHaW (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties) continues its vital work by providing well-trained, trauma-informed volunteers to advocate in court for children living in foster care, ensuring every child has a safe and permanent home; and

WHEREAS, the Bridgewater Women's Club, with its longstanding commitment to supporting vulnerable populations, placed pinwheels in the Municipal Courtyard to raise awareness for National Child Abuse Prevention Month and highlight the mission of CASA SHaW;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor Matthew C. Moench, alongside the Bridgewater Township Council, do hereby proclaim **April 2025** as **NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH** in the Township of Bridgewater and urge all citizens to recognize this month by learning about the work of CASA SHaW, volunteering with community-based child abuse prevention programs, and fostering a narrative of hope for children throughout our

community.

**Public
Comment**

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

On the motion of Councilman Ring, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the meeting was opened to the public for comment.

No one from the public wished to be heard.

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

**Introduction
of Ordinances**

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF PROPERTY KNOWN AS LOT 511 IN BLOCK 3 ON THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP TAX MAP AND LOCATED AT WHITNEY COURT, BRIDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY 08807 (EAST OF SHASTA DRIVE), TO TRIPLE C HOUSING, INC., 1520 ROUTE 130 N, SUITE 201 NORTH BRUNSWICK, NJ 08902 (BUYER), FOR A NOMINAL CONSIDERATION OF \$100.00 PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A: 12-21(l) TO CONSTRUCT AFFORDABLE HOUSING. IF THE DEVELOPER IS UNABLE TO MEET CONSTRUCTION COST THROUGH OTHER SOURCES, THE TOWNSHIP MAY CONTRIBUTE UP TO \$150,000.00 FROM THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND

Township Administrator Pappas stated that the five-apartment structure will provide the township ten credits toward the affordable housing requirements.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-107](#) is appended to the official minutes

Grace Njuguna, 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 24th day of April, 2025, 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

CANCELLATION OF YEAR 2017 SEWER CAPITAL BOND ORDINANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$278.76

Township Administrator Pappas reported that this bond ordinance facilitated the completion of several sewer projects, resulting in a remaining balance of \$278.76. He stated that these funds would be transferred to the sewer utility general fund.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-108](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSAL OF TOWNSHIP-OWNED SURPLUS PROPERTY VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

Township Administrator Pappas informed the Council that several vehicles and pieces of equipment are no longer useful to the township and will be proposed for sale through an auction.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-109](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE CONTRACT AUTHORIZED VENDOR US. BANK FOR THE USAGE OF PROCUREMENT CARDS

Township Administrator Pappas reported that a slightly reduced number of officials have access to these cards, which are used in limited circumstances. He further stated that a policies and procedures manual exists and must be followed by all authorized officials.

Councilman Ring added that the township is switching to this vendor as the previous vendor is no longer on state contract.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-110](#) is appended to the official minutes

AWARD OF CONTRACT TO ACTIVE DISPOSAL, INC., 10 POLHEMUS LANE, BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807 FOR DUMPSTER RENTAL AND DISPOSAL OF MUNICIPAL REFUSE AT VARIOUS TOWNSHIP LOCATIONS FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$34,160.00 FOR THE PERIOD OF APRIL 1, 2025 – MARCH 31, 2026 TO BE FUNDED THROUGH THE 2025 TEMPORARY BUDGET DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS - REFUSE COLLECTION

Township Attorney Corsini explained that this vendor is being awarded the contract despite submitting the second lowest quote because they were the sole qualified bidder. The company that provided the lowest quote did not meet the township's qualification criteria.

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 Pedroso | Aye |
| Councilman Ring | Aye |
| Council President Norgalis | Absent |

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-111](#) is appended to the official minutes

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

AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF CONTRACT TO ROBERT H. HOOVER & SONS, 149 GOLD MINE ROAD, FLANDERS, NJ 07836 FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$163,482.82 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF (1) HOOK LIFT TRUCK CHASSIS VIA THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM CONTRACT # 23/24; #65MCESCCPS TO BE FUNDED THROUGH THE 2024 SEWER CAPITAL ACCOUNT

AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF CONTRACT TO TONY SANCHEZ LTD, CUSTOM TRUCK BODIES, 1685 U.S. ROUTE 46, LEDGEWOOD, NJ 07852 FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$271,093.00 FOR THE TRUCK UPFIT ACCESSORY PACKAGE VIA THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM CONTRACT # 23/24-04 CLASS 4-8 TO BE FUNDED THROUGH SEWER CAPITAL ACCOUNT

Township Administrator Pappas requested that images of the trucks be displayed on the screens for the Council's review and subsequently addressed their questions. He clarified that the funds for these trucks were allocated from the 2024 sewer capital account.

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

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

THE RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED.

Copies of resolutions [#25-04-03-112](#) & [25-04-03-113](#) are appended to the official minutes

AWARD OF CONTRACT TO TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP. (22 FIFTH STREET, SOMERVILLE, NJ 08876) FOR THE 2024-6 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WHICH INCLUDES THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF PERRINE ROAD, DAVIS COURT, BITTLE COURT AND WEAVER DRIVE, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$399,158.58, FUNDED THROUGH THE 2024 CAPITAL ROAD FUND

Township Administrator Pappas provided the Council with a map of Section 6, illustrating the roads slated for improvement under this resolution.

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 Pedroso | Aye |
| Councilman Ring | Aye |
| Council President Norgalis | Absent |

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-114](#) is appended to the official minutes

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSFER OF PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION LIQUOR LICENSE #1806-33-007-005 FROM (LICENSEE) OANKAR CORP t/a CHAND PALACE, MARTINSVILLE GARDENS, TO (APPLICANT), RRD & S INVESTMENTS, LLC t/a MARTINSVILLE GARDENS LOCATED AT 1801 WASHINGTON VALLEY ROAD, MARTINSVILLE, NJ 08836

Councilman Ring conveyed his gratitude to RRD&S Investments for their confidence in bringing business to Bridgewater Township.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-115](#) is appended to the official minutes

**Closed
Session**

Council President Norgalis joined the Council for the closed session meeting at approximately 8:30 PM.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Bridgewater Township Council that this body will now hold a closed meeting to discuss litigation and 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 Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Ring, the Council convened in closed session at approximately 8:33 p.m.

A copy of resolution [#25-04-03-116](#) is appended to the official minutes.

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

reconvened to open session at approximately 9:06 p.m.

On a motion by Councilman Ring, the closed session agenda was amended to include contract negotiations for the Center of Excellence. The motion was seconded by Council President Norgalis and passed unanimously by voice vote.

Adjournment

On the motion of Council President Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Ring, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:06 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Grace Njuguna, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Howard Norgalis
Council President