

MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
DECEMBER 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 Wednesday, December 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 (Absent)
Council President Howard V. Norgalis

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

Councilman Kirsh led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

NOVEMBER 6, 2025– REGULAR SESSION

On motion of Council President Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the November 6, 2025, regular session minutes were moved for approval and passed unanimously on a voice call vote. Councilman Pedroso abstained from approving the November 6 minutes, as he was absent from that meeting.

OCTOBER 6, 2025 AND NOVEMBER 6, 2025 – CLOSED SESSIONS

On motion of Council President Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the October 6, 2025, 2025 and November 6, 2025, closed session minutes were passed around for Council approval & signature.

Council Reports

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Councilman Kurdyla amended his earlier report to include his Veterans Day remarks. He stated that for the past 22 years, on every Veterans Day and

Memorial Day, he has met with the now-defunct Martinsville VFW Post 6588. He described it as a privilege and an honor to represent the Township and to meet with the VFW group at Trinity Rock Park.

- This year, he visited again and met with Jack Dilly, and together they paid homage to the members they traditionally gathered with on those occasions. He noted that many of those members have since passed, and he wished to publicly acknowledge the significance of those moments of service and remembrance.
- Councilman Kurdyla reflected that speaking for the group 44 times over the years presented challenges in finding new topics, but the veterans were always an extraordinary and highly respected group. He also recognized Jack Dilly for his service to the community through the VFW and honored the memory of the members who have passed.

Councilman Kirsh:

- On Veterans Day, November 11, had the privilege of briefly speaking at the American Legion in Bradley Gardens.
- On November 25, the Zoning Board held its sixth and final hearing on the 821 Bridgewater LLC and Jewish Community Center application. The Board approved a D1 variance for an expanded use of the JCC but denied three use variances for age-restricted townhouses, as the required super-majority vote was not achieved.
- On December 1, he attended the Bridgewater Senior Club holiday party.
- On December 2, the Planning Board met and heard a sign-waiver request from the Wine Outlet at the Promenade. A second portion of that application will be heard at a future meeting. The Planning Board also reviewed the Bridgewater Master Plan, which will continue at the next meeting.
- Councilman Kirsh stated he has met individually with incoming Council members Geiger, Isla, and Bucko.
- Councilman Kirsh addressed questions regarding Council operations. He explained that although Council members may not always speak publicly on every issue, significant discussions occur behind the scenes, including conversations with Administrator Pappas and Mayor Mench. Due to the Open Public Meetings Act, members may only speak with one other Council member at a time to avoid forming a quorum.
- He further clarified the process for zoning and planning board applications.

When a landowner submits a complete application and is current on taxes, they are entitled to a timely and fair hearing. He emphasized that there is no pre-screening process; applications must be heard as long as requirements are met. Given increased public interest in land-use matters, he stressed the importance of education on how these processes work.

Council President Norgalis:(*Verbatim*)

- I hope everyone had a blessed Thanksgiving and as we move forward into the holiday season, we remember those among us who are in need of a simple hug, a good meal or temporary lodging during these cold winter nights,
- Congratulations on Police Promotions:
Sergeant Anthony Mendoza
Sergeant Adam Alosi
Lieutenant Michael Ziarnowski
Lieutenant Robert Reilly
Captain Joseph Dolinski
Captain Douglas Thorsen
- Speaking of police issues. Sgt James Edwards deserves the credit for Wrangling the township departments in the completion and the acceptance of the totally revised OEM package which was accepted by Somerset County and the NJ State Police. It was a massive undertaking with virtually every department having to redo their input or in some case create entirely new details in order to meet the expanded State Police OEM requirements.
- The Township Christmas Tree lighting ceremony was moved from yesterday to next Monday due to the weather. The Menorah lighting and Crescent Moon lighting representing the Jewish and Muslim religions will follow.
- There is only one council meeting left in 2025. That will be on Wednesday Dec. 17, 2025 at 7:30pm here in the Court Room.
- The 2026 Council Reorganization Meeting will be on Monday Jan 5 at 5:30 also here in the Court Room

Councilman Pedroso:(*Verbatim*)

I'd like to begin tonight by congratulating Andrew Bucko, Ridwana Isla, and Joan Geiger on their election night victory. Having served the residents of Bridgewater for 14 years on the Township Council—and another 10 years on the Zoning Board of Adjustment—I know firsthand the tremendous commitment it takes to serve this community. So I sincerely thank Andrew, Ridwana, and Joan for stepping forward, dedicating themselves to this responsibility, and choosing to serve the people of Bridgewater.

There are several people I want to acknowledge—individuals who truly deserve recognition.

First, my wife, Liana. None of these 14 years on the Council would have been possible without her. Her support, her patience, and her strength allowed me to devote the time required to serve this town. I also want to thank my four children—Sophia, Julia, Alina, and Nikolas. They've helped on countless campaigns, and more importantly, they sacrificed time with their father when government responsibilities pulled me away. Their love and support have been my foundation. I am blessed beyond measure.

Second, I want to thank Allen Kurdyla and Howard Norgalis for their decades of extraordinary service. Their dedication—from the fire department to countless boards and committees, as well as serving practically decades on this governing body—has shaped this township in profound ways. Their commitment to Bridgewater is a legacy to be admired.

Third, throughout my years on the Council, I worked under two remarkable Township Clerks: Linda Doyle and Grace Njuguna. Both have led the Clerk's Office with exceptional professionalism, pride, and integrity. They and their teams embody service at its best, and Bridgewater has been fortunate to have them.

Fourth, to the members of the local media who show up, meeting after meeting, to shine light on township government—thank you. It's not glamorous work, but it is essential. A special recognition goes to Roman Uschak of The BReeze, who has attended more Council meetings than just about anyone not elected to sit at this dais. And to Audrey Blumberg—who once covered these meetings herself before becoming the big-shot owner of The BReeze—thank you for your continued commitment to informing our residents. I also thank Mike Deak of MyCentralJersey and Alexis Tarrazi of The Patch. Their work ensures Bridgewater never has to wonder what happens in these chambers.

Fifth, to the voters of Bridgewater: thank you. Thank you for placing your trust in me in four elections. Thank you for allowing me to serve the town I love and have called home since 1977. Every vote I cast, every decision I made, was rooted in one simple principle: what is best for Bridgewater. The greatest rewards of serving on this Council have been protecting what makes this town special—and meeting countless incredible, compassionate, and caring people along the way.

And finally, and most importantly, I thank God. For wisdom. For courage. For

guidance. And for the strength to serve this community faithfully for all these years.

Over the past 14 years, there are many accomplishments that I feel proud to have played a role in—too many to list tonight. But I want to highlight a few moments that truly shaped Bridgewater’s future.

In 2015, Bridgewater faced one of the largest overdevelopment proposals in its history—the Center of Excellence. It was being pushed forward rapidly, with little transparency and minimal public involvement. With only Councilman Howard Norgalis and myself opposing it, I knew we had to bring the public into the process. That’s when I launched “Preserve Bridgewater.”

One woman—Lauren Whalen—came to meeting after meeting, and I didn’t know whether she was a Republican or Democrat. What mattered was that she cared about Bridgewater. I reached out and I was happy she accepted to help manage the Preserve Bridgewater movement. Together, and with the help of countless community members, we stopped a project that would have flooded Bridgewater with 400 apartments and an ill-conceived retail center that would have forever changed the character of our town. Nothing has threatened Bridgewater’s quality of life more than that proposal—and we stopped it. I am proud of that. And Bridgewater is better for it.

In 2020, when the Defund the Police movement swept across the country, I was the first elected official in Bridgewater to publicly defend and support our police department. Throughout all my years in office, I have always prioritized public safety and always supported our law enforcement officers. Bridgewater residents should be proud of their police department—because Bridgewater’s officers truly are Bridgewater’s finest.

Also in 2020, after years of pushing for it, we finally adopted the Historic Preservation Ordinance. This created a town historian and historic committee—something I championed for years—to preserve Bridgewater’s artifacts, protect its history, and ensure future generations can learn from it.

In 2021, during the height of COVID, I served as Council President and made the decision to bring Council meetings back in person—while preserving public access by continuing live streaming that started with COVID virtual meetings. Transparency in government has always been one of my priorities. I argued for live streaming early in my tenure, and in 2021 I am proud to have made it permanent.

That year, in 2021, I also joined the Board of the Somerset Regional Animal Shelter. After years of near financial collapse, I helped restructure and

stabilize the shelter—ultimately serving as Chairman and leaving the shelter financially strong, debt-free, the budget balanced, and with hundreds of thousands in savings in the bank. It went from near insolvency to a thriving, humane, and responsible community resource.

In 2023, I stood up for juvenile girls who were being sexually harassed at the Bridgewater Commons Mall and advocated for measures to protect them—standing alone on the Council in doing so. And in 2025, I again stood alone as the only governing body official in supporting women’s rights when speaking out regarding Policy 5756 at the Board of Education meeting. Board of Education Policy 5756 permits biological males who identify as female to use female bathrooms and locker-rooms in our schools, and that violates women’s rights. I will never regret standing up for women and girls in this community.

I also have always believed that Bridgewater should be welcoming to everyone. In 2016, as Council President, I became the first to invite all four major religious groups to participate in the reorganization meeting. It was historic. Five years later, when I was again Council President, all four participated — again a first in Bridgewater’s history. Bridgewater is beautifully diverse, and our government needs to be inclusive.

For ten years on the Zoning Board and fourteen years on this Council, I have consistently opposed high-density development and apartment complexes. We’ve all seen how such projects can dramatically alter the character of neighboring towns, and I have always fought to protect Bridgewater’s suburban identity. When faced with town-changing high-density housing mandates—referred to as “Affordable Housing” by Democrats—I proposed an out-of-the-box solution: Bridgewater self-building its affordable units. That idea, however, was completely ignored by the Administration. During my tenure, Bridgewater’s population remained stable—proof that we successfully resisted the push toward mass development.

From 2013 to 2020, I served as one of two council members on the Budget and Finance Committee. During that time, Bridgewater saw its longest stretch of tax stability—an average increase of just over half of one percent per year—and Bridgewater reached the lowest municipal tax rate in Somerset County.

These are only some of the accomplishments I am proud of.

This past November, an election was held, and the voters spoke. Some may call it a “Blue Wave,” but the truth is more pointed: it reflects the public’s loss of confidence in this government.

For years, I have warned this Council and the Administration that it was heading in the wrong direction:

- Nearly 30% tax increases in six years.
- A 33% increase in sewer fees from 2022 to 2025 — just 3 years!
- Bonding without a budget.
- Budgets delivered late year after year.
- Late audits.
- A declining bond rating.

I voted NO to these policies—NO to the tax hikes, NO to the sewer increases, NO to the irresponsible bonding. But my opposition was not enough to prevent what have become some of the highest tax increases in Bridgewater's history. After years of steady, stable taxes from 2013 to 2020, this Mayor has driven costs in the opposite direction. Everything is up—taxes, sewer bills, recreation fees, permits... you name it, it's up!

It's important to understand the structure of our government. Bridgewater operates under what is typically referred to as a "strong-mayor, weak-council" form of municipal government. In this system, the mayor runs the show—holding tremendous power and serving as the primary driver of the town's direction, finances, and policies. The Council has a role, mainly in adopting the budget, but the mayor largely sets the course. Because of this, the policies of this Administration are directly responsible for the results of this November's election. The public expressed its frustration clearly—and I hear you.

I hope this governing body heard you too. It's time for a course correction. Bring back sound fiscal responsibility: stop raising taxes, reduce unnecessary bonding, and lower the sewer bill.

Some may argue that speaking out now helps the Democrats in the next election—but the truth is, I'm not saying anything they haven't already been saying. And frankly, enough is enough. Without a serious course correction, you will continue to hand the Democrats the tools to win.

As I conclude my service on this Council, one thing will not change: I will continue to fight for Bridgewater. I will continue to speak out for responsible financial policy, for quality of life, and for the safety and character of this community—regardless of party politics.

I'm not going anywhere.

And I will be back to continue fighting for the town I love.

Mayor Matthew C. Moench

- Mayor Moench publicly congratulated and thanked Captains Tennant and Severe, who recently retired after decades of service with the Township Police Department. He noted that both captains were present to celebrate the recent promotions filling the positions they vacated, as well as the promotions of new lieutenants and sergeants. He emphasized that their long service left a lasting impact on the department and expressed gratitude for their contributions.
- Mayor Moench also offered public congratulations to the three council-elect members in attendance. He stated that he looks forward to working with them beginning in January and anticipates productive collaboration with them.

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

- **Maureen Dwyer: 275 W Summit St- Somerville, NJ 08876**

Ms. Dwyer began by expressing appreciation to the outgoing Council, noting that many have served the community for years and thanked them sincerely for their service.

Ms. Dwyer then offered constructive feedback regarding the proposed 15-unit affordable housing complex near the Somerville border. She acknowledged Bridgewater's efforts to meet its affordable housing obligations and emphasized the importance of thoughtful planning that supports both communities.

She noted that the proposed location sits at the entrance of a major highway, an area already experiencing significant traffic activity, and encouraged careful consideration of circulation, safety, and infrastructure needs. She expressed confidence that with collaborative planning, both Bridgewater and Somerville can ensure safe and efficient travel for motorists and pedestrians.

Ms. Dwyer highlighted the value of the existing natural buffer, which helps protect nearby neighborhoods from noise, pollution, and stormwater impacts. She encouraged exploring ways to preserve or responsibly replace these protections so that environmental quality remains strong for residents.

She also acknowledged that multiple alternative sites had been previously reviewed and encouraged continued transparency in explaining how the final

location was selected. She expressed optimism that open communication will strengthen trust and ensure residents understand how decisions are made.

Ms. Dwyer stated that the community supports responsible, well-designed development and believes that with collaboration, a solution can be reached that balances housing needs with the well-being of Somerville and Bridgewater residents alike.

Finally, she respectfully asked the Council to consider tabling the matter until January, noting that new council members will soon be taking office. She expressed hope that the incoming Council will have the opportunity to review the issue and participate fully in the discussion.

- **John Arcoleo: 1110 Washington Valley Road – Martinsville, NJ 08836**

Mr. Arcoleo expressed appreciation to Councilmen Kurdyla, Norgalis and Pedroso for their dedicated public service. He acknowledged their ongoing contributions and noted the importance of recognizing their efforts.

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

Council-elect Geiger thanked the outgoing council members Kurdyla, Norgalis and Pedroso and mentioned that she looks forward to sharing more thoughts at the upcoming reorganization meeting, noting that she has many kind words to share.

Ms. Geiger also requested, that the discussion regarding the property on Cornell Drive be tabled until the new council takes office. She acknowledged the community's concerns and expressed a desire for the incoming council to fully understand the issue before making any decisions. She noted that she and her fellow council-elect members plan to meet with Township Attorney Corsini and his law firm to learn more and ensure they are well-prepared.

She emphasized that tabling the discussion would allow the new council to thoughtfully review the concerns raised by the community, make informed decisions, and continue working collaboratively for the benefit of all residents.

- **Tim Kenny: 198 Short Hills Drive- Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

Mr. Kenny thanked the departing council members for their service. He shared appreciation for the town's plans to repave Short Hill Drive and surrounding streets and noted that coordination with utility companies is underway to address ongoing water issues.

He also highlighted his experience with solar panels and suggested that municipal solar initiatives could help manage rising electric costs. Mr. Kenny

expressed optimism that these efforts will improve neighborhood infrastructure and support sustainable energy solutions.

Mayor Moench noted that larger-scale community solar projects are being explored and remain a promising option for both private owners and the Township.

Council President Norgalis reminded residents that American Water Company provides water service throughout Bridgewater Township. He acknowledged the recent water main breaks on Short Hill Drive but noted that the system is modern and repairs were completed promptly, including restoration of the affected sidewalks and landscaping. He expressed confidence that American Water is aware of the situation and will address any long-term needs.

- **Cathy Franco: 766 Weemac Road – Martinsville, NJ 08836**

Ms. Franco expressed her gratitude to Councilmen Norgalis, Kurdyla, and Pedroso for their combined years of dedicated service on the Council, noting that their commitment has been greatly appreciated by the community. She offered special thanks to Council President Norgalis for his courtesy during public comment periods, which has been valued by residents.

Ms. Franco then addressed Item 11C, regarding an ordinance amending and reconfiguring the health code. She noted the proposed fee updates and inquired about how they relate to costs.

Council President Norgalis and Mayor Moench explained that the fees are designed to align with rates used by comparable municipalities and to cover operational costs, including inspections, ensuring the Township maintains sustainable practices. Ms. Franco expressed appreciation for this thoughtful approach and emphasized the importance of staying current with fees in the future.

- **Bob Albano: 1149 Papen Rd – Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

Mr. Albano addressed the Council and expressed his appreciation to both outgoing and incoming members. Speaking first as a representative of the Martinsville Rescue Squad, of which he is an active member and trustee, he brought attention to Assembly Bill 675, which proposes that emergency medical services be recognized as an essential service. He encouraged the Council, including new members, to consider its implications for funding and service provision, and noted that the EMS Advisory Committee may provide additional guidance.

Mr. Albano also expressed gratitude to the outgoing Council members for their dedication and hard work, acknowledging the effort and commitment required

to serve the community. He wished them well in their future endeavors and offered his support and experience to the incoming Council members.

- **Andrew Bucko: 543 Berrywood Ln- Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

Mr. Bucko spoke on Item 11C regarding the proposed health code fee updates. He acknowledged that updating the fees after 16 years is a timely and necessary step. He also noted that many of the changes bring the Township's rates more in line with neighboring municipalities.

He highlighted the reduction in reinspection fees for food establishments as a supportive measure for local businesses and suggested continuing to review the details to ensure the balance between business support and public health standards. He also noted that including inspection fees for schools, churches, and nonprofits reflects a fair approach to covering Township inspection costs. Overall, he expressed support for thoughtful updates that benefit both the community and local businesses.

- **Kyle B: Employee resides in Branchburg, NJ**

Mr. Boehme, a Township employee, addressed the Council regarding the proposed update to the Bridgewater Employee Handbook. He expressed concern that with this update, employees were losing time off and offered he wanted to bring that to the attention of the governing body.

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

Public
Hearing &
Final Action
Ordinances

BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$4,100,000, FOR MIDDLE BROOK SANITARY SEWER PUMPING STATION IMPROVEMENTS - PHASE 2 IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$4,100,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION.

Council President Norgalis noted that tonight's meeting would include the public hearing on the bond ordinance, giving residents the opportunity to comment, but that the final vote would be carried to the next meeting

Councilman Kirsh added that conversations about sewer rates need context. The rate stayed unchanged for many years, leaving the utility in poor fiscal and physical condition by 2020. He explained that the council made necessary adjustments to stabilize the system and ensure long-term reliability. He emphasized that maintaining both the financial and infrastructure health of the utility is a shared responsibility moving forward.

Councilman Pedroso shared a few thoughts, noting that recent budget transfers

suggest the sewer utility is currently in a strong financial position and may offer opportunities to ease costs for residents in the future. Regarding the \$4.1 million bonding ordinance, he emphasized the significance of the decision and expressed his belief that, since a new council will be sworn in within weeks, it would be most appropriate for the incoming governing body to take up the vote in January.

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

- **Cathy Franco: 766 Weemac Road – Martinsville, NJ 08836**

Ms. Franco expressing appreciation for the ongoing infrastructure work and simply seeking clarity on how it may influence future sewer rates. She noted that residents have seen increases in recent years and shared that understanding the potential impact in advance would help the community stay informed and prepared.

Mayor Moench responded that detailed cost information will be provided before the next meeting. While the exact budget impact depends on the full annual budget, the township can share expected repayment figures in advance. He added that this bond is being done through the State I-Bank program, which offers better rates and terms, helping keep costs as manageable as possible.

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

Ms. Geiger said she understands the seriousness of the issue and appreciates the guidance she has already received from Councilman Kirsh and Councilman Norgalis. She added that she plans to meet with Councilman Ring to continue learning, noting that while the topic may not be the most exciting, it is extremely important. She emphasized that she recognizes the need to replace the aging 50-year-old system and is committed to being fully informed. She thanked everyone for their support.

Council President Norgalis added that the best way to understand the issue is through an on-site visit to the station. He explained that while the facility may not be glamorous, seeing it firsthand is very helpful.

On a motion by Councilman Kurdyla, seconded by Councilman Kirsh, the foregoing ordinance, on which no vote was proposed, was carried to the December 17, 2025, council meeting. The public comment portion was then closed.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 138 (MASSAGE AND BODYWORK THERAPY) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER TO CLARIFY CERTAIN PROVISIONS THEREOF

Mayor Moench stated that this ordinance updates the municipal code related to this topic.

Council President Norgalis explained that this issue was first raised by the Health Department and the Police Department, both of which expressed concerns about their ability to monitor these functions within the township effectively.

Councilman Kurdyla noted that over the years, the governing body has addressed many challenging topics, and this issue is one that highlights the importance of maintaining safe, reputable facilities in the community. After reviewing police reports, he emphasized that the ordinance aims to address inappropriate activities occurring in a small number of establishments and to ensure all facilities operate responsibly. He added that most businesses strive to follow the rules, and this update will help support a healthier, safer environment for everyone in the township.

Councilman Kirsh added a brief comment, noting that the ordinance is designed to support establishments that operate responsibly, helping them continue to succeed and contribute positively to the community. At the same time, it provides clearer safeguards and accountability for those who do not follow the rules, ensuring a fair and safe environment for everyone.

Councilman Pedroso asked for clarification on Section 9, paragraph Q, specifically regarding the term “suggestive clothing.” He explained that providing a clear definition would help legitimate businesses better understand the expectations and ensure they can easily comply with the ordinance.

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

No one wished to be heard.

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

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

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

ORDINANCE #25-21 WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-285**](#) is appended to the official minutes

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 94 (“FEES”) TO AMEND AND RECONFIGURE SUBSECTION F (“HEALTH”) THEREOF OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER

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

• **Andrew Bucko: 543 Berrywood Ln- Bridgewater, NJ 08807**

Mr. Bucko reiterated his comments regarding the changes to the reinspection fees, noting the significant reduction and emphasizing that the update is intended to improve conditions within establishments that may not currently meet sanitary standards.

Mayor Moench responded to Mr. Bucko’s comments regarding the reinspection fees, explaining that the previous high fees were rarely charged in practice. The updated fees bring the ordinance more in line with actual practice. He added that adjustments to the fees for second or third reinspection’s could be considered in the future and offered to work with Mr. Bucko on potential amendments in January, without delaying the rest of the ordinance.

Council President Norgalis emphasized that health inspections are designed to ensure public safety. While reinspection’s incur fees, the goal is to bring establishments to a healthy standard, protecting residents and recovering costs without subsidizing noncompliance. He noted that this is a critical function for the township and the health department.

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

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

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

ORDINANCE #25-22 WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-286**](#) is appended to the official minutes

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 216 (WRECKER ROSTER), SECTION 216-7 (ISSUANCE OF LICENSE; DENIAL, SUSPENSION, TERMINATION) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER TO CREATE A NEW SUSPENSION PROVISION

Council President Norgalis stated that the police department has provided valuable insight on this issue, which has been a persistent challenge over many years. He noted that the ordinance gives the township the tools needed to address the problem effectively, ensuring that all regulated organizations operate on a consistent and fair standard.

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

No one wished to be heard.

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

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

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

ORDINANCE #25-23 WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-287**](#) is appended to the official minutes

Introduction of Ordinances	AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AMENDING SECTION 126 OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP CODE, REPEALING AND REPLACING SECTION 126-321.10 TITLED “AH-3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING ZONE” ALLOWING FOR ELEVEN 100% AFFORDABLE MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT UNITS AND FOUR DISABLED VETERANS HOUSING UNITS PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE FAIR HOUSING ACT AND ANY UNIFORM HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY CONTROLS ON BLOCK 406, LOT 2.01
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Mayor Moench commented on the affordable housing project, noting that it provides housing for disabled veterans and is entirely an affordable development. He explained that because of its type, the township receives bonus credits, meaning completing this 15-unit project avoids the need to replace roughly 150 units elsewhere.

He acknowledged residents' concerns and the input of incoming council members but emphasized that this project is a key component of the township's plan and has recently received \$3 million in state funding, reducing the burden on local affordable housing funds. Mayor Moench highlighted that moving forward with the project ensures compliance with state law while making the best use of available resources.

Councilman Pedroso stated that while he will not be supporting this project, he appreciates the township's efforts on affordable housing and emphasized the value of exploring all possible approaches. He highlighted that a cost analysis on the potential for the township to self-build affordable housing could provide additional insight and encouraged future consideration of such options to ensure the best outcomes for the community.

Councilman Kirsh noted that while he cannot speak to past administrative decisions, the proposal for self-funding affordable housing would have required a substantial investment. He emphasized that exploring solutions that are both financially feasible and sustainable allows the township to move forward effectively while still addressing its affordable housing goals.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-288**](#) 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 17th day of December, 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.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk shall forward this Ordinance to the Bridgewater Township Planning Board for their meeting to be held on December 16, 2025, to review and prepare a recommendation.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 26 (PERSONNEL POLICIES), ARTICLE IV (COMPENSATION AND PAY PERIODS) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER TO CLARIFY COMPENSATION STANDARDS

Administrator Pappas stated that the council has before it a draft ordinance, modeled after what other municipalities have used; to clarify how non-union employees would receive compensation increases. He noted that the three collective bargaining units are already covered under their agreements. The ordinance also updates other provisions to ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, reflecting the township's commitment to clear, fair, and up-to-date employee policies.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-289**](#) 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 17th day of December, 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.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AMENDING SECTION 320.3 ENTITLED "BRCC BRIDGEWATER REGIONAL CORPORATE CENTER ZONE" WITHIN CHAPTER 126 (LAND USE) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP

OF BRIDGEWATER SO AS TO BRING THE BRIDGEWATER REGIONAL CORPORATE CENTER ZONE INTO CONFORMANCE WITH THE TOWNSHIP 2025 MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION REPORT AND ITS ADOPTION BY THE TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

Mayor Moench commented that items 12C and 12D mark the beginning of the council's ongoing process to implement the recently adopted Master Plan. He emphasized that while the Master Plan serves as a guiding document, it becomes actionable only once approved by the council. In this case, the updates will provide greater flexibility for this particular area and zone in Bridgewater, supporting thoughtful and strategic development.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-290**](#) 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 17th day of December, 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.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk shall forward this Ordinance to the Bridgewater Township Planning Board for their meeting to be held on December 16, 2025, to review and prepare a recommendation.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AMENDING SECTION 126 OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP CODE, AMENDING SECTION 126-311 TITLED

"C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ZONE" TO PERMIT ADDITIONAL CONDITIONAL USES

Mayor Moench noted that this is the next step in updating the Master Plan. The proposal focuses on the C1 neighborhood business zones, including areas like Martinsville, to modernize and align them with the Master Plan's recommendations while supporting traditional, neighborhood-oriented businesses.

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

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

THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-291**](#) 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 17th day of December, 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.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk shall forward this Ordinance to the Bridgewater Township Planning Board for their meeting to be held on December 16, 2025, to review and prepare a recommendation.

Resolutions	RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
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Council President Norgalis expressed enthusiasm that progress is being made on the long-standing project of creating an employee handbook, a process dating back to the Flannery administration.

Mayor Moench thanked Council President Norgalis for his dedication and leadership, noting the significant role he played in advocating for and advancing this project, and expressed satisfaction that it is now coming to fruition. He added that the updated employee handbook is designed to supplement existing collective bargaining agreements, particularly for non-union employees, and has undergone extensive review. He noted that a recent question from an employee was due to a misunderstanding, as the section in question applies only to part-time employees. The handbook is intended to be a living document, with opportunities for future updates and improvements as needed.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-292**](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING BRIDGEWATER TAX COLLECTOR AND TREASURER TO RELEASE PREMIUM BID MONEY

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-293**](#) is appended to the official minutes

RESOLUTION REQUESTING APPROVAL OF ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION NJS 40A:4:87 – COUNTRY CLUB ROAD, ARDSLEY LANE, AND GOLDFINCH DRIVE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT \$356,411.00 - BUDGET CHAPTER 159

Council President Norgalis stated that this represents incoming funding for the township, emphasizing that it is a grant.

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

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

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-294**](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF CONTRACT TO CIOCCHA FORD, 215 US HIGHWAY 202, FLEMINGTON, NJ 08822, FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$144,231.00 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF TWO 2026 FORD F-350 TRUCKS VIA THE MORRIS COUNTY COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM CONTRACT # 15-C, ITEM #12 TO BE FUNDED THROUGH CLEAN COMMUNITIES GRANT FROM 2022, 2023, 2024, AND 2025

Council President Norgalis noted that these funds will be used to replace aging DPW vehicles.

Mayor Moench added that the purchase is covered by the Clean Communities grant, making it budget-neutral.

On motion of Council President Norgalis, 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	Absent
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-295**](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF CONTRACT TO PAVE-RITE, INC., 40 RADEL AVENUE, BRIDGEWATER, NJ, 08807, FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$68,746.40 FOR THE ASH STREET ROAD REPAIRS VIA THE SOMERSET COUNTY OPEN-ENDED COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM CONTRACT # CC-0028-24

Mayor Moench noted that this action addresses previous resident concerns about dangerous road conditions on Ash Street, where pipes were causing issues, and that the problem was resolved through cooperative pricing.

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	Absent
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-296**](#) is appended to the official minutes

AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER #1/FINAL CHANGE ORDER DECREASING THE AMENDED CONTRACT PRICE FROM \$651,677.93 TO \$651,052.35 A DECREASE OF \$625.58, AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROJECT, RELEASE OF THE PERFORMANCE BOND, ACCEPTANCE OF THE MAINTENANCE BOND, AND FINAL PAYMENT TO TOP LINE CONSTRUCTION CORP. (22 FIFTH STREET, SOMERVILLE, NJ 08876) FOR THE FOXCROFT ROAD AND SPRING VALLEY DRIVE ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WHICH INCLUDES THE ENTIRE LENGTHS OF FOXCROFT ROAD AND SPRING VALLEY DRIVE FUNDED THROUGH THE 2023 ROAD IMPROVEMENT CAPITAL FUND AND FY 2023 NJDOT MUNICIPAL AID GRANT

On motion of Council President Norgalis, 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	Absent
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-297**](#) is appended to the official minutes

RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS LOCAL NO. 11 AND TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER FOR TERMS TO A SUCCESSOR COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS AGREEMENT

Administrator Pappas reported that the township successfully negotiated a four-year contract with the Teamsters. The key changes are outlined in the MOA, which was reviewed with the Mayor and Council, and this action formally approves the contract and its amendments.

On motion of Council President Norgalis, 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	Absent
Council President Norgalis	Aye

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

A copy of resolution [**#25-12-03-298**](#) is appended to the official minutes

Adjournment

On the motion of Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Councilman Kurdyla, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Grace Njuguna, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Howard Norgalis
Council President