

**MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
MAY 2, 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, May 2, 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  
Councilman Filipe Pedroso  
Council President Timothy Ring

Also Present: Michael Pappas, Township Administrator  
Christopher Corsini, Township Attorney  
Juliana Coelho, Deputy Township Clerk

Councilman Pedroso led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**

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

**Council Reports**

Councilman Kirsh:

- On April 5th, Councilman Kirsh attended the Somerset Patriots opening day at the invitation of the ownership group.
- Attended Bridgewater Baseball's Opening Day on April 13th, where Council President Ring threw the opening pitch.
- The Planning Board met on April 16th to discuss an interesting case of a subdivision in Bradley Gardens.
- The Zoning Board convened on April 9th for the third hearing regarding The Chimney Rock Storage. The next hearing is scheduled for June 11th.

- On April 23rd, the Zoning Board approved a single-family dwelling addition in Bradley Gardens.

Councilman Kurdyla:

- Congratulated the Somerset Patriots and Bradley Gardens Baseball and Softball on their Opening Day.

Councilman Norgalis: (verbatim)

- Attended the monthly Municipal Alliance meeting. Bridgewater Township Deputy Administrator, Wells Winegar, provided an update on the Bridgewater REACH program an Initiative to fight the opioid crisis. Renata Denlinger and Jerri Collevchio from the Safe Communities Coalition also joined the meeting to present their prom kit program. At the next Council meeting, I plan to request that the Council appoint April McGrath-Lutzyk, High School Student Assistance Counselor, as a member of the Alliance. She already attends the meetings.
- Best wishes to our Jewish friends who celebrated PASSOVER. Passover is documented in the Book of Exodus Chapters 12 thru 14 in the Christian Bible.
- Work has already begun with Engineering firms knocking on doors for those homes on streets involved in the 2024 Road Construction Program. The letter they hand out is self-explanatory but if folks have questions they can contact Anthony Gallo, Assistant Township Engineer on 908-725-6300 x 5514 whose name is referenced in the letter.
- Attended the Somerville High School National Honor Society Induction Ceremony where my Granddaughter Grace Norgalis was one of 54 students recognized. The motto of the Society is Noblesse Oblige. A French term signifying the obligation to behave honorably, generously, and with responsibility to others. Sen Douglas Steinhardt was the guest speaker.
- Several weeks ago, I reported about the apartment fire in Finderne. At the time of the fire, a lithium battery was in the building, but it was unclear if the battery was the cause of the fire. According to our Fire Marshal, it has officially been determined that the lithium battery started the fire. I want to caution our residents that an Underwriter approved lithium battery should only be used with the correct Underwriters approved charger. PLEASE do not rely on cheap readily available knockoff chargers obtained at flea markets and on eBay.

Councilman Pedroso:

- Wished the Jewish Community a Happy Passover.

#### Council President Ring:

- Attended the Bradley Gardens Baseball and Softball Opening Day festivities on April 20th, along with Mayor Moench.
- Bulky Trash days have been scheduled for May 11th and May 18th. They will be held in the Findern section of Bridgewater and are open to all township residents. Because there are certain restrictions, President Ring recommended that residents review those restrictions on the township website ahead of time to ensure their items and vehicle are compliant.
- The May 16th Council meeting has been rescheduled to May 23rd due to quorum issues.

#### Mayor's Reports

Michael Pappas, Township Administrator reported on behalf of Mayor Moench

- The Bridgewater Township Master Plan workshop will be held on May 22nd, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers. All residents are encouraged to attend.
- Following the extensive discussion and questions raised during PSE&G's presentation at the last council meeting, a follow-up meeting with the administration was committed to. Due to scheduling conflicts, the meeting is now scheduled for next Tuesday.

#### Presentation

##### **SEWER UTILITY**

Township Administrator Pappas commended Councilman Norgalis and Mr. Genova for their instrumental roles on this project. Mr. Corsini's legal expertise ensured the responsible company would cover the cost, originally slated for the township. Additionally, the township benefits from the expertise of resident engineer, a member of CDM Smith firm, who is leading this project.

The administration proposes adjustments to the sewer utility fee schedule. Previously, the council approved a fee increase, and the township was able to absorb a subsequent 2.5% increase from the regional sewage authority (SRVSA) in 2022 due to its existing reserves. While the SRVSA hasn't increased fees in 2024, they may do so in 2025.

The sewer utility's financial condition has improved considerably. There have been significant amendments to a series of ordinances that regulate the sewer utility and improvements that have been made to the Gilbride pump station. We are in the midst of the final design of a rebuild of the Middlebrook Pump Station, a crucial component for sewage conveyance to the SRVSA. This outdated facility will be addressed through a previously approved contract with Penone Associates engineering firm.

Replacing the Middlebrook pump station, estimated at \$3 million to \$3.5 million, will

require future funding approval by the council. Township Administrator Pappas addressed the proposed tiered fee increases as follows:

- 2.5% increase for the remainder of 2024, raising the fee from \$472 to \$483.80.
- 5% increase for 2025, bringing the fee to \$495.
- 1.5% annual increase starting in January 2026.

A "pass-through clause" ensures any future increases from the SRVSA are automatically applied to Bridgewater's fees. A drafted ordinance, reviewed with legal counsel, reflects these changes.

Councilman Pedroso asked if selling the sewer system to a private company had been explored. Administrator Pappas confirmed it was considered. However, due to the current state of the sewer system and the significant upgrades needed for the pump station, there's insufficient time to determine the feasibility of a sale.

The council sought clarification on the increases and expressed overall support for the proposed ordinance.

**Public  
Comment**

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

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

No one wished to be heard.

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

**Introduction  
of Ordinances**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, CHAPTER 40 "SUBSTANCES, HAZARDOUS" TO ADD SECTIONS RELEVANT TO REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS TO THE TOWNSHIP AND VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES**

Council President Ring explained that this ordinance already exists. This amendment simply adds an administrative fee to recover damages and a provision for nonpayment.

Councilman Pedroso expressed concern over the language used and offered his comments were not incorporated into the ordinance.

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

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

**THE ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-126](#) is appended to the official minutes.

Juliana Coelho, 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 23rd day of May 2024, at 7:30 p.m. prevailing time on said day as the time and the Bridgewater Township Municipal Court Chambers at 100 Commons Way in said Township as the place for hearing and final action.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Township Clerk shall forthwith post on the bulletin board in the Township Municipal Building at 100 Commons Way, a true copy of said ordinance and make copies available to members of the general public and spread the same upon the minutes of the meeting.

**Resolutions**

**A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR EMERGENCY TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT FUND \$1,040,301.24 WHICH BRINGS THE 2024 YEAR-TO-DATE TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS TO \$19,720,145.04**

Councilman Pedroso expressed he was concerned about approving this resolution before seeing the budget.

Township Administrator Pappas stated there is a slight delay in presenting the budget to the council. While it was originally anticipated for tonight's meeting, revised figures for some external revenue sources are still being received. Mr. Pandos at a previous meeting mentioned several necessary early-year expenditures, such as a disproportionately large pension payment, which increased the overall budget amount by \$3-4 million. The administration prioritizes presenting a precise and accurate budget, and these final adjustments require additional time. Administrator Pappas stated the Council can expect the budget to be presented within the next week.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-127](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**AWARD OF CONTRACT TO KEYSTONE SPORTS CONSTRUCTION OF 1100 SCHELL LN, SUITE 104, PHOENIXVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF SYNTHETIC TURF AT THE FIELD KNOWN AS “TURF 3”/“1000 TURF”, LOCATED AT 600 GARRETSON RD, BRIDGEWATER, NJ UNDER THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY (ESCNJ) COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM #ESCNJ 22/23-37, FOR \$423,835.12. FIFTY PERCENT OF WHICH SHALL BE REIMBURSED BY THE BRIDGEWATER RARITAN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT TO BE FUNDED FROM OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND ACCOUNT**

Council President Ring explained that there was a presentation on this resolution during the last council meeting. The school district will share the cost to replace the turf field equally with the township.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-128](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**AWARD OF CONTRACT TO KEYSTONE SPORTS CONSTRUCTION OF 1100 SCHELL LN, SUITE 104, PHOENIXVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF SYNTHETIC TURF AT THE FIELD KNOWN AS THE MUNICIPAL COMPLEX TURF, LOCATED AT 100 COMMONS WAY, BRIDGEWATER, NJ UNDER THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY (ESCNJ) COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM #ESCNJ 22/23-37, FOR \$451,684.78 TO BE FUNDED FROM OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND ACCOUNT**

Councilman Pedroso asked whether grass fields had been considered instead of turf fields. He also highlighted the advantages of grass compared to turf.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-129](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**AUTHORIZING AN AWARD OF CONTRACT TO APPRAISAL SYSTEMS, INC. TO PERFORM PROFESSIONAL APPRAISAL INSPECTIONS AND RELATED SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH THE TOWNSHIP REASSESSMENT PROGRAM IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$73,010.00 FOR THE PERIOD OF MAY 3, 2024 – DECEMBER 31, 2024 FUNDED FROM THE TAX ASSESSMENT – PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ACCOUNT**

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-130](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**AUTHORIZING AN ADDITIONAL \$25,392.00 TO K & J TREE SERVICE, LLC; 16 STONY BROOK ROAD, BRANDBURG, NEW JERSEY TO PROVIDE 3RD PARTY SNOW PLOWING FOR TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$175,392.00 FOR THE 2023-2024 SNOW SEASON TO BE FUNDED FROM THE PUBLIC WORKS- SNOW REMOVAL- CONTRACTUAL SERVICE ACCOUNT**

**AUTHORIZING AN ADDITIONAL \$946.30 TO THE SOMERSET COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE DIVISION FOR ROAD SALT FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$140,946.30 FOR THE 2023-2024 SNOW SEASON TO BE FUNDED FROM THE PUBLIC WORKS- SNOW REMOVAL- MATERIAL ACCOUNT**

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

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

**THE RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED.**

Copies of resolutions [#24-05-02-131 thru #24-05-02-132](#) are appended to the official minutes.

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT FOR UNIFORMED CONSTRUCTION CODE INSPECTIONS PURSUANT N.J.A.C. 5:23-4.4(e) IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$2,500.00 FROM 2024 CURRENT FUND FOR A TERM COMMENCING ON JANUARY 1, 2024, AND TERMINATING ON DECEMBER 31, 2028**

Council President Ring highlighted the benefits of the reciprocal agreement in this contract. It ensures prompt access to inspections, even if our construction department faces staffing challenges due to illness or injury.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-133](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A DEVELOPER’S AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER AND BRIDGEWATER ACCESSORY ASSOCIATES, LP REGARDING PLANNING BOARD APPROVALS FOR BLOCK 234, LOT 5 – ROUTE 22 AND CHIMNEY ROCK ROAD**

Council President Ring acknowledged this application, which he previously encountered during his time on the Planning Board. The applicant faced challenges because their application predated the implementation of the township's warehouse ordinance.



The project involves demolishing two dilapidated buildings, one with a collapsed roof. The applicant will also clean up a large, neglected area along Chimney Rock Road bordering their property. Additionally, the township has required the applicant to address compliance issues with zoning regulations at some of their other properties.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-134](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**AUTHORIZING RELEASE OF THE PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$178,527.00 AND SAFETY & STABILIZATION BOND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,218.33, ACCEPTANCE OF THE SITE IMPROVEMENTS AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE MAINTENANCE GUARANTEE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$22,315.95 FOR GIRALDI BUILDERS, BLOCK 107, LOTS 1, 2 & 4 NOW BLOCK 107, LOT 1.01, 1.02 AND 1.03 ON FRANKLIN STREET**

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-135](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**RESOLUTION TO CANCEL CAPITAL APPROPRIATION BALANCES FOR COMPLETED PROJECTS IN AN AMOUNT OF \$1,074,968.11**

Administrator Pappas explained that the council last approved a similar resolution in 2020, before the departure of Natasha Turchan, Former CFO. Since then, no such actions have been taken. CFO Pandos, Township Engineer Burr and Sarah Housman, purchasing agent have reviewed these outstanding bond ordinances over the past

few weeks. Being that the associated projects are complete, there's no reason to retain these funds within the bond ordinances. Releasing these unspent balances would be financially beneficial for the township this year.

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

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

**THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**

A copy of resolution [#24-05-02-136](#) is appended to the official minutes.

**Adjournment**

On the motion of Councilman Norgalis, seconded by Councilman Kirsh, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Grace Njuguna, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

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Timothy Ring  
Council President