

**BRIDGETON CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 21, 2023**

A meeting of the Bridgeton City Council was held on Tuesday, March 21, 2023 5:30 p.m., at the City of Bridgeton Police and Municipal Court Complex, 330 Fayette Street, Bridgeton, New Jersey in Council Chambers.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Bethea.

The Statement of Meeting Notice was read by Municipal Clerk, Nichole Almanza;

Notice of this Meeting of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton, as required by N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., the "Open Public Meetings Act", has been provided by an Amended Public Advertisement in the South Jersey Times, The Daily Journal on February 11, 2023 and on the City Website setting forth the date, time and place of this meeting of the Bridgeton City Council.

Invocation and Flag Salute was led by Councilman Gonzalez.

**The following answered to roll call:**

Councilwoman Rosemary DeQuinzio  
Councilman J. Curtis Edwards  
Councilman David Gonzalez  
Councilwoman Marian King  
Council President Edward Bethea

**Also in attendance:**

Administrator Kevin Rabago  
Municipal Clerk Nichole Almanza

Solicitor Michele Gibson  
CFO Trisha McGahhey

**MINUTES:**

Council President Bethea presented the City Council Meeting Minutes of March 7, 2023. It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilwoman King that said minutes be approved and to dispense with the reading of said minutes as all members have received copies. The motion carried unanimously.

**COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:**

Council President Bethea requested Council/Committee Liaison Reports:

**Councilwoman DeQuinzio** – None at this time.

**Councilman Edwards** – None at this time.

**Councilman Gonzalez** – None at this time.

**Councilwoman King** – None at this time.

**Council President Bethea** – Reminded residents that there will be a Joint Meeting between City Council and the Board of Education members on March 28, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

**Council President Bethea referred to the Mayor, Business Administrator and Solicitor for their reports.**

**Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago** – None at this time in the absence of Mayor or as Business Administrator.

**City Solicitor, Michele Gibson** – None at this time.

**ORDINANCES ON 1<sup>ST</sup> READING:**

Council President Bethea announced there was one (1) Ordinance for First Reading. The Municipal Clerk read the Ordinance.

**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON RENEWING AND REAUTHORIZING THE WATER UTILITY REVITALIZATION FUND SURCHARGE**

It was moved by Councilman Edwards and seconded by Councilman Gonzalez that the Ordinance be introduced on first reading and that the second reading, public hearing and final consideration be held on April 4, 2023.

**The Clerk called the roll as follows:**

<b>COUNCIL</b>	<b>YEA</b>	<b>NAY</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	<b>X</b>			
Councilman Edwards	<b>X</b>			
Councilman Gonzalez	<b>X</b>			
Councilwoman King	<b>X</b>			
Council President Bethea	<b>X</b>			

**ORDINANCES ON 2<sup>ND</sup> READING:**

Council President Bethea announced there was one (1) Ordinance for Second Reading. Council President Bethea asked the Municipal Clerk to read the Ordinances.

**ORDINANCE 23-06**  
**ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS**  
**AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK**  
**(N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)**

It was moved by Councilwoman King and second by Councilwoman DeQuinzio this be considered the second reading of said ordinance and the meeting be opened to the public for a hearing on the matter which motion was carried unanimously.

Council President Bethea opened the meeting to the public for any one desiring to be heard on this ordinance and this ordinance only.

No one desiring to be heard, it was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and second by Councilman Edwards the public hearing be closed which motion was carried.

It was then moved by Councilwoman King and second by Councilwoman DeQuinzio this be considered the final reading of said ordinance and that it be taken up for adoption or rejection by roll call vote.

**The Clerk called the roll as follows:**

<b>COUNCIL</b>	<b>YEA</b>	<b>NAY</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	<b>X</b>			
Councilman Edwards	<b>X</b>			
Councilman Gonzalez	<b>X</b>			
Councilwoman King	<b>X</b>			
Council President Bethea	<b>X</b>			

**PUBLIC PORTION:**

Council President Bethea opened the meeting to the public for anyone desiring to be heard. It was moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio motioned and seconded by Councilwoman King the public portion be opened.

Damon Dunns, Landlord of property located on Bank Street, explained that he has come before Council before with the same types of issues. He continued that he is receiving violations for dumping in an alleyway behind the property he owns. He explained that he has decided to hand out flyers regarding illegal dumping in Bridgeton. Mr. Dunns stated that the City is not taking this seriously and explained that he has received his flyers back in the mail. Mr. Dunns indicated that he has now filed a complaint with the DCA. He provided a flyer to Council for their review.

Andrea Gillis (Bridgeton, NJ address provided) discussed pot holes within the City. She expressed her frustrations that the pot holes are being filled with a material that washes out after one or two rains. Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago explained that depending on the time of the year that the patch is done may also determine the lifetime of the product. He continued that in the colder times of year that a "cold patch" will not last as long and that the material used in warmer weather will last longer.

Ms. Gillis also listed a few roadways that should have a red light placed such as North and Pearl Streets, Laurel and Pearl and at the new Wawa. Mr. Rabago stated that he has reached out to the State for these specifics prior and was told that traffic data studies would have to be performed in order to determine if a light would be needed. Council President also provided Ms. Gillis information to reach out to the County and State officials with her concerns.

Ms. Gillis stated that the steps at the Zoning Office are cracked and are in dire need of replacement before someone gets hurt.

Esaul Martin and Cassandra representing Bridgeton Housing Authority and SEG Coordinator provided information regarding the Semi-Annual Citywide Clean-up scheduled for Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Mr. Martin indicated that the met-up spot has been changed to the Marino Center.

Mr. Martin stated that they are working with Rutgers for a case study to help promote the use of electric bikes within the City. He continued that there is an online meeting regarding funding set for March 27<sup>th</sup> from 5-7:00 p.m.

Mr. Martin stated there was an issue on various streets within the City regarding parking happening in “No Parking Here to Corner” spots. He continued that a lot of people ignore these signs and hopes there is a way to have this enforced as it causes issues with drivers not being able to see around the corners when pulling out of the streets. Mr. Martin stated that he did take his issues to the County and felt that he was laughed at.

Mr. Martin stated that there are many businesses that need parking and explained that there are also people that park all day in these spots leaving the businesses out of choices. He provided a recent encounter where a car parked in the middle of the street with their hazards on while going into a local business for about 30 minutes.

With no one else desiring to be heard, it was moved by Councilman Edwards and seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio the public portion be closed, which motion was carried. Council President Bethea closed the public portion of the meeting.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

Council President Bethea announced all matters listed under the consent agenda; M-1 through M-9 will be enacted upon by one motion unless a council member desires to discuss an item, in which case the items will be removed from the consent agenda and acted upon separately.

Council President Bethea called upon the Municipal Clerk to read the Resolutions of the Consent Agenda.

**RESOLUTION NO. 64-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing budget appropriations transfers for the 2022 Budget.

**RESOLUTION NO. 65-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton accepting a grant from the Hazardous Discharge City Remediation Fund through the New Jersey Economic

Development Authority and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection pertaining to Block 142 Lot 11.

**RESOLUTION NO. 66-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton imposing liens on various properties for remediation of certain code violations impacting public safety, health or welfare January 2023.

**RESOLUTION NO. 67-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing refund of payment in Office of Housing & Inspections/Code Enforcement.

**RESOLUTION NO. 68-23**, authorizing the City to advertise for Resurfacing of Chestnut Avenue, Penn Street, Madison Street and High Street.

**RESOLUTION NO. 69-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton expressing support for the Solar Landscape Community Solar Projected located at 450 N. Laurel Street and 600 N. Laurel Street in the City of Bridgeton.

**RESOLUTION NO. 70-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton accepting the bids on certain property owned by the City of Bridgeton.

**RESOLUTION NO. 71-23**, approving participation with the State of New Jersey in a Safe and Secure Communities Program administered by the NJ Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General.

**RESOLUTION NO. 72-23**, authorizing contracts with certain approved State Contract vendors for contracting units pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12, County Co-Op Vendors approved by the County of Cumberland for use by municipalities pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:34-7.29, and National Co-Op Vendors pursuant to P.L. 2011, c.139.

Council President Bethea asked for a motion to accept the resolutions under the consent agenda.

It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and second by Councilwoman DeQuinzio that Resolutions M-1 through M-9 be adopted which motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. The original resolutions may be found in the Resolution Book.

**The Clerk called the roll as follows:**

<b>COUNCIL</b>	<b>YEA</b>	<b>NAY</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	<b>X</b>			
Councilman Edwards	<b>X</b>			
Councilman Gonzalez	<b>X</b>			
Councilwoman King	<b>X</b>			
Council President Bethea	<b>X</b>			

**SCHEDULE OF BILLS:**

Council President Bethea asked Council for a motion to approve the Schedule of Bills dated March 17, 2023 in the amount of \$1,202,677.34. It was moved by Councilwoman King and seconded by Councilman Gonzalez the Schedule of Bills be approved as read and warrants be drawn on their various accounts and appropriations, which motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote. The original schedule may be found in the minute books.

## **APPLICATIONS:**

Council President Bethea announced there were no applications for approval.

## **REPORTS:**

Council President Bethea announced there were no reports for approval.

### **Council President Bethea called upon Council for comments:**

**Councilwoman King** – Stated she hopes some resolutions can be made regarding the comments from the public tonight.

Councilwoman King agreed that the Visitor Center (Planning/Zoning) steps need to be fixed and stated there is a liability with having employees in that building.

Councilwoman King suggested that the City could have a meter maid job regarding the earlier comments about traffic violations and parking issues.

**Councilman Gonzalez-** Congratulated “Life Worth Living” for receiving a Federal Grant for over \$1M to continue making a difference in our schools and community.

Councilman Gonzalez spoke to Mr. Dunns stating that his concerns have been heard and he has dealt with this issue as well. He suggested cameras and reaching out to the Housing Department.

**Councilman Edwards** – Spoke to Mr. Dunns regarding the alleyway dumping and explained that he is dealing with the same thing. He asked that Administration and Code Enforcement report back at the next meeting. He also stated that he would like to go see the area of concern.

Councilman Edwards agreed with Mr. Martin’s comments of the corner parking, etc. and stated that some enforcement needs to take place.

Councilman Edwards spoke of a viral video regarding Big John’s and stated he was happy to see a local business be shared all over.

**Council President Bethea** – Asked Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago to report back to Council with more information regarding Mr. Dunn’s property. He stated that trash does not grow on its own and that it comes from people and/or property owners. He continued explaining that there is often liter thrown on his own property and that he still goes out and picks it up.

Council President Bethea reminded all residents regarding the clean-up scheduled for Saturday and for the Joint Meeting with the Board of Education scheduled for March 28, 2023.

Council President Bethea stated that he is interested in hearing more regarding the Rutgers case study (“15 Minute Town”). He also stated that the City should look into being more accessible such as after school study and broadband usage for students rather than closing the buildings at the end of the day. He stated that maybe this can be spoke about at the Joint Meeting.

Council President Bethea explained that he was previously the President of Main Streets and they had suggested a 15-minute local business parking. He suggested that this could be looked into again.

Council President Bethea spoke of funding going to Youth Anti-Violence non-profits and the start up of Anti-Gang Summer Camps.

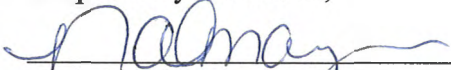
Council President Bethea thanked and saluted all 1<sup>st</sup> Responders – Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works and all Public Servants.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business before Council, it was moved by Councilman Edwards and seconded by Councilman Gonzalez to adjourn the meeting which motion carried unanimously.

Council President Bethea adjourned the meeting which ended at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Nichole Almanza, RMC, Municipal Clerk

APPROVED  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Edward Bethea, Council President

Date Approved: 4/4/2023