

**BRIDGETON CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
REORGANIZATION MEETING  
JANUARY 4, 2022**

A meeting of the Bridgeton City Council was held on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 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 Municipal Clerk, Nichole Almanza.

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 to the South Jersey Times, The Daily Journal and the City of Bridgeton Website on December 22, 2021 and The Press of Atlantic City on December 23, 2021 setting forth the date, time and place of this meeting of the Bridgeton City Council.

Invocation and flag salute was led by Mayor Kelly.

**The following answered to roll call:**

Councilman Edward Bethea  
Councilwoman Rosemary DeQuinzio  
Councilwoman Marian King

**ABSENT** – Councilman J. Curtis Edwards  
Councilman David Gonzalez\*  
(Entered Late)

**Also in attendance:**

Mayor Albert Kelly  
Solicitor Michele Gibson

Administrator Kevin Rabago  
Municipal Clerk Nichole Almanza

**Election of Council President 2022:**

The Municipal Clerk announced nominations are now in order for the Seat of President of City Council.

Councilwoman King nominated Councilman Edward Bethea for President of the City Council and it was seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio.

The Municipal Clerk announced the nominations, and called for any further nominations. There being no further nominations for President of City Council, the Municipal Clerk declared the nominations closed.

The Municipal Clerk announced a Roll Call vote will be taken to declare Councilman Edward Bethea as President of the City Council for the year 2022.

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

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

The Municipal Clerk announced the vote.

Councilman Bethea was elected as City Council President for the Year 2022.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

***Elevate 9 LLC – Cannabis***

David Kotler, Esquire representing Elevate 9, LLC stated that Mr. Damian Walker was unable to attend tonight due to COVID. Mr. Kotler stated that he is a practicing Attorney and has years of cannabis industry experience to provide an advisory role with Elevate 9.

Mr. Kotler stated that Mr. Walker graduated from Howard University with a previous football career. He continued that Mr. Walker current is the owner of DW Executive Services which provides protection services. Mr. Kotler stated that Mr. Walker has recently shifted his focus to the cannabis industry and has begun courses to begin a microbusiness.

Mr. Kotler provided background of Mr. John Saccenti, another Principal of the company. He stated that Mr. Saccenti is an Army Veteran. He stated that Mr. Saccenti also worked with the NJ Division of Criminal Justice and Board of Health and has a clear understanding of the workings of Trenton.

Mr. Kotler stated that Mr. Walker’s vision is to fit in the community and be a functional cannabis company.

***Councilman Gonzalez entered the meeting***

Mr. Dave Fornea, also an Advisor for the company, stated that this is an opportunity to bring something to the City to put land to good use and bring employment opportunity to the City.

Council President Bethea provided information regarding the City’s Cannabis Committee and stated he looks forward to moving forward in 2022.

***Business Dumpster Location Issue (13-17 N. Laurel St.)***

Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago stated that he was contacted by this business owner and wanted to get Council’s input on her situation. Mr. Rabago stated he will reach out to her and see if there has been any updates.

Council President Bethea suggested for Admin, Mayor and himself could meet and try to resolve on their own.

## MINUTES:

Council President Bethea presented the City Council Meeting Minutes of December 21, 2021. 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.

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

**Mayor Kelly** – Discussed Code Blue and how the shelters will most likely be full all week due to the weather.

Mayor Kelly stated he is working with Cumberland County to open a COVID testing site on western side of town. He stated that there is a possibility it could be open on January 17, 2022 at the Marino Center. He stated once confirmed, he will provide flyers to all with the information.

**Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago** – None at this time.

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

## PUBLIC PORTION:

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

Alan Trzuskoski welcomed Elevate 9. Mr. Trzuskoski stated he is currently working with 9 candidates and completing applications for the State. He stated his next step after applications would be to speak with Admin and the Mayor for support letters.

With no one else desiring to be heard, it was moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio and seconded by Councilwoman King 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-12 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. 01-22**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton designating the Date, Time, and Place of Meetings of the City Council for the Year 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 02-22**, appointing the Public Agency Compliance Officer for the City of Bridgeton for the Year 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 03-22**, designating the Official Newspapers for the City of Bridgeton for the Year 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-22**, designating the Official Radio Stations for the City of Bridgeton for the Year 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 05-22**, authorizing the adoption of Robert’s Rules of Order.

**RESOLUTION NO. 06-22**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing the adoption of a Cash Management Plan.

**RESOLUTION NO. 07-22**, designating the Official Depositories and Investment Groups for the City of Bridgeton for the Year 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 08-22**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton designating Official Check Signers for the Year 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 09-22**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton designating Elevate 9, LLC as Conditional Redeveloper for Block 103 Lot 64 AKA 429 E. Commerce Street (Former Ferracuta Parking Lot) and authorizing the City of Bridgeton to negotiate a Redevelopment Agreement and Purchase/Sale Agreement with Elevate 9, LLC.

**RESOLUTION NO. 10-22**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing and approving contract between City of Bridgeton and Bridgeton Policeman’s Benevolent Association Superior Officers Local #94 (S.O.A.).

**RESOLUTION NO. 11-22**, authorizing the Contract with Gentilini Motors, a State Cooperative #20-01190 for the purchase of a 2022 Chevrolet Silverado 4WD, Crew Cab Special Service Vehicle, not to exceed the amount of \$45,486.69.

**RESOLUTION NO. 12-22**, making temporary appropriations for the Calendar Year 2022 pending final adoption of the Calendar Year 2022 Budget.

Council President Bethea asked Council for any comments. There were no comments from Council.

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

It was moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio and second by Councilwoman King that Resolutions M-1 through M-12 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   | X          |            |                |               |
| Councilman Edwards       |            |            |                | X             |
| Councilman Gonzalez      | X          |            |                |               |
| Councilwoman King        | X          |            |                |               |
| Council President Bethea | X          |            |                |               |

**Council President Bethea called upon Mayor Kelly for comments:**

**Mayor Kelly** – Stated that the County Commissioners Reorganization Meeting will be held on January 5, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the High School and it will be available virtually as well.

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

**Councilwoman DeQuinzio** – Wished everyone a Happy New Year and hopes it is healthy and prosperous year for all. Councilwoman DeQuinzio also thanked Alan Trzuskoski.

**Councilwoman King-** Wished everyone a Happy New Year. She stated that she will be working hard in 2022 to get initiative for change in the City. She also congratulated Councilman Bethea for his Council President nomination.

**Councilman Gonzalez** – Wished everyone a Happy New Year. He stated that despite challenges in 2021, he is happy to see growth within the City.

Councilman Gonzalez thanked Public Works for their great job of plowing the snow. He also thanked residents that moved their vehicles to allow the plows to do their jobs.

Councilman Gonzalez gave kudos to the Police Department and Fire Department for their hard work.

Councilman Gonzalez announced that on January 11, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Main Street will be meeting looking to unite Latino business owners within the City. He continued that this meeting will take place at the Immaculate Conception Church.

**Council President Bethea** – Stated that he wishes Main Street success and shared that they have had less than stellar last few years. He indicated that Councilwoman King would be meeting with them soon as well. He continued that the community and the local businesses deserve better. Council President Bethea suggested if Main Street is unable to fulfill these duties, maybe Administration can find a different solution.

Council President Bethea thanked his colleagues for the faith and support. He also thanked the Municipal Clerk, Mayor, CFO, Solicitor and Admin for their hard work.

Council President Bethea stated he is looking forward to the various redevelopment with cannabis and is hopeful it will help with rateables and taxes with economic development.

Council President Bethea wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Council President Bethea thanked all 1<sup>st</sup> Responders, Police Department, Fire Department and Public Works for their service.

Council President Bethea stated that the Bridgeton Roads were plowed better than Millville and thanked Public Works for their outstanding job.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council President Bethea announced that Council will convene into Executive Session after which the Council Meeting will resume in public to continue the regular portion of the meeting.

Council President Bethea read **RESOLUTION NO. 13-22**; the City Council has determined that it is necessary to go into an Executive Session to discuss certain matters relating to the items below as permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b.

1. **Hayes v. City of Bridgeton**– *Litigation, Attorney/Client Privilege*

Upon a motion by Councilwoman DeQuinzio and second by Councilman Gonzalez the motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote to convene into Executive Session at 6:07 p.m. The original Resolution may be found in the Resolution Book. Council left the dais to convene into Executive Session.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With a motion by Councilman Gonzalez, seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio, and all in favor, Council came out of Executive Session at 6:19 p.m. and reconvened the regular meeting.


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

Council President Bethea adjourned the meeting which ended at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**APPROVED**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nichole Almanza, Municipal Clerk

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

Date Approved: 1/18/2022