

**BRIDGETON CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
October 4, 2022**

A meeting of the Bridgeton City Council was held on Tuesday, October 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 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 to the South Jersey Times, The Daily Journal on January 8, 2022 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:

Mayor Albert Kelly
Solicitor Michele Gibson

Administrator Kevin Rabago
Municipal Clerk Nichole Almanza

PRESENTATIONS:

Firehouse Project Update – Ryan Feaster, CCIA

Ryan Feaster of the CCIA discussed the status of the project and updates on the design. He indicated that the schematic design was 100% complete, design development was 65% complete and construction documentation was 25% complete.

Mr. Feaster stated that the hopes is to have site plans presented to the Bridgeton Planning Board in October.

Mr. Feaster explained that the historic preservation is what is taking the most time. He continued that there is a scheduled meeting on October 20, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Feaster stated that the environmental remediation is out to bid and should be awarded on October 26, 2022. He added that the awarded bidder would have 30 days to complete remediation.

Mr. Feaster provided information regarding replacement of the roof and applications being presented to SHPO for approval.

Mr. Feaster stated that should Council or the City want a Groundbreaking Event that one could be created.

Councilman Edwards asked the name of the architect and if Council could have a copy of the schematic design. Mr. Feaster answered with PS & S as the architect and stated that he will work with Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago with getting Council copies of the schematic design. He continued that once construction starts, the project should be done within 14 to 16 months with an ultimate goal of 1st quarter of 2024.

Council President Bethea asked questions regarding the budget of the project. Mr. Feaster stated that the budget is unchanged as of right now. He continued that costs are going up for materials but looking to save money wherever they can. Fire Chief, Todd Bowen discussed changes that were made to save money and stated that usability and efficiency is the most important thing.

MINUTES:

Council President Bethea presented the City Council Meeting Minutes of September 20, 2022. It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilman Edwards 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 – None at this time.

Mr. Feaster stated that the environmental remediation is out to bid and should be awarded on October 26, 2022. He added that the awarded bidder would have 30 days to complete remediation.

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MINUTES:

Council President Bethea presented the City Council Meeting Minutes of September 20, 2022. It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilman Edwards 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 – None at this time.

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

Mayor Kelly – Provided an update regarding the culvert. He stated that the County Business Administrator has asked Attorney, John Carr to take this situation on as an emergency matter due to public safety.

Mayor Kelly stated that PennRose is interested in developing market rate housing in the City.

Mayor Kelly discussed a recent meeting with the Police Department, Public Works and the Business Administrator regarding the homeless population at the Riverfront. He indicated that an invitation to the Director of Homeless Prevention has been made for them to come and see the challenges that we face.

Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago – Also spoke of the homeless that have begun staying within the Riverfront. He stated that there have been many complaints received from merchants and residents regarding public intoxication. Mr. Rabago discussed reviewing the City Code and State Statutes with the City Solicitor. He continued that one of the Ordinances on tonight’s meeting is for using UEZ funds to help put more officers on the streets.

City Solicitor, Michele Gibson – None at this time.

ORDINANCES ON 1ST READING:

Council President Bethea announced there were four (4) Ordinances for First Reading. The Municipal Clerk read the Ordinances.

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AMENDING SECTION 277-10 OF THE CITY CODE PERTAINING TO CONFORMANCE TO PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE TO INCLUDE CONFORMANCE TO P.L. 2021, c.182 GOVERNING INSPECTIONS FOR LEAD PAINT HAZARDS

It was moved by Councilwoman King 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 October 18, 2022.

The Clerk called the roll as follows:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AMENDING SECTION 149-20 OF THE CITY CODE PERTAINING TO FEES FOR LEAD PAINT INSPECTIONS

It was moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio 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 October 18, 2022.

The Clerk called the roll as follows:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF VACATED 10' X 40' UNUSED RIGHT-OF-WAY SITUATED BETWEEN BLOCK 125, LOTS 1.01 AND 2 ON SOUTH LAUREL STREET TO SMITH & RICHARDS LUMBER COMPANY, INC.

It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilwoman King that the Ordinance be introduced on first reading and that the second reading, public hearing and final consideration be held on October 18, 2022.

The Clerk called the roll as follows:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF VACATED 10' X 62.23' UNUSED ALLEY SITUATED BETWEEN LOTS 5 AND 28 OF BLOCK 154 TO IGLESIA DE DIOS ISRAELITA OF BRIDGETON 2 INCORPORATED

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 October 18, 2022.

The Clerk called the roll as follows:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

ORDINANCES ON 2ND READING:

Council President Bethea announced there were four (4) Ordinances for Second Reading. Council President Bethea asked the Municipal Clerk to read the Ordinances.

ORDINANCE 22-26

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON ADOPTING PARCEL SPECIFIC REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR PARCELS IN BLOCK 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, AND 183 FOR PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT OF APPROXIMATELY 150 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND 72 UNIT OVER 55 SENIOR FACILITY IN PHASES

It was moved by Councilwoman King and second by Councilman Gonzalez 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 Councilman Edwards and second by Councilman Gonzalez 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:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea			X	

ORDINANCE NO. 22-27
ORDINANCE APPROVING THE APPLICATION AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT
FOR A LONG TERM TAX EXEMPTION WITH EASTERN PACIFIC
DEVELOPMENT, LLC FOR PHASE I AND PHASE II OF THE PROJECT TO BE
CONSTRUCTED ON PARCELS IN BLOCKS 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181,
182 AND 183 ON THE CITY OF BRIDGETON'S OFFICIAL TAX MAP

It was moved by Councilman Edwards and second by Councilman Gonzalez 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 Councilwoman King and second by Councilman Edwards the public hearing be closed which motion was carried.

It was then moved by Councilman Gonzalez 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:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea			X	

ORDINANCE NO. 22-28
ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AMENDING
ARTICLE V CHAPTER 40-12 (A) ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT
PERTAINING TO RANKS AND NUMBER OF OFFICERS

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 Councilman Edwards and second by Councilwoman King 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:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

ORDINANCE NO. 22-29

**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AMENDING
CHAPTER 149, ARTICLE II, SECTION 27 SUBSECTIONS J (1) THRU (4) OF THE
CITY CODE**

It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and second by Councilwoman King 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 Councilwoman King and second by Councilman Edwards the public hearing be closed which motion was carried.

It was then moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio and second by Councilman Gonzalez 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:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

PUBLIC PORTION:

Council President Bethea opened the meeting to the public for anyone desiring to be heard. It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez motioned and seconded by Councilman Edwards the public portion be opened.

Damian Cheeks of Cedardell Avenue stated that he is now waiting for the State to approve his cannabis conditional license and is already prepped for the next step. He expressed his excitement with having his business on a Resolution on tonight's Consent Agenda.

Esaul Martin of Eagle Street introduced Council to Ms. Cassandra Avila that will be helping with breaking language barrier issues within the Southeast Gateway. Ms. Avila stated that she is originally from Philadelphia and moved to Woodstown. She stated she is happy to see a big Latino community. She added that she previously worked in the Kensington community.

Mr. Martin working with the Bridgeton Housing Authority stated that he has received many complaints from residents of Oakview Apartments regarding speeders. He suggested the installation of speed bumps.

Carl Seabrook of Baltimore Avenue discussed the dire need of signs for school bus riders. Mr. Seabrook also stated there was a recent issue with tractor trailers hitting limbs with their trucks and falling into yards. He indicated that a neighbor was given a violation for the limbs.

Alan Trzuskoski of Edison, New Jersey stated that Mr. Damien Cheeks has done a lot of work with getting the applications to the State. Mr. Trzuskoski stated that land acquisition is in order. Mr. Trzuskoski stated that is a seminar scheduled on November 12th in Berlin regarding cannabis in Southern New Jersey.

Lee Fox, Department Head for Public Works Department discussed the recently held clean-up. He stated that they only had about 30 volunteers that day but were still able to pick up about 148 bags of trash. He suggested starting a committee to help organize and advertise the clean-ups.

Council President Bethea thanked Mr. Fox for stepping up and taking on the job. He discussed potholes within the City. He stated that Mr. Fox and his department went right out and filled what they could. He continued that even with short staff and resources, they are doing an excellent job.

With no one else desiring to be heard, it was moved by Councilman Gonzalez 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-15 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. 221-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton adopting the Cumberland County Hazard Mitigation Plan update for the City of Bridgeton.

RESOLUTION NO. 222-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton Tax Overpayment (114 Henry Street).

RESOLUTION NO. 223-22, authorizing the Request for Proposals for Emergency Medical Billing Service for the City of Bridgeton.

RESOLUTION NO. 224-22, authorizing the City to advertise for City of Bridgeton Water Samples 2023-2024.

RESOLUTION NO. 225-22, authorizing the City to advertise for Landfill Closure Monitoring Wells Ground Water Testing 2023-2025.

RESOLUTION NO. 226-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton expressing support for Brokin Hearts Premium Goods, LLC to be part of proposed Cannabiz Incubator on Block 189 Lots 3.03 and 3.04.

RESOLUTION NO. 227-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing certain utility account adjustments and taxes.

RESOLUTION NO. 228-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton Tax Overpayment (41 N. Pearl Street).

RESOLUTION NO. 229-22, authorizing execution of Discharge or Release of Mortgage for 159 S. Pine Street, designated as Block 143, Lot 23 on the City of Bridgeton's Tax Map.

RESOLUTION NO. 230-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton appointing Risk Management Consultant for the City of Bridgeton.

RESOLUTION NO. 231-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton appointing Fund Commissioner and Alternate as required by the Statewide Insurance Fund.

RESOLUTION NO. 232-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing submission of an Administrative Budget to fund the hiring of a Full-Time Zone Coordinator and funding Support Staff for FY2023.

RESOLUTION NO. 233-22, authorizing the City of Bridgeton to award a Contract to Ricky Slade Construction, Inc. for the construction of a Futsal Court within the City of Bridgeton in the amount not to exceed \$151,950.00.

RESOLUTION NO. 234-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing submission of a UEZ Project to fund two (2) Police Officers to work in the downtown and throughout Bridgeton's UEZ.

RESOLUTION NO. 235-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing submission of a UEZ Project to fund engineering analysis pertaining to the Former Angie's Diner ahead of relocation, renovation, or demolition.

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-15 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:

COUNCIL	YEA	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Councilwoman DeQuinzio	X			
Councilman Edwards	X			
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

SCHEDULE OF BILLS:

Council President Bethea asked Council for a motion to approve the Schedule of Bills dated October 4, 2022 in the amount of \$215,842.71 It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio 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 was one (1) application for approval being:

1. Extension of Premises – Inka Chicken – October 15 & 16, 2022 from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. – 22 S. Laurel Street – Mystic Bowie Event

It was moved by Councilman Edwards and seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio that said application be approved and filed, which motion carried with unanimously.

REPORTS:

Council President Bethea announced there was one (1) report for approval.

1. Treasurer’s Monthly Report – August 2022

It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio that said applications be approved and filed, which motion carried unanimously.

Council President Bethea called upon Mayor Kelly for comments:

Mayor Kelly – Stated that representatives from NJ DEP will be here next Thursday regarding the old landfill site. A meeting will be held at the Hall of Fame Building for residents to speak of what they would like to see done on this location.

Council President Bethea called upon Council for comments:

Councilwoman DeQuinzio – Stated that it is always great to see Mr. Seabrook. She congratulated Mr. Cheeks and told him to keep up the good work.

Councilwoman DeQuinzio stated that even with so little volunteers that it was a great amount of trash that was picked up.

Councilwoman King – Thanked Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago for working both day and night to get answers when needed. She expressed her deep application for him.

Councilwoman King asked everyone to keep praying for Florida and Puerto Rico.

Councilwoman King asked Mr. Rabago about the trail opening that is coming up. Mr. Rabago stated that there will be a “try-it-out” event on October 30th. He stated that an official ribbon cutting would be held sometime after this date. He continued that the trails are being looked at to add biking competitions in the future.

Councilwoman King spoke of the recent accomplishments of Mr. Isiah Pacheco in the NFL. She stated that he has done some great work in the last couple of games.

Councilman Gonzalez- Thanked Lee Fox and his department for working so hard.

Councilman Gonzalez thanked all 1st Responders for helping make the City a safe place.

Councilman Edwards – Apologized for missing the clean-up.

Councilman Edwards asked if there has been any updates regarding the reverter clause with the Laurel Theater. Mr. Rabago stated he spoke with Mr. Yilmaz and discussed what Council is looking for. He stated he will reach back out to him as a follow-up.

Councilman Edwards congratulated Mr. Cheeks and stated that he supports him 100%.

Councilman Edwards agreed with Mr. Seabrook and stated that we need to blanket the City with safety for the children.

Councilman Edwards asked Mayor Kelly to return with an update regarding the County Jail. He stated he is hearing mixed messages about the status and what they plan to do.

Councilman Edwards discussed the trashcans that were removed from downtown. He stated that now there is an issue with people putting trash on the road. Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago stated that cameras were showing that the additional cans were inviting businesses to put their trash into the public trash containers. He continued that this is not permanent and different plans are being worked on to fix the situation.

Councilman Edwards announced that Gary Denby passed away and asked everyone to keep the family in prayer.

Council President Bethea – Spoke of Gary Denby’s passing stating that he was a long term resident and civil servant to the City that will be greatly missed.

Council President Bethea stated that he was happy to hear the updates regarding the Fire Department project.

Council President Bethea expressed his disappointment with the County as to taking so long to help fight about the culvert being fixed. He added that this should have already been done. He continued that if this issue was in another municipality then it would have been taken care of by now.

Council President Bethea thanked all of the volunteers that helped with the clean-up and acknowledged various attendees.

Council President Bethea acknowledged City Council and other colleagues stating that they are truly are a team. He continued that even when they don't agree on a subject, they can have valid discussions to help make decisions.

Council President Bethea thanked Mayor Kelly, Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago and City Solicitor, Michele Gibson with answering questions even if the answers are tough to hear sometimes.

Council President Bethea discussed development taking place within the City. He stated that it is slow but steady. He stated that he is happy to see some mix income development take interest in the City. Council President Bethea stated that we need to bring some rateables to the City.

Council President Bethea asked that Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago, Public Works and Police Department look into the speeding issues mentioned by Mr. Martin in Public Comment and the possibility of the installation of speed bumps.

Council President Bethea thanked Mr. Seabrook for continually bringing safety issues to Council.

Council President Bethea congratulated Mr. Cheeks and stated he was excited about the job creations and start of careers that his business will bring.

Council President Bethea spoke of Hurricane Ian and the destruction that it brought. He asked for prayers for the families that have been effected. Council President Bethea stated that it is tough to watch from a distance and seeing areas that he and his family has fond memories of be destroyed.

Council President Bethea saluted all 1st Responders – Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works and all Civil Servants.

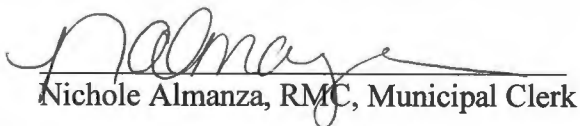
ADJOURNMENT:

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

Council President Bethea adjourned the meeting which ended at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED


Nichole Almanza, RMC, Municipal Clerk


Edward Bethea, Council President

Date Approved: 10/18/2022

