

**BRIDGETON CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
December 20, 2022**

A meeting of the Bridgeton City Council was held on Tuesday, December 20, 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 Mayor Kelly.

The following answered to roll call:

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

Absent: Councilwoman Rosemary DeQuinzio

Also in attendance:

Mayor Albert Kelly
Solicitor Michele Gibson

Administrator Kevin Rabago
Municipal Clerk Nichole Almanza

MINUTES:

Council President Bethea presented the City Council Meeting Minutes of December 6, 2022 and Executive Session Minutes of December 6, 2022. It was moved by Councilwoman King 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:

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 – Discussed recently held public meetings regarding the landfill. He handed out what was proposed such as bike trails, walking trails and pagodas. He explained that an architect was hired by the State for this.

Mayor Kelly discussed a grant for the Tin Can site and explained that it currently there are investigations taking place for any remedial work needed on the site.

Mayor Kelly announced that the Planning Board's meeting schedule for December 21, 2022 will hear an application from investors regarding the proposed Taco Bell.

Mayor Kelly stated that he is still waiting for a response from the County CFO regarding the library and the County library.

***** Councilwoman Rosemary DeQuinzio entered the meeting *****

Mayor Kelly stated that interviews have begun for the Park and Recreation Director position with 2nd interviews being scheduled. He continued he hopes to have someone in place at the start of the new year.

Mayor Kelly stated that the County is proposing the use of Grove Street to be a two-way street on parts of it as a temporary fix of the culvert being shut down. Mayor Kelly stated that we still want the culvert fixed.

Council President Bethea stated that the culvert has to be done. He continued that he is still very disappointed that there is no sense of urgency. He added that maybe he or other members of Council should appear at the next Commissioners' Meeting and speak up and express their concerns. Council President Bethea stated that this temporary idea could easily become the county's permanent fix and he does not want that.

Councilwoman King shared her agreement that if this issue was in another municipality that it would have already been fixed. She stated that she will be making some calls to help speak up and share their aggravations.

Councilwoman DeQuinzio agreed with all and stated that the last update was that they were just waiting for SHPO approval but it seems like there is always another thing in the way of getting this finished.

Councilwoman King suggested that maybe a collective effort along with Commercial Township, Fairfield, etc. should be made to add pressure.

Lee Fox, Public Works Director stated that he has not received any other updates other than what Council already knows. He stated that this is really a County issue as it provides huge issues for mutual aid for emergencies.

Fire Chief, Todd Bowen stated that he did respond previously to the State explaining how this is a safety issue for mutual aid responses. He explained that a lot of the smaller townships rely on others to help.

Mayor Kelly presented a poster of the proposed Fire House. He stated that the roof work has started. He continued that remediation of the building is not yet complete.

Council President Bethea asked Fire Chief Bowen if the street will continue to be blocked off in the future to which Chief Bowen replied yes at this time.

Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago – None at this time.

City Solicitor, Michele Gibson – None at this time.

ORDINANCES ON 1ST READING:

Council President Bethea announced there were no Ordinances for First Reading.

ORDINANCES ON 2ND 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 22-40

**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON
RELEASING, VACATING, AND EXTINGUISHING THE RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC IN
A 10' X 144' RIGHT-OF-WAY SITUATED BETWEEN LOT 8 AND LOT 9 IN BLOCK
37 ON MANHEIM AVENUE**

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 Councilwoman DeQuinzio the public hearing be closed which motion was carried.

It was then moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio and second by Councilman Edwards 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.

Alan Trzuskoski and Damien Cheeks of 7 N. Industrial Blvd., stated that the incubator is coming before the Planning Board and if approved it will then be brought before Council.

Mr. Trzuskoski stated that they have been presented with an option to lease 59 E. Commerce Street for a dispensary. He continued that they would need to get zoning approval to move forward.

Mr. Trzuskoski stated that he has a group interested in the RFP for a cannabis location and will be helping them make their proposal packet.

Mr. Cheeks stated that the 59 E. Commerce Street location is beautiful and would love to set up a time to show Council the location and what he wants to propose as a dispensary.

Cassandra Avila working with the Southeast Gateway stated that there will be a Community Meeting on January 19th at Union Baptist Temple. She stated that they are looking to do a large fence mural and are hoping to get youth involvement. She also announced a Job and Resource Fair scheduled for January 13, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. to be held at the Alms Center.

Ms. Avila stated that she has heard some complaints recently regarding parking in the vicinity of Big Johns. She explained that there are signs for 2-hour parking but a lot of people park there and stay all day which then leaves no parking for their customers. She suggested parking meters for the area.

Ashanti Rankin of Bridgeton spoke of Sustainable New Jersey and Community Gardens. He suggested that Bridgeton partners with the High School to make one here. He continued that there are often grants available as well. He added that growing food could be used for those that need it in the City.

With no one else desiring to be heard, it was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilman Edwards 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-13 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. 297-22, requesting approval for the insertion of a Special Item of Revenue for the FY 2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG).

RESOLUTION NO. 298-22, authorizing the City of Bridgeton to award a Non-Fair and Open (NFAO) Contract to Professional Account Management, LLC/Duncan Solutions, Inc. for the Professional Service of Municipal Debt Collector for the CY 2023.

RESOLUTION NO. 299-22, requesting approval for the insertion of a special item of revenue pertaining to HOME Investment Partnership Funds (HOME) from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

RESOLUTION NO. 300-22, requesting approval for the insertion of a special item of revenue funded through New Jersey Department of Transportation for Road Reconstruction Giles Rd., Devonshire Pl, Wayne Rd., Glen Dr., Rugby Ln., South Dr. and North Dr.

RESOLUTION NO. 301-22, authorizing execution of Discharge or Release of Mortgage for 713 Chestnut Avenue, Bridgeton, New Jersey, designated as Block 8, Lot 3 on the City of Bridgeton's Tax Map.

RESOLUTION NO. 302-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing submission of the 2023 Local Recreation Improvement Grant through the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

RESOLUTION NO. 303-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing certain utility account adjustments and taxes.

RESOLUTION NO. 304-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton granting Disabled Tax Exemption (5 Mulford Court).

RESOLUTION NO. 305-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton granting Disabled Tax Exemption (293 Spruce Street).

RESOLUTION NO. 306-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton granting Senior Citizen Tax Exemption (293 Spruce Street).

RESOLUTION NO. 307-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing the City of Bridgeton to enter into Agreement with Jeff Vannoy, DBA "Dirt Brothers Trail Designs" for trail planning, design, maintenance, and related tasks in Bridgeton City Park.

RESOLUTION NO. 308-22, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing budget appropriations transfers for the 2022 Budget.

RESOLUTION NO. 309-22, authorizing the City of Bridgeton to award a Non-Fair and Open Contract to South Jersey Regional Animal Shelter for Animal Shelter Services for one (1) year.

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

It was moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio and second by Councilman Edwards that Resolutions M-1 through M-13 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 December 20, 2022 in the amount of \$283,330.29. It was moved by Councilman Edwards 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 were six (6) applications for approval being:

- 1. Taxi Owner (2023) – Jaylene Cab & Transport (Rafael A. Jimenez)**

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

- 2. Taxi Owner (2023) – GO-US-CAB (Teodoro Martinez)**

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

- 3. Taxi Owner (2023) – S&K Taxi (Florentino Ruiz Perez)**

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

- 4. Towing Application (2023) – Maria Calixto - Xtreme Towing & Auto Repair LLC**

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

5. Towing Application (2023) – Tyler Hoehe – Ed’s Body Shop LLC

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

6. Towing Application (2023) – Troy Burger – Quick Towing & Repair

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

REPORTS:

Council President Bethea announced there were three (3) reports for approval.

1. Tax Collector’s Cash Receipts Totals – November 2022
2. Vital Statistics Monthly Report – November 2022
3. Clerk’s Monthly Report – November 2022

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

Council President Bethea called upon Mayor Kelly for comments:

Mayor Kelly – announced that his secretary, Irene Dellaquila, will be retiring after 28 years with the City. He stated that tomorrow will be her last day. He thanked the Fire Department for providing Irene with a piece of slate from the original Fire House.

Council President Bethea called upon Council for comments:

Councilwoman DeQuinzio – Stated she remembers when Irene first started with the City.

Councilwoman DeQuinzio stated that the 59 E. Commerce would be a great idea with the correct approvals. She stated she would love to tour the site.

Councilwoman DeQuinzio wished all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Councilwoman King – wished all Happy Holidays. She asked everyone to pray for those going thru loss at this time.

Councilwoman King agreed that 59 E. Commerce could give more a turn key situation.

Councilwoman King thanked all 1st responders and wished them well.

Councilman Gonzalez- Thanked all 1st responders.

Councilman Gonzalez wished everyone a Happy New Year and Happy Holidays.

Councilman Gonzalez thanked all Code Blue volunteers for helping others.

Councilman Edwards – Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Councilman Edwards shared his disappointment with the culvert situation and stated that they need to make an impact to get this done.

Council President Bethea – Reminded all that the Reorganization Meeting is set for January 3, 2023 where all Council and Mayor will be sworn in for their new terms.

Council President Bethea stated that he would love to do something from Council to honor Irene in her retirement. Mayor Kelly explained that Mrs. Dellaquila was adamant that she did not want any recognition. Council President Bethea suggested that they still pass something and maybe just mail it to her.

Council President Bethea stated that he is familiar with the old bank and stated that he would like a tour of the place once they got their approvals and are open for business. He asked Alan and Damien to stay diligent with what they are doing.

Council President Bethea responded to Mr. Rankin's comments and stated that there are a couple farm with green houses and the High School has a few too. He stated that we could use resources to expand for the City.

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

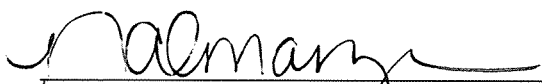
ADJOURNMENT:

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 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED



Nichole Almanza, RMC, Municipal Clerk



Edward Bethea, Council President

Date Approved: 1/3/2023