

**BRIDGETON CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 7, 2023**

A meeting of the Bridgeton City Council was held on Tuesday, March 7, 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:**

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  
CFO Trisha McGahhey

Administrator Kevin Rabago  
Municipal Clerk Nichole Almanza

**MINUTES:**

Council President Bethea presented the City Council Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2023. It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilwoman 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** – Provided statistics for the month of February for the Public Works Department which included trash pick up and repairing trash cans.

Councilman Gonzalez stated the Main Street Association is planning a Cinco de Mayo event. He continued that they are also reaching out to the schools and local businesses in hopes of having the Christmas Parade again.

**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.**

**Mayor Kelly** – Provided an update of 72 S. Pine Street and explained that the landlord was found guilty of 6 counts of not having the property up to code. He continued that this brings fines against the landlord.

**Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago** – Stated that he is working with gathering information regarding the health benefits at the request of Council. He is receiving HIPPA information and will provide updates accordingly.

Mr. Rabago stated that he has submitted the Urban Park Grant in regards to funding the redevelopment of the landfill. He added that he has also submitted the Bulkhead Grant.

**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 TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET  
APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK**

It was moved by Councilman Edwards 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 March 21, 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 23-05  
ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AMENDING  
ORDINANCE 22-35 FIXING THE SALARIES AND RATES OF CERTAIN OFFICERS  
AND EMPLOYEES**

It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and second by Councilman Edwards 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:**

<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 King motioned and seconded by Councilman Edwards the public portion be opened.

Damien Cheeks (Bridgeton, NJ address provided) stated that he is working on his Operating Agreement and is currently looking for real estate for his cannabis business.

Esaul Martin (Bridgeton, NJ address provided) explained to Council that a resident reached out to him regarding the intersection of Sharp and Colfax. He explained that there was an accident over a year ago and there is still a cone on the corner of the intersection where the curb was destroyed.



Mr. Martin stated that he brought flyers regarding the upcoming Citywide Clean-up and asked residents to join.

Mr. Martin announced the next Southeast Gateway Community Meeting will be held March 16, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

Betsy McBride representing Senior Solar Landscape provided some business background. She explained that they are looking to do a Community Solar Project at 450 N. Laurel Street where they would put the solar panels on commercial rooftops. She continued that residents could save 20 to 25% of their monthly utility bills. She provided a list of other municipalities benefiting from this program and asked Council to consider adopting a Resolution of Support.

With no one else desiring to be heard, it was moved by Councilwoman King 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-6 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. 58-23**, authorizing the City of Bridgeton to award a contract to South State, Inc. for Water Main Installation and Resurfacing Marion Street and Parker Street in the amount of \$416,542.65.

**RESOLUTION NO. 59-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing the execution of a Redevelopment and Purchase and Sale Agreement with CI Bridgeton, LLC – Block 189, Lots 3.03 and 3.04 within the Southeast Industrial Redevelopment Area.

**RESOLUTION NO. 60-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton granting Senior Citizen Tax Exemption (773 E. Commerce Street).

**RESOLUTION NO. 61-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton granting Senior Citizen Tax Exemption (520 South Avenue).

**RESOLUTION NO. 62-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton granting Veteran or Widow of Veteran Tax Exemption (533 Buckshutem Road).

**RESOLUTION NO. 63-23**, of the City Council appointing Diana Sandoval to the City of Bridgeton Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.

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 King that Resolutions M-1 through M-6 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 7, 2023 in the amount of \$1,970,203.00. It was moved by Councilman Edwards and seconded by Councilwoman King 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 Mayor Kelly for comments:**

**Mayor Kelly** – Stated that there is a notice to the public out regarding the establishing of Little League which is moving full steam ahead. He explained that they are still in need of sponsors and sign ups will be soon.

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

**Councilwoman King** – Discussed the recent turmoil on the streets and in the City. She expressed her hopes that some of the young people involved change their outlook on life and asked residents to keep the City in prayers.

**Councilman Gonzalez-** Thanked all 1<sup>st</sup> Responders.

Councilman Gonzalez stated that it takes a community to participate, help and inform with issues. He asked residents to speak up if they see something wrong.

**Councilman Edwards** – Stated that the Cannabis Committee recently met and is looking forward to all of the projects being updated with their start up timelines.

Councilman Edwards thanked Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago for looking into the health benefits and is excited to see what comes back.

**Council President Bethea** – Asked Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago and Mayor Kelly for an update regarding the microloan. Mr. Rabago stated that it was submitted to UEZ and will most likely be on their April meeting.

Council President Bethea asked if the City could have Mr. Lee Fox of Public Works take a look at what is going on at the corner of Sharp and Colfax.

Council President Bethea invited all to participate at the next Citywide Clean-up.

Council President Bethea asked Mr. Rabago and Mayor Kelly to get a little more information regarding the solar project such as how many residents would actually benefit from it. He continued that he does like the rooftop idea.

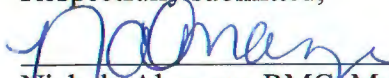
Council President Bethea thanked and saluted all 1<sup>st</sup> Responders – Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works and all Public Servants.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

Council President Bethea adjourned the meeting which ended at 6:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Nichole Almanza, RMC, Municipal Clerk

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

Date Approved: 3/21/2023