

**BRIDGETON CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 2, 2023**

A meeting of the Bridgeton City Council was held on Tuesday, May 2, 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 David Gonzalez  
Councilwoman Marian King  
Council President Edward Bethea

**Absent:** Councilman J. Curtis Edwards

**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 April 18, 2023. It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio 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 Gonzalez** – Provided residents with information regarding the Cinco de Mayo event to be held this weekend at the Riverfront. He stated he hopes for good weather and great turnout.

**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** – Stated that Judge Witcher is retiring in the near future. He continued that he will be meeting with him to get his suggestions on how to improve our court system. He added that one suggestion brought forward already was to hold more hearings.

Mayor Kelly announced that he recently attended a workshop regarding reentry of individuals leaving halfway houses and explained that the Village of Hope located next to Kintock was noticed nationally for its efforts.

Mayor Kelly stated that he recently met with the property manager of Burlington Manor. He suggested that monthly meetings take place with all of the property managers of the apartment complexes. He added that he would like the meetings to be held with the property managers, Code Enforcement, Police Department, Administration and a Council representative.

Mayor Kelly stated that he met with a resident of Bridgeton Commons regarding a shooting that took place and had damage done to her vehicle and home. He expressed the need for more lighting and cameras in the area.

Mayor Kelly discussed the failure to appear rate that the Municipal Court has. He explained that 1/3 of the number of summonses that are given are for failure to appear. He continued he would like to sit with the City Solicitor to see how we can improve this.

Mayor Kelly provided a handout with a few pictures to show the progress of the former City Hall and future Fire Department.

**Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago** – Announced the approval of various grants that will total to \$586,000.00 in funds to use to revitalize the old landfill.

Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago introduced John Medica, Director of Recreation to Council. Mr. Medica stated that he has started reaching out to the community, Department Heads, Zoological Society, Revive NJ, youth football program, Hall of Fame, schools and Mr. Ed Fentress to get familiar with everyone. Mr. Medica stated that he has a lot of ideas and changes in mind, however, he did not want to just “flip the tables” suddenly on everyone.

Mr. Medica reviewed various projects and changes made since coming on board such as the following: zoo walkway improvements, beautician (painting, etc.), additional small mammals for zoo, old platform tennis court removed from park, futsal court, and minor playground improvements.

Mr. Medica announced that Kidsfest will take place this Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the zoo.

Mr. Medica stated that there will be a Fireworks display for the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday and the return of the summer concerts and out to lunch program.

Mr. Medica that Zoo Camp filled rather quickly this year. He continued that he would like to set up a mini scholarship to allow children from families that are unable to pay the registration fee be able to attend.

Mr. Medica discussed the need of need supplement department help, however, funds would be needed to do so. He explained that he has been working with a Mr. Ed Fentress and thinks that he would be a great addition to the department and would like to work together with Administration and Finance with getting this to happen.

Councilwoman DeQuinzio welcomed John to the City. She thanked him for being so open and honest.

Councilwoman King stated that she also was able to meet with John recently and complimented him for being so innovative.

Councilman Gonzalez welcomed John to the City.

Council President Bethea expressed his support for John to “flip the tables” with the Recreation Department. He continued that change is good and sometimes very necessary.

Council President Bethea thanked Councilwoman King for pushing for the additional budget for the Recreation Department.

Council President Bethea suggested that John looks into bringing pickleball to the City.

**City Solicitor, Michele Gibson** – Discussed concerns brought forward to Council recently regarding concerns of the living environment at Burlington Manor. She explained that she agrees that a monthly meeting should take place to monitor these issues.

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

Council President Bethea announced there were two (2) Ordinances for First Reading. The Municipal Clerk read the Ordinance.



**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AMENDING  
CHAPTER 149, ARTICLE II, SECTION 149-27 OF THE CITY CODE CONCERNING  
CERTAIN POLICE DEPARTMENT-RELATED FEES**

It was moved by Councilman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilwoman DeQuinzio that the Ordinance be introduced on first reading and that the second reading, public hearing and final consideration be held on May 16, 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>			

**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON AMENDING  
ARTICLE II TO ESTABLISH A REAL ESTATE CLOSING FEE RELATED TO THE  
SALE OF CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES INCLUDING DOCUMENT PREPARATION  
AND RECORDING COSTS**

It was moved by Councilwoman DeQuinzio 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 May 16, 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 23-12  
ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRIDGETON  
AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CITY OF  
BRIDGETON TO THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION**

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 Councilwoman DeQuinzio and second by Councilwoman King 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	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 Councilwoman DeQuinzio the public portion be opened.

Esaul Martin and Cassandra Avila representing Bridgeton Housing Authority and SEG Coordinator stated that the recently held citywide clean-up was a successful event with about 53 residents volunteering and 67 bags of trash collected.

Ms. Avila announced a Family Day of Service to be held May 20, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Southeast Gateway which will include painting, planting and cleaning.

Ms. Avila also announced a job and resource fair to be held at the Alms Center on June 9, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She added they hope to have about 50 vendors available for the day.

Carl Seabrook (Bridgeton address provided) discussed the steps at the Tourist Center that are in disrepair. He continued that they are an eyesore and a safety issue. He added that the LED sign in front of the building is also not working properly.

Mr. Seabrook explained that there is a parking issue with some houses as there are not enough parking spaces available for those living in the homes. He continued that this leaves it where the homeowner or their children need to park in the grass. Mr. Seabrook spoke of residents receiving tickets for parking in the grass.



Mr. Seabrook stated that Baltimore Avenue still needs to be completed from a project that started about 8 years ago.

Mr. Seabrook wished all a Happy Mother's Day.

Alan Trzuskoski, Industrial Blvd. provided updates on his Cannabis Incubator project. He discussed applying for a grant with the EDA. He stated that his conversion application will be going to the State next week and Site Plans should be listed on the Planning Board agenda soon. He continued that he is also developing the security plan for the campus such as fencing and camera systems. Mr. Trzuskoski stated that proposals are out to be a tenant at the incubator. He introduced Ms. Marisol Quiles, a local resident, interested in the project.

Ms. Quiles (Bridgeton address provided) expressed her interest in the cannabis incubator project. She stated that she wanted to learn the different techniques and help produce jobs for the residents of Bridgeton. Ms. Quiles shared that she was diagnosed with MS and uses medical marijuana to help ease some of the symptoms. Ms. Quiles stated that she wants to see these types of projects move forward where the product is regulated and by the law and not abused.

With no one else desiring to be heard, it was moved by Councilman Gonzalez 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-10 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 asked that M-10 of the Consent Agenda be voted on separately.

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 93-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing up to five (5) monthly food vending agreements per month with mobile food vendors to operate at Block 124 Lots 1 & 2 and/or approved locations within Bridgeton City Park during 2023.

**RESOLUTION NO. 94-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing a refund of the purchase price for 143 S. Pine Street (Block 143, Lot 20.01) sold to Honda Fontilus at the March 10, 2023 City Property Auction.

**RESOLUTION NO. 95-23**, approving the FY 2023 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan for the City of Bridgeton.

**RESOLUTION NO. 96-23**, authorizing the City of Bridgeton to advertise for Redevelopment of Well 19 for the City of Bridgeton Water Department.

**RESOLUTION NO. 97-23**, authorizing the City of Bridgeton to advertise for Maintenance and Repairs for the City of Bridgeton Water and Sewer Department Wells and Pump Stations.

**RESOLUTION NO. 98-23**, authorizing the City of Bridgeton to advertise for Reconstruction of Existing Brick Sidewalks Phase II on North & South Laurel Street and East & West Commerce Street.

**RESOLUTION NO. 99-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing certain utility account adjustments and taxes.

**RESOLUTION NO. 100-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing Amendment to Redevelopment Agreement between City of Bridgeton and Raymond Roman for Block 171, Lots 13, 14 and 15.

**RESOLUTION NO. 101-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton authorizing the City of Bridgeton to enter into a Shared Services Agreement with the Cumberland County Board of Health to utilize grant funds to improve local communications ecosystem.

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-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	X			
Councilman Edwards				X
Councilman Gonzalez	X			
Councilwoman King	X			
Council President Bethea	X			

Councilman Gonzalez made a motion to adopt **RESOLUTION M-10** being **RESOLUTION NO. 102-23**, of the City Council of the City of Bridgeton expressing support for Gateway Community Action Partnership's application to the New Jersey Affordable Housing Trust Program. It was seconded by Councilwoman King that resolution M-10 be adopted which motion carried 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	

**SCHEDULE OF BILLS:**

Council President Bethea asked Council for a motion to approve the Schedule of Bills dated May 2, 2023 in the amount of \$2,556,542.40. 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 were two (2) applications for approval being:

1. **Raffle** – Nanticoke Leni-Lenape Indians of NJ – August 24, 2023 – 2:00 p.m. – 18 E. Commerce Street, Bridgeton, NJ 08302.

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

2. **Extension of Premises** – Inka Chicken – May 7, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. – 22 South Laurel Street – Cinco de Mayo.

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

### **REPORTS:**

Council President Bethea announced there were no reports for approval.

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

**Mayor Kelly** – Stated that he has heard nothing but great things about Mr. Medica. He added that the zoo is very clean.

Mayor Kelly stated that he will be meeting along with Councilwoman DeQuinzio with the County Library for some much-needed discussions.

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

**Councilwoman DeQuinzio** – Congratulated Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago for the impressive amount of grant funds that we will be receiving from the DCA.

**Councilwoman King** – Thanked John Medica for meeting with her and for all of his ideas.

Councilwoman King discussed the “Failure to Appear” rate and explained that a lot of towns are seeing this due to bail reform.

Councilwoman King agreed about the steps on the Tourist Center needing replacement. She asked Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago for any updates as this has been brought up a few times. Mr. Rabago explained that the steps have been assessed by the City Engineer and we are waiting to hear back what the City’s options will be.



Councilwoman King thanked Police Chief Gaimari for a successful event with the dirt bikes. She expressed that she was glad that there were no real big issues.

**Councilman Gonzalez-** Welcome John Medica to the City. He continued that he would like to see the City and Main Street work together to help draw people into the City.

**Council President Bethea** – Stated that he was notified that there will not be a May Planning Board Meeting. he asked Mr. Rabago if there is a quorum issue or just no applications were made.

Business Administrator, Kevin Rabago answered that he did not see that it was cancelled at this time but will look into it for him. He explained that sometimes the volunteers that are on the board do cancel last minute and no quorum is available. He discussed the various amounts of time that the Planning Board Secretary takes to remind the members of the meetings. He added that some that were failing to attend the meetings on a regular basis were removed.

Council President Bethea thanked Esaul Martin and Cassandra Avila from the Southeast Gateway Committee for handling the clean-up as it was postponed multiple times due to weather.

Council President Bethea discussed the photos provided by Mayor Kelly of the old City Hall building.

Council President Bethea announced that his youngest daughter committed to University of Michigan – School of Music, Theatre and Dance. He added this was her first choice.

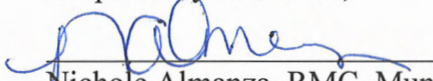
Council President Bethea thanked all 1<sup>st</sup> Responders – Police Department, Fire Department and all Public Servants.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

Council President Bethea adjourned the meeting which ended at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

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

Date Approved: 5/16/23