

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday
June 23rd, 2025**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joseph Knowles, Council President
Ed Kisselback, Council Vice President
Michelle Benitez, Council Secretary
Stacey Champion, Council Member

SUPPORTING STAFF PRESENT:

Joseph DiGirolamo, Mayor
Debora McBreen, Council Clerk/Recording Secretary
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor
Philip Wursta, Township Engineer

PLEASE NOTE:

The minutes are not verbatim but rather a synopsis of what transpired during the meeting, and while I do my best to attribute remarks and questions to the correct individual, there may be mistakes or omissions because of the “back and forth” dialogue and the lack of the use of their microphone.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING:

Council President Knowles opened the meeting with a moment of silence and/or prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS, MAYOR AND STAFF:

Council President Knowles introduced the Supporting Staff and Council Members.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Council President Knowles indicated the Public Comment will be heard at the time the agenda item is heard. Seeing no one come forward the first of two Public Comments was closed.

Council President Knowles asked Solicitor Pizzo if there were any changes to the agenda.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated Agenda Item #5 which is the public hearing on the Mobile Food Vending Ordinance. The proposed ordinance was in front of Council last year and at that time some changes were requested and those changes have been made. The ordinance was sent back to the Township and County Planning Commission for their review and comment. The Township Planning Commission has had an opportunity to review and comment, the County Planning Commission's review has not yet been received by the Township. As is required under the MPC, the Township should wait for that review to be received. It is the Administration's recommendation that Council table the hearing on the ordinance to a date certain of the Council meeting of July 14th, at which time the Township should have the comments back from the County.

Council Secretary Benitez motioned to table the Food Vending Ordinance to a date certain of July 14th, 2025. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

4. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Councilwoman Champion motioned to approve the Council Meeting Minutes from May 27th, 2025 as presented. **Council Secretary Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

5. **CONSIDERATION AND PUBLIC HEARING ON AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AND CREATING CHAPTER 173 "MOBILE FOOD VENDING" AND AMENDING CHAPTER 232 "ZONING" TO ADD SECTION 600 "MOBILE FOOD VENDORS":**

This item was tabled by a previous motion.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION REQUIRING INSURANCE COMPANIES TO DIRECTLY REIMBURSE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR SERVICE RENDERED TO COMMONWELATH RESIDENTS:**

Council President Knowles indicated that this is a Bill that is actually going in front of the State. The Resolution was discussed with the Township's Emergency Services personnel, including Mr. Topley who is the Executive Director of the Bensalem Rescue Squad. Council Secretary Benitez is on the Bucks County Association of Township Officials and will explain the process.

Council Secretary Benitez indicated that the Township is working hard to bring in revenues to support the Township's EMS. One of the things that can be done is to help support House Bill 1152. Currently, when the Township's EMS is providing services to patients, the patients are getting reimbursed for the services instead of the EMS getting paid directly from insurance companies. Many Municipalities in Bucks County, through the Bucks County Association of Township Officials, want to put this Resolution forward in support of House Bill 1152 to get the EMS paid directly from the insurance companies as the provider.

Council President Knowles indicated that the insurance provider will be paid directly if this law passes. Council approving this Resolution doesn't pass a law, what it does say is that Council is in favor of what the State is trying to do.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated that the Resolution is in order. The current structure of the current system does place an undo burden on the funding of the Township's EMS. Anything that can help the Bensalem Rescue Squad, the solicitor was sure that Council would want to be behind it.

Council Secretary Benitez motioned to approve the Resolution requiring insurance companies to directly reimburse Emergency Medical Service providers for services rendered to Commonwealth residents under House Bill 1152. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

7. **CONSIDERATION OF THREE (3) LAND DEVELOPMENT EXTENSION AGREEMENTS FOR:**

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| A. Applicant: | Trevose Senior Residence, LLC |
| Site Information: | 4695 Somerton Road |
| Tax Parcel: | 02-003-006-003 |
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| B. Applicant: | Faith Unity, Inc. |
| Site Information: | Richlieu and Galloway Roads |
| Tax Parcel: | 02-001-055-002 |
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| C. Applicant: | Property Perfection, Inc. |
| Site Information: | 1430 Lavender Road |
| Tax Parcel: | 2-32-185 |

Solicitor Pizzo indicated that the three (3) Land Development Extension Agreements are projects which are underway in the Township. I order to move forward with the projects. The Developers are required to post Land Development Agreements with the Township, which among other things, require them to post Escrows with the Township to ensure completion of the projects, or at least the public improvement's portions of those projects.

Each of the Agreements have a deadline within them, and as happens fairly often and certainly from time to time, the Developers for any number of reasons require an additional amount of time to complete the project. In all three cases for each of these items, if Council is of a mind to grant the Extension Agreements. It would be the recommendation of the Administration that Council do so, subject to an audit by the Township Engineer, and the Township Finance Department of the Escrows for those various projects, to make sure sufficient funds remain in place for the completion of the public improvements and other aspects of the projects.

The first of the three Agreements is with Trevose Senior Residence, LLC. This is for the property located at 4695 Somerton Road in Trevose. This is the second of the two buildings for the Senior Housing up in that part of the Township. The Agreement is currently due to expire in September of this year. The applicant, knowing that they are not going to meet that deadline, has asked for Council to grant an additional one-year extension of that Agreement. The Administration is in favor of that request subject to the requirement of the audit previously mentioned.

Council Vice President Kisselback motioned to approve the Land Development Extension Agreement for Trevose Senior Residence, LLC. **Council Secretary Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated Item B is for Faith Unity, Inc. This is the property located at Richlieu and Galloway Roads, which is the future home of the mosque for Faith Unity. They have requested an extension until July 27th, 2026. As Council is aware, the first phase of the

improvements at this point appears to have been installed and to the satisfaction of the Township. This extension will allow for the next step and the next phase to occur. Their attorney Mr. Stanton Kelton is present this evening should Council have any questions.

The agreement is in a form acceptable to the Township Administration, and they recommend that Council grant the extension subject to the condition of the audit by the Township Finance Department and the Township Engineer.

Councilwoman Champion motioned to extend Faith Unity, Tax Parcel 02-001-055-002 to a date thereof July 27th, 2026. **Council Secretary Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated that the third and final agreement is for Property Perfection, Inc., 1430 Lavender Road. The applicant is requesting, it is not entirely clear, perhaps from the agreement as they filled it out, but it would be to extend the agreement for an additional four months. The agreement having been signed and submitted to the Township in June, it would be the recommendation that Council grant the extension to the end of October.

Councilwoman Champion asked if it was known what the extension is for?

Township Engineer, Mr. Philip Wursta indicated that the applicant has to install fencing.

Council Secretary Benitez motioned to approve Property Perfection, Inc. for their extension, Tax Parcel 2-32-185, to October 31st, 2025. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

8. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR ACT NO. 537, PA SEWAGE FACILITIES ACT, PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT OF A PARCEL OF LAND IDENTIFIED AS 2810 STREET ROAD:**

Solicitor Pizzo indicated that the next two items are for projects that have either previously received land development approval from the Township and are taking the next step which is to get an amendment of the Townships Act 537 Plan to accommodate the additional sewage needs for those projects.

The tenant located at 2810 Street Road; Showcase Plaza Shopping Center is going to need additional sewage capacity which requires an amendment of the Townships Act 537 Plan. The Resolution is in a form as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Council Vice President Kisselback motioned to approve the Act 537 Plan for 2810 Street Road. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

9. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR ACT NO. 537, PA SEWAGE FACILITIES ACT, PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT OF A PARCEL OF LAND IDENTIFIED AS 1282 BYBERRY ROAD:**

Solicitor Pizzo indicated the land development project that was previously approved by Council for the townhome development located at 1282 Byberry Road. The Resolution is in a form as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Bucks County Water and Sewer has signed off on the capacity and everything is in order.

Council Vice President Kisselback motioned to approve the Act 537 Plan for 1282 Byberry Road. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

10. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Council President Knowles asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to speak. The following constituent came forward:

Ethan Comdrowski, Boy Scout Troop 130, indicated that his Troop is associated with St. Ephrem's and was attending the Council meeting because they need their Communication Badge for summer camp.

Seeing no one else come forward the second Public Comment was closed.

11. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Engineer Wursta indicated he was feeling patriotic today in regards to what is happening.

Solicitor Ferris indicated it was very hot outside.

Solicitor Pizzo wished everyone a Happy Fourth of July!

Mayor asked the residents to please go to the Township website regarding the Street Sweeping Schedule, because people have to get their cars off of the street so that the streetsweeper can do its job properly. Concert on Wednesday is The Ultimate 90's Experience. Opening night concert was cancelled due to the weather but has been rescheduled to Friday, September 12th, with Who's Bad, the Ultimate Michael Jackson Experience. There is no concert scheduled for the first Wednesday of July. Concerts resume on Wednesday, July 9th with Killer Queen.

Free Electronic Recycling Event for Bensalem Residents Only! October 10th through October 20th, Monday-Saturday 8:00am to 2:00pm at our Public Works Department. Please check out our website for the items that will be accepted and the items that will not be accepted.

Free Shredding Event for Bensalem Residents Only! Saturday, October 25th from 10:00am until 1:00pm at our Public Works Department.

Happy Fourth of July have fun and be safe!

Council Vice President Kisselback indicated that June 21st was the first day of Summer and we are certainly celebrating it with summerlike weather. Make sure everyone stays hydrated and protect yourselves by wearing sunblock. Wished everyone a Happy Fourth of July!

Councilwoman Champion thanked the Boy Scout Troop 130 for being in attendance. Mentioned that it is her son's Troop and is working on his Eagle Scout's project. Happy and safe Fourth of July! Hopefully everybody had a good Father's Day! Stay hydrated, stay cool, check on your neighbors and check on the pets!

Council Secretary Benítez indicated we had a big storm and she lost a tree and is pretty banged up from cleaning it up; was aware of a lot of damage but was glad that everybody remained safe! Thanked the Bensalem Township Public Works Department and the Emergency Management Service for getting the cleanup done. PECO did a heck of a job getting the electric back on and is aware that it took some time to get those without electric up and running, but there was a lot happening.

Happy Fourth, Happy Summer and a Happy Belated Birthday to Ed Kisselback! Ms. Benitez's daughter, Gianna, will be celebrating a birthday soon and wished her a Happy Birthday!

Senator Farry put out information today indicating that because of the excessive heat warning Bucks County Emergency Services have cooling centers in Upper and Lower Bucks County. In Bensalem the Senior Center is open from 9:00am to 6:00pm. If anybody is having any issues there are cooling centers and space available for residents to get to a safe place. Contact the Township if you have any questions.

Council President Knowles wished everyone a Happy Fourth of July! Had a nice Father's Day. Solicitor Pizzo and Mr. Knowles supported the Tour of Honor at the Bensalem Township Country Club by playing a round of golf and stayed hydrated by drinking Gatorade and water. It raises money for the Tour of Honor trip to Washington, D.C. for our Veterans. Pro Golfer Johnny C got a hole in one and he had received a National Award for supporting Veterans. He has a program that he runs at the Bensalem Township Country Club golf course.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated it is a worthy cause and that he had the good fortune to be there with Mr. Joe Szafran, former Councilman and former Recorder of Deeds; who started the program here in Bucks County, and was his solicitor at the time when the program initially started.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

The Bensalem Township Council Meeting of June 23rd, 2025 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalenpa.gov

or

www.youtube.com

Respectfully Submitted,

Debora F. McBreen
Recording Secretary