

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday  
December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024  
Budget Meeting**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Edward Kisselback, Council President  
Joseph Knowles, Council Vice President  
Stacey Champion, Council Secretary  
Michelle Benitez, Council Member – Via - ZOOM

**SUPPORTING STAFF PRESENT:**

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo  
Debora McBreen, Council Clerk/Recording Secretary  
John Chaykowski, Deputy Director of Administration  
William Cmorey, Director of Administration  
William McVey, Director of Public Safety  
Tim Shultz, Director of Public Works  
Kyle Pennypacker, Director of Parks & Rec  
Ken Farrall, Director of Building & Planning  
Jim Bogan, Director of Operations, Bensalem Township Country Club  
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor

**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. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**Council President Kisselback** opened the meeting with a moment of silence and/or prayer which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET:**

**Council President Kisselback** invited the **Mayor** to make the Opening Remarks. The Mayor indicated he would like his message to be written into the record. The 2025 Budget being presented this evening has no tax increase, which the Mayor was very proud, working together with Council through the years to make sure they take care of Bensalem!

**Council President Kisselback** introduced the Deputy Director of Administration, John Chaykowski. Mr. Chaykowski indicated that the Township did some work on the historic mansion that is located on the Bensalem Township's Country Club golf course. It is a 17th century farmhouse mansion. A major exterior renovation was performed this past year. The Township has met with architects and came up with the idea of renovating the interior of the mansion for the 2025 Budget. The interior of mansion renovation can be used for two purposes one being a pre-cocktail party of a wedding or a bistro restaurant type of setting as well.

The Township is requesting from Council to borrow up to \$4.5 million dollars from the Trust Fund. There is a pending grant that the Township was awarded a number of years back. The Township has petitioned the State to allow the Township to reallocate the existing approved Grant funds to be moved to the golf course. If that process is approved the Township will only need \$2.5 million because it is a 50% match on the grant. The Township will have to spend \$4.5 million on the golf course, \$250,000 will come back from the State and then the Township will spend \$2,250,000.

If the Township is awarded the grant the intended uses of the grant money will be as follows:

1. The renovations of the interior of the mansion which is currently out to bid on the four primes, general, electrical, plumbing and mechanical contractors. The bid opening will be held on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. At that point the Township will know what the interior renovation costs will be.

2. The purchase of the new kitchen equipment for the mansion is estimated around \$40,000.

3. There has been a number of issues with Hole #11 on the golf course. The location of the hole tends to send the golf balls out onto Hulmeville Road. What the Township is looking to do is to redesign Hole #11, shifting the green away from Hulmeville Road so the golfers are hitting more into the golf course itself. That renovation will also realign hole #18.

4. There has been significant cart-path repaving, however, there is still a significant amount of cart-path that needs to be repaved which will also be utilized with this grant.

As in previous years, the Superintendent of the golf course has requested a number of pieces of machinery, which will not be utilized through the grant, that need to be replaced within the golf maintenance end. Lawnmowers, grinder for the blades to be sharpened and as such.

Mr. Chaykowski indicated that when they developed the Budget they were looking at different options of whether to borrow externally or borrow from the Township, pay the Township back the interest. The Trust Fund is currently based on the investment level and is generating about 2% interest a year. For the equipment it will be paid back in 5 years that is paid by at a 4% interest rate, the borrowing for the mansion and the whole realignment will be at a 3% interest rate and will be paid back over 20 years. The intention would be the golf course, once the mansion is completed and business is booming the golf course will be making those annual debt payments back to the Trust Fund.

Historically Council has authorized the Township to borrow 7.4 million out of the Trust Fund. Those monies were used for the purchase of the Trifecta property on Bristol Road, which is now

First Responders Field. To date the Township has repaid 5 million of the 7.4 that was borrowed. In a couple of years, the Township will have repaid, with interest, the 7.4 million that was authorized.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked what is the total balance of the Trust Fund.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated if Council authorizes the transfer, at the end of 2025 the balance will be at 44 million dollars.

**Council Vice President Knowles** indicated that besides no tax increase, the \$300 rebate for each homeowner is still in the Budget.

**Councilwoman Benitez** indicated that the Grant funds were already reallocated, what is the Township originally getting the Grant for?

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated the Grant was approved for the Renaissance Boulevard down on State Road to run behind the industrial properties but it fell apart.

**Councilwoman Benitez** asked if the Township was fairly confident that the Township can reallocate the funds for such a project? Does it line up with the original Grant?

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the Township has spoken to the consultant who has been assigned through the State. Between the Redevelopment Authority who is assisting the Township with the reallocation and the consultant, there doesn't seem to be any reason why it shouldn't be approved, it is just waiting for Harrisburg to put their stamp on it.

#### **GENERAL FUND:**

**Councilwoman Benitez** asked if the 5 million indicated was a semi-annual payment that the Township receives.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that it was a quarterly payment which only showed the third quarter as being received to date. The amount would be updated on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### **ADMINISTRATION:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that it is relatively the same as it was proposed in 2024. There are minor increases due to salaries and health insurance cost worker comp costs and pension costs. There is a slight increase in the property insurance, but overall similar as to what was proposed in 2024.

#### **FINANCE DEPARTMENT:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that there are minor increases in Professional Services which is the Townships outside payroll service. The Auditing Services budget was increased slightly due to utilizing a lot of the ARPA Funds in 2024, and will trigger a single Federal audit.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked in regards to the Audit Expenses in other departments are they allocated out or is it a different type of audit?

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the Township allocates the Auditing Service to the Country Club due to them having their own set of books and pay a portion of the Auditing Fees as well. Auditing Fees are budgeted in Federal Forfeitures. In Community Spirit there is Auditing Services because some of the Grants will require a closeout audit of the monies at the time the Township finishes out the Grant.

**Mr. Chaykowski** explained that the Township budgets for worst case scenarios and budget conservatively on revenue. All of the Department heads when they step up will be able to state that whatever is not spent is returned to the General Fund. The Mayor and Council provide the Budget to be able to provide the services that are needed for the Township residents. If there is extra money at the end of the year the Township returns it back to be able to fund next year's budget.

**Council President Kisselback** introduced **the Director of Public Safety, Director McVey**, who presented the Police and Fire budget along with Deputy Director Robert Race and Lieutenant Michael Schum.

### **POLICE AND FIRE:**

**Director McVey** thanked the Mayor, Council and the Administration for the support they give to the Police and Fire Departments. Director McVey indicated they are only as good as they are because of the commitment the Mayor and his Administration and the Council have given them and have shown toward them and the support they give every day. On a particular note, Director McVey indicated that the Police Department is fully staffed with 107 Police Officers, 106 currently and the next to be hired is a Veteran who is waiting to be deployed and when he returns home the department will be at 107 Police Officers.

It is important to note that the Police Department has attained their state accreditation for PLEAC and their international accreditation for CALEA. They were recently at the Township doing their on-site assessment which the Police Department has received very high praise for a municipality. What sets Bensalem apart from other municipalities is their technological advancements, the intersection cameras, school district cameras, the business cameras, and the license plate readers. All of these technologies that have been approved in their budget annually are keeping Bensalem safe.

Bensalem, at the end of 2023, was recognized at the International Association of Chiefs of Police as a premiere agency and this year at the NAACP received special recognition for the work they do in the community and their leadership and maintaining a diverse workforce.

**Director McVey** indicated he would be happy to answer any questions the Council had regarding the proposed 2025 Police and Fire Budget.

**Council Secretary Knowles** asked if the Police Department had any anticipations for openings of retirement.

**Director McVey** indicated there was a detective ready to retire in January. The next retirement isn't scheduled until 2026. This is all anticipated through the DROP Program. There will be a little bit of time before a decent number of officers will be leaving within the next 5 years. The Police Department is preparing for that now.

**Council Secretary Champion** indicated that the increases she saw were pertaining to salaries and benefits which she believes to be a general overall anticipated contract increase, health insurance increase as every industry is hit with that. Would that be a safe assumption of those increases?

**Mr. Chaykowski** replied it would be a safe assumption.

**Councilwoman Champion** thanked Director McVey and his Departments for all that they do.

**Councilwoman Benitez** thanked Director McVey and his Department for all that they do.

**Council Vice President Knowles** thanked Director McVey and his Department for all that they do.

**Director McVey** indicated that the budget for the Fire and Rescue Department was similar to last years. There were some minor cuts in the budget. A Fire Chief was hired last year which leveled the budget and an additional firefighter was hired last year. There are adequate staff levels in the Fire Department. They have submitted for the SAFER Grant but were denied this year. The intention is to resubmit the SAFER Grant as they believe in the future it will be needed for the services in Bensalem Township. They are awaiting that response in 2025 whether or not those funds are provided.

**Council President Kisselback** asked Director McVey to briefly explain the transition from where the Township was last year with all of the volunteer firefighters, six companies and now to the consolidated fire company the Bensalem Volunteer Fire Department.

**Director McVey** indicated it was a long road. Bensalem had 6 legacy Fire Departments that did a tremendous job for the Bensalem community for over a hundred years. With their tradition and their proven excellence in how they conduct a business. The last two years they worked to formulate one Bensalem volunteer fire department that will function as one volunteer fire company. As part of that, they hired Chief Antozzeski to lead the efforts to both the career staff, Engine 222 who function during business hours Monday through Friday; and Chief Antozzeski also oversees the volunteer fire department who do the nights and weekends for the Township and also supplements during business time.

**President Kisselback** asked how many full-time firefighters are employed.

**Director McVey** indicated there are eleven firefighters, that includes Chief Antozzeski, the Battalion Chief Sponheimer and Lieutenant Altomare and two part-timers as well.

**Council Vice President Knowles** asked if the labor issue was resolved regarding the full-time firefighters.

**Director McVey** indicated that it was the first issue that Chief Antozzeski had to work out. The part-timers could no longer do both, they opted to serve in leadership roles in the volunteer fire department and it is what led them to conclude to hire a full-timer because the man-power was needed along with the additional two part-timers. They have adjusted and made sure there was no conflict. They are functioning well within the guidelines of the law.

**Council President Kisselback** introduced the Director of Building and Planning, Mr. Ken Farrall.

### **BUILDING AND PLANNING:**

**Director Farrall** thanked the Mayor and Council and proceeded with questions from Council.

**Director Farrall** indicated the Building and Planning Department is working with a full staff and will do well over 5,000 permits which is a significant amount for his small department.

**Mr. Chaykowski** referred to the Building and Planning Engineering Services line item and indicated that it did increase in 2025. In previous years the Township would spread the allocation of Engineering Services in the Administration Department and in the Public Works Department because there was a more generalized use of the Engineers throughout the Township. The Engineering Services work primarily out of the Building and Planning Department performing inspections. There was a need to increase the Building and Planning Department's Engineering Services to a realistic number. The Fee Schedule was updated to have the Engineering Fees built into the Permit Fees pertaining to pools and such that require an Engineer to perform an inspection. The Revenues will offset the increase in Engineering Services.

**Council President Kisselback** asked Director Farrall to give a breakdown of his staff.

**Director Farrall** indicated there are twelve full-time employees besides himself. There are two consultants, United, that perform the electric; and Code Inspectors which perform the residential and commercial building inspection. The services of TPD handle the alteration of land and some of the building permits, inspections, etc. as well as all of the land development work from the developers.

**Councilwoman Champion** asked what the wait time was for a normal kind of permit.

**Director Farrall** indicated, generally, when permits come into the Permit Center they are getting them out to the reviewers in less than a week, and then getting them back from the reviewers in less than 2 weeks. Potentially in 2 to 3 weeks permits are being issued. Quick permits, such as fence permits are going out almost immediately.

**Council Vice President Knowles** indicated that with the new computer system that was put in years ago that it is more efficient than in previous years.

**Director Farrall** indicated that they are able to track things better. The Mayor's assistant, Dawn Davis, has been trained on the system and is able to answer the Mayor's questions when they arise.

**Council Vice President Knowles** asked Director Farrall if he believes the level of service that the Township provides and the cost factor that outsourcing some of these functions has been a good thing for the Township?

**Director Farrall** responded, “Absolutely! 110%.”

**Council Secretary Champion** asked if the new computer system was in the Tech Support line?

**Director Farrall** indicated that it was and it is an ongoing Munilogic that is paid for annually. It is also a way the department captures all of their data of all of the permitting and all of the U and O’s and everything.

**Councilwoman Benitez** indicated that Director Farrall didn’t have any kind of indication or projections as to what the results of the Fee Schedule may bring.

**Director Farrall** indicated the Township has not had a full year into the Fee Schedule changes. It is tough with building permits because you don’t know the status of the job whether it would be commercial or residential. Once the Township has a full year into the Fee Schedule Director Farrall plans to sit down with Mr. Chaykowski with the actual versus what was budgeted and see if there is any additional changes they should or can make.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the Township’s Apartment Inspection Fees, which is one of the fees that was increased to an appropriate level through October it basically doubled. It went from a budget of 195 to an actual number of 366. The application fees have doubled as well, 46,000 as a budget, to 77,000 through October. The plumbing permits and electrical permits those fees were increased as well. While it increased this year, it is due to the Fee Schedule increase and part of it is due to permit submission.

**Council President Kisselback** introduced the Director of Public Works, Mr. Tim Schultz.

### **PUBLIC WORKS AND LIQUID FUELS:**

**Director Shultz** thanked the Mayor and Council and proceeded with questions from Council.

**Director Schultz** indicated that Public Works is ready for winter. There is plenty of salt in stock and all of the trucks are ready to go.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked if the Public Works Department was fully staffed.

**Director Schultz** indicated that the Public Works Department is currently one employee short. There are 16 Drivers, 1 Maintenance Repairman who does the building repairs, an Assigned Foreman, four full-time Mechanics and 1 part-time Mechanic, 2 Office Staff and 1 Director.

**Council Vice President Knowles** asked Director Schultz how he was doing with major equipment.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the reason there was no major equipment purchased in 2024 when the Director was able to purchase the equipment the Township was able to purchase under

the Road Machinery Tax Mileage Rate. The Township purchased trucks and other allowable machinery under the Road Machinery Tax Mileage Rate and that is the reason the Township did not have to take any money out of the General Fund. The Township will be doing the same in 2025 by utilizing that fund once again.

**Director Schultz** indicated that the Public Works Department will be purchasing in 2025 a Backhoe, and an International Dump Truck.

### **NON-DEPARTMENTAL:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that in 2025 the Township is requesting an allocation of a transfer to the Capital Improvement Fund in the amount of 3 million dollars. This will be utilized for road repaving and drainage work in 2025. In 2023 the Township completed repaving all of the Township roads. Obviously, traffic never stops, there is another section of the Township that needs to be repaved in 2025. The majority of the increase is for 2024-2025.

### **STREET LIGHTS:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the Street Light Fund is one of the Tax Mileage Funds; it is used to repair and maintain the Township street lights. The budget for 2025 is the same as in previous years. The slight increase is due to property insurance as is every fund.

### **FIRE COMPANY:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that this is another Tax Mileage Fund. This is the money that will be paid to the new Fire Company. Whatever money is collected is paid directly to the Volunteer Fire Company. They will be submitting a budget to the Chief, the Director and the Deputy Director as to what their intended purchases will be for the next year and coming years.

**Council President Kisselback** indicated that since the 6 Volunteer Fire Companies have been consolidated into one Fire Company, there is going to be a number of pieces of equipment that will no longer be needed. What is the arrangement regarding that equipment and where will the money be going.

**Chief Antozzeski** indicated that it was his understanding that they have been approved to sell a few pieces within the Volunteer Fire Companies. The money generated from those sales will go back to the Fire Company to pay off a debt. They have already arranged within themselves to not spend that money on anything else. The Chief indicated they have no control on how they do that and the individual Fire Companies have not all fully merged into the new organization. There is an agreement between the voted-in President for the Bensalem Volunteer Fire Department and the current Presidents of the individual Fire Companies. They are still in the process of being merged over into one organization.

**Council President Kisselback** asked Chief Antozzeski if the debt is not paid down, does it now become the debt of the Township.

**Chief Antozzeski** indicated that it would not be a debt of the Township but would be a debt for the new Volunteer Fire Company. The Fire Companies have gone through the process to be one

new organization, which is now done and has been recognized by the AG's office. Now they are working on taking one fire company at a time, dissolving them; and merging them into the new organization.

**Councilwoman Benitez** indicated that Chief Antozzeski mentioned that the funds were going back to the individual fire companies to pay off their debts. Has anything been assessed as to what the sale of the equipment will bring in versus the debt they have outstanding? And if the revenue is higher than the debt will that then be funded to BTFD?

**Chief Antozzeski** indicated that from his understanding whatever the debt is that will be for that individual fire company. The monies from the Township will go to the new organization and not to the individual fire companies with the intent as the volunteer fire companies are merged in, that money will already be with the main organization. There will be only one payment made to the new organization, not 6 payments to the original organizations. If company A sells a firetruck that money will go into company A's funds to pay off their debt for their volunteer fire company in anticipation of getting merged with the new fire company. That way, hopefully, there won't be debt going into the new organization.

### **RESCUE SQUAD:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** Tax Revenue that is collected on behalf of the Rescue Squad and then those funds are transferred to the Rescue Squad for their operation. They are a private entity which oversees the usage of the funds and works with the Director of Public Safety as part of the Emergency Management of the Township.

**Council Vice President Knowles** indicated that in the new Budget he would assume that the increase in millage that was voted in is going to the Rescue Squad. And hopefully the money is doing what it was intended to do for the Rescue Squad and asked if it has been doing well for the Rescue Squad?

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the tax increase went in 2024 and received the additional revenue in 2024.

**Director McVey** indicated that the money being generated will be put toward mainly retainment of their current staff and the recruitment of new staff and keeping up with the latest and best technologies in terms of advanced medicine. Director Topley communicates with Director McVey and Deputy Director Race regularly. They meet officially once a month to go over the status in the Township with Emergency Services and are very confident that he is continuing to build a great organization to be responsive within the Township.

**Council President Kisselback** introduced the Director of Parks and Rec, Mr. Kyle Pennypacker.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION:**

**Director Pennypacker** thanked the Mayor and Council and indicated that there are a lot of repairs and improvements that need to be done. Imagination Land is slated to be completely replaced. It is a very expensive project but it is a good cause being handicap accessible along with special needs and sensory objects that will help with anybody that will have a safe place to play.

The department received a grant for half of their budget which was just shy of \$400,000 in grant money to go towards that, along with some community money. The department has applied for another grant for new lighting at Yezzi Field.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked what parks were refurbished this year.

**Director Pennypacker** indicated that they replace Executive Park located on Park Avenue which was a replacement of a very old playground. The Clusters and Coves had their playgrounds replaced. The Township renovated one of the three tennis courts into three pickle ball courts. The department is working on a dual purpose for the courts.

**Council Vice President Knowles** wanted to know if the pickle ball courts were open to anyone.

**Director Pennypacker** indicated that they were not monitored and anyone can use the courts.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked about Growden Mansion.

**Director Pennypacker** indicated a lot of work was done over the summer. The first floor has been fully renovated. The second floor the floors have been done and will be painted before the end of the year. The third floor is in the most disrepair, there was some water damage to the roof that was replaced awhile ago and now need to work on the water damaged area. The first phase of that will take place before the end of this year.

There is a vault that has a lot of history involved. It is the only last example of what we had in Bucks County. The one in Newtown was destroyed. Growden holds very historical significance. To the right is the kitchen and the next small building to the side was considered the vault and it actually had treasury documents, deeds for properties, and things of that nature. There is a desk in there and you can see the original structure of it and how it was built. They had Historians look at the vault. The department is looking for options with preservations and other grants to possibly work on the mansion since there is such historical significance. The mansion is a registered historical building.

The mansion will not be rented out to anyone. The department has been working closely with the Historical Society in keeping the historical significance and possibly to have events in the future for people to see the inside and to learn a little bit of the history because it is such an historical building in Bensalem.

**Council Vice President Knowles** asked how the soccer fields were doing.

**Director Pennypacker** indicated that First Responders Field was a very large project that was finished up this past Fall. Springtime will be the first time the rental of that facility will really take off. It is a for rent facility and will be a profitable facility. They will be charged by the hour, and it will be determined if there was the use of lights, or there were no use of lights. Tournaments and championship games and other organizations are very hopeful with this facility. Fully lit, bleachers, artificial turf it is the best you can get, top of the line.

**Council Vice President Knowles** asked Mr. Pennypacker how the Township's Summer Program was doing.

Director Pennypacker indicated that the Township does a full day program which has 150 children at the Community Park from the hours of 8:30am to 5:30pm. Thanks to Mrs. Stancil who has a lot of experience running the program, the staff is remarkable and it is well organized.

**Council President Kisselback** introduced Mr. Bogan, Director of Golf at the Bensalem Township Country Club.

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNTRY CLUB/BANQUET FACILITIES:**

**Mr. Bogan** presented the 2025 Budget for the Bensalem Township Country Club.

**Council Secretary Knowles** indicated that Mr. Bogan was doing a great job. The atmosphere is great. The Golf Association is relatively inexpensive to join. There are a lot of tournaments and you will receive a gift at the end of year along with a banquet. A lot of local residents are involved from all different age groups. There is a lady's group and there are quite a few different programs for the kids. Johnny C works with the Veterans and has received the "Patriot Award" which is a National Award for his work with Veterans.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked if Greens Fees were down, by comparing them to 2023.

**Mr. Bogan** indicated that they were actually in front of their budget 2024.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that through October they were already beating their budget. Greens Fees will continue for the remainder of the year, but did not know where to project it to, and is very positive that the Country Club will hit the 2023 figures, if not exceed it.

**Councilwoman Benitez** indicated the Banquet Facility Actual year-over-year decreased and is that due to the temporary closure and renovation.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that two things happened in 2024. There was a three-month closure due to the renovations. Through the turnover of Banquet Managers, there was issues with future bookings. A new Banquet Manger was added late and a new Executive Chef and one of the existing Bartenders was promoted to become the Bar Manager. Between the three of them and the help of Director Bogan, and Kelly Newhouse at the golf course, the Banquet facility has certainly turned the corner. The facility is getting bookings on a daily basis, they are advertising and doing what they need to do to generate revenue and make the Country Club the shining star that it is meant to be right now.

The 2025 Budget is down from 2024 and is based on existing bookings that they already have in 2025 as well as their anticipated funeral volume and any type of parties. That number can only grow based on additional bookings that may come in. Golf outings that are already booked are also included in that number. There is certainly a different path and different leadership at the Banquet end of the facility. The staff is doing everything they can to make the Owl's Nest and the Banquet facility profitable as it can be along with the mansion being renovated.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked how long, once the bids have been received, will the mansion be under renovations.

Mr. Chaykowski indicated that on Monday they will know the price and then a week or two for the Architect to go through the documents and make sure everything has been addressed appropriately. The intention is to start the job in January. As soon as the contractor can start working the Township will start working the extent of the project should be about 6 months.

**Council President Kisselback** asked Mr. Bogan to explain what the Golf Social Membership Fee is all about.

**Mr. Bogan** indicated it is the BGA Golf Association.

**Council Secretary Champion** asked if the Golf Club has a junior association.

**Mr. Bogan** indicated that the Country Club does not have a junior association but they do have junior rates and they do run junior programs which is called the First Tee.

**Mr. Bogan** indicated if you take a look at the numbers for Golf Income early in the year were not up to par because of the projects going on at the Country Club in the Spring. In 2025 the Golf Course should be fully operational. Golf and Banquet will bring in quite a bit of revenue in 2025.

**Council Secretary Champion** indicated that the new bridges that were put in in 2023 look amazing and all of the armoring will help stabilize the creek.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the Conservation District was awarded a Grant and in turn they passed purchases along to have plantings along streambanks as well as in front and alongside of the mansion to help slowdown water hitting the creek.

There has also been a year of changes at the Golf Course. There is a new Superintendent and he is doing a great job in bringing the Gold Course back to a much enjoyable playing area.

**Council President Kisselback** asked Mr. Chaykowski to conclude with Capital Improvement.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that through the Federal Grant the Township has done a number of drainage projects in 2024. The Township will be finalizing those projects in 2025. There are 3 or 4 slated for construction the end of this year into next year, weather permitting. The drainage project has a 30 plus year old infrastructure and when they ripped these pipes out, it showed. It is something in the coming years we will continue to address and unfortunately those come with a cost. The Township will do its best to budget and plan accordingly.

The Township will be doing \$3 million in road repaving and the list is being finalized to be put out to bid next year and there will be drainage work in there as well. Washington Lane will be done in conjunction with Michael Drive drainage work and Point Drive is on the list for next year. There are two bridges in Bensalem and these bridges get inspected on an annual basis by PennDOT as well as the Township Inspectors. For a number of years Director Schultz and his crew have been doing patchwork jobs to these bridges but they are getting to a state now where the patch jobs are not working.

Hollindale Bridge will be getting into the design and replacement phase, this bridge is the easy one because there is another way out of Hollindale. The other bridge that is a little more problematic is Newport Mews Bridge, there is only one way in and one way out. Both of these projects will be put into design next year by the engineers and put out to bid and possibly constructed next year, depending on timing.

**Council Vice President Knowles** thanked the Mayor, his staff and Mr. Chaykowski for having the budget numbers to Council on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for review.

**Council Secretary Champion** motioned to approve the Budget for 2025. Council Vice President Knowles seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

**The Mayor** thanked everyone for the teamwork. Thanked the Directors for coming in under budget. The Township gives the services that everyone in the community deserves. It is important that they work together to get the job done for the residents of Bensalem as that is what they are elected to do. The Mayor said he could not do this without the support from Council and the great job they have done through this year. The Mayor thanked Council President Kisselback for his leadership and looks forward to 2025.

**The Mayor** wished everyone “Happy Holidays!!” and to be safe.

**Council Vice President Knowles** thanked everyone for their diligence in getting the Budget together. Through the Mayor’s leadership and Council, the new Directors have really stepped up to the plate and produced productive departments.

**Council Secretary Champion** thanked all of the Directors for their presentations. Thanked Mr. Chaykowski for his input. Thanked the Mayor for making sure that Bensalem is one of the best in Bucks County. Thanked everyone who reached out to her after the passing of her father, she is very grateful. As she was growing up, her parents instilled in her how great Bensalem is and how it is a wonderful place to raise a family.

**Councilwoman Benitez** indicated that she is very proud to part of the team. Their number one priority is health and public safety. The Township has a bonus where they have great amenities and services that they can provide. Thanked the Mayor and everyone in his respective department for what they do every single day. Thanked the Mayor for his dedication to his role as the leader of this Township. Thank Mr. Chaykowski for an excellent job of presenting the 2025 Budget. Happy Holidays, be safe and Tis the Season!!!!

**Council President Kisselback** thanked the Directors for the great job they do, how very conscientious as far as being aware of the Budget that they are working with as well as providing the services to the Bensalem residents. December 16<sup>th</sup> is the next Council meeting. Director Pennypacker reminded everyone of the Tree Lighting on December 14<sup>th</sup> here at the municipal complex beginning at 5:00pm. Thanked the Mayor for giving an easy budget to approve for the coming year.

3. **ADJOURNMENT:**

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

The Bensalem Township Budget Council Meeting of December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

[www.bensalempa.gov](http://www.bensalempa.gov)

or

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Debora F. McBreen**  
**Recording Secretary**