

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday  
September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**SUPPORTING STAFF PRESENT:**

Joseph DiGirolamo, Mayor  
Debora McBreen, Council Clerk/Recording Secretary  
Ken Ferris, Township Solicitor  
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 Mayor, Council Members and Supporting Staff.

**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.

4. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

**Councilwoman Champion** motioned to approve the Council Meeting Minutes from August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 as presented. **Council Vice President Kisselback** seconded and the motion carried 3-0-2.

5. **PRESENTATION OF THE 2026 PENSION FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT AND MINIMUM MUNICIPAL OBLIGATION BY THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION, JOHN CHAYKOWSKI:**

Every year at this time it is required that Mr. Chaykowski reads into the Township record information in compliance with Pennsylvania Act 205.

The first requires no action by Council. The 2025 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) financial requirements for the Police, Non-Uniform and Non-Uniform Defined Contributions pension funds have been prepared. They are as follows:

Police Defined Benefit Pension	\$6,513,905
Non-Uniformed Defined Benefit Pension	\$ 721,095
Non-Uniformed Defined Contribution Pension	\$ 348,000

No action is required.

6. **PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING VERIZON CABLE FRANCHISE RENEWAL:**

Mr. Chaykowski indicated that the Public Hearing is pursuant to Section 626 of the Federal Cable Act which sets forth the process for franchisee renewal. The Township has an independent attorney through the consortium that is handling the negotiations with Verizon for the franchise agreement.

At this time, Mr. Chaykowski will answer the public comment.

Seeing no one come forward, the public comment portion was closed.

**Council President Knowles** asked how many municipalities were involved.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that it would include the Bucks County Consortium who will negotiate the price and get the best deal.

**Council President Knowles** asked if there were any problems with their services.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that there were none. It has to do with the PEG channel (Public, Educational and Governmental), all of those things that Verizon provides to the municipalities.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that Council did not have to vote on this item and that there was no action required. There was a Public Notice advertised in the paper, and it would just be that if there was any public comment, that he would take it back to the consortium.

Seeing no one come forward the Public Comment portion was closed.

7. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GRANT APPLICATION FOR TOWNS AGAINST GRAFFITI (T.A.G.):**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the Township is submitting all of the yearly Redevelopment Authority grants to the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority for the grant program. This year the Township is going to submit the Towns Against Graffiti Program. The total program costs roughly \$199,000 a year. The Township is requesting \$175,000. The remaining amount is paid through the dues of the different municipalities that are members of the Towns Against Graffiti (T.A.G.).

**Council President Knowles** indicated the Township handles this on behalf of all of the municipalities involved.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that the Township will submit the grant to the Redevelopment Authority.

**Councilwoman Champion** indicated, for those who were unaware, that this was started by Mayor DiGirolamo. How many years has T.A.G. been in existence?

**Mayor DiGirolamo** indicated that T.A.G. started in 1996, 29 years ago.

**Councilwoman Champion** indicated that if people see graffiti within their towns that are participants of this, they can call and have it removed.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated they can call the Township and within a few days they will have the graffiti removed on public or private property. The one thing that was upgraded within the program was that T.A.G. will also pick up litter.

**Council Vice President Kisselback** indicated that the difference between the cost of \$199,000 and the \$175,000 grant is \$24,000 which is picked up by the members and their dues.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that each municipality or borough will have an annual payment that is paid. Currently there are 12 different municipalities in the program, and it is continually growing.

**Council Vice President Kisselback** inquired about the fund balance.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that there was a fund balance for situations such as if the TAG vehicle should need repairs or have to replace it, the Township budgets for those types of items.

**Council Secretary Benitez** motioned to approve Agenda Item #7 as presented. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

8. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR THE MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM FOR FUNDING OF THE INTEGRATION OF POLICE RECORD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RMS) THROUGHOUT BUCKS COUNTY:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that there are 39 Police Departments in Bucks County that participate within this program. The integration of this RMS, will allow the Township's Police Officers to perform their services in a more efficient and safe manner with the other 39 Police Departments in Bucks County. This program cost \$118,900 for the year. There is no fund balance, all of the money is used right away which pays for the computer software and the storage to house all of the data for all of the municipalities.

**Councilwoman Champion** indicated that Bensalem, yet again, is the lead on this program and makes good things happen throughout the County.

**Councilwoman Champion** motioned to approve the Resolution as presented. **Council Secretary Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

9. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR THE MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM FOR FUNDING OF THE BENSALEM EMS ORION PROGRAM:**

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that **ORION** stands for **O**ut of hospital **R**esuscitation with **I**nfusion **O**f whole blood & oxyge**N**. This is a new grant submission for the Bensalem EMS and the Township will be the subgrantee. There was legislation that was passed that enables the Bensalem Rescue Squad to carry whole blood to sites. For example, if there is a high trauma site where a person needs blood on the scene before they can be extricated to take to the emergency room, or something of that nature; the Township will now have the ability to do it not only in Bensalem, but across the different areas of Bucks County such as Middletown, Falls, Lower South and Bristol.

The way this program will work is that this funding will go towards the refrigeration units needed for this program. Refrigeration is needed to store the blood at the Rescue Squad, as well as a special cooler that will be housed in either a supervisor's truck or on the Stroke Truck with the Rescue Squad during early evening hours. Should an event happen, they will respond and provide the blood donation.

**Council President Knowles** asked if in past EMS calls were they not able to supply blood if needed?

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated no they were unable to give the blood. This is new legislation that was passed and now EMS technicians can now administer the blood.

There was an incident at the Radison last year where someone fell and fortunately were able to grab a doctor from the Frankford Torresdale and bring him to the Radison and do this on sight, which ultimately saved the gentlemen's life. Now the Township will be equipped to handle such matters involving the need for blood.

**Councilwoman Champion** asked Mr. Chaykowski if Bensalem will be the first EMS to have this in the County.

**Mr. Chaykowski** indicated that **Bensalem will be the first!**

**Council Secretary Benitez** motioned to approve Agenda Item #9 as presented. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

**10. CONSIDERATION AND SIGNING OF AGREEMENTS FOR:**

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Bristol Road Commons Associate, LLC</b>
<b>Location:</b>	700 Bristol Pike (Intersection of Walnut Ave. & Bristol Pike)
<b>Proposed Use:</b>	Health related Retail and Physical Sports Facilities
<b>Zoning Classification:</b>	GC – General Commercial
<b>Tax Parcel:</b>	02-023-001

A. Land Development Improvements Agreement  
(4) Executed copies to be signed by Council upon consideration.

B. Stormwater Best Management Practices Operations & Maintenance Agreement  
(4) Executed copies to be signed by Council upon consideration.

**Solicitor Pizzo** indicated, the Land Development Improvements Agreement and the Stormwater Best Management Practices Operations & Maintenance Agreement for the project located at 700 Bristol Pike was approved last year, and consists of a health rehab and physical therapy facility together with one or two related commercial facilities.

The Developer has posted the necessary security with the Township, has signed the agreements and they are in a form acceptable for Council’s consideration and approval.

**Council President Knowles** asked Solicitor Pizzo to verify if the location was in front of the old Andalusia Drive-In site.

**Solicitor Pizzo** indicated that the location was in front of the old Andalusia Drive-In site.

**Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

**11. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF CURBS AND SIDEWALKS INSTALLATION SUBJECT TO PAYMENT OF A FEE IN LIEU OF REQUEST:**

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Hashaam Shahid</b>
<b>Site Information:</b>	2074 New York Avenue
<b>Tax Parcel:</b>	2-60-40

**Engineer Wursta** indicated that upon review there are no curbs and sidewalks in the vicinity of this parcel. He is recommending a fee in lieu of the waiver of the curbs and sidewalks in the amount of \$1,700.

**Councilwoman Champion** motioned to approve a fee in lieu of for tax parcel 2-60-40 for curbs and sidewalks. **Council Secretary Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

12. **CONSIDERATION OF A REDUCED PERMIT FEE FOR THE HOLY GHOST PREPARATORY SCHOOL MOTHER GUILD LOCATED AT 2949 BRISTOL PIKE:**

**Solicitor Pizzo** indicated that this is the annual Mother’s Guild Craft Show at Holy Ghost Prep. For a number of years, they have placed a tent on the school grounds, but the last few years they have been holding it entirely indoors with the opening of the Holt Center across the street.

The reductions that have been asked for and are being recommended by the Township Administration would reduce the permit fee in half, and would knock the bonding requirements down from \$10,000 down to \$2,500. The Township Administration recommends the approval of the fee waiver request.

**Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve the permit fee as presented in the amount of \$2,650. **Council Secretary Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

13. **CONSIDERATION OF FOUR (4) ESCROW RELEASES:**

- A. **Developers Request:** Lavender Rd. S/D – Release #3  
**Location:** 1430 Lavender Road  
**Tax Parcel:** 02-032-185  
**Amount:** \$17,217.98

**Solicitor Wursta** indicated that 1430 Lavender Road was a final request and will close out this project and is recommending a release of \$17,217.98 subject to an audit by the Finance Department.

**Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve subject to an audit by the Finance Department. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

- B. **Developers Request:** 2289 Green Ave. S/D – Release #3  
**Location:** Green and McKinley Avenue  
**Tax Parcel:** 2-39-104  
**Amount:** \$22,355.45

**Solicitor Wursta** indicated that 2289 Green and McKinley Avenue was a final request and will close out this project and is recommending a release of \$22,355.45 subject to an audit by the Finance Department.

**Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve subject to an audit by the Finance Department. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

**C. Developers Request: Federation Housing – Release #8**  
**Location:** 4695 Somerton Road  
**Tax Parcel:** 02-003-006-003  
**Amount:** \$358,267.68

**Engineer Wursta** indicated that Federation Housing is still under construction and is recommending a release of \$358,267.68 subject to an audit by the Finance Department.

**Council Secretary Benitez** motioned to approve as presented subject to an audit by the Finance Department. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

**Developers Request: DALFO L/D – Release #3**  
**Location:** 4001 Bristol Road  
**Tax Parcel:** 02-018-003  
**Amount:** \$21,325.00

**Engineer Wursta** indicated that is coming to a close and is recommending a release of \$21,325.00 subject to an audit by the Finance Department.

**Councilwoman Champion** motioned to approve subject to an audit by the Finance Department. **Council Vice President Kisselback** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

14. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There being no one in the audience the second Public Comment was closed.

15. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Council Secretary Benitez** indicated to say your prayers, the world is a crazy place and she has gone back to church and feels great!

**Councilwoman Champion** Indicated that Saturday is the Fall Festival and it is a fun filled afternoon through the night! **Go Phillies!!! Go Eagles!!!** Thank you to all who came out to the Growden Mansion for Growden day. Another hidden treasure of Bensalem which the Township has been able to keep maintained and improve.

**Council Vice President Kisselback** indicated that October 4<sup>th</sup> is the Fall Festival and starts at 2:00 PM. Some of the events and activities that will be here are the Little Mermen which is a Disney Tribute Band---Pony Rides----Petting Zoo—Snow White Meet & Greet –Spiderman Meet & Greet—Slime Play, Magic show, K-9 and Police Motor Patrol, Public Safety apparatus display, just to name a few. Don’t forget the Concert that features Rock & Roll Hall of Famer member of the Cars, Greg Hawkes with Eddie Japan performing the music of The Cars. And of course the grand finale, Fireworks!

Election is November 4<sup>th</sup>, residents still have an opportunity to register to vote and let your voice be heard.

**Solicitor Pizzo** echoed everything that has been said. Many of our neighbors will be celebrating Yom Kippur and wished those a thoughtful and easy fast.

**Mayor** indicated that we had a great loss this past week regarding his good friend Bernie Parent. This will be the 34<sup>th</sup> annual Fall Festival, which the Mayor started before he became Mayor. Electronic Recycling Event will be held from October 10<sup>th</sup> through October 20<sup>th</sup> to Bensalem Township residents ONLY! Monday through Saturday from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. at the Public Works Department. Please check the Township website for items that are acceptable. Shredding Event will be October 25<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM for the residents of Bensalem only at the Public Works Department.

The Township had a great year this year with the amphitheater. Deron Miller, the Media Manager, has put together a recap of the season which is phenomenal in itself on the Township website.

The Mayor wished all of his Jewish friends a Happy Yom Kippur. Columbus Day is October 13<sup>th</sup> and the Township will be closed.

**Council President Knowles** indicated that he was looking forward to the Fall Festival this Saturday. Starts at 2:00 PM. The CARS was one of his favorite bands back in the day. Attended a few of the concerts and indicated that they were very good and is looking forward to next year's concerts.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**16. ADJOURNMENT:**

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

The Bensalem Township Council Meeting of September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

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

or

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

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Debora F. McBreen  
Recording Secretary**