

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL  
REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday  
January 5th, 2026**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Joseph Knowles  
Jesse Sloane  
Ed Tokmajian, Jr.  
Joseph Wenzel, Jr.

**SUPPORTING PERSONNEL:**

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo  
Debora McBreen  
Joseph Pizzo  
Judge Dawn Burkes  
Judge Joseph Falcone  
Judge Michael Gallagher

**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 the microphone.**

**1. OPENING OF THE MEETING:**

**Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo** introduced Judge Gallagher and Judge Falcone and noted the Judges were on hand to swear in the newly elected and/or re-elected local officials.

**Judge Gallagher** swore in the following officials:

**Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo  
Councilman Ed Tokmajian, Jr.**

**Judge Falcone** swore in the following officials:

**Councilman Jesse Sloane  
Treasurer Mike Brill**

**Judge Burkes** swore in the following officials:

**Councilman Joseph J, Wenzel, Jr.  
Auditor Zachery Winters**

The **Mayor** called the meeting to order with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT: AGENDA ITEMS**

3. **ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT:**

The **Mayor** called for nominations for **Council President**, **Councilman Sloane** nominated **Ed Tokmajian**, **Councilman Wenzel** seconded. The Mayor asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 4-0.

**Council President Tokmajian** thanked his Councilmates for their faith and trust in him as Council President for 2026.

4. **ELECTION OF COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT:**

**Council President Tokmajian** called for nominations for **Council Vice President**, **Councilman Wenzel** nominated **Councilman Sloane**. **Council President Tokmajian** seconded. **Council President Tokmajian** asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 4-0.

5. **ELECTION OF TOWNSHIP SECRETARY:**

**Council President Tokmajian** called for nominations for **Township Secretary**. **Council Vice President Sloane** nominated **Joe Wenzel**, **Council President Tokmajian** seconded. **Council President Tokmajian** asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 4-0.

**Council President Tokmajian** indicated that tonight is about moving Bensalem forward together as Council members. They are elected to represent the residents of Bensalem and that responsibility comes first. They look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the Mayor and the Administration in the spirit of teamwork for the benefit of all of Bensalem. Even before taking office, they have begun working together in a very positive and constructive way focused on communication and mutual respect. It is his hope that by working together in good faith that they can set an example right here in Bensalem of how local leaders and officials can work across the aisle to best serve the people that they represent.

While they may not always agree, they share a common goal and that is serving the people of Bensalem with integrity, transparency and a commitment to doing what's best for Bensalem.

**The Mayor** indicated that it is about Bensalem, and it is not individuality. It is all about teamwork and that is what makes it work, and the Mayor is looking forward to working together as a team.

6. **APPOINTMENT OF TOWNSHIP ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR 2026:**

**Council Secretary Wenzel** recommended *Debbie McBreen* for the position of Township Assistant Secretary. **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF A MUNICIPAL CLERK PURSUANT TO SEC. 2.25 OF THE CODE:**

**Council President Tokmajian** recommended *Debbie McBreen* for **Municipal Clerk** pursuant to Section 2-26 of the Code. **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

8. **APPOINTMENT OF TOWNSHIP SOLICITOR:**

**Council Vice President Sloane** recommended *Joseph Pizzo* of Pizzo Rudolph, LLC as the Township Solicitor. **Councilman Knowles** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

9. **APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL COUNSEL/CONFLICT COUNSEL:**

**Council President Tokmajian** indicated **the Mayor** recommended *Randall Flager, Esq.* of Flager Law as Special Counsel/Conflict Counsel. **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve *Randall Flager, Esq.* of Flager Law as Special Counsel/Conflict Counsel, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

10. **APPOINTMENT OF TOWNSHIP ENGINEER:**

**Council President Tokmajian** indicated **the Mayor** recommended *Philip Wursta* of WK2, LLC as the Township Engineer. **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve, **Council President Tokmajian** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

11. **APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL PROJECT ENGINEER:**

**Council President Tokmajian** indicated **the Mayor** recommended *Joseph Jones* of Jones Engineering Associates as the Special Project Engineer. **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve Joseph Jones of Jones Engineering Associates as the Special Project Engineer, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

12. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS:**

**The Mayor** recommended the following Department Directors:

**John Chaykowski - Director of Administration**  
**Kenneth Farrall - Director of Building and Planning**  
**Kyle Pennypacker- Director of Parks and Rec**  
**William McVey - Director of Public Safety**  
**Tim Shultz - Director of Public Works**

**Council Secretary Wenzel** motioned to approve the Mayor's recommendations for Department Directors, **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

13. **DESIGNATION OF BENSALEM TOWNSHIP'S NEWS MEDIA FOR LEGAL ADVERTISING DURING 2026:**

The **Mayor** recommended the *Bucks County Courier Times*. **Council Secretary Wenzel** motioned to approve the Bucks County Courier Times. **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the vote carried 4-0.

14. **DESIGNATION OF MONTHLY MEETING DATES DURING 2025:**

**Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve the proposed monthly meeting dates for 2026 as presented, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the vote carried 4-0.

**Council President Tokmajian** thanked everyone involved with the Township Boards for their service, time and dedication to their community.

**Council President Tokmajian** proceeded to introduce the Township Boards on the advice and consent of the Mayor's recommendation.

15. **CODE OF APPEALS BOARD:**

The **Mayor** indicated that the discussion he had with the Council members, it was agreed that the board should consist of 5 members and they should have the necessary credentials.

**Council Secretary Wenzel** motioned to suspend until next month due to credential requirements. **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

16. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Ernesto Veneziale, Frank Goldstein* and *Marc Winokur* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Wenzel** motioned to approve and **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded, the motion carried 4-0. Judge Gallagher swore in 1 member.

The **Mayor** indicated for the people who could not attend this evening's meeting they can make an appointment with either Judge Gallagher or Judge Falcone or be sworn in at his office.

**Council President Tokmajian** indicated that Councilman Kisselback was not in attendance due to an illness and wished him a speedy recovery.

17. **DISABLED ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Loreen Cimino, Matt Neiman, Joelle Pilieri, James Wright, Abid Siddiq, Al Kovnat and Kris Walski* for a 1-year term. Council Secretary Wenzel motioned to approve all seven nominations. Council Vice President Sloane seconded; the motion carried 4-0. Judge Falcone swore in 3 members.

18. **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Rosemarie Angle, Maura Champion, Francis Curran, Lisa Diasio, Mary Ann Griffin, Julianna Jim Kane, Bernadette Kisselback, Gary Kisselback, Art Mackley Matthew Pienkowski, Frank Vendetti and Joe Kraher* for a 1-year term. Council Secretary Wenzel motioned to approve, Council Vice President Sloane seconded, and the vote carried 4-0. Judge Gallagher swore in 9 members.

19. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:**

The Mayor recommended for a 3-year term *John Costello, AL Gougler, Ron Davis, J. Patel and Rick D'Aquanno to serve the remainder of Cliff Greer's term which expires on 12/31/26.* Council Vice President Sloane motioned to approve and Council Secretary Wenzel seconded, the motion carried 4-0. Judge Falcone swore in all 5 members.

20. **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Tom Markert, Ron Harris, Bill McVey, Lance Morell, Ed Tokmajian Jr., Ken Hopkins, III, Robert Race, Edward Copper, David Marshall, Nick Altomare, John Chaykowski, Ken Farrall, Kurt Stolzenberger, Mark Antozzeski and Val Ridge* for a 1-year term. Council Vice President Sloane indicated that the Agenda says 13 members, but 15 are listed and wanted to verify if it was okay to appoint more than the allotment. Solicitor Pizzo indicated that Council Vice President Sloane was correct, and that 15 are okay.

Council Vice President Sloane motioned to approve all 15 members, Council Secretary Wenzel seconded and the motion carried 4-0. Judge Gallagher swore in 14 members.

21. **ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *James Lamb, Nancy Strinte, Robert Boysenm, John Juergensen and Manish Patel* for a 1-year term. Council Secretary Wenzel motioned to approve, Council Vice President Sloane seconded and the motion carried 5-0. Judge Falcone swore in 4 members.

22. **GAMING ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Donna Patti, Mike Gallagher, Mary Ann Griffin, Sunny Patel, Sandra Rogers, David Johnson and Don Bonner* for a 1-year term. **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the motion carried 4-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 6 members.

23. **IMPACT FEE ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Mary Ellen Cook, Deepak Dhawan, Tom Nevrotski, Rameshbha Patel, Ross Seidman, Marc Stolee and Arpan Patel* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Wenzel** motioned to approve, **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 4-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 4 members.

24. **PLANNING COMMISSION:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Michael Gabriele, Pete Kreiger, Michelle Benitez, Umar Farooq John Polidoro to serve out Ed Tokmajian, Sr. term that expires 12/31/28 and Joyce Hadley to serve out Bryan Hanratty's term that expires 12/31/28* for a 4-year term. **Council Secretary Wenzel Kisselback** motioned to accept as stated, **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 4-0. Motions were amended due to a correction of Ed Tokmajian, Sr.'s term expiration. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 5 members.

25. **SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Robert Gale, Alice Gresko, Barbara Carter Ed Penszak and Melanie Goldstein* for a 1-year term. **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the motion carried 4-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

26. **VACANT PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Jeffrey Darwak John Chaykowski and Francis Bitting* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Wenzel** motioned to approve, **Council Vice President Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 5-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 2 members.

27. **VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Joe DeFranco, Wayne Lewis, Lt. James McGinty, Gail Reilly, Bruce Siemers and Joe Slemmer* to serve a 1-year term. **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the motion carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 5 members.

28. **ZONING HEARING BOARD:**

**Council President Tokmajian** indicated Ed Tokmajian, Sr. resigned from the Planning Commission to be sworn in for the Zoning Hearing Board.

The **Mayor** recommended *Ed Tokmajian, Sr.* for a 5-year term, **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the motion carried 4-0. **Judge Gallagher** swore in 1 member.

29. **OTHER BUSINESS FROM SUPPORT PERSONNEL:**

**Council President Tokmajian:** Indicated there was no further discussion of business.

30. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Council President Tokmajian** asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to come forward. Seeing no one come forward, the second Public Comment Portion was closed.

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**Council Secretary Wenzel** thanked everyone for giving him and his colleagues the opportunity to serve the community over the next four years.

**Council Vice President Sloane** thanked everyone and indicated that it is a pleasure to serve his community as their Councilman, again, and look forward to working with his colleagues over the next four years.

**Councilman Knowles** congratulated all three of the new Council members, Ed Tokmajian, Jr., Jesse Sloane and Joe Wenzel, Jr. and their newly appointed positions. He is looking forward to working with them for the good of Bensalem.

**Mayor** indicated that these are extraordinary times for Bensalem. In the future there will be a lot to work on and a lot to get done. Bensalem is an incredible community in which the Mayor was born here and raised here. Bensalem is an incredible Township and there is so much they can accomplish working together and knows that the Councilmen have the same heartfelt feelings for Bensalem.

The Mayor thanked all of the volunteers who give up their time to participate on the boards and congratulated and welcomed Ed Tokmajian, Sr. to the Zoning Hearing Board.

**Solicitor Pizzo** indicated that it continues to be an honor and privilege to represent the community that he calls home and has raised his family. Thanked the Mayor and the members of Council for showing their trust in him and allowing him to continue in that role, and he greatly appreciates it. Wished everyone a Happy New Year and it will be a wonderful year for Bensalem. **Council President Tokmajian** indicated that hopefully he will see the cooperation from the Solicitors and Engineers and looks forward to that partnership. Echoed everyone's sentiments. Thanked everyone for their trust in representing Bensalem.

**Council President Tokmajian** ended with this: At their last Council meeting in 2021, he pointed to his son and said that it was about the future here for Bensalem. And pointed to his son once again and indicated that he, as the youth of this community, the ones that the Council and Mayor are here for, to make good for the youth of our community.

**The Mayor** indicated that he remembers when he and Council President Tokmajian were at Bensalem High School, and saw two young ladies and pointed to them and said they are the future and this is what we are here for.

**The Mayor** thanked his wife for all of the years that she put up with him. January 19<sup>th</sup> is their Wedding Anniversary and they will be married 69 years.

31. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to conduct, **Council Vice President Sloane** motioned to adjourn, **Council Secretary Wenzel** seconded and the meeting was adjourned.

The Bensalem Township Reorganization Council Meeting of January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026 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**