

**EAST BRUNSWICK TOWNSHIP
COUNCIL AGENDA\ACTION MEETING
March 28, 2022**

1 Jean Walling Civic Center
East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816

7:30 P.M.

**All agendas\attachments are available on the Website: www.EastBrunswick.org at section Government.*

1. Council President Wendell called the meeting to order. After a Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence, the Clerk called the roll:

Present: Councilman Behal, Councilman McEvoy,
Councilwoman Sullivan, Councilwoman Zimbicki,
Council President Wendell

Also Present: Mayor Brad Cohen, Michael Baker, Township Attorney
Joseph Criscuolo, Administrator; Nennette Perry, Township Clerk

2. Statement of Notice of Publication:

The Clerk read the following statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by specifying time, date, location and to the extent known, the agenda by posting a copy on the Bulletin Board located in the main lobby of the East Brunswick Municipal Building, providing a copy to the Home News Tribune and Sentinel newspapers, posting a copy on the Township's website and by a filing a copy in the office of the Township Clerk which will be entered in the minutes.

3. Presentations, Proclamations and Discussions:

- A. Proclamation – Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month --
"Pinwheels for Prevention"

Councilwoman Sullivan read the proclamation.

Assemblyman Sterley Stanley and Middlesex County Clerk Nancy Pinkin presented a Joint Legislative Resolution by Senator Diegnan and Assemblyman Karabinchak and Stanley honoring Nennette Perry on her retirement.

Councilman Kevin McEvoy presented the resolution from the Mayor and Township Council to Nennette Perry.

**RESOLUTION HONORING
NENNETTE PERRY**

WHEREAS, Nennette Perry began her 39 year career with the Township of East Brunswick on February 14, 1984 with the Finance Director as an Office Coordinator; and

WHEREAS, Nennette Perry was promoted on June 28, 2004 as Deputy Clerk/Registrar with the Township Clerk's office. Ms. Perry attended classes for the Registered Municipal Clerk and Certified Municipal Registrar and passing both State exams was appointed on June 12, 2006 as the Township Clerk/Registrar.

WHEREAS, during her tenure with the Township, she devoted innumerable hours, working with dedication and devotion; and

WHEREAS, over the past 15 years, Nennette has served on multiple associations demonstrating her knowledge and expertise as a Municipal Clerk and as a Local Registrar of Vital Statistics; and

WHEREAS, she served as Secretary to the New Jersey Registrars Association from 2007 through 2009; she also served as Secretary to the Middlesex County Clerk's Association in 2010, was voted Vice President of the Middlesex County Clerk's Association in 2012, and served as

President in 2013. She further served on the Municipal Clerk Association of New Jersey Legislative Review Committee from 2014 to present. Lastly, she has served as Treasurer of the Central Jersey Registrar's Association from 2016 to present, and was Acting President from 2019 to present; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council, Township of East Brunswick, County of Middlesex, on behalf of a grateful community, do hereby thank **Nennette Perry** for her dedication and service to the Township of East Brunswick and its residents and extend to her our best wishes for a long and healthy retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk is hereby directed to include this resolution and spread its contents upon the minutes of the Township of East Brunswick Council meeting for the purposes of posterity on the 28th day of March, 2022 so that the public service of **Nennette Perry** may be forever recorded in the history of the Township of East Brunswick.

4. Agenda Session: (Discussion Only – No Vote)

None

5. Public Hearing:

None

6. Reports of Mayor, Administrator, Director of Law, Clerk, Council Committee/Board, Ad Hoc Committees Reports, Request Communication:

Mayor Cohen – April 7th orientation for new residents to be held at the Community Arts Center. Thanked those attendees at the council meeting who support the ice rink concept. He also outlined the 2022 budget as stated below.

Municipal Taxes 2022/2023

I am quite aware that for most residents, the state of the global and national economy, bond and stock market fluctuations, short and long-term interest rates, and monetary policy are abstract concepts that do not really address your most pressing concerns. Despite increases in wages – income has not kept up with inflation and the cost of living. As a result, folks feel that they are falling further and further behind as the prices of goods and services continue to climb.

In the middle of this is local government – whose mission is to provide for the services that keep our community functioning in a way that allows us to enjoy a safe respite and is committed to the three pillars displayed on our township emblem – home, education, and commerce. But the facts are that we, too, must deal with increased wages for our employees-who are our greatest asset, increased healthcare and pension costs, increased costs of good and services, supply chain delays, increased fuel costs, and so on.

But with excellent management and strict financial discipline, I am happy to be the bearer of GOOD NEWS as this year as the municipal budget will call for a modest 0.75% increase. This amounts to a \$5.85/mo. increase for the average taxpayer in the township. This budget stays within all the state required caps and is the third year in a row that I have been able to keep municipal tax increases below 1%. As promised when I ran for office 6 years ago, municipal taxes have stabilized and have averaged 1.39% per year since taking office- well below the cost of living. For comparison – the average municipal tax increase for the 15 years before I took office was 4.8%.

There are no tricks in this budget – we will continue with our capital projects which have funded our pavement management program to the tune of \$2 million yearly. Between this plan and the state and federal grants we receive, the township has never seen such a massive commitment to repaving the 240 miles of roads that traverse East Brunswick. Our Parks/Rec. Programs, Sports Programs, Library, Senior Center, Boards/Commissions, Arts/Cultural Programs, and others are

all funded at or above last years levels. Garbage Removal and Recycling costs are stable and under contractual limits until our contract expires in 2024. Most other towns have seen increases exceeding 50% and even worse if private. All our major labor contracts have been settled with average raises ranging between 2.5-3.5%/year for the next five years. This is accounted for in our budget and this is the investment we need to make in our employees – and I believe in all my heart that we have the best employees in the state. With very few exceptions, our employees care very deeply for our residents and our community. While many industries see employees jump from job to job – we have many long-term employees who have truly made working here a career. And this is not due only to tenure or benefits. It's due to the culture- our staff is valued, free to innovate without fear of dismissal if they fail, and they are part of a team that knows that our residents are the customer and superior customer service is our absolute goal.

As mentioned in my State of the Township Address – the township remains in a very strong financial position. Our township debt is 0.508%, one of the lowest in the state. The combination of low debt ratio, firm vision for the future, 99% collection ratio, and stable management has all contributed to the investment rating agencies awarding the township a Aa1+ bond rating. The school and fire districts use our credit rating to help secure their financing needs. This results in hundreds of thousands in dollars in financing costs saved for our residents.

As you know, the final tax bill you receive is the combination of primarily your township, public school, and county tax levies. The county (approximately 13% of the tax bill) has already announced that their tax levy will be flat. The public schools (approximately 62% of the tax bill) will be asking for a 0.73% tax decrease- a result of increased funding in state aid. This comes on the heels of the Governor Murphy's commitment to restoring public school state aid. This started last year, making this the second year in a row that our schools have reduced their levy. The net effect last year was to keep your total tax bill flat. The net effect this year will result in a total tax bill that is decreased from last year. Let me say that again – next year's total property tax bill will be decreased from the year before. This is the first time in over THIRTY years that any Mayor has been able to announce a tax decrease here in East Brunswick. Given the state of the economy in the world around us – this is a tremendous achievement!

The ability to provide sound, stable, fiscally responsible budgets does not occur in a vacuum. Much of the credit goes to your federal, state, county, and municipal officials and finance professionals working together for the benefit of our taxpayers. After many years of increased federal budget deficits, sound fiscal policy has seen the federal deficit decrease this year and forecasts are for an even greater decrease next year. Federal CARES Act and ARP Funding has helped local government meet its needs while COVID related expenses surged, and revenues fell sharply during the pandemic. The State of New Jersey has seen an explosion in industry and investment back in the state. Despite naysayers, New Jersey population increased according to the 2020 census and grew even more in 2021 as many people left NYC and moved here to NJ. The state bond rating has improved after eleven bond rating decreases in the last administration. Middlesex County actually has a higher credit rating than our township – quite a feat given our stellar reputation. All these agencies have worked together, resulting in the stabilization of the taxes you pay for the services we deserve. Finally, a big thank you to Angel Albanese, our CFO, the entire staff of the Finance Department, the Assessor's Office, and our Business Administrator – Joseph Criscuolo.

To the Township Council – this is now your budget. The Administration is here for you and the public to answer any questions. Thank you all for your continued support. God bless you, our troops, and the United States of America.

Joseph Criscuolo, Administrator – March 31st Ramadan Lighting Ceremony at 6:30 pm at the East Brunswick Municipal Pond. Annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 9th noon to be held at Warnsdorfer School. East Brunswick Fly a Kite April 9th between 11am and 3:00 pm at the Community Arts Center.

He also updated Council on the Township's employee training for cyber security. Currently the Township is at 98.8% of trained employees. The Central Jersey JIF approved the Township as Tier 2. The approval affects premiums and deductibles. He thanked Council for their financial

commitment to maintain and upgrade network software to prevent malicious attacks on the Township.

Michael Baker, Township Attorney – no report.

Nennette Perry, Township Clerk – no report.

Councilwoman Sullivan – Daisy Breakfast April 10th at the EB Hilton. EB Education Foundation will host their annual gala.

7. Public Portion:

Council President Wendell opened the meeting to the public:

Troy Bailey, 16 Glen Court – spoke about the ice rink project. Suggested that the facility has multi-purposes for the area.

Karen Zamolodchikov, 138 Hardenburg Lane – supports the ice rink but not the location.

Greg Tomari, 5 Branco Place – asked about various projects under redevelopment.

Alex Spielman, 6 Douglas Road – Ice rink development needs to be well thought out and maybe consider another area.

Antoinette Evola, 45 Merrill Avenue – how long will it take the construction costs to be paid off? Suggested that the project go the voters.

Shannon Christie, Dean Lane – supports ice hockey but not the location.

Butch Seltzer, Route 18 – worked in the hockey industry and suggested that the facility not only be an ice rink but an entertainment center.

Bob Connolly, 8 Patton Place, Spotswood – Indicated that East Brunswick and Spotswood schools are interested in forming a senior hockey team. He currently coaches hockey and is in favor of a local ice rink.

David Herrera, 32 Cosgrove Court – supports ice hockey but believes the \$15 million is too costly.

Maria Mangelo, 200 Willow Street – indicates traffic on Tices Lane will be impossible with a new ice hockey rink.

Thomas Ingrisani, 58 Deerfield Road – the ice hockey rink should be put to the voters.

Abraham Strum, 10 Raven Court – asked about other projects and architectural costs. He was told that between 5% and 7% of the project is for architectural costs.

There being no further discussion, the public portion was closed.

8. Consent Agenda: (Resolutions)

Council President Wendell asked if anyone wished to have any items separated from the Consent Agenda. Councilman McEvoy asked that Items B & G be separated from the agenda. Councilwoman Sullivan asked that items C & D and Councilwoman Zimbicki asked that Item J be separated from the agenda. Council President Wendell read the remaining items on the Consent Agenda.

A. 17350 Honoring Nennette Perry

E. 17354 Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of a Kubota R640R43 Wheel Loader with Attachments Paladin 60” Snow Thrower & 52 Tink Claw Leaf Bucket Under Sourcewell National Purchasing Cooperative Contract # 040319-KBA as Part of the 2022 Capital Budget (*Cherry Valley Tractor Sales, Inc. - \$105,234.04*)

- F. 17355 Resolution Authorizing Refunds to be Issued Related to Tax titled Liens Redemptions
- H. 17357 Providing for the Cancellation of Certain Charges Which the Collector of Revenue Deems Uncollectible
- I. 17358 Authorizing the Cancellation of Property Taxes for the Preliminary 2022 Billing on Block 88.43, Lot 1 C0060 for Receiving at 100% Permanently Disabled Veteran Exemption
- K. 17360 Awarding Contract for the Supply and Delivery of Sodium Hypochlorite for Crystal Springs Family Waterpark (*Main Pool & Chemical Co., Inc. - \$1.77/gallon*)
- L. Approval of Raffle License RA2518 – BPOE #2370 East Brunswick – May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023.
- M. Approval of Raffle License RA2519 – East Brunswick Jewish Center – May 22, 2022.
- N. Approval of Council Agenda\Action Meeting Minutes – March 14, 2022.
- O. Approval of Bill List (approval of bills owed by Township to various individuals, companies and accounts).

Resolution Re: Approval of Bill List

WHEREAS, the Township Council for the Township of East Brunswick has approved Ordinance 74-1-BB amending the municipal ordinances accordingly requiring the Township Council's approval before any disbursements are made. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council for the Township of East Brunswick that the following bills have been duly audited and found correct by the Director of Finance and she is ordered to pay the amounts as hereinafter stated.

Councilman Behal moved the adoption of the Consent Agenda Items A, E, F, H, I, and K to O. Councilman McEvoy seconded the motion. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the Consent Agenda Items A, E, F, H, I and K to O were declared adopted.

Council President Wendell read the following resolution.

- B. 17351 Honoring Ronald Murphy

RONALD MURPHY

WHEREAS, Ronald Murphy began his 32 year career with the Township of East Brunswick on October 10, 1989 with Public Works department as a Service Worker I and was promoted in August of 1992 as a Service Worker II; and

WHEREAS, Ronald Murphy was promoted on March 18, 1996 to a Service Worker III/Equipment Operator and finally on February 1, 2020 was promoted to a Field Specialist in the Department of Public Works.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council, Township of East Brunswick, County of Middlesex, on behalf of a grateful community, do hereby thank **Ronald Murphy** for his dedication and service to the Township of East Brunswick and its residents and extend to him our best wishes for a long and healthy retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk is hereby directed to include this resolution and spread its contents upon the minutes of the Township of East Brunswick Council meeting for the purposes of posterity on the 28th day of March, 2022 so that the public service of **Ronald Murphy** may be forever recorded in the history of the Township of East Brunswick.

Councilwoman Sullivan moved the adoption of the resolution. Councilman Behal seconded the motion. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the resolution was declared adopted.

Council President Wendell read the following resolution:

- C. 17352 Appointment of Municipal Clerk/Registrar for the Township of East Brunswick

Councilwoman Sullivan moved the adoption of the resolution. Councilman Behal seconded the motion. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the resolution was declared adopted.

Council President Wendell read the following resolution:

- D. 17353 Appointing Tamar Lawful as a Public Agency Compliance Officer for the Township of East Brunswick in the Awarding of Contracts Pursuant to P.L. 1975 c. 127 (N.J.A.C. 17:27)

Councilman McEvoy moved the adoption of the resolution. Councilman Behal seconded the motion. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the resolution was declared adopted.

Council President Wendell read the following resolution:

- G. 17356 Of The Township Council of East Brunswick Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Property No Longer Needed For Public Use On An Online Auction Website (*EBTV*)

Councilwoman Sullivan moved the adoption of the resolution. Councilman McEvoy seconded the motion. The Administrator explained the purpose of the resolution. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the resolution was declared adopted.

Council President Wendell read the following resolution:

- J. 17359 Awarding Contract to On Site Landscaping Management for Mowing Services for the Township of East Brunswick

Councilman Behal moved the adoption of the resolution. Councilman McEvoy seconded the motion. The Administrator explained why and where we need outside mowing services. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

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Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the resolution was declared adopted.

9. Ordinance Requiring a Public Hearing Date: April 11, 2022

None

10. New Business:

Council President Wendell read the following resolution:

A. 17361 Resolution for Introduction of 2022 Budget

Councilwoman Zimbicki moved the adoption of the resolution. Councilman Behal seconded the motion. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the resolution was declared adopted.

Council President Wendell read the following resolution:

B. 17362 Resolution Requesting Approval for Authorizing Emergency Temporary Appropriations In Accordance With N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20

Councilwoman Zimbicki moved the adoption of the resolution. Councilman McEvoy seconded the motion. The Administrator explained the purpose of the resolution. There being no further discussion from Council, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the resolution was declared adopted.

11. For Good of the Cause:

Council President Wendell thanked Mrs. Perry for her years of service.

Michael Baker, Township Attorney thanked Mrs. Perry.

Joseph Criscuolo, Administrator thanked Mrs. Perry and wished her well on her retirement. He also welcomed Tamar Lawful.

Councilwoman Zimbicki explained why the ice rink was not on the agenda and indicated that the Council is taking this project very serious and they are doing their due diligence.

12. Adjournment:

Councilman McEvoy moved that the meeting be adjourned. Councilman Behal seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the Clerk called the roll:

Behal - yes, McEvoy - yes, Sullivan - yes, Zimbicki – yes, Wendell - yes and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M.



JAMES WENDELL, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

ATTEST:



NENNETTE PERRY, MUNICIPAL CLERK

