

**BRIDGEPORT BOROUGH TO HIRE LAW FIRM TO
COLLECT DELINQUENT TRASH AND SEWER
ACCOUNTS**

In an effort to maximize the collection of its unpaid trash and sewer fees, the Borough of Bridgeport has hired the law firm of Portnoff Law Associates, Ltd. to collect its delinquent accounts. Representing over 150 municipalities across Pennsylvania, Portnoff utilizes state law that allows for the costs of collection to be imposed upon the delinquent property owner, creating immediate incentive to make payment and reducing the burden of administrative time and collection costs on the Borough.

For many years, Bridgeport Borough has experienced significant problems with delinquent trash and sewer accounts, to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars. Delinquent collections have historically been handled through in-house measures. However, the overall magnitude of the number of accounts and amount of monies owed has risen to the point where Borough Council and administration have determined that hiring a firm that specializes in collections makes sense at this time.

Each delinquent property owner will receive a notice setting forth the balance due. Attached to the notice will be a schedule of legal fees that Portnoff Law Associates will potentially assess against the property, if the property owner fails to respond to the notice. Recipients of the notice will be afforded a 30-day grace period within which to make payment arrangements. Property owners with large balances will be permitted to enter into payment arrangements of up to six months, and a hardship program allowing longer payment terms will be available to owner occupants experiencing financial difficulties.

After the grace period ends, Portnoff Law Associates will proceed with legal action on the unresolved accounts. Delinquent property owners who have failed to make payment arrangements or request hardship accommodations will be assessed the legal fees and costs associated with the collection of their accounts.

Bridgeport Borough would like residents to understand that this move is not a result of the economic damage caused by the COVID-19 shutdown. The borough has struggled with getting account holders to remit past due trash and sewer balances for quite some time. Bridgeport officials do not

**BRIDGEPORT BOROUGH TO HIRE LAW FIRM TO
COLLECT DELINQUENT TRASH AND SEWER
ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)**

think it is fair to the taxpayers of Bridgeport that dutifully pay their bills to have to experience rate increases that could be lower if all residents and businesses paid their representative balance; therefore this step is being taken in an effort to combat the rampant delinquency.

Bridgeport Borough urges property owners who have not yet paid their delinquent sewer fees to contact Portnoff Law Associates promptly upon receipt of the notice to avoid additional charges.

**BRIDGEPORT WELCOMES TWO NEW PART-TIME
POLICE OFFICERS**

The month of November saw Bridgeport Police Department bring two new part-time officers onto the force - Marvin Rosario and Glenn Seymour, Jr. Rosario, 38, originally of The Bronx, is a 14-year law enforcement veteran. Rosario graduated the Delaware County Police Academy in 2004. He is a certified SWAT officer and hostage negotiator with a love for community policing. He received a B.S. from Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA in 2018, with studies in aviation and business. Rosario was enlisted as a U.S. Marine and later commissioned as a Warrant Officer in 2008 in the U.S. Army, serving as an aviator in rotary wing aircraft. Rosario reached the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 2 prior to his honorable discharge in 2015. He currently also works as a banking officer with Wells Fargo. Rosario is fluent in Spanish.

Glenn Seymour, Jr., 24, is a native of Norristown, having attended Visitation BVM School, and Methacton High School, graduating in 2014. While in school Glenn excelled in athletics as captain of his high school and college baseball teams, and also received the United States Distinguished Athletic Award. Seymour studied at East Stroudsburg University and then finishing up his B.A. in Criminal Justice at West Chester University. Glenn attended the Montgomery County Police Academy, graduating in August of 2020 as Class Sergeant. Glenn has worked in landscaping, Wawa and for Contemporary Services Corporation tasked with Event Security at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia. Glenn's parents were born in Ireland. Glenn enjoys sports. Literature and physical fitness. Please join us in welcoming both officers to the Bridgeport team!



BOROUGH OF BRIDGEPORT

NEWSLETTER, WINTER 2020

BOROUGH COUNCIL

PRESIDENT: Kyle Shenk, Ward 3

VICE-PRESIDENT: Tony Heyl, Ward 3

Howard "Randy" Bennett, Ward 1

James Fee, Ward 1

Diane Gundrum, Ward 2

Meghan Nolan, Ward 2

Cory Scott, At-Large

MAYOR: Mark Barbee

Keith S. Truman, Borough Manager

Todd J. Bereda, Chief of Police

Salvatore F. Bello, Jr., Borough Solicitor

Edward Woyden, Borough Engineer

Council meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7:30pm, at Borough Hall, 63 West 4th Street. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

ADMINISTRATION: 610-272-1811

POLICE DEPARTMENT: 610-272-5660

BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROJECTS FORECAST FOR 2021

At the November 10 meeting of Bridgeport Borough Council, the first draft of the 2021 budget was presented to Borough Council and the public. While the budget will not be officially adopted until the December 8 meeting, administration has presented a balanced budget, and therefore it can be referred to with a high degree of certainty as being a finished product. Borough administration would like to share some highlights of the 2021 budget development process, including detailing some of the major capital projects that are set to commence in 2021.

Budget and Tax Rate Facts

1. For the eighth consecutive year, Bridgeport Borough will not raise property taxes. Borough Council and administration are extremely proud of this fact and attribute the ability to keep tax rates static for so long to fiscal responsibility and good decision making.
2. Bridgeport has an overall millage rate of 36.839, which is determined by adding the borough property tax millage rate to the millage rates imposed by Upper Merion Area School District and Montgomery County. 36.839 "mills" equates to 3.6839%. This means that a home with an assessed value of \$100,000 would pay a tax bill of \$3,683.90.
3. Bridgeport's total millage rate of 36.839 ranks it as #29 out of 62 Montgomery County municipalities, firmly in the middle. In comparison, Cheltenham Township owns the highest millage rate in the county at 62.951, and tiny Bryn Athyn Borough owns the lowest at 14.725.

Capital Projects for 2021

1. Street Paving: A \$213,000 community development block grant will help fund a road paving project in 2021, which should include parts of Fraley, Coates and Prospect Streets.
2. Memorial Park Walking Trail: A \$192,800 grant from the Montco2040 program will fund the majority of a project that will install new sidewalk along Grove Street at the base of Memorial Park, as well as a scenic walking trail that will wind up the slope of the hill and then connect to the existing walking trail at the top of the park.
3. Audio-Visual Upgrade, Council Chambers: Council chambers will be upgraded with new audio and video technology that will finally allow the borough to record and

broadcast council meetings and other public meetings to the borough website and social media platforms.

4. Police: Bridgeport Police Department will make several capital purchases that will help improve operations and enforcement capabilities in 2021. Body worn cameras will be purchased for all officers next year. Additionally, the police department will purchase VASCAR units, which is a method of car speed monitoring and enforcement.

WASTE COLLECTION UPDATES

Christmas Tree Collection: This coming year, Christmas tree collection will take place on **Friday, January 9, 2021**. Please have your trees out at the curb by 7:00am that morning.

Fall Leaf Collection: Public Works will continue collecting fall leaves from curb side until the first major snow of the season. Leaf collection days are Mondays and Fridays, every week.

Bulk Items: All residents may place one (1) bulk item curbside per month for collection on the last Tuesday of the month. These items can include: Furniture, Carpets (must be cut into 3-foot widths, rolled, tied or taped. Only 10 rolls of carpet/ padding per pick up.), Appliances that do not use Freon, Tree limbs or trunks larger than 3" in diameter (Cannot be longer than 36"), Windows, mirrors, glass panels in doors, etc. (Must be taped in a crisscross pattern to prevent breakage.), and Mattresses and box springs (A mattress + box spring is considered one (1) item, so both can be put out together.)

All mattresses and box springs must be wrapped in plastic sheeting or bagged prior to putting them out for curbside collection. Please understand that box springs and mattresses that are not wrapped/bagged and fully sealed will not be collected.

Please Note: Bulk pick up is not an opportunity to dispose of multiple items accumulated over a lifetime when you are moving. If you wish to dispose of more than one item, please call J.P. Mascaro at 610-272-2765 and they will arrange a special pick up for you. Multiple bulk items placed at the curb is prohibited without an agreement with Mascaro. This restriction will be strictly enforced.

THE JOY OF DRIVING IN THE SNOW

By Salvatore F. Bello, Jr., Esquire and Paul S. Peters III, Esquire, Borough Solicitors

Pennsylvania has two laws pertaining to legal requirements while driving in snow conditions or after a snowstorm. Pennsylvania statute 75 § 4524, requires that drivers always have a clear and unobstructed view of the road. Snow and ice — along with any other debris — must be removed from all windows before driving. State troopers and local officers may initiate traffic stops for violations. The fine for driving with an obstructed view is \$25 but with administrative and other fees added on, violators can expect to pay more than \$100.

Regarding snow accumulated on a vehicle's roof, Pennsylvania statute 75 § 3720, states that if snow or ice is dislodged or falls from a moving vehicle and strikes another vehicle or pedestrian causing death or serious bodily injury, the operator of the vehicle from which the snow or ice is dislodged or falls shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$200 nor more than \$1,000 for each offense. This is in addition to other legal consequences one may face in such a situation. For additional safety measures, Pennsylvania statute 75 § 4310 requires drivers to have their vehicle's front lights fully on: (1) Between sunset and sunrise; (2) Any time when the operator cannot discern a person or vehicle upon the highway from a distance of 1,000 feet due to insufficient light or unfavorable atmospheric conditions, including rain, snow, sleet, hail, fog, smoke or smog; and (3) Any time when the vehicle's windshield wipers are in continuous or intermittent use due to precipitation or atmospheric moisture, including rain, snow, sleet or mist.

Bridgeport Borough staff and officials and the team at Bello, Reilly, McGrory & DiPippo, P.C. wish all Bridgeport residents a happy, joyful, safe, fun, and prosperous winter season. Hopefully Bridgeport's children receive the gift a snow day or two. Safe driving!

