

**Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County  
Wednesday, March 19, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was convened in person.

**Name/Organization**

**Voting Members in Attendance**

Troy Fischer, Bridgewater Commons  
Tony Tufaro, Johnson & Johnson  
Michael Pappas, Bridgewater Township  
Nicolas Carra, Raritan Borough  
Joseph Brosnan, Raritan Borough  
Nick Zamora, Raritan Borough  
Brian Gallagher, Somerville Borough  
Rich Reitman, Somerville Borough  
Lisa Werner, Somerville Borough  
Paul Drake, Somerset County Commissioners  
Samantha De Andrea, Somerset County Planning Division  
Daniel Hayes, Somerset County Park Commission

**Non-voting County Support Staff**

Victoria Schulz, Somerset County Planning Division

**Non-voting Guests**

Melissa Mazzaro, New Jersey Water Supply Authority  
Kyle Clonan, New Jersey Water Supply Authority

The meeting commenced at 5:10 PM.

**Business Items**

**Call to Order**

Chair Troy Fischer called the meeting to order.

**Attendance Roll Call**

Principal Community Planner Victoria Schulz performed the roll call and noted for the record that there were 11 voting members present. Michael Pappas entered the Meeting during the Treasurer's Report Presentation, making 12 present voting members.

## **Introduction of Somerset County Planning Director Samantha De Andrea**

Director Samantha De Andrea introduced herself to the Board as the new Somerset County Planning Division Director and gave a brief overview of her experience prior to joining the County.

## **Chair's Remarks**

Chair Troy Fischer welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## **Action Items**

### **Adoption of January Meeting Minutes**

Chair Fischer presented the January 19, 2025 meeting minutes asked if there were any corrections, comments, or questions. There being none, Chair Fischer asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Somerville Mayor Brian Gallagher made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, Raritan Engineer/Planner Joseph Brosnan seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken resulting in the following voting record:

Ayes: 11

Nays: 0

Abstentions: 0

The motion to approve the minutes was approved.

### **Treasurer's Report for January/February 2025**

Chair Fischer presented the January/February 2025 Treasurer's Report. Principal Planner Schulz gave an overview and explanation of expenditures and deposits. Chair Fischer asked if there were any questions or comments concerning the Treasurer's Report. There being no questions, comments, or corrections, Chair Fischer asked for a motion to approve the January/February 2025 Treasurer's Report. Raritan Mayor Nicolas Carra moved the motion, and Somerville Mayor Brian Gallagher seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken resulting in the following voting record:

Ayes: 11

Nays: 0

Abstentions: 0

The motion was approved.

## **Information Items**

### **Rain Barrel Rebate Program Information Session**

Assistant Watershed Protection Specialist Melissa Mazzaro from the New Jersey Water Supply Authority introduced herself to the group and gave an overview of the NJ Water Supply Authority while presenting a PowerPoint entitled “Raritan River Rain Barrel Rebate Program”. Watershed Protection Specialist Kyle Clonan from the New Jersey Water Supply Authority also introduced himself to the group. Ms. Mazzaro described the area where the Raritan Basic Water Supply System is in the New Jersey Water Supply Authority’s jurisdiction. Ms. Mazzaro proceeded to explain the benefits of rain barrels such as being a great tool for water conservation and controlling stormwater runoff. Ms. Mazzaro then explained the mechanics of the Rain Barrel Rebate Program. The Rain Barrel Rebate Program offers up to \$200 dollars in reimbursement for up to two rain barrels per household and is open to residents of Manville, Somerville, Bridgewater, and Raritan. The Regional Center Partnership processes refunds for Somerville, Bridgewater, and Raritan. The Rain Barrel Rebate Program is looking for aid in Marketing. Mr. Clonan explained that in the past, flyers advertising the program were often placed by the SC Park Commission at Parks within the rebate towns. Ms. Mazzaro showed a map with points where rebates have been processed within the rebate towns and then showed the link to submit an application for a rain barrel rebate. Ms. Mazzaro told the group that rain barrels are inspected from April through October, as they should be disconnected and stored away for the winter months. Ms. Mazzaro concluded her presentation and asked the group for any questions.

Mayor Gallagher asked about the possibility of bringing back a former practice of a “build your own rain barrel” workshops in different municipalities. Mr. Joseph Brosnan mentioned that rain barrel workshops can be utilized for MS4 permit credits. Mr. Clonan stated that they would investigate the possibility of restarting the workshops.

Mayor Gallagher asked if the Water Supply Authority provides support to private property owners to alleviate property erosion. Currently, the Water Supply Authority does not offer this kind of assistance.

Mayor Gallagher also asked about the maintenance of rain gardens. Mr. Clonan recommended that an education program be considered for local Department of Public Works staff on proper maintenance techniques.

### **Draft Regional Center Member List**

Principal Planner Victoria Schulz introduced a draft list of Regional Center Partnership Board members. Ms. Schulz noted that with recent staff changes at the County, she is seeking input to ensure the accuracy of member names, titles, and positions for the Regional Center Board. Ms. Schulz also emphasized the importance of an up-to-date list to facilitate the formation of subcommittees previously requested by the Board. Chair Fischer brought attention to Ms. Vicky Allen’s position and explained that Ms. Allen requested several months ago to transition out of her role due to other commitments. Chair Fischer remarked that having Ms. Allen recommend someone to fill her position would be preferred. Ms. Schulz told the group she would reach out to Ms. Allen, assured the group she would make edits as mentioned, and if anyone else had any other comments on the draft list, to contact Ms. Schulz directly.

## **Municipal and Other Updates**

**SC Parks Commission:** Somerset County Park Commission Representative Daniel Hayes discussed that the County golf courses are now open, the Parks commission recently received several state awards, there are new therapeutic programs in place at various County parks, and recently there has been an initiative to help amphibians cross pathways at night so they can safely migrate out of hibernation and to places to lay eggs for the spring.

**Raritan:** Raritan Mayor Nicolas Carra discussed recent efforts of the Borough to help mitigate new affordable housing requirements. Raritan Borough Engineer/Planner Joseph Brosnan discussed some of the areas in need of redevelopment/rehabilitation that are being considered for designation.

**Somerville:** Mayor Brian Gallagher discussed current affordable housing requirement efforts with research related to the possibility of tiny home construction, Electric Vehicle charging in parking structure issues related to fire safety, and requested that the RCP add the Pledge of Allegiance to future agendas.

**Bridgewater:** Bridgewater Representative Michael Pappas discussed Township redevelopment efforts and positive feedback related to the proposed development of a Paul Miller Range Rover dealership in the Township.

## **Public Comment Period**

No comments

## **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 pm