



Town of Bridgewater
Town Council Meeting – Virtual Meeting
December 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Matthew Rushton called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:00pm, on December 21, 2021, via Zoom.

PRESENT:

Peter Colombotos, Francis Sousa, Shawn George, Fred Chase, Matthew Rushton, Erik Moore and Dennis Gallagher. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

ABSENT:

Dr. Kevin Perry and William Wood

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was held for all of the veterans who have passed including Robert Souza who passed on December 4, 2021.

President Rushton announced: Pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, An Act Relative to Extending Certain Covid-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, this meeting of the Town Council for the Town of Bridgewater will be fully remote and accessible to the public through remote participation to the greatest extent possible. There will be no in person attendance permitted. Citizens who wish to tune in to the meeting may do so via Zoom or Facebook Live.

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

• **December 6, 2021**

Councilor George motioned to approve the meeting minutes from December 6, 2021, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Council President Rushton noted that because of the new virus strain the Town Council meetings will continue to be remote until the end of February.

C. PROCLAMATIONS – None

D. CITIZENS OPEN FORUM

Marilee Hunt, Town Clerk/Registrar: Noted that nomination papers for School Committee and Library Trustees will be ready for pick-up on January 3, 2022 in the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall.

E. APPOINTMENTS - None

F. HEARINGS

a) **Order O-FY22-030: (Continued from 12/6/21) Capital Plan Fall 2022 (Town Manager)**

Town Manager Dutton withdrew Order O-FY22-030. There were no objections from the Town Council.

G. LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

a) **Petition P-2022-001: Annual Renewal – All Alcohol and Attendant Licenses**

Councilor George made a motion to approve P-2022-001, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:



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Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

b) Petition P-2022-002: Annual Renewal – Automatic Amusements

Councilor George made a motion to approve P-2022-002, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

c) Petition P-2022-003: Annual Renewal – Auto Dealers – Class I, II, III

Councilor George made a motion to approve P-2022-003, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

d) Petition P-2022-004: Annual Renewal – Common Victuallers (No Alcohol)

Councilor George made a motion to approve P-2022-004, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

e) Petition P-2022-005: Annual Renewal – Annual Entertainment (No Alcohol)

Councilor George made a motion to approve P-2022-005, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

f) Petition P-2022-006: Annual Renewal – Pawn/Second-Hand Gold Dealers

Councilor George made a motion to approve P-2022-006, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

g) Petition P-2022-007: Annual Renewal – Lodging House

Councilor George made a motion to approve P-2022-007, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.



h) Petition P-2022-008: Annual Renewal – Taxicab License

Town Manager Dutton asked that this Petition be on the next Town Council meeting.

i) Petition P-2022-009: Annual Renewal – Antique Dealer

Town Manager Dutton asked that this Petition be on the next Town Council meeting

H. PRESENTATIONS - None

I. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

• **Mitchell School Update**

Work continues as planned and on schedule. Target completion date of July 2022. Next Mitchell School meeting will be on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 6:30pm via Zoom.

Discussion: Councilor George received information regarding a change order and asked if there is a contingency budget for change orders. Town Manager Dutton noted that there is a change due to supply chain issues and that there is a contingency budget.

• **Covid-19 Update**

The Town Manager reported that there are currently 113 active cases (no hospitalizations) of Covid-19 within the Town of Bridgewater. 68% of residents are fully vaccinated and 67% have one shot. Town Manager Dutton is recommending, not requiring masks at Town Hall. The town has received 8,400 test kits and they have been distributed by the Fire Department and the Federal Government has committed to providing more in the future.

Discussion: Councilor Rushton thanked the Board of Health, Fire Chief and the Fire Department staff for stepping up and doing an incredible job with the distribution of the test kits.

J. DISCUSSIONS – None

K. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS - None

L. LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

a) Ordinance D-FY21-011: Amend Article II Sec 2-1. Composition; Eligibility; Term of Office (Gallagher)

Councilor George motioned to approve R-FY21-011 which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

b) Ordinance D-FY22-015: Amend Article VII Sec. 7-4 “Districts” of the Town of Bridgewater Home Rule Charter by Special Act Legislation (Chase and Rushton)

Councilor George motioned to approve O-FY22-015 which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.



c) Ordinance D-FY22-016: Amend Article I Sec. 1-9 “Definitions” of the Town of Bridgewater Home Rule Charter by Special Act Legislation (Moore)

Councilor George motioned to approve O-FY22-016 which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

d) Ordinance D-FY22-017: Amend Article VII Sec. 7-3(a) “Signature Requirements” of the Town of Bridgewater Home Rule Charter by Special Act Legislation (Moore)

Councilor George motioned to approve O-FY22-017 which was duly seconded.

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to amend D-FY22-017 as follows: change the last two sentences under (a) to read: For an office which is to be filled by the voters of the whole town, not less than 50. For an office which is to be filled by the voters of a District, not less than 25 from the District. The Amendment was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken on the amendment with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The amendment passed.

Roll-call vote was taken on the Ordinance with the amendments with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

e) Ordinance D-FY22-018: Amend Article X Section 10-7 Time of Taking Effect (Chase and Wood)

Councilor George motioned to continue O-FY22-018 to the next meeting which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Absent; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

f) Ordinance D-FY22-012: Zoning Ordinance – Zoning Map Amendment 168-180 Broad Street (Gallagher)

Councilor George made a motion to advertise O-FY22-012 which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

g) Ratification of the Town Manager’s Contract

Councilor George made a motion to approve the Town Manager’s Contract which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:



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Colombotos – No; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – No; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – No; George – Yea. 4-3-0 The motion passed.

M. OLD BUSINESS – None

N. NEW BUSINESS

a) Resolution R-F22-005: Town Council Meeting Dates 2022

Councilor George made a motion to approve R-F22-005 which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

b) Order O-FY22-033: Loan Order – For update of the Wastewater Treatment Facility (Town Manager)

Town Manager Dutton noted that the expenses increase by \$9M due to a number of factors. The town will be applying for state revolving fund money to help offset the cost to the taxpayers.

Councilor George motioned to refer O-FY22-033 to the Budget and Finance Committee and Finance Committee. The motion was duly seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Gallagher noted that he will have a lot of questions about this request. Concerned about the 4 year delay. Council Rushton would like to understand why due diligence has not been done.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

c) Order FY22-034: Acceptance of Non-Recurring Revenue to Capital (Town Manager)

Town Manager Dutton noted that this is based on the calculations of inmates.

Councilor George motioned to refer O-FY22-034 to the Budget and Finance Committee and Finance Committee which was duly seconded.

Discussion Councilor George asked that Town Manager Dutton reach out to the state representatives to find out what funding formula is used. Would like to understand why Bridgewater seems lower.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Absent; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

d) Order O-FY22-035: Contractual Buyouts (Town Manager)

Town Manager Dutton noted that the town is contractually obligated to buy back accrued sick time from retiring employees.



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Councilor George motioned to refer O-FY22-035 to the Budget and Finance Committee and Finance Committee which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Absent; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

O. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Carlton Hunt, 80 Austin Street – Reminded Town Council that Executive Session meeting minutes should be released.

P. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor George – wished everyone a happy and healthy holiday. Thanked the first responders for what they are dealing with.

Councilor Gallagher – wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and thanked the town employees for all that they do.

Councilor Chase – wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Councilor Sousa – wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Councilor Moore – wished everyone Happy Holidays and thanked all of the volunteers in the town.

Councilor Colombotos – wished everyone a nice holiday with family.

Councilor Rushton – wished everyone a happy holiday and reminded people to mask up.

Q. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

R. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor George motioned to adjourn which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Colombotos – Absent; Wood – Absent; Moore – Yea; Sousa – Yea; Rushton – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Absent; Gallagher – Yea; George – Yea. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m. Minutes submitted by Debra Ward In accordance with the applicable provisions of the Town of Bridgewater Home Rule Charter and Town Council Rules and Procedures, the Town Council assembled voted, at their meeting on Tuesday, January 4 2022, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a Roll Call vote (9-0).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Debra Ward