



Town of Bridgewater
Town Council Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 8, 2017

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council Vice President Edward Haley called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:30 pm, on August 8, 2017 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

Council members present were, Aisha Losche, William Wood, Edward Haley, Dennis Gallagher, and Peter Colombotos. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

ABSENT:

- President Timothy Fitzgibbons
- Councilor Kevin Perry
- Councilor Francis Sousa
- Councilor Shawn George

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was held for all veterans who have passed including:

- Robert Patterson
- John E. Welch
- Christopher Thrasher
- Brenda Franz

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- July 11, 2017

Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Losche. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0-1 (Councilor Wood abstained)

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT - None

PROCLAMATIONS - None

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM –

- Jennifer Smith, Boxwood Lane: Ms. Smith reminded the Council that the town voters rejected the sale of recreational marijuana at the last election and she strongly urged the Council to ban the sale of recreational marijuana in Town.
- Lisa McSweeney, South Drive: Ms. McSweeney spoke about her history with the town and spoke out against recreational marijuana. Ms. McSweeney believes there are many other ways to bring revenue into the town and plead with the Council not to allow recreational marijuana.
- Taylor Sullivan, Nolan Park: Ms. Sullivan asserted; it (marijuana) is a federally illegal drug and has not been approved by the FDA and will pose a safety risk to the town. She asked what kind of message allowing the sale of marijuana will send to the youth in town. Regarding the revenue, Ms. Sullivan feels the cost of public safety will outweigh the revenue brought in.
- Lillian Holbrook, Driftwood Drive: Ms. Holbrook is not here as a school committee member, but as a resident. She is very disheartened to hear that the kindergarten class sizes are on the rise. Ms. Holbrook spoke about the current class sizes stating she feels they are unacceptable and it is a safety issue. Ms. Holbrook referenced the possibility of future MCAS scores being compromised due to the classroom sizes. Ms. Holbrook went on to speak about the curriculum in kindergarten now and referenced the approved budget versus what the school district



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requested. Ms. Holbrook respectfully invited the Councilors to visit the schools, especially in the beginning of the year to help make their budget decisions.

- Melissa Desjardins, Pearl Street: Ms. Desjardins introduced herself as chair of the CPC and echoed previous comments about school classroom sizes.
- Rosemarie Smitchel: Ms. Smitchel is in agreement with people who spoke against recreational marijuana and noted it will affect home property values. She asked the Council to be proactive and set the ban versus being reactive and seeing the negative effects.
- Dana Rowan, 15 Brownfield Drive: Ms. Rowan voiced concerns about the numbers in the kindergarten classes.

APPOINTMENTS - None

HEARINGS -

- 7:35 p.m.: Order O-2017-038: CPC Transfer – Capital Project – Legion Field Lights
Vice President Haley opened the hearing at 7:47 p.m.

Mr. Dutton explained the transfer of funds is for a new lighting system at Legion Field. The request is for \$231,000.

Vice President Haley invited any questions from the public – Charlie Simonds came forward to answer questions. Mr. Simonds explained the project. The lights at both fields were erected in approximately 1992 and are now a safety issue. Mr. Simonds briefly explained the budget for the project noting; if any money is unused it will go back to the CPC. He has been in contact with a company to give a rough idea of the scope of work, knowing we will be going out to bid.

Vice President Haley asked if there was anyone speaking in favor -

- Matt Gavigan, VP of Bridgewater Little League Board of Directors came forward and spoke in favor of the lights. In the course of a season there are over 600 players who use the field and the current lights are a safety hazard.

Vice President Haley asked if there was anyone speaking in opposition – None came forward.

Vice President Haley entertained any questions from councilors:

- Councilor Colombotos asked if there is any assessment of the energy efficiency of the new lights. Mr. Simonds responded; there will be less energy used, but didn't have exact figures. Councilor Colombotos followed up asking if any effort was made to find alternate funding expressing concern that there have been several (CPC) proposals with no alternate funding. Mr. Simonds explained; within the organization there are several funding sources and through the little league they will continue to find funding sources; if alternate funding is secured and/or receive some type of reimbursements, the unused money will be returned to the CPC. Mr. Simonds also spoke about "in-kind" funding, explaining his plan to do as much of the project himself as possible to save money. Mr. Colombotos stated he would like to see the electrical savings sent back to the CPC. A discussion continued as Mr. Colombotos and Mr. Simonds discussed the suggestion and potential issues.

Councilor Colombotos asked Dr. Hunt to speak about the potential energy savings.

- Dr. Carlton Hunt, 80 Austin Street: Dr. Hunt, Chair of the Energy Committee. Does not recall that this was brought before the Energy Committee, but knows the lamps will use less energy. Dr. Hunt suggested the golf course bond will be paid off very soon and believes that would be a good potential funding source.

Vice President Haley closed the hearing at 8:05 p.m.

Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.

Discussion: Councilor Wood noted the Finance Committee voted in favor and Budget & Finance Committee also voted in favor. The Budget & Finance Committee spoke with the Finance Director and Town Manager and went through the budget to ensure there was enough money. Councilor Colombotos stated he would like to put off



vote so he can hear about energy savings. Discussion briefly continued regarding Councilor Colombotos' suggestion. Finally Councilor Colombotos expressed disappointment with not having the energy savings presented.

A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Losche – YEA; Wood – YEA; Perry – ABSENT; Haley – YEA; Fitzgibbons – ABSENT; Sousa – ABSENT; Gallagher – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; George – ABSENT. The motion passed 4-1 (Councilor Colombotos in the minority)

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- Town Council Letter Authorizing One-Day Bingo – *Friends of the Freetown-Lakeville Warriors Swimming, Inc*
Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Gallagher. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

PRESENTATIONS

- 2016 Annual Town Report Update

Town Clerk, Marilee Hunt came forward and spoke about the 2016 Annual Town Report. This is the first Annual Town Report assembled since 2008. Since 2010, when we became a town, we were not required to produce a town report, but we are guided by the Charter and Administrative Code. The report is being organized to coordinate with the new Administrative Code.

Ms. Hunt spoke about the process of beginning the project and process of finding support staff to assist with the report. Ms. Hunt believes the report will be ready to go to print in October, and then walked through the different sections of the annual report. She highlighted the section on elections, noting there were four elections in 2016. The Annual Town Report will be online with approximately 15 (hard copies) available at different locations around town (i.e., the Library). She then spoke briefly about the Council's portion of the report noting there will be a hyperlink to legislation.

Questions:

- Councilor Gallagher thanked Ms. Hunt and Ms. Cordeiro for their effort, and then asked; what will be included with the financials. Ms. Hunt responded the Finance Director provided that information. .
- Councilor Wood complimented the Town Clerk stating he thinks this is fantastic. He asked if the idea is that we'll do this one and backtrack, then go forward. Ms. Hunt explained about the different formatting needs for 2015. Mr. Wood followed up asking how the Council can help to keep this on an annual process. Ms. Hunt suggested staff would be needed as a volunteer may not always be available.
- Vice President Haley asked if this will make next year easier. Ms. Hunt responded; yes, and explained some of the challenges some areas faced needing to produce the reports under the new Administrative code format.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Dutton reported on information about various activities happening around town and highlighted meetings and events. Items of note included: a brief update on the Marijuana Ad Hoc Committee to advise the Council on future actions. Mr. Dutton explained; we will not really know what's needed until the Cannabis Control Committee meets. The town has one wine and malt liquor license available for the council to provide a disposition on. People will be asked to complete and return applications by a date certain. The Community & Economic Development office worked diligently to put together an application for a MassWorks Grant for Elm Street which focuses on increasing economic development, new jobs and new businesses in that corridor. OCPC continues to work with us to update the Town's Housing Production Plan. The plan is on the Town's website and Lisa Sullivan is taking comments. Mr. Dutton reminded all that the Duxburrow 40B application continues its hearing before the ZBA on 9/27/17 at 7:30 p.m. The Claremont Corporation, received site eligibility for their property to add 300 units of rental properties. They have filed with ZBA and submitted site approval for a slightly smaller office building which will go before the Planning Board. Mr. Dutton then briefly explained about the Highway Superintendent's recommendation to address decaying drainage pipes located in several areas around town. The Town Manager's office has been working with the Clerk's office to get some order around documents that we're required to keep. Most documents are at Town Hall. They have met with a State Archivist, who was very complimentary of our efforts so far. Mr. Dutton provided a brief update on the Mitchell



School Committee. Comcast has completed work to get live broadcasts up and running. They are looking at September to get it going. Mr. Dutton thanked BSU for their assistance. Mr. Dutton reminded all that the Auburn Street Solar Project was denied by the Conservation Commission and it has been appealed. He explained; if the DEP overturns the denial then the project will move on the Planning Board stage. Finally, Mr. Dutton noted he will be asking the Council to approve legislation to up the amount Seniors can earn through the SAVE Program.

Councilor Questions:

- Councilor Wood asked if there is a provision with the state for us to get a higher rate on the available wine and malt license since it's so valuable. Mr. Dutton responded he will check, but doesn't think you can charge any more than for any other license. Mr. Wood briefly stated the Council voted an increase in the B-R assessment from last year to this year, however, there's a misconception on social media that that we cut it.
- Councilor Gallagher confirmed the available liquor license is not for a restaurant. Mr. Dutton confirmed that was correct. Regarding the comments about Kindergarten sizes; Councilor Gallagher asked if there has been any correspondence asking us to do something. Mr. Dutton responded; he spoke to the Superintendent who let Mr. Dutton know that they have some additional concerns about additional students coming in, but have made no requests for money.
- Councilor Colombotos briefly spoke about the increased class sizes noting; with the increased growth you'd think there'd be increased revenues though taxes. Mr. Dutton explained the revenue sharing and 60% of proposition 2 ½ and new growth will go to the schools.
- Vice President Haley briefly asked about the drainage pipes. Mr. Dutton explained they were over hyped when they first came out 25 – 30 years ago. He then spoke about funding for the repairs coming out of the highway budget.

DISCUSSIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Community & Economic Development: Councilor Colombotos briefly explained the committee was tasked with Open Space and the Nuisance Ordinance. They will meet with the Community & Economic Development Director at their next meeting.
- Vice President Haley gave a brief update on the Marijuana Ad Hoc Committee. He explained they have been actively meeting and speaking with leaders from other states where recreational marijuana is legalized.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order O-FY18-001: Acceptance of a Gift – Bridgewater State University
Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.
Discussion: Councilor Wood noted the Finance Committee approved this measure and Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to support.
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
George – ABSENT; Colombotos – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Sousa – ABSENT; Fitzgibbons – ABSENT; Haley – YEA; Perry – ABSENT; Wood – YEA; Losche - YEA. The motion passed 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ordinance D-FY18-001: Establish a Stabilization Fund
Motion: A motion to postpone was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.
Discussion: Councilor Wood pointed out that Councilor Fitzgibbons, the sponsor, was not present therefore it should be postponed.
A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Julie Scleparis, Red Mill Road: Ms. Scleparis is a School Committee member. She clarified that the schools did get an increase over last year, but it was not anywhere near what we originally asked for.
- Dr. Carlton Hunt, 80 Austin Street: Dr. Hunt asked what the status of the intern looking at the Open Space/Recreation Plan. Mr. Dutton responded; the intern is here Monday and Tuesday's and will be here through



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the beginning of September. Dr. Hunt stated there is a Master Plan Committee meeting the 2nd Thursday of this month. Tried to work with Green Communities and get school system to join with the Bridgewater Green Community and we can try to get some of the buildings not under renovation looked at for energy savings.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Losche: Thanked all who came down and voiced their opinions and encouraged people to stay involved. There are many committees who could use that passion.
- Councilor Wood: Thanked Marilee Hunt for coming in and doing a great presentation. He appreciates the efforts of the school committee too. Mr. Wood feels this year the budget process was very fair. Would like to see a copy of the approved Teachers contract.
- Councilor Perry: Absent
- Councilor Haley: Thanked all for the support for his first meeting as Chair. He has a child going into Kindergarten and is sure we'll have more discussion about this going forward.
- Councilor Sousa: Absent
- Councilor Gallagher: Thanked citizens who came out and spoke tonight. The school budget is a big budget that we don't have a lot to say about. Salaries will increase, benefits will cost more and the budget will increase. Mr. Gallagher is hoping the Town Manager will speak with the Superintendent.
- Councilor Colombotos: No comments.
- Councilor George: Absent
- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Absent

EXECUTIVE SESSION – *No Executive Session was held.*

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Losche. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Ann Holmberg

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, September 5, 2017, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a voice vote (5-0) (Councilors Perry, Fitzgibbons, Sousa and George abstained).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk