Town of Bridgewater
Town Council Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 19, 2017

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Timothy Fitzgibbons called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:30 pm, on September 19, 2017 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

- Councilor Shawn George

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

- Richard Palleschi
- Paul Costa
- Ronald Corr

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- September 5, 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 8-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

- October 17, 2017 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., there will be a 2017 Health and Public Safety Expo sponsored by the Bridgewater TRIAD. For more information contact Senior Center.
- Mr. Dutton Introduced Master Eamon Fitzgibbons as Deputy Assistant to the Town Council President.

PROCLAMATIONS - None

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM –

- Dr. Kern, 77 South Street: Dr. Kern wanted to make additional points about the (marijuana) moratorium. He spoke about the dangers of driving while high and the impact on business and the work force, noting there are significant downsides to businesses. As marijuana becomes legalized, use by employees has increased. Dr. Kern cited businesses in Colorado who have begun recruiting outside their state.
- Pat Neary, Lakeside Drive: Ms. Neary referred to the smoking ordinance that was passed some time ago and expressed her hope that the Council is not considering the possibility of inviting another possibly harmful substance into the town. Ms. Neary reminded all that the Town voted “no” on question 4 and we do not need a moratorium.
- Faye George, 21 Old Forge Road: Ms. George is opposed to marijuana shops and wants to know if anyone has surveyed the law enforcement community. She understands there currently is no reliable test for our public safety to issue to drivers. Ms. George does not understand why the town would want to invite another intoxicant into the community.
- Aysha Hussain, Sophia Lane: Ms. Hussain is relatively new to town and explained Sophia Lane is off Elm Street. She would not want Elm Street to have Marijuana Retail shops and spoke about the current traffic due to the industrial park. Ms. Hussain strongly opposes retail marijuana stores.

- Cameron Brushani: Mr. Brushani asked the Council to ban Retail Marijuana Shops as he doesn't want any more friends and family to have any more access to marijuana than they already do.
- Taylor Sullivan, Norlen Park: Ms. Sullivan stated she is aware some of the Councilors are in favor of the stores. She feels those Councilors are being fooled. Ms. Sullivan spoke about retail sales people making an effort to join their email group.
- Greg Carlstrom , 240 Cherry Street: Mr. Carlstrom is a new resident to Bridgewater who previously served in the Army. Mr. Carlstrom spoke about the potential effects of allowing marijuana on the community.
- Peter Joseph, Brian Road: Mr. Joseph spoke about his experience as a father of an addict. Some kids will become addicts because marijuana can be a gateway drug. Mr. Joseph is here for the next generation and asked that the town not legalize the sale of marijuana.

APPOINTMENTS

- Cultural Council – Kelsey Keefe
  Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Haley.
  Discussion: Several Councilors spoke on behalf of Ms. Keefe and thanked her for volunteering.
  A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.
- Finance Committee Reappointment – Nathan Schofield
  Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.
  Discussion: None
  A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

HEARINGS - *None*

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- Petition P-2017-024: Attachment of Wires and Fixtures – Taunton Municipal Light Plant
  Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Perry. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sousa.
  Discussion: Mr. Dutton explained this is to run fiber to the Bridgewater Raynham School District.
  A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.
- Petition P-2017-025: Consideration of Applicant for Available Package Store Wine & Malt Beverages License
  President Fitzgibbons explained we are only allowing them to apply. Not approving any licenses.
  Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Haley. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.
  Discussion: At Councilor Wood's request, Mr. Dutton confirmed this was the only applicant.
  A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

PRESENTATIONS - *None*

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 planning for the projected tropical storm. Mr. Dutton thanked the multiple departments who take time to coordinate the planning and the volunteers who are in place to assist. The Community & Economic Development Director will be leaving in October. Mr. Dutton's office is currently reviewing the position and the needs of the Town to see if there's a different need. Mr. Dutton does not anticipate filling the position prior to Mr. DeIonno's departure. Invoice Cloud, an online payment solution, is being rolled out over the next several months. Mr. Dutton spoke about the attributes of the system. The Community & Economic Development office is filing phase III grant request for Complete Streets funding. The Mitchell School Building Committee has been meeting to finalize remaining work in the eligibility phase. After voting last night to accept the Massachusetts School Administration numbers about our enrollment, the next step is to go back to MSBA and wait for their invitation to enter the feasibility phase. Mr. Dutton briefly spoke about the Parks & Recreation Summer Intern who worked on an assessment report, noting his work was exactly what Mr. Dutton had hoped. There are currently three 40B applications. The public hearing for Duxburrow is being re-advertised because the members of the board changing. VIVA has also submitted an application and there is a filing for a project on Plymouth Street. If all these projects come to fruition, we'll be over our 10% threshold. Mr. Dutton has met with the Strategic Planning consultant who will be

back to meet with the Strategic Planning committee. Bridgewater State University purchased a property on Hale Street which has a large vacant building that is scheduled to come down in the next few weeks.

Councilor Questions:

- Councilor Wood asked if the Oak Street Bridge is a permanent fixture now. Mr. Dutton explained; we continue to seek legislative money. Mr. Wood asked about parking on School Street. Mr. Dutton responded we will see a Paid Parking Ordinance - possibly at next meeting. Mr. Dutton is planning to include all the spaces on School Street.
- Councilor Sousa asked for an update on his request to expedite the permitting process. Mr. Dutton anticipates the process internally will change a bit. He spoke about a flier; stating after polling residents, they felt the flier was too confusing. They are considering a possible online menu for people to use.
- Councilor Colombotos asked about the sidewalks on Clarence Ave, off Summer Street. Mr. Dutton responded; Weston & Sampson did an assessment which gives us a guide, however, we get $700,000 in Chapter 90 funds, but probably need double that to address the streets in town. Councilor Colombotos asked how we address this. Mr. Dutton responded; the Finance Director is building some projections on Capital Items.
- Councilor Haley asked for an update on Skips Liquors. Mr. Dutton responded there is no change. He sent a letter of license revocation, which was returned - undeliverable.
- Councilor Wood asked if the McElwain has been sold. Mr. Dutton responded; the RFP deadline is the 27th at which time the proposals will be opened, then we'll put together a committee to review.

DISCUSSIONS

Texting and Driving

Councilor Wood explained he has asked the Police Chief to come in and speak about texting and driving. Mr. Wood spoke briefly about the issue stating he is hearing that traffic at the lights on 104 near the Cumberland Farms gets bogged down because people are looking at their phones. Councilors Colombotos, Gallagher and Perry agree it's a huge problem.

Chief Delmonte began stating; distracted driving is a huge problem and spoke about several scenarios they receive calls on. They have tried to designate an officer during the day and one at night for proactive enforcement, but the Police Department is very busy here. Chief Delmonte has received a mobilization grant, which enable us to do these types of activities and is waiting for a traffic enforcement grant. The Chief pointed out that Central Square is its own separate problem. He noted his concern over recreational marijuana and noted Bridgewater is not unique in its distracted driving issues.

Council Questions:

- Councilor Colombotos asked if there were fines for anyone caught driving distracted. Chief Delmonte responded yes. Councilor Colombotos followed up asking if the fines could create a self-paying position with the fines. Chief Delmonte reminded everyone that they are not a revenue generating department and explained why the enforcement could not pay for itself.
- Councilor Perry noted West Bridgewater has done some things in this area and asked if it's possible for the Town to partner with BSU. Chief Delmonte responded we've taken advantage of the grants that are out there, but funding is very limited and stated BSU Campus Police is great to work with but they have their own set of issues to handle.
- Councilor Wood asked if they have engaged the High School and are there other educational programs? Chief Delmonte explained yes, they've engaged the school and currently have a smashed-up vehicle to remind people to take care. Chief Delmonte spoke about several areas where they partner with the school. He also spoke about receiving a grant from the University for a mock accident so they can see personnel responding.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Councilor Wood stated he has nothing to offer in terms of legislation but wanted to start a dialogue around the topic.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget & Finance: Councilor Wood stated the Budget & Finance Committee met prior to the Town Council meeting. They unanimously supported the SAVE Program, Acceptance of a gift and the Water Meter Project.

- Rules & Procedures: Councilor Losche stated the Rules & Procedures Committee also met this evening. Regarding the Office of the Town Clerk Hours - they are going to do some further due diligence to look at the whole Town Hall and will be referring Vacant & Abandoned Buildings to Community & Economic Development Committee.
- Community & Economic Development: Councilor Colombotos stated he is waiting for dates from the Planning Board to schedule the joint hearing on Zoning Ordinances.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Ordinance D-FY18-001: Establish A Stabilization Fund
  Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Gallagher. The motion was seconded by Councilor Losche.
  Discussion: Councilor Gallagher noted Budget & Finance Committee voted to approve this measure.
  A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
  Losche – YEA; Wood – YEA; Perry – YEA; Haley – YEA; Fitzgibbons – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; George - ABSENT. The motion passed 8-0.
- Order O-FY18-002: South Street – Chapter 61A – Intent Not to Exercise Right to Purchase Land
  Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Perry. The motion was seconded by Councilor Haley.
  Discussion: Mr. Dutton explained this is fairly routine when a property owner puts the property into 61A. He pointed out there is no municipal interest in pursuing this property. Councilor Wood confirmed this the Leach's Grove property and asked if these parcels were included in the open space plan? Mr. Dutton confirmed they are not. President Fitzgibbons noted the Assessor's office recommending the Town not exercise it's right.
  A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
  George – ABSENT; Colombotos – NOT PRESENT; Gallagher – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Fitzgibbons – YEA; Haley – YEA; Perry – YEA; Wood – YEA; Losche - YEA. The motion passed 7-0.
- Order O-FY18-003: Acceptance of a Gift – Estate of John Chruniak
  Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Losche.
  Discussion: Several Councilors expressed appreciation to Mr. Chruniak for his generous gift.
  Losche – YEA; Wood – YEA; Perry – YEA; Haley – YEA; Fitzgibbons – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; George - ABSENT. The motion passed 8-0.

OLD BUSINESS

- Ordinance D-FY18-004: Senior Work-Off Abatement Program
  Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Wood to send to advertising. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.
  Discussion: None
  A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.
- Order O-FY18-006: Loan Order – Water Meter Project
  Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Wood to send to advertising for a public hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilor Haley.
  Discussion: None
  A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 8-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- Ordinance D-FY18-006: Establish a Search/Review committee
  Councilor Gallagher explained; he feels this would be a good idea. He thinks in the past the Town Manager, at times, established search committees. He noted; this would be a permanent thing. Mr. Gallagher further believes the Treasurer/Collector process was flawed and thinks this type of committee would help the process.
  Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Gallagher to refer to the Rules & Procedures Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.
  Discussion: None
  A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.
- Resolution R-FY18-001: Directing the Town Manager to Explore Acquiring Specific Land – Summer Street

Councilor Gallagher explained the purpose of the legislation noting; he mentioned this at the last meeting. The property the used to be the Mobile Station is now an eyesore. He has heard perhaps the owner has had interested parties and thought maybe the Town would be interested in turning it into something useful.

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Gallagher to refer to the Community & Economic Development Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: Councilor Wood noted Councilor Colombotos will have to recuse himself due to his residence and suggested, perhaps referring to Strategic Planning. Councilor Colombotos pointed out there would still be two members, so it shouldn't be an issue. At Councilor Perry's request, Attorney Rawlins briefly explained the legalities, noting it can be done, if it's for public purpose. He advised the Council will want to be thinking about what the "public purpose" is.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0-1 (Councilor Colombotos abstained due to conflict of interest)

CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor George: Absent
- Councilor Colombotos: Nothing
- Councilor Gallagher: Reminded all that Autumnfest will be held 9/30/17. He hopes many people come out. Thanked the Town Manager's office for the Employee & Volunteer recognition event.
- Councilor Sousa: Spoke about Autumnfest, noting it is an event built around families.
- Councilor Haley: Spoke about Music Alley stating he really enjoyed this past season.
- Councilor Perry: Echoed prior comments on Autumnfest. Also reminded everyone there is a Bridgewater Police 5K that morning. The thanked everyone for the Employee Volunteer Event and thanked the volunteers who were appointed this evening.
- Councilor Wood: Spoke about his stance on tobacco and his perceived stance on marijuana noting the need for Raynham to adopt "Tobacco 21" which raises the age to purchase tobacco to 21. Mr. Wood's stance on tobacco is pretty strong. Regarding the ban on the retail marijuana shops; even if we ban it, people can still grow, use transport and gift. It will still be in our community and we need to control it through legislation.
- Councilor Losche: Nothing
- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Nothing

EXECUTIVE SESSION – *No Executive Session was held.*

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 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, October 3, 2017, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a voice vote (7-0-1) (Councilor Colombotos not present, Councilor George abstained).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

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Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk