



CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Shawn George called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:00pm, on September 22, 2020 via Zoom©.

PRESENT:

Council members present via Zoom© were, Timothy Fitzgibbons, Peter Colombotos, Francis Sousa, Matthew Rushton, Shawn George, William Wood, Fred Chase, Aisha Losche and Dennis Gallagher. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

ABSENT: *No Councilors were absent.*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was held for all who have passed.

President George announced: Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council will be conducted via 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 Facebook Live.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- September 8, 2020

Motion: Councilor Chase made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Losche – YEA; Gallagher - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT - None

PROCLAMATIONS

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM

APPOINTMENTS

- Charter Review Committee – Janet Hanson

Motion: Councilor Sousa made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

Gallagher – YEA; Losche – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

HEARINGS - None

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None

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:

- Mitchell School Update (Standing Item)
100% design plans are being completed this month. The committee has reviewed the HVAC alternatives in detail. It will go out to bid in late October/November with construction beginning in December with a July 2022 completion date. Next meeting is 9/28 at 5:30 p.m. More information can be found at www.bridgewaterproject.com. Mr. Dutton confirmed the project is still on time and still on budget.



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- **FY21 Revenue vs. Budget (Standing Item)**
Mr. Dutton reported it is still too early to draw any firm conclusions. Our revised revenues are tracing right around where we anticipated. We will continue to keep close watch on that. Councilor Fitzgibbons requested the Finance Director give an idea of his thoughts on what type of recession we're currently in.
- **COVID-19 Update**
Have seen a little spike this week. There are now 10 cases in Bridgewater. The emergency team meets twice/week. Bridgewater Raynham School District, School Nurses, Raynham and Bridgewater meet on a weekly basis. The town is submitting another reimbursement request of \$500,000 to Plymouth County in next couple of weeks. We are focused on technology right now. We are targeting 10/5 for opening building to citizens by appointment only. Mr. Dutton addressed the possible perception that people aren't working if the building is closed, which is not accurate. Bridgewater is one of the few towns that never actually closed the operation. Mr. Dutton then addressed returning to the Council Chambers, stating we are constrained a bit by capacity and technology. Technology should be arriving 9/28. Assuming the technology arrives on-time, we anticipate an in-person Council meeting 10/6. He noted the public will not be allowed in the building, but Councilors should be able to. We will continue to utilize Zoom and Facebook for those who want to watch.
Mr. Dutton answered questions from Councilors about staff who are in the building and when he may anticipate opening the building freely to the public, to which he anticipates no more than two weeks by appointment as long as things go well. President George emphasized the need for the Council to have technology available so residents can continue to participate via Zoom.
- **Update - FY20/21 Goals**
Mr. Dutton provided updates on several goals, including progress on the Fire Station Feasibility process, which is underway and the Fire Station Building Committee is meeting October 5th. The old Town Hall feasibility study, which has gone through quiet a process which is almost completed. Mr. Dutton spoke about key positions filled and the vacancies posted. The Water Treatment Plant contract has been awarded and they're hoping for an 18-month construction schedule. The Sewer Treatment Plant engineering is in the works and the affordability study is complete and filed. Councilor Wood asked if the Town Manager's goals could be added to the Town Manager's webpage. He also asked if the Town Manager has a copy of the evaluation form. At Councilor Gallagher's request, Mr. Dutton elaborated on the internal education the new hires receive and where vacant positions are posted.
- **Maintenance of Town Buildings**
Condition of buildings overall is okay. Right now, we are changing over from cooling season to heating season. We have budgeted for basic building needs. Most of the building maintenance is handled through department heads. Mr. Dutton spoke about the invaluable service of the interim Building Maintenance Manager. Mr. Dutton provided examples of the items which are now better coordinated (i.e., elevator inspections). He briefly touched on some of the smaller building projects completed. We had anticipated hiring a facilities manager. When we advertised we had one qualified applicant. We are re-advertising the position now that we have a better idea of what the needs are, noting it is a challenging job to fill. Mr. Dutton answered questions from Councilors, addressing possible moisture issues in the Memorial Building, stating the floors have been buckling for years and he does not believe any moisture issues are related to the HVAC system, which is relatively new. Mr. Dutton offered to walk through with any Councilor who may be interested. Councilor Fitzgibbons asked a series of questions, finally stating his opinion that something should be built into the budget each year for unexpected items and asked if it's a preferable option to appropriate funds each year for longer-term future needs, or rely on the reserve funds. Mr. Dutton responded, it's always good to budget within the operating budget. When budget resolution is passed by council, there's a provision that assures we have some excess money left over which goes



into our Free Cash policy. Councilor Fitzgibbons requested an agenda item be included for the next meeting on the subject of normal budgeted maintenance items vs. debt exclusion or items requiring tax increases. Councilor Gallagher spoke about the need for the Maintenance person.

- Election
Anticipating a large turnout. The Assistant Town Manager is trying to look for PPE's to keep everyone safe as they come in to vote. In terms of volunteers to help the Town Clerk as Mr. Gallagher just spoke about; we have to get away from that. We are trying to go out and advertise for temporary help. Councilor Gallagher asked if there will be fewer staff working during early voting and is the Council Chambers the best place to have early voting when there may have been other options. Mr. Dutton responded, it's likely there will be fewer people working from Academy Building during early voting. He tends to agree there are other possibilities for early voting. Mr. Dutton believes the Town Clerk felt it would be very difficult to move early voting away from the Academy Building. At Mr. Wood's request, Mr. Dutton spoke about the elevator policy for early voting. Stating he believes the limit is one person in the elevator at a time.
- Halloween
The CDC just posted guidelines about Halloween and holidays. Halloween is considered a "high risk" activity. The Town will follow any state orders issued. But at this time, we have no plan to ban trick-or-treating. At Councilor Losche's request, Mr. Dutton confirmed, Halloween is not a Town sanctioned day, so we don't really have a role in telling people what they can or can't do. Attorney Rawlins suggested waiting until a little closer to the date in case there are any Executive Orders passed down from the state.
- Town Webpage – Code360
Mr. Dutton explained; it's a program that many towns use to house their bylaws, code, etc. We have looked at it in the past and would work well in Bridgewater. We are waiting to get the zoning piece done, then we can have it translated to an E360 format. Councilor Wood expressed support for the Code360 product.

Finally, Mr. Dutton reminded the Councilors, if there is something helpful for public consumption, he is happy to include in Town Manager's Update. However, if it's just a question, please feel free to reach out to him.

- Items for Next Meeting:
President George requested the Fire Station Committee come in and do a presentation.

DISCUSSIONS - None

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Review Committee: Committee Chair, Losche advised the committee met to discuss the review process for the Town Manager. We have the evaluation that we've done in previous years. The committee will draft a timeline. They are looking to get a process into rules and procedures and are looking for updated goals.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Ordinance D-FY20-009: General Ordinance - Amend Administrative Code Article II, Section I (B) and Article III, Section I (I)
President George read Ordinance history and committee dispositions.
Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: Attorney Rawlins suggested adding "and/or the Town of Bridgewater Town Charter" to Article III, Section I, (3) after c. 268A.
Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to amend as suggested by the Town Attorney which was duly seconded.
Discussion: President George confirmed adoption of the amendment did not require re-advertising. Attorney Rawlins agreed as it is not a substantive change, but a technicality.
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:



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Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Losche – YEA; Gallagher - YEA. The motion to amend passed 9-0.

Discussion (cont'd on main motion to approve): Councilor Fitzgibbons, referencing an email received, asked about property owners being allowed to serve on committees. Attorney Rawlins offered to do dig further but believes it's based on residency. Councilor Gallagher noted he explained to the person who made the recommendation that he is not in favor of allowing non-residents to serve on the board.

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

Gallagher – YEA; Losche – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion to approve, as amended, passed 9-0.

- Ordinance D-FY21-002: General Ordinance - SFI Paperwork Reduction - Creation of a SFI Short Form
President George read the ordinance history and committee dispositions.

Motion: Councilor Wood made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Wood is hopeful there is support for this legislation.

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

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Losche – YEA; Gallagher - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

- Order O-FY21-012: WWI Guardrail/Flagpole Repair
President George read the committee dispositions.

Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to amend as indicated which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

Gallagher – YEA; Losche – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion to amend passed 9-0.

A roll call vote on the main motion to approve was taken with results recorded as follows:

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Losche – YEA; Gallagher - YEA. The motion to approve, as amended, passed 9-0.

- Order O-FY21-013: Creation of an Ad Hoc Committee for Community Diversity, Inclusion and Equity
President George read the committee dispositions

Motion: Councilor Chase made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons noted Councilor Losche spoke out at the last meeting and asked if she had anything to add at this time. Councilor Losche responded; she felt like she said what she had to say. Ms. Losche has shared a job posting. Discussion followed while Councilors asked questions and spoke about the purpose of the committee, the need for the committee to have some guidance and potential funding for a possible professional consultant. Finally, at Councilor Colombotos' request, Councilor Losche provided her opinion, as a professional in the field, that this is not the way to create a strategy however, she pointed out, the Council has voted 8-1 in the past to keep the process moving forward.

Motion: Councilor Losche made a motion to move the question which was duly seconded.

Councilor Wood raised a Point of Interest, which was ruled out of order as the motion to move the question supersedes a point of information.

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

Gallagher – YEA; Losche – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion to move the question passed 9-0.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion to approve with results recorded as follows:

Fitzgibbons – NO; Colombotos – NO; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – NO; Chase – NO; Losche – NO; Gallagher - YEA. The motion to approve failed 4-5.

- Order O-FY21-014: Acceptance of CARES Act Reimbursement

This measure was not taken up and will be moved to the 10/6/20 agenda.



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- Order O-FY21-015: Transfer Order - Cross Street Engineering
This measure was not taken up and will be moved to the 10/6/20 agenda.
- Order O-FY21-017: Transfer Order - CPC Recommendation - Central Square Congregational Church
This measure was not taken up and will be moved to the 10/6/20 agenda.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- Ordinance – D-FY21-003: Zoning Ordinance – Zoning Map Amendment – Pleasant Street
Motion: Councilor Sousa made a motion to refer to Planning Board and Community and Economic Development Committee for a joint public hearing which was duly seconded.
Discussion: None
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Gallagher – YEA; Losche – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Mr. Fitzgibbons was just informed that Mr. Tom Moran, a teacher at the middle school for many years had just passed away. He asked for a moment of silence. Mr. Fitzgibbons then spoke about the schools and returning to classes pointing out that teachers are doing their best to figure it out.
- Councilor Colombotos: No comments.
- Councilor Sousa: Stated his desire to get back into Town Hall
- Councilor Rushton: No comments.
- Councilor Wood: Reminded all to stay safe as we move into colder weather.
- Councilor Chase: Stated it is National voter registration day. He reminded folks that voter registration is open and strongly encouraged people to register to vote.
- Councilor Losche: No comments.
- Councilor Gallagher: No comments.
- Councilor George: No comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to move into Executive Session under MGL, Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(6) To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body and to adjourn from Executive Session. A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Losche – YEA; Gallagher - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Open Session adjourned at 8:55 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 6, 2020, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a Roll Call vote (9-0).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk