



Town of Bridgewater
Town Council Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 1, 2019

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council Vice President Shawn George called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:30 pm, on October 1, 2019 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

Council members present were, Francis Sousa, Fred Chase, William Wood, Shawn George, Aisha Losche, Peter Colombotos (arriving at 7:46 p.m.) and Timothy Fitzgibbons. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

ABSENT:

President Dennis Gallagher
Councilor Matthew Rushton

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice President George announced the meeting is being aired live and recorded.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

- William Arrighi
- Albert Kelso

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- September 3, 2019

Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sousa.

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0.

- September 17, 2019

Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sousa.

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Vice President George provided dates and times and locations for information sessions on the Williams School project.

PROCLAMATIONS - None

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM – None

APPOINTMENTS

- Conant Trust – Marie Fahey

Mr. Dutton explained Ms. Fahey is a reappointment and encouraged the Council to ratify the re-appointment.

Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sousa.

Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons spoke on behalf of Ms. Fahey. Vice President George thanked Ms. Fahey for her service.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0.

Motion: A motion to take item G: (License Transactions) out of order was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sousa.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS (Taken Out of Order) - None

Motion: A motion to take item H: (Presentations) out of order was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Losche.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0.



PRESENTATIONS (*Taken Out of Order*) - None

**Return to regular order of business F: Hearings*

HEARINGS

- **7:35 p.m.:** Order O-FY20-022: Loan Order - High Street Water Treatment Facility
Vice President George read past votes and advertising information.
Vice President George opened the hearing at 7:35 p.m.
Vice President George invited any questions from the public – None came forward
Vice President George asked if there was anyone speaking in favor - None came forward
Vice President George asked if there was anyone speaking in opposition - None came forward
Vice President George entertained any questions from councilors:
 - Councilor Wood asked if the presentation Stantec gave to the Budget & Finance committee was available online. Mr. Dutton responded it should be.Vice President George closed the hearing at 7:36 p.m. and noted the legislation would be taken up for a vote under Legislation for Action.

Motion: A motion to take item J: (Discussions) out of order was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgibbons.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0.

DISCUSSIONS (*Taken Out of Order*)

- Board and Committee Reporting Process
Councilor Wood explained; there isn't an annual reporting process where committees can come forward and present to the Council. Councilor Fitzgibbons agreed; stating it's important for citizens to hear from committees. He suggested perhaps the meeting schedule on the agenda should include a concurrent presentation schedule. Councilor Losche pointed out the matter has come up before and there was a schedule in the past. Councilors Losche and George recommended setting expectations on why the committees are attending and giving them a timeframe for presenting. Councilor George suggested five minutes. Mr. Dutton will work with the Council Clerk to generate a schedule that ties committees to the meeting schedule which will begin in January with the new meeting schedule.

**Return to regular order of business F (b).*

- **7:40 p.m.:** Order O-FY20-014: Transfer Order - High Street Dam & Bridge Preliminary Work
Vice President George re-opened the hearing at 7:42 p.m.
Vice President George read past committee dispositions and advertising, noting the hearing would need to be continued as Finance Committee has not met to vote as yet.
Mr. Dutton requested a continuation to the next meeting at 7:35 p.m.
Motion: A motion to continue to the next meeting was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Losche.

**7:46 p.m., Councilor Colombotos arrived at the meeting.*

Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons pointed out it's going on two months now. As these things need to move forward, what are the other alternatives? Mr. Dutton briefly outlined possible options as: 1. Declare an emergency, but he hesitates to do that with loan orders, 2. Order of necessity which we declare when a committee doesn't have a quorum, however he noted that option is also not ideal, 3. Longer term solution could be to have the Town Council look at the issue of how the Charter defines the Finance Committee membership and make a proposed charter change for that one issue. The best solution is to rotate out the members who have been unable to attend meetings.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.



TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Dutton reported on information about various activities happening around town and highlighted meetings and events. Items of note included:

- The Mitchell School vote is coming up on October 19th. Mr. Dutton outlined various ways for citizens to get information. Vice President George confirmed with Town Attorney there were no issues taking this item up as it was not listed on the agenda. Attorney Rawlins confirmed it was not an issue. Councilor Fitzgibbons stated he is hearing concerns about the tax impact and asked if there is a way the Town can work to abate the taxes through state opportunities? Mr. Dutton responded; there are programs available; stating there is information available on the Assessors website. He spoke about SAVE program as an example. Councilor George asked if the Town can put the links on Facebook.
- **Grant Announcement:** The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs notified the Town Manager's office that the Town is the recipient of a grant in the amount of \$325,974.00, which will allow us to move forward with the acquisition of a property off Broad Street that will better connect to Styles and Hart. Mr. Dutton thanked Harry Bailey, the Park Steward at Styles and Hart and Kitty Doherty for their efforts.
- **Energy Assessment Update:** Mr. Dutton reminded the Council that Dr. Hunt had requested an update on the Energy Assessment. The vendor has backed out, so the project has been on hold for a little bit. Mr. Dutton anticipates meeting with the Energy Committee in November or December. If the Energy Assessment ends up being a costly initiative, will look to put it on the Capital plan.
- **Strategic Plan Update:** Mr. Dutton reminded the Council that Paradigm was hired to provide a Strategic Plan. Half the work has been done behind the scenes, and we've put it on hold awaiting the Master Plan, which should wrap up around the end of the year.

Councilor Questions:

- Councilor Colombotos asked what the value is of the energy assessment? Mr. Dutton responded; the initial thought was there's a large open space at the golf course and it was suggested we look into solar panels over the parking area. However, some of the state program rules have changed. Believes the thought was it would be better for us to take a more comprehensive look at our energy usage and production.
- Councilor Wood congratulated the town on the grant. He spoke about the process and number of people involved.
- Items for next meeting:
 - Mitchell School
 - Add a discussion item for Broad Street Update

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget & Finance: Councilor Wood stated the committee met tonight and voted to recommend the Loan Order and Special Purpose program.
- Strategic Planning: Councilor Losche stated the committee met last week and updated the order with the Town Manager goals. It can be voted tonight.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order O-FY20-021: Rescind and Revote - Order O-FY18-022: Massachusetts Clean Water Trust for High Street Water Treatment Facility
Vice President George read the committee dispositions.
Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.
Discussion: Councilor Wood explained the reason for the change.
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – ABSENT; Rushton – ABSENT; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 7-0.
- Order O-FY20-022: Loan Order - High Street Water Treatment Facility
Vice President George read the committee dispositions.



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

Discussion: Councilor Wood noted; if people get to see the Stantec presentation, you learn a few things. He briefly outlined a few key points noting; Bridgewater has a lot of iron in the water. Explained where some of the cloudy water comes from.

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

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rushton – ABSENT; Gallagher – ABSENT; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY20-024: Transfer Order - Capital Sewer Special Purpose Transfer
Vice President George read the committee dispositions.

Motion: A motion to postpone was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion:

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY19-021: Establish Town Manager Goals

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

Motion: A motion to amend as presented was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons thanked the Strategic Planning committee for undertaking this. Councilor Wood briefly summarized the goals.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion to amend passed 7-0.

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

Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – ABSENT; Rushton – ABSENT; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion to approve, as amended, passed 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- Order O-FY20-025: Pedestrian Tunnel

Motion: A motion to refer to Public Safety Committee was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: Councilor Wood explained his rationale for the order, stating at certain times of the day, traffic can be backed up significantly. He feels a solution should be explored, with the support of the University. Discussion briefly turned to different details the University provides during certain times of the year to help with backups.

Councilor Colombotos thinks some cost estimates need to be provided before this comes back to the council.

Councilor Fitzgibbons agrees and, as a member of the committee, doesn't think this will come back quickly.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY20-026: Free Cash Allocation to Trust Funds

Motion: A motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: Mr. Dutton explained; this allocates Free Cash generally according to the Council's Free Cash policy.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY20-027: Transfer Order – Capital Transfer Roadway Drainage – Flagg Street

Motion: A motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: Mr. Dutton explained; this transfer is to fund the engineering and drainage on Flagg Street as a result of an underground survey done. He further explained; it is not an "emergency" as defined by the Council in Charter, but in terms of prioritization. Councilor Chase asked if the project covers the replacement of all corrugated steel? Mr. Dutton responded; yes, but not the concrete because it's okay. Vice President George



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asked if there are any pending projects or developments in the area being replaced? Mr. Dutton responded; not that he is aware of.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY20-028: Transfer Order – Capital Transfer – FY20 Lease Payments

Motion: A motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Losche.

Discussion: Mr. Dutton briefly explained; these are outstanding lease payments for ambulances and the street sweeper.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY20-029: Transfer Order – CPC Funding for Broad Street Property Purchase

Motion: A motion to refer to the Budget & Finance and Finance Committees was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgibbons.

Discussion: Councilor George asked if the measure needs to go to CPC? Mr. Dutton responded; the state grant was awarded much earlier than expected, so he wants to make sure we're well within the window. It is on for first reading this evening, but the Council won't see it again until CPC has heard and recommended it. Councilor Wood asked if the grant will offset this amount? Mr. Dutton responded; yes. Councilor Colombotos asked if the \$475K number will change? Mr. Dutton responded; no.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.

- Resolution R-FY20-004: 2020 Town Council Meeting Dates

After a brief discussion, this measure was not referred to any committee.

CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- *Councilor Fitzgibbons: Wished Councilor Rushton a Happy Birthday.
- Councilor Colombotos: No comments.
- Councilor Losche: Thanked all who came out to the Cross Street information session. She will most likely have another in 2020. Mrs. Losche thanked Mr. Dutton the Town Engineer and Jennifer Burke for their attendance and assistance.
- Councilor Rushton: Absent
- Councilor Wood: No comments.
- Councilor Chase: No comments.
- Councilor Sousa: No comments.
- Councilor George: Enjoyed the Town Volunteer and Employee luncheon last week. It was nice to see people recognized. Regarding the Free Cash allocation; Mr. George reminded all that he pushed hard for us to be more aggressive with our revenue. We have \$2.5MM in Free Cash which shows him we need to reevaluate our revenues.
- Councilor Gallagher: Absent

EXECUTIVE SESSION – *No Executive Session held.*

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgibbons. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Ann Holmberg



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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 15, 2019 to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a voice vote (6-0-1) (Councilor Losche absent, Councilor George not present, Councilor Gallagher abstained).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk