Town of Bridgewater
Town Council Meeting – Virtual Via Zoom©
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 6, 2020

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 October 6, 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 veterans and first responders 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 22, 2020
  Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons 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

- District 5 Vacancy
  President George announced no citizens responded to the vacancy in District 5 and asked Attorney Rawlins to explain that Mr. Colombotos can continue to serve in the capacity. Councilor Fitzgibbons asked if the search had to be closed. President George did not want to simply leave it as a standing announcement. Attorney Rawlins suggested it can be put on the agenda periodically and re-evaluated. After a brief discussion, it was determined to leave the announcement on the website. Finally, Attorney Rawlins confirmed; at the April election, the seat would be filled for the remaining two years.

PROCLAMATIONS - *None*

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM - *None*

APPOINTMENTS

- Veteran's Council – John Pagnotta
  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.
- Transportation Committee – James Creed
  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.

HEARINGS - *None*

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- Petition P-2020-017: Four (4) One-Day Entertainment Licenses – Black Hat Brew Works – Octoberfest
  Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
  Discussion: Mr. Dutton briefly explained the health agent ensures proper protocol is taking place to ensure safety.
  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.

PRESENTATIONS

- Early Voting – Town Clerk
  Town Clerk, Marilee Kenney Hunt spoke about early voting, the hours which early voting will take place and the statistics of absentee and mail in voting. She detailed the procedures for citizens attending early voting to ensure proper social distancing. Ms. Hunt spoke about the Secretary's decision to allow ballots to begin the opening process for early vote ballots on October 25th and reviewed the process. Ms. Hunt answered questions about the elevator capacity and accommodations for any citizens who may not be able to access the second floor. She noted they are still looking for people to help set up and break down on the 2nd and 3rd. She is also still looking for early voting pole workers from 2pm-8pm on 10/24. President George asked how the early voting in the Council Chambers may affect the Council meeting on 10/20. The Town Clerk acknowledged the room would have to be rearranged. Mr. Dutton didn't feel much rearranging would be necessary.
- Fire Station Building Committee
  Fire Station Building Committee Chair, Matthew Rushton read the mission statement of the committee, then walked through a presentation which outlined the timeline of the committee's progress and milestones. Mr. Rushton thanked all involved and noted the project had been significantly impacted by COVID-19.
  Mr. Dutton spoke about the space needs assessment which is the first step in determining square footage requirements. The next step is to do a site analysis. We are not close to choosing a site for headquarters for downtown or on the west side. He reiterated the process really begins with the determination of what actual square footage is needed.
  Mr. Rushton spoke about the square footage requirement; noting the Fire station was built in 1860 and the last renovation was in 1972. He encouraged all councilors to reach out to Fire Chief and ask for tour. Finally, Mr. Rushton requested the needs assessment document be put on the website.

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)
  Mr. Dutton stated there is nothing substantively different since last meeting but noted at the last Building Committee meeting, they reviewed list of inclusions in the bid package. Mr. Dutton briefly walked through the remaining timeline for the project and noted the next Building Committee meeting is 10/29/20 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom. He also reminded all that more information can be found at www.bridgewaterschoolproject.com
  At Councilor Fitzgibbons' request, Mr. Dutton confirmed the project continues to be on time and on budget.
- FY21 Revenue vs. Budget (Standing Item)
  Mr. Dutton acknowledged not a lot has changed since the last meeting. It is still too early to draw conclusions. Mr. Dutton stated the Finance Director would like to come in and give quarterly update on 10/20. Councilor Wood requested the monthly reports resume being sent. Councilor Fitzgibbons requested the Finance Director speak about what we should actually be doing around annual budgeting for maintenance vs. intermittent requests (debt exclusions).

- COVID-19 Update
  The town has seen some additional cases which don't seem to be originating from any one place. Currently we show 10 active cases. Mr. Dutton is not expecting Bridgewater to be bumped to red, but expect to remain in yellow. Mr. Dutton noted; the town has submitted a reimbursement request to Plymouth County, and are looking to assist the school district with $700,000 submission and will be doing our own submission for approx. $900,000. He then spoke about the plan for opining the Academy Building by appointment beginning October 12th, pointing out staff have gone out of their way to meet people in parking lot to ensure they get what they need. He continues to work towards October 20th for in-person meeting for those Councilors who wish to come to Academy Building. Mr. Dutton does not think it will require substantial rearranging of the room since the public will not be present. We will continue to utilize Zoom for citizen participation. Mr. Wood asked about the library capacity for opening. Mr. Dutton will provide an update at the next meeting. At Mr. Wood's request, Mr. Dutton spoke about how the state counts cases.
- Central Square Improvements Process
  The opportunity zone capital gain benefit has been extended by congress. The master planning process has demonstrated that engaging in some sort of "charette" process would be very beneficial for this project. Mr. Dutton explained "charette" process which involves many people from a variety of areas. They would consider the Downtown Revitalization plan a starting point. Mr. Dutton then spoke about all the projects going on in downtown.
- Update on Town Hall and Town Hall Ad Hoc Committee
  Mr. Dutton spoke about the history of the project. The Feasibility Study is complete and scheduled to be presented to the Town in mid-October. The ad hoc committee will then begin it's work to begin digging in to the feasibility study with Mr. Dutton, his office and the Cultural Council. Once feasibility phase is complete goes to MA Cultural Council. Once they accept our recommendation, we are eligible to apply for Capital Funding through the MA Cultural Council. Mr. Dutton has spoken to BSU about doing a joint application.
- Update on Walgreens Parking Lot Striping
  Walgreens has a parking lot maintenance firm. They have done crack sealing and are awaiting seal coating and will then restripe lot. It's anticipated to be done by end of October. President George asked if it includes the entrance and exit? Mr. Dutton responded he can double check.
- Items for Next Meeting:
  - Councilor Sousa requested an update on repair of sidewalks outside of downtown.

DISCUSSIONS

- Online Auto Dealer License
  Mr. Dutton brought this forward to get a sense of whether the Council would like to proceed with creating an online Auto Dealers license. There has been at least one inquiry for such a license. He explained, it's a Class II Auto Dealers License (used cars) with no autos on site. The operation is all online, so there would be no abutters list and no site plan. At Councilor Chase's request, he further explained the license owner would be a resident of Bridgewater as there would be no business property. Essentially, you'd be granting a license for the person to go to an auction. Councilor Chase noted he'd like to include a requirement that the petitioner have a business license with Town Clerk. Discussion followed as Councilors asked questions about this type of business. In general, the Council was not opposed to move forward with the legislative process.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS - *None*

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order O-FY21-014: Acceptance of CARES Act Reimbursement
  President George read the committee dispositions.
  Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons 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.

- Order O-FY21-015: Transfer Order - Cross Street Engineering
  President George read the committee dispositions.
  Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons 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.
- Petition P-2020-018: State Election Warrant
  Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons 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.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- Order O-FY21-018: Old High School Purchase and Sale Agreement Ratification – Bridgewater, Raynham Regional School District
  Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to refer to the Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.
  Mr. Dutton explained; we have finally come to a resolution, which requires a vote of the Council. The Raynham Board of Selectmen is voting tonight, then School Committee will vote. He explained this agreement will buy out the old High School for a total of $700,000, to be paid over a 12-year period. Once signed and voted, the district will agree within 30 days to execute a deed and transfer ownership of the old High School to the Town of Bridgewater and all outstanding claims and potential lawsuits would be resolved.
  Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons commented his hope that the committees can get meetings together to move this as quickly as possible.
  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.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Gallagher: Nothing
- Councilor Losche: Nothing
- Councilor Chase: Nothing
- Councilor Wood: Nothing
- Councilor Rushton: Nothing
- Councilor Sousa: Nothing
- Councilor Colombotos: Nothing
- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Complimented Mr. George on another good meeting via Zoom.
- Councilor George: Spoke briefly about his attendance at the groundbreaking ceremony for Sewer Treatment on High Street.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: Councilor Losche 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 which was duly seconded.
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.

ADJOURNMENT

Open Session adjourned at 8:46 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 20, 2020, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a roll call vote (8-0) (Councilor Rushton absent).
A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

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Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk