



CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President William Rivers called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:31 pm, on August 4, 2015 at BTV Studios, 80 Spring Street, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

Council members present were, William Wood, Kevin Perry, William Rivers, , Aisha Losche, John Norris Dennis Gallagher and Timothy Fitzgibbons. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Mark Gildea were also present.

ABSENT:

- Councilor Peter Colombotos
- Councilor Sandra Wright

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was held for all who have passed since the last meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

- July 7, 2015

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

Discussion: None

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

- President Rivers reminded all that dog licenses are due August 15th. Reminders were not sent out this year.
- President Rivers offered condolences to the family of Cleon Paige

PROCLAMATIONS -

- Allan Knight

Town Manager Dutton came forward and offered a proclamation in honor of Allan Knight, who retired. Jean Knight accepted to proclamation on his behalf.

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM –

- Keith Buhl, 10 Fieldcrest Dr: Mr. Buhl asked if the construction company for the High and Broad Street light would keep the town updated on the phases. He also asked about pedestrian safety in downtown, including painting the crosswalks. Mr. Buhl asked if there was a plan to address the needs in Inspectional Services, perhaps through an Internship with the College. Finally, he noted the webpage needs to be updated.

APPOINTMENTS

- Conservation Commission – Robert Mello

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

- Conservation Commission – Matthew Stoddard

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

- Community Preservation Committee – Melissa Desjardins

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

- Finance Committee – Nicholas Mollo

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



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- Finance Committee – Nathan Schofield
Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Norris. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.
- Town Accountant – Anthony Sulmonte, Jr
Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Norris.
Discussion: Mr. Dutton briefly spoke about Mr. Sulamonte's background. Councilor Gallagher asked if there was a contract and if the salary could be revealed. Mr. Dutton responded he was entering into negotiations. Councilor Fitzgibbons noted the salary was not to exceed the line 101 budget. Councilor Norris thanked all the volunteers.

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

HEARINGS

- 7:35 p.m., Petition #P-2015-016: New Pole Location – Oak Street Pole 7S
President Rivers opened the hearing at 7:45 p.m.
President Rivers asked the petitioner to speak. Kelly Correia representing Verizon explained they want to move pole 7S to the easterly side of the street.
President Rivers invited any questions from the public – none came forward.
President Rivers asked if there was anyone speaking in favor – none came forward.
President Rivers asked if there was anyone speaking in opposition - none came forward.
President Rivers entertained any questions from councilors:
 - Councilor Norris asked if the petitioner has heard from any residents. Ms. Correia responded, yes, the resident from 80 Oak Street. Ms. Correia explained he had some informational questions about the location, which she was able to answer to his satisfaction.
 - Councilor Perry asked if the pole was in any location that would be a problem for the property owner. Ms. Correia responded no.President Rivers closed the hearing at 7:48 p.m.
Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Norris.
Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons asked when will the bridge be fixed and what the relation is between the bridge and the pole. Mr. Dutton responded there is no relationship between the two.
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Wright – ABSENT; Colombotos – ABSENT; Wood – YEA; Perry – YEA; Rivers – YEA; Losche – YEA; Norris – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 7-0.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- Petition #P-2015-017: Pole Relocation – Main Street #6
Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Norris.
Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons asked why this did not require a public hearing, but the other petition did. Attorney Gildea responded, the statute does not require a hearing for relocations.
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Fitzgibbons – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Norris – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rivers – YEA; Perry – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos –ABSENT; Wright - ABSENT. The motion passed 7-0.

PRESENTATIONS

- Roselli, Clark & Associates – *FY2014 Audit Presentation*
Mr. Tony Roselli presented the audit for FY2014. Mr. Roselli noted fiscal year 2014 wasn't great and walked through some of the history noting a new accountant came in who needed to learn the system and then implement a new system. The Treasurer resigns. Mr. Roselli noted; going forward to fix this: in the past, a lot of processes were done in different computer systems. Now it seems like you're brining everything into the MUNIS system, which will solve a lot of problems if done properly. He also understands a new Finance Director is coming



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on board. Mr. Roselli is hopeful there'll be a brighter future in FY15. Mr. Roselli also noted the Town is up to almost \$4MM in unassigned fund balance. The reserve ratio is up to 8.5%, and explained the bond rating agencies read that. Bridgewater's bond rating is currently at a "2". Five years ago we were at a "5", which is a big improvement. Mr. Roselli explained what bond agencies consider in assigning ratings.

Mr. Roselli explained most items in the audit were deficiencies, but there were a few that raised to material weakness. Items of note included:

Municipal Data Breaches: There are many ransom attacks out there now. Recommends making sure all your employees know not to download items, give out login info, etc. He also recommends a security audit. Mr. Roselli noted the Town's response was in agreement and is looking to address this item.

Health Insurance Legislation: Mr. Roselli noted it looks like the Town is finally going to work with Mayflower Municipal to do an audit and it also looks like some spot checks have been done that did identify some issues. Mr. Rivers asked if we could ask the school system to also do such an audit.

Personal Property Taxes De minimus: – Mr. Roselli explained the law allows you to exempt up to \$10,000 and noted the Town has legislation in process so this will be addressed.

Cash Reconciliation: Cash reconciliation has always been a problem, but the Town has always been able to balance. The Town was out of balance by a large variance. Mr. Roselli had recommended hiring a consultant to find it, which the Town did. It took 3-4 months to reconcile. There issues with payroll withholdings and debt transactions which weren't reported. From what Mr. Roselli understands there is a better reconciliation process in place now. Mr. Roselli confirmed with Mr. Dutton that the new Town Accountant would transition with the consultant for a week or two once he starts.

Material Weaknesses: Mr. Roselli noted; Cash Reconciliation, Debt Reconciliation and Payroll were all identified as material weaknesses. At Councilor Losche's request, Mr. Roselli explained the payroll discrepancy speaking about the antiquated system and personnel transitions.

Tax Recap: Found a couple of errors on the tax recap. From the Town's responses, the Finance Director will be taking over in FY16 to resolve some of these issues.

Police Grants: The state is behind on these. Mr. Dutton noted he has spoken with the Chief and we are beholden to the State on how these are paid. Mr. Roselli recommends submitting the expenses before the project is completed.

Human Resources Department: Mr. Roselli noted from the Town's response, it is now managed in the Town Manager's office and benefits are managed in the Collectors office.

Tax Title: The Town had got up to about 1.9MM in tax title (in 2014). Mr. Roselli has suggested taking a look at assigning the tax titles. Mr. Roselli also noted the Town can have special legislation submitted that creates amnesty to waive certain fees.

Performance Bonds: It's a deposit that a contractor gives the town to make sure the town has some funds in case they need to make repairs. There's an abandoned property process where the town can go back and recover the abandoned performance bonds. The Town has a lot of money in performance bonds. Mr. Roselli recommends doing an analysis.

Golf Inventory: The Town is not in the business of selling items for less than you purchased them. The Golf Course's gross profit margin is currently at 4%. The Town's response states they sell products at 30%-40% higher than they purchase at.

Sewer Betterments: – The assessment that is collected in advance should be set aside in a special stabilization account. It's currently co-mingled with the retained earnings.

Finally, Mr. Roselli suggested it may be a good idea to have the new Accountant do a report to the Council on the S&P rating system. It also would be a good idea to do periodic updates to the Budget & Finance committee.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

**8:55 p.m. Councilor Fitzgibbons exited the meeting.*



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Mr. Dutton reported on information about various activities happening around town and highlighted meetings and events. Items of note included: Mr. Dutton provided an update on the High & Broad Street light, noting work has begun and there shouldn't be any detours. Councilor Rivers requested we put the plan on the website. Mr. Dutton spoke about downtown pedestrian safety stating we have money to do line striping and has had an offer to apply for a grant to apply spray painting. They have activated some additional lighting on Plymouth Street and in Central Square. The Town has received several grants to assist with the fire department. They have submitted the required reporting to DCR and working with engineers on Carvers Dam. Mr. Dutton is working with School district on roof claims. There are 2 claims – content and structure. The school has already received money for uncontested claims. Children won't be in the school in September. There are three sources of funding – insurance, FEMA and Mass School Housing Authority. The Community & Economic Development is working with a BSU intern on 40R designation for downtown. The plan is to come up with recommendations to send to DHCD. The town has been re-approached by the same people who wanted to put in a marijuana dispensary. The Town Council did approve legislation creating an overlay, but Mr. Dutton will put on agenda for discussion. We have hired temporary help to review permits and assist with inspections and have made progress in the Inspectional Services department. Mr. Dutton thanked Keith Buhl and Lisa Curley for arranging with Noonan Waste Removal to clean Marathon Park. Town employees were trained on updating the website. Finally, Mr. Dutton noted volunteer opportunities as: Web Advisory Committee, Solid Waste Advisory committee, and the Ad Hoc Parking Committee.

Council Questions:

- Councilor Norris asked if we are on budget/on time for the Academy Building. Mr. Dutton responded, yes. We have had one change order.
- Councilor Losche asked if there was a range on affordable housing Mr. Dutton responded it's usually 80% of median income, but he can get some numbers. Mrs. Losche asked about the process for abandoned houses. Mr. Dutton responded we have an abandoned building ordinance, but it does not include residential dwellings. If there are specific concerns, please let Mr. Dutton know.

**9:17 p.m., Councilor Fitzgibbons returned to the meeting.*

**9:17 p.m., Councilor Norris exited the meeting and returned at 9:22 p.m.*

- At Councilor Wood's request, Mr. Dutton suggested the light at High and Broad Street might be done by April or May. Mr. Wood noted the University did a lot of new LED lighting at Great Hill and asked if the Town was doing any new lighting. Mr. Dutton responded we are putting crosswalks at Waterford and better lighting at train tracks. Mr. Dutton provided an update on the Oak Street Bridge stating there's engineering going on. Their recommendation was to go with a narrow bridge. Finally, at Mr. Wood's request, Mr. Dutton addressed the issue of permitting; noting every time a permit comes in, it has to be reviewed, but now one of the new temporary employees can do that.
- At Councilor Gallagher's request, Mr. Dutton clarified the newly appointed Town Accountant's title and Mr. Dutton's intention for him to oversee all the financial offices as he has that experience. Right now it's a timing issue with the Administrative Code.
- At Councilor Perry's request, Mr. Dutton spoke briefly about the developer on Broad Street with the proposed 40R project noting; he heard from him last week. The developer is deciding what he wants to do.
- President Rivers noted; the Council voted to fund what the Inspectional Services Department needed; however the message is out there that they had to lay off the temporary help - what is the disconnect? Mr. Dutton confirmed; yes, the council voted the money. He is not sure where the disconnect is; there is temporary help there now, not the same that was there before though. Finally, Councilor Rivers noted the usability of the website is still an issue. It looks nicer, but it is still difficult to navigate.

DISCUSSIONS

- **Skips Liquor Update**
Mr. Dutton stated he spoke with the attorney Friday and was told they have submitted their plans to the building department. Mr. Dutton told attorney he wants a written report if they're not going to show up with updates. If they submitted the plans; then that's the same update they gave previously. Councilor Norris stated his opinion



that we should consider taking action. Councilor Perry requested the Town Manager please contact them and make a strong suggestion that they give a better update at the next meeting. Councilor Wood suggested; if their legal advisor says they submitted plans, we can check on that. Councilor Gallagher asked if it's possible that they just have nothing to report.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order #O-2015-009: Parking Ad Hoc Committee

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

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Wood to amend by replacing "Town Council" with "Town Manager" after, Ordered that... and to insert "by the Town Manager" after "appointed" in the same sentence. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgibbons.

Discussion: Councilor Wood explained his reason for putting this Ad Hoc committee forward and noted there had been much discussion about the parking committee in the subcommittee.

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

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Rivers to amend by changing the membership to 4 residents and the CEDC Director. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: After a brief discussion and at Councilor Perry's suggestion, President Rivers withdrew his original motion and made a new motion as follows:

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Rivers to change the membership to read "5 town residents or business owners in the Central Business District. The motion was seconded by Councilor Perry.

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

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

Wright – ABSENT; Colombotos – ABSENT; Wood – YEA; Perry – YEA; Rivers – YEA; Losche – YEA; Norris – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion to approve, as amended, passed 7-0.

- Order #O-2015-022: Acceptance of a Gift – Ron Emma's

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

Discussion: None

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

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Norris – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rivers – YEA; Perry – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos – ABSENT; Wright – ABSENT. The motion passed 7-0.

- Order #O-2015-023: Acceptance of a Gift – Bridgewater Savings Bank

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

Discussion: None

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

Wright – ABSENT; Colombotos – ABSENT; Wood – YEA; Perry – YEA; Rivers – YEA; Losche – YEA; Norris – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- Transfer #T-2015-018: Transfer Appropriation – Police Department 911 Dispatch Renovation Project

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons to refer the measure to the Budget & Finance Committee and Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Norris.

Discussion: None

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Colombotos: Absent
- Councilor Wright: Absent



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- Councilor Wood: None
- Councilor Perry: Congratulated the little league All Star teams.
- Councilor Losche: None
- Councilor Norris: Thanked all the committee volunteers. Welcomed Mr. Sulmonte.
- Councilor Gallagher: Thanked everyone who volunteered for committees. We still need volunteers as noted by the Town Manager. Regarding the audit report, based on what the Town's been through Mr. Gallagher thinks we need to make improvements, but we are on the right track.
- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Regarding the audit, Mr. Fitzgibbons pointed out the Town has gone from negative funds in free cash, to positive free cash, though to see material weaknesses is cause for concern and he trusts the Town Manager will take action.
- Councilor Rivers: Thanked Keith Buhl and all who helped organize the clean-up effort for Marathon Park. Mr. Rivers offered congratulations to Lisa Mackay. Thank you to the Police and Fire Departments this morning with the storms. Mr. Rivers announced he is moving to Baltimore, MD and this will be Mr. Rivers' last meeting. He thanked everyone who supported Mr. Rivers and who made him President. Mr. Rivers also thanked State Representative D'Emilia and all who reached out to him with well wishes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – *No Executive Session was held.*

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 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 8, 2015, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted, by a voice vote (8-0) (1 Council vacancy).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk