



**TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SEPTEMBER 13, 2022, MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Fred Chase called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13, 2022, in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT

Fred Chase, Erik Moore, Peter Colombotos, Francis Sousa, Dennis Gallagher, Dr, Kevin Perry, Shawn George and Matthew Rushton. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlings were also present.

ABSENT

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) May 24, 2022

Because of councilor absences at the May 24, 2022 meeting and absent tonight, the meeting minutes could not be voted on. Will be on the September 27, 2022 meeting agenda for approval.

b) August 2, 2022

Councilor George made a motion to approve the Council Minutes from the 8/2/22 meeting, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Absent at the time of the vote; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 8-0-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

A moment of silent prayer was held for Mr. Chester Shore and Mr. Robert O’Grady, two veterans who recently passed away.

PROCLAMATIONS – None

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

Taylor Sullivan, 250 Norlen Park: Opposes order on marijuana and noted the harm caused by addiction.

Vernon Domingo, 36 Saddle Drive: In favor of making the 2nd Monday in October Indigenous Peoples Day.

Aysha Hussain, 40 Sophia Lane: Opposes order on marijuana and noted that it needs to stop coming up at council.

Ed Ivaldi, 10 Boxwood Lane: Opposes order on marijuana, gave statistics on drug addiction.

Janet Hansen, 665 Pleasant Street: Opposes the marijuana resolution, needs to be written clearer.

Jennifer Smith, 225 Boxwood Lane: Opposes marijuana resolution.

Pat Neary, 225 Lakeside Drive: Spoke about the recodification and would have like to have seen more workshops; opposes ballot question and agrees with Indigenous Peoples Day.

Fred Kern, 77 South Street: Pediatrician in town, opposes marijuana resolution.

Councilor Rushton made a motion to allow Josh Cabral from The Well to speak, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Absent at the time of the vote; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Josh Cabral, The Well, 1029 Pleasant Street: Spoke about treatment of those addicted and their families.

Council President Chase read 3 emails into the record that were received by the Town Council Clerk. They were from:

Lisa Bulman, 1545 Plymouth Street: In favor of resolution regarding marijuana.

Jonathan Geggatt, 245 Lakeside Drive: Strongly supports allowing the sale of medicinal and recreational marijuana.
Bob Smith, 514 High Street: Supports consumer marijuana sales but it should not be limited to the 2 existing medical facilities.

Councilor Gallagher noted that an email was received by the Councilors noting their opposition to the resolution regarding marijuana.

APPOINTMENTS

- a) Open Space Committee – Michael Silvia Term 2022-2025

Councilor George made a motion to approve the appointment of Michael Silvia to the Open Space Committee with the term of 2022-2025. The motion was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Absent at the time of the vote; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 8-0.

HEARINGS - None

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- a) Petition P-2023-001 The Granting of the Transfer of a Class II Used Auto Dealers License -Fritz Auto Body, 567 Main Street

***Continued Public Hearing:** This hearing has been duly advertised in the Enterprise and on the Town's website and abutter letters sent. This measure may be considered this evening upon conclusion of the hearing.*

Councilor Chase opened the Public Hearing at 7:43pm. Councilor Sousa recused himself as this business is directly across from his house.

Councilor Chase asked if there were any questions from the public – none.

Councilor Chase asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to speak in favor – none.

Councilor Chase asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to speak in opposition – none.

Council Chase asked if any of the Councilors had any questions – none.

Councilor Chase closed the Public Hearing at 7:44pm.

Councilor George made a motion to approve the transfer of the Class II license for Fritz Auto Body located at 567 Main Street. The motion was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Absent at the time of the hearing; Sousa – Recused; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 7-0.

- b) Petition P-2023-004: Granting of the Transfer of the Class II Used Auto Dealers License - Auto Nation, 1893 Old Plymouth Street

***7:05 p.m. Public Hearing:** This hearing has been duly advertised in the Enterprise and on the Town's website and abutter's letter sent. This measure may be considered this evening upon conclusion of the hearing.*

Councilor Chase opened the Public Hearing at 7:45pm.

Councilor Chase asked if there were any questions from the public – none.

Councilor Chase asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to speak in favor – none.

Councilor Chase asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to speak in opposition – none.

Council Chase asked if any of the Councilors had any questions – none.

Councilor Chase closed the Public Hearing at 7:48pm.

Councilor George made a motion to approve the transfer of the Class II license for Auto Nation located at 183 Old Plymouth Street. The motion was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Absent at the time of the hearing; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 7-0.

PRESENTATIONS - None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a) Mitchell School Building Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that the school opened on time and \$14M less than what voters approved.

b) Farmers Market – Town River Landing

Town Manager Dutton noted a local resident, Al Lacerda started a non-profit, Fire for Effect Foundation that helps veteran. There will be two farmers market in October (10/1/22 and 10/22/22) with all proceeds going to helping local veterans. Mr. Lacerda has also organized a town river clean-up for Sunday, September 18th.

c) Update on Hybrid Meetings

Town Manager Dutton noted that the town is looking into hybrid meetings but that kind of model requires staff. Working on specifics, will be testing webinar via Zoo.

Councilor Moore noted that he supports hybrid or remote meetings, wants to give the residents the ability to participate.

Councilor George noted that he is not in favor of hybrid meetings until technology is solidified because it could disrupt a meeting.

Councilor Gallagher asked who was responsible for the technology. Town Manager Dutton noted that cable broadcasts on TV. Zoom on Facebook is not cable responsibility. Suggested adding an agenda item on a November agenda for what the legislation can do for local cable access.

d) Schedule High Street Closure

Town Manager Dutton noted that a portion of Wall Street will be closed for approximately 10 months for the High Street Bridge project. There is just no other way to do the project. It will either be in November 2022 or July 2023, bid process in underway. Will get as much information out to the public.

DISCUSSIONS

a) Water Management Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that water has been in the news all summer. Three issues: 1) withdrawal permit; 2) water supply due to the drought; and 3) PFAs (Worldwide).

Councilor Wood asked how will supply be improved going forward with 3,000 college students back and all the expansion taking place around town. Town Manager Dutton noted that increasing the draw permit is the first step.

Water Superintendent Jonas Kazlauskas noted that Bridgewater withdraw 1.7m daily. EPA use to give us 2.4m per day. Tough process. Waiting on the flushing program.

Councilor George asked if each well was tested, what other factors are taken into consideration and can private wells affect town? Water Superintendent Jonas Kazlauskas noted that there are lots of moving parts and if a private well is near a town well it could affect us.

COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION:

- a) Ordinance D-FY22-021: Zoning Ordinance - Codification of Zoning Bylaws to Ordinances
(Councilors Colombotos and Wood)

At a joint hearing between the Community and Economic Development Committee and the Planning Board on May 11, 2022, the Planning Board voted unanimously to adopt the zoning with recommendations to fix three typo corrections. This hearing has been duly advertised in the Enterprise and on the Town's website. This measure may be considered this evening.

Councilor Wood noted that many workshops were held, difficult to do side by side comparison and worked through all of the changes.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Ordinance D-FY22-021, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 9-0.

- b) Order O-FY23-008: Transfer Order - Capital Leasing Obligations (Town Manager)

Budget & Finance meeting on 9/13/22 prior to Town Council meeting. At their 8/31/22 meeting, Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend.

Town Manager Dutton noted that this was for a number of leased vehicles.

Councilor Gallagher noted that the Budget and Finance committee met prior to the Town Council meeting and voted 3-0 to recommend.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-008, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 9-0.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Order O-FY23-0009: Acceptance of Gift Funding (Town Manager)

Town Manager Dutton noted that this was mitigation funding or the planting of trees.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-009 to Budget and Finance and FinCom, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 9-0.

- b) Order O-FY23-010: Acceptance of Gift COA (Town Manager)

Town Manager Dutton noted that this was a grant to help with social isolation.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-010 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 9-0.

- c) Order O-FY23-011: Acceptance of AFG Grants (Town Manager)

Town Manager Dutton noted that this was a training grant for paramedics and equipment replacement.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-011 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 9-0.

d) Order O-FY23-012: Let the Voters Decide (*Chase and Wood*)

Councilor Wood noted that this was not an order to change, just the ability to send it to voters. Court cases have been limiting towns, could challenge us in court.

Councilor Wood made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-012 to Rules and Procedures and Community and Economic Development, which was duly seconded.

Councilor Gallagher noted that maybe it is time to put before the voters.

Councilor George made a motion to suspend the council rules so Order O-FY23-012 can be sent to two different committees. The motion was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 8-1.

e) Petition P-2023-005: 2023 Town Election Warrant (*Chase*)

Councilor Chase noted Charter amendments adopted by legislature for precinct and district councilors was recently approved. Special meeting was held on August 29, 2022 for possible local election on November 8, 2022 but the legislation did not put an emergency preamble on the amendments therefore 30 days were added before it could go into effect. The Town Clerk recommended January 7, 2023 as the election date as an April date is not possible.

Town Attorney Rawlins noted that this Petition should be voted as an emergency at the next meeting and the 30 days should be waived.

Councilor Rushton left the meeting at 9:47pm.

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to retain Petition P-2023-005 at Town Council level, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. The motion passed 8-0.

f) Resolution R-FY23-001: Recognizing the Second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day (*Chase and Moore*)

Councilor Chase read the Resolution into the record.

Councilor Moore made a motion to retain Resolution R-FY23-001 at Town Council level, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. The motion passed 8-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Rebecca Fleisch Corderio, 135 Deerfield Drive: Spoke about resolution and noted that on September 30th at 3pm it is orange shirt day to honor those that survived and reflect on those that did not.

Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: Spoke about hybrid meetings, the High Street bridge project and the water in the town.

Ed Ivaldi, 10 Boxwood Lane: Noted that voters need to know pros and cons.

Janet Hanson, 665 Pleasant Street: Spoke about needing more information on marijuana, water issues in town and the election.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Perry: Wished the sport programs a successful year.

Councilor Sousa: Thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Councilor George: Congratulated the school committee, open house was great. Also noted that Al Laceda is conducting a Town River landing clean up for Sunday at 9am.

Councilor Gallagher: Also congratulated all those involved with the new school and how great open house was.

Councilor Moore: congratulated all those involved with the new school.

Councilor Colombotos: No comments

Councilor Wood: Noted that the open house was great and he is happy with the outcome.

Councilor Chase: Thanked all in attendance and the ribbon cutting at the school was stunning.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor George made a motion to adjourn, which was duly seconded.

Roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. The motion passed 8-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:16p.m.

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 27, 2022, to approve the aforementioned minutes.

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Debra Ward, Town Council Clerk