



Town of Bridgewater
TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SEPTEMBER 27, 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 27, 2022, in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT

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

ABSENT

Matthew Rushton

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) May 24, 2022 Meeting Minutes

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 – Yea; Sousa – Abstained; George – Abstained; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Abstained; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. The motion passed 5-0-3.

b) September 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes

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 – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Council President Chase held a moment of silent for all of the veterans.

C. PROCLAMATIONS - None

D. CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

Natalie Justice, 35 Evergreen Drive – Opposes ordinance on marijuana; has done research and spoken to attorneys.

Taylor Sullivan, 250 Norlen Park – Opposes ordinance on marijuana, bias, needs to be rewritten.

Mark Linde, 56 Michael Road – Opposes ordinance on marijuana, needs to be rewritten.

Sam Baumgarten, 60 Short Street – thanked the councilors for serving, supports the tree committee and

DEI formation and opposes retail marijuana sales.

Raymond Ajemian, 221 Aldrich Road – Supports the tree committee and thanked those that helped with the ad hoc tree committee.

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to allow a non-resident, Dr. Joyce Rein Anderson, to speak, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dr. Joyce Rein Anderson – Spoke in detail about Indigenous Peoples Day

Pat Neary, Lakeside Drive – Opposes retail marijuana, does not approve putting it on the ballot.

Janet Hansen, 665 Pleasant Street – Opposes retail marijuana ordinance, not written clearly.

Debbie Smith, Boxwood Lane – Opposes retail marijuana.

Carlton Hunt, Austin Street – Supports the tree and DEI committee and Indigenous Peoples Day.

E. APPOINTMENTS

- a) Tina Larson, Cultural Committee -Term 2022 to 2025

Councilor George made a motion to approve the appointment of Tina Larson to the Cultural 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

F. HEARINGS - None

G. LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- a) Petition P-2023-006: Change of Manager of an Alcohol Establishment - Cumberland Farms #2318

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-006, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

- b) Petition P-2023-007: Granting of the Transfer of a Common Victualler License - 16 Central Square

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-007, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

- c) Petition P-2023-008: Granting of the Transfer of a Common Victualler License - 59 Broad Street

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-008, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

H. PRESENTATIONS

a) Master Plan Presentation (*Jennifer DeBoisbriand*)

Jennifer DeBoisbriand, Community and Economic Development Director, gave a brief presentation of the Comprehensive Master Plan. Began in December of 2018, a robust committee was formed, public forums were held, many meetings were held, online survey was conducted and utilized online feedback. Planning Board adopted the final version in May of 2022.

Councilor Moore noted that the Master Plan is a valuable document but wanted to know how the items get implemented; how do we set actions.

Jennifer DeBoisbriand noted that the first step is to work with Community and Economic Development to start the process.

I. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a) Roadway Prioritization Process

Town Manager Dutton gave an update on how roads are classified and prioritized. Noted that mill and pave is the cheapest maintenance work and road replacement is most expensive. \$730k was received from the State for Chapter 90 money.

Councilor Moore asked if there was a strategy to fund future roads. Town Manager Dutton noted that Chapter 90 money is less than 10 years ago and they are working on ways to fund future roads.

Councilor Wood asked if a debt exclusion would be brought forward for road repairs and Town Manager Dutton noted that it is potentially on the radar.

b) Explanation of Testing Process for Drinking Water Supply

Town Manager Dutton gave an update on the drinking water. Noted that it was safe to drink and testing is done daily in the town's water lab. Testing is also done with the State and tests consistently come back acceptable across the board and results are noted on the website.

c) Fire Station Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that they were finalizing the OPM contract and they have met with the architect.

J. DISCUSSIONS

K. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Wood noted that the Community and Economic Development Committee met prior to the Town Council meeting and voted 3-0 to recommend Order O-FY23-012. Councilor Wood also discussed a document that he handed out during the meeting. (A copy is attached to these minutes).

Councilor Chase noted that the Rules and Procedures committee met on Thursday, September 22nd and a vote was taken to consider the recommendation of Order O-FY23-012 and that vote was 1-1-0.

L. LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

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

Councilor Moore made a motion to approve Resolution R-FY23-001, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

- b) Petition P-2023-005: Emergency Petition - 2023 Town Election Warrant

Councilor Moore made a motion to declare and accept the Emergency Preamble, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor George made a motion to suspend Section XVIII “Readings” of the Council Rules & Procedures, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0

Councilor George made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-005, 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 – Absent. The motion passed 8-0-0

- c) Order O-FY23-012: Let the Voters Decide

Councilor George made a motion to amend Order O-FY23-012 by removing the first two paragraphs starting with “Whereas”, which was duly seconded.

Councilor George noted that these two paragraphs were not needed and did not change the substance of the order.

Councilor Wood noted that these two paragraphs were fact.

Councilor Moore asked what the purpose of “whereas” is in an order and Attorney Rawlins noted that it is used for the reason why the order is being brought forward.

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

Perry – No; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – No; Gallagher –Yea; Colombotos – No; Wood – No; Rushton – Absent. The Amendment failed 3-5-0.

Councilor George made a motion to amend Order O-FY23-012 by striking out “Special or” in the fifth paragraph, which was duly seconded.

Councilor George noted that there is too much going on at the 1/7/23 election and by having it at the next regular election it would give people more time.

Councilor Wood noted that by having it at the January 7, 2023 election it would draw out more crowds.

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

Perry – No; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – No; Gallagher –No; Colombotos – No; Wood – No; Rushton – Absent. The Amendment failed 2-6-0.

Councilor Wood made a motion to amend Order O-FY23-012 by replacing “next Special or Regular” with “January 7, 2023 , which was duly seconded.

Councilor George noted that these two paragraphs were not needed and did not change the substance of the order.

Councilor Moore noted that he thinks there will be a big turnout for the January 7th election.

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

Perry – Yea; Sousa – No; George – No; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher –Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. The Amendment passes 6-2-0.

Councilor Wood made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-012 with amendements, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – No; Sousa – No; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher –No; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. The Order with Amendment passes 5-3-0.

M. OLD BUSINESS

N. NEW BUSINESS

a) Order O-FY23-014: General Fund Free Cash Allocation to Trust Funds

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-014 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

b) Order O-FY23-015: Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund Equipment Transfers

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-015 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 – Absent at the time of the vote; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. Motion passes 7-0-0.

c) Order O-FY23-016: Acceptance of Assistance to Firefighter Grant

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-016 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

d) Order O-FY23-017: Acceptance of Elder Services Grant

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-017 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

e) Order O-FY23-018: Acceptance of Elder Services Gift

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-018 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

f) Order O-FY23-019: Establish Town Goals

Councilor Moore made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-019 to Strategic Planning, 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

g) Order O-FY23-020: Town Clerk Election Stipend

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-020 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

h) Order O-FY23-021: Town Council's Annual At A Glance Calendar

Councilor Moore made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-021 to Strategic Planning, 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

i) Ordinance D-FY23-002: Zoning Ordinance - Amend Section 11 Definitions

Councilor Wood made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY23-002 to Community Economic Development and Planning Board, 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

j) Ordinance D-FY23-003: General Ordinance - Amend Administrative Code Article III - Section 11A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI&B) Committee

Councilor George made a motion to keep Order O-FY23-014 at Council, 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

k) Ordinance D-FY23-004: General Ordinance - Amend Administrative Code Article III - Section 26A Tree Commission

Councilor George made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY23-004 to Rules and Procedures, 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 – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

O. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Janet Hansen, 665 Pleasant Street – Opposes retail marijuana ordinance and disappointed question going on the ballot.

Marilee Hunt, Austin Street – Nomination papers will be available tomorrow.

Rebecca Fleisch Cordero, 135 Deerfield Drive – BCCR is pleased that the second Monday in October will be known as Indigenous Peoples Day.

P. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Moore – Thanked everyone who spoke tonight.

Councilor Gallagher – Noted that 8 seats were available on 1/7/23 and this is the chance to run for office. Also thanked everyone involved in the Town River Landing cleanup and noted that Autumn Fest was a great success.

Councilor George – Also noted that Autumn Fest was a success and well organized. Thanked all involved in the Town River Landing Cleanup.

Councilor Colombotos – No comment

Councilor Sousa – Noted Autumn Fest was great and the Farmers Market on October 8th will have many vendors.

Councilor Wood – Noted that the Lions were looking for more volunteers, the chess club meets every Wednesday night at 7pm and the Robotics Team was getting ready for Fall competition.

Councilor Perry – Thanked the BAA and all the volunteers for a great event. Also noted BR football team won their first game.

Councilor Chase – Thanked those that attended the meeting.

Q. EXECUTIVE SESSION

R. 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 - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher –Yea; Colombotos – Yea; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Absent. Motion passes 8-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10pm.

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 25, 2022, to approve the aforementioned minutes.

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Debra Ward, Town Council Clerk