



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

November 15, 2022

7:00 PM

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 7:00pm on Tuesday, November 15, 2022, in the Council Chambers.

PRESENT

Fred Chase, Dr. Kevin Perry, Bill Wood, Erik Moore, Francis Sousa, Shawn George and Matt Rushton. Also in attendance was Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins.

ABSENT

Peter Colombotos and Dennis Gallagher.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) October 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Because of councilor absences, the October 11, 2022 meeting minutes could not be voted on. These meeting minutes will be on the November 22, 2022 Council agenda.

b) October 25, 2022 Town Council Meeting Minutes

Councilor George made a motion to approve the October 25, 2022 meeting minutes, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

A moment of silence was held for Veteran Charles Brunaccini and Retired Parks and Recreation Superintendent Charlie Simmonds.

PROCLAMATIONS - None

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

Scott Pitta, 118 Pine Street: In favor of Order O-FY23-032 veterans benefits. Would help veterans and would cost little to the town.

APPOINTMENTS - None

HEARINGS

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- a) Petition P-2023-011: Change of Officer - Circle K Massachusetts dba Circle K Store 7517

Council President Chase noted that this was a change of officer request at the corporate level and not at the store level.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-011, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

PRESENTATIONS - None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- a) Fire Station Project

Town Manager Dutton noted that there was nothing new to report but will keep this item on the agenda going forward.

- b) Update on Town River Landing and Stiles & Hart

Town Manager Dutton noted that Stiles is a 75 acre park and the town is awaiting a grant from the National Parks service, which is pending an order of conditions from Conservation Commission.

Town Manager Dutton noted that Town River Landing (located behind BTV) is not designated a park. A veterans group has taken it on as a volunteer project and the town will provide as much assistance as possible.

Councilor Moore asked about the debris in the water issues and Town Manager Dutton noted that it was a separate issue and proper training is needed for someone to remove that debris. There is a Parks meeting in December and he will discuss with them.

- c) Update on Mobil Station

Town Manager Dutton noted that the first reading of the order of taking was done a while ago. A first reading will be done for the December meeting which will include the complete park design and public design process.

- d) Update on OSL Management Agreement with Projected Revenues to the Town

Town Manager Dutton noted that the management agreement went out to bid, the Town selected Indigo Golf. Year to date revenue is \$320,000, more than covers the towns expenses.

Councilor George asked if revenues coming in goes into an Enterprise Fund Account earmarked for OSL, if that Enterprise Fund was over could it be used on other items. Town Manager Dutton noted that yes, over the new few years it will be looked at with the possibility of monies going into the General Fund.

Councilor Perry asked if the Town was happy with Indigo Golf and Town Manager Dutton replied that he was very pleased, no issues.

- e) Middle School Parking Lot

Town Manager Dutton noted that the Town leases to the school; district maintains and we fund capital expenses. Paving projects should be on the District Capital Plan. They put in priority order and then come to us.

Councilor Wood noted that if an elderly person goes there they cannot see the pot holes. Needs a fix, maybe Town should step up.

Councilor Moore noted that he agrees with Council Wood but also wanted to know if paving is approved, can the district use that money for something else. Town Manager Dutton noted that we need to make clear that what is voted on is used for what was voted.

Council Perry asked where the priority was with this and if there were any short term fixes. Town Manager Dutton noted that he will discuss with Paul DeCosta.

Councilor Wood asked if repairs could be made since the Town is the Leaseholder. Attorney Rawlins noted that he would have to look at the lease.

DISCUSSIONS

a) Capital Improvement Program

1) Upcoming Debt Exclusion - Roads and Infrastructure

Town Manager Dutton noted that critical roads were identified and developing long-term capital plan, what the Town needs for the next 5 years. Town Manager Dutton also noted that before going to the voters, alternative funding will be looked into. He also noted that Flag, South, Vernon and Cross are 4 roads being looked at and the total for all 4 is approximately \$44M.

Councilor Sousa asked about sidewalks, there are spots where trees are coming out of them. Town Manager Dutton noted that the \$44M included sidewalks and bike lanes on some roads.

2) Upcoming Debt Exclusion - Bristol Plymouth

Town Manager Dutton noted that on the ballot question asking if Bristol Plymouth should be rebuilt, all said yes, so now we need to pay. 35 year bond - \$1.M per year based upon student population. Will be going out and asking for debt exclusion on the April Ballot.

Councilor George noted that if the Town does not approve the debt exclusion budget cuts would need to be made.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Wood noted that Budget and Finance met prior to the Council meeting and all Legislation for Action was recommended for action with a 2-0 vote.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

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

Councilor Moore gave a brief update on the Order. Councilor George noted that the town needs an alternative way to technology to notify the residents, not everyone has access to the internet.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-019, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

b) Order O-FY23-026 Transfer Order - Town House Roof Project

Town Manager Dutton noted that this transfer order was CPC funding for old Town Hall roof.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-026, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

c) Order O-FY23-028 Acceptance of Gift - BSU \$55,000

Town Manager Dutton noted that this was an annual gift from BSU.

Councilor Wood made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-028, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

d) Order O-FY23-029 General Fund Transfer Order

Town Manager Dutton noted that this transfer is to offset shortages in the operating budget. Mid-year transfer.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-029, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

e) Order O-FY23-030 Transfer Order - Sewer Enterprise Fund

Town Manager Dutton noted that this transfer was to fund a shortfall.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-030, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

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

Council President Chase noted that this Ordinance was referred to CEDC and Planning and the CEDC voted 2-0 to recommend.

Councilor George made a motion to refer O-FY23-029 to advertising, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

g) Ordinance D-FY23-005 General Ordinance - Amend Article II. Sec. 14. Citizens Comments

Council President Chase noted that the Rules and Procedures committee met and voted 2-0 to return the Ordinance to Council and asked for a motion to amend what was presented at first reading.

Councilor Wood made a motion to amend Ordinance D-FY23-002 as Councilor Chase has indicated, which was duly seconded.

Councilor Chase noted that the amendment would be: 1) Under 1. Change “twenty four” to “six” and change “(24)” to “(6)”. 2) Also Under 1, add “via email (addressed to: TownCouncilClerk@bridgewaterma.org)” prior to, “which shall include”. 3) Under d) add “If applicable, a non-resident may include a” as the beginning of the first

sentence. 4) Under 2. Change “twelve” to “six” and “(12)” to “(6)” after “Within” and change “six” to “two” and “(6)” to “(2)” after “no case less than”.

Councilor Perry made a motion to amend Ordinance D-FY23-002 by adding as the last paragraph:

“Business Owners and Real Property Owners

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the owner of record of a business, real property or leasehold interest in real property located within the Town who is a non-resident of the Town shall be permitted to address the Town Council.” This amendment was duly seconded.

A Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows on the first amendment made by Councilor Wood: Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – No; Gallagher –Absent; Colombotos – Absent; Wood – No; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 4-3-0.

A Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows on the second amendment made by Councilor Perry: Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher –Absent; Colombotos – Absent; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 7-0

Councilor George made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY23-002 to advertising, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Yea; George – Yea; Moore - No; Chase – Yea; Gallagher –Absent; Colombotos – Absent; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 6-1

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

a) Order O-FY23-031 Prior Fiscal Year Bill

Town Manager Dutton noted this was an invoice for an unemployment claim that was decided on in 2022.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-031 to Budget & Finance and FinCom, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

b) Order O-FY23-032: Veteran Tax Benefits

Councilor Moore noted that this would help veterans and would not be a significant cost to the town.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-031 to Budget & Finance and FinCom, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Sousa – Recused; George – Yea; Moore - Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher –Absent; Colombotos – Absent; Wood – Yea; Rushton – Yea. The motion passed 6-0 (Councilor Sousa recused himself).

c) Resolution R-FY23-002 Naming of the Olde Scotland Links Golf Course Clubhouse

Councilor Moore noted that he was bringing this forward because Charlie Simonds was a huge impact on Bridgewater.

Councilor George made a motion to retain Resolution R-FY23-002 at the Council level until the next Council meeting, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

d) Resolution R-FY23-003: FY2024 Budget Resolution

Councilor Wood noted that this is done annually, strategy that is followed for budget planning.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Resolution R-FY23-003 to Budget & Financing and FinCom, which was duly seconded.

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Perry: Commend all those involved with the Veteran Day Ceremony. Christmas on the Common will be held on Sunday, December 4th.

Councilor Sousa: No comment.

Councilor George: Hope all those commenting about the Christmas on the Common show up and help.

Councilor Moore: Had the opportunity to present to the 8th grade class regarding government. Also noted that there are many residents that are so giving to the town that there should be something to honor them, like bricks in a park.

Councilor Wood: Noted that Summer Street Café closed and two Mexican restaurants opened. Need to decide what we want the downtown to be.

Councilor Rushton: No comment.

Councilor Chase: Veterans Day was inspiring as well as the event held at the Senior Cener.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.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, December 6, 2022, to approve the aforementioned minutes.

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Debra Ward, Town Council Clerk