

**Town of Bridgewater**  
**Town Council**  
February 21, 2023

**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, February 21, 2023 in the Council Chambers.

**PRESENT**

Fred Chase, Dr. Kevin Perry, Bill Wood, Mark Linde, Shawn George, Dennis Gallagher, Susan Robinson and Bradford McKinnon (via Zoom). Also in attendance was Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins.

**ABSENT**

Erik Moore

A moment of silence was held for Mr. George A. Hill, Retired United States Air Force veteran who passed away on February 5, 2023.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

- a) February 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

*Councilor George made a motion to approve the February 7, 2023 meeting minutes, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

**PROCLAMATIONS**

- a) Retiring Firefighter/EMT George W. Hogg

Council President Chase read a Proclamation in honor of retiring Firefighter/EMT George W. Hogg who will be retiring from the Fire Department as of March 7, 2023.

### **CITIZEN OPEN FORUM**

- Rosemary Anderson, High Pond Estates: discussed/presented issues with her water; frustrated and upset.
- Kevin Buohl, July 4<sup>th</sup> Committee: noted that the committee usually comes before the Board in June for the July 4<sup>th</sup> event but this year the event is in danger of not happening. Asked the councilors to reach out and spread the word about donating to the July 4<sup>th</sup> event.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

b) Beth Young: Cultural Council 2023-2026

*Councilor George made a motion to approve the appointment of Beth Young to the Cultural Council, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

c) Pat Neary: Tree Committee 2023-2026

*Councilor Linde made a motion to approve the appointment of Pat Neary to the Tree Committee, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

d) James Hayes-Bohanan: Tree Committee 2023-2026

*Councilor Wood made a motion to approve the appointment of James Hayes-Bohanan to the Tree Committee, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

### **HEARINGS**

- a) Proposed Ordinance D-FY23-007: Acceptance of Local Tax Option - Retail Marijuana Tax  
*Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 1/23/23 meeting. FinCom voted 6-0 to recommend at their 1/23/23 meeting.*

Councilor Chase opened the Public Hearing at 7:20pm.

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

Councilor Chase asked if the Councilors had any questions – None

Councilor Chase closed the public hearing at 7:22pm.

*Councilor George made a motion to approve Proposed Ordinance D-FY23-007, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- b) **Proposed Ordinance D-FY23-008: Cash Policy - Retail Marijuana Tax Reserve Fund**  
*Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 1/23/23 meeting. FinCom voted 6-0 to recommend at their 1/23/23 meeting.*

Councilor Chase opened the Public Hearing at 7:22pm.

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

Councilor Chase asked if the Councilors had any questions:

Councilor Gallagher noted that he is concerned about this ordinance goes against policy of building fiscal budget; should be treated like meals tax.

Councilor Perry noted that it would be a good idea to have a reserve fund to get an idea of what will come in from the 3% tax.

Councilor Chase closed the public hearing at 7:31pm.

*Councilor Wood made a motion to approve Proposed Ordinance D-FY23-008, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – No; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – No; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – No. Motion passed 5-3-0

## **LICENSE TRANSACTIONS**

- a) **Petition P-2023-021: Petition for National Grid and Verizon New England Inc. Installation and Relocation - 171 High Street**

Simon Yung from National Grid noted that the pole locations were selected through contractor plans for the bridge work.

Councilor Chase opened the Public Hearing at 7:32pm.

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

Councilor Chase asked if the Councilors had any questions – None

Councilor Chase closed the public hearing at 7:33pm.

*Councilor Perry made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-021, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- b) Petition P-2023-022: Petition for National Grid and Verizon New England Inc. Installation of Poles - 911 Conant Street

Councilor Chase opened the Public Hearing at 7:36pm.

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

Councilor Chase asked if the Councilors had any questions – None

Councilor Chase closed the public hearing at 7:38pm.

*Councilor George made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-022, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- c) Petition P-2023-023: Change of Officers/Directors/LLC - Cumberland Farms, 1001 Pleasant Street

Councilor Chase opened the Public Hearing at 7:39pm.

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

Councilor Chase asked if the Councilors had any questions – None

Councilor Chase closed the public hearing at 7:40pm.

*Councilor Perry made a motion to approve Petition P-2023-023, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

## **PRESENTATIONS** – None

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

- a) Fire Station Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that an updated cost estimate was requested and soil testing is being done.

- b) Truck Exclusion Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that residents were calling the some of the councilors regarding truck traffic on certain streets. Town Engineer researching to see if truck limitations can be put on certain streets. Will keep the council updated.

c) High Street Closure Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that High Street will be closed at Wall and Highway Department barn from 6/15/23 to October 15, 2023 to demolish and install bridge. In the process of notifying all about the closure.

d) Energy Aggregation Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that other towns have used an energy program and he has asked the Energy Committee to look into energy aggregation.

**DISCUSSIONS** – None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**LEGISLATION FOR ACTION**

- a) Order O-FY23-044: Acceptance of Funds - Council on Aging Donation  
*Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 2/21/23 meeting. FinCom voted 6-0 to recommend at their 2/16/23 meeting.*

*Councilor Gallagher made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-044, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- b) Order O-FY23-045: Ratification of Renewal Cable Television License Agreement: Comcast Cable Communication Management, LLC and Town of Bridgewater  
*Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 2/21/23 meeting. FinCom voted 6-0 to recommend at their 2/16/23 meeting.*

Town Manger noted that this is a good contract that was negotiated, there is a small senior discount and stressed that the Town does not have control over what the cable company can charge users.

*Councilor Gallagher made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-045, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- c) Order O-FY23-046: Acceptance of Gift - Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater - \$25,000  
*Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 2/21/23 meeting. FinCom voted 6-0 to recommend at their 2/16/23 meeting.*

*Councilor George made a motion to approve Order O0FY23-046, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- d)     **Order O-FY23-047: 2023 Election - Debt Exclusion Ballot Question**  
*Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 2/21/23 meeting. FinCom voted 6-0 to recommend at their 2/16/23 meeting.*

*Councilor Robinson made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-047, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- e)     **Ordinance D-FY23-009: Capital Expenditure Policy**  
*Budget and Finance voted 3-0 to continue at their 2/21/23 meeting. FinCom voted 6-0 to continue at their 2/16/23 meeting.*

*Councilor Wood made a motion to postpone Ordinance D-FY23-009 until the March 21, 2023 Town Council meeting, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a)     **Order O-FY23-048: Acceptance of LWCF Grant - Stiles & Hart Parkland Project**

Councilor Wood noted that this grant creates a huge opportunity to open up trails, 10 year effort.

*Councilor Wood made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-048 to Budget and Finance and FinCom, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

- b)     **Resolution R-FY23-005: Funds Review Resolution**

Councilor Gallagher noted that he is introducing this for Budget & Finance and Finance Committee to look at the reserves and make sure they are being used for what they were intended to be used for.

*Councilor George made a motion to refer Resolution R-FY23-005 to Budget and Finance and FinCom, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

c) Order O-FY23-049: Adoption of Town Council Social Media Policy

Councilor George noted that the legal ramifications will be reviewed by the Town Attorney. This is a first pass.

*Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-049 to Rules and Procedures, which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: Spoke on behalf of being on the CPC.
- Keith Buohl: Asked if the Town Manager could post water updates on the Town Page so that he could add it to the Residents page.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- Councilor McKinnon: No comments
- Councilor George: No comments
- Councilor Perry: Thanked Firefighter Hogg for his service. Thanked James, Beth and Pat for stepping up and being on a committee and mentioned that the July 4<sup>th</sup> committee needs the help to raise funds for a great Town event.
- Councilor Robinson: Thanked those that have served and will share the information about the July 4<sup>th</sup> event.
- Councilor Linde: Noted that if everyone gave a few dollars to the July 4<sup>th</sup> Committee, it could go a long way.
- Councilor Gallagher: Thanked Ms. Anderson for speaking up about her water tonight and even though it doesn't seem it, things are moving in a positive manner. Thanked the July 4<sup>th</sup> committee. Also noted that he is having Coffee with a Councilor on Saturday from 8:30am to 11:00am at Bridgewater Bagel.
- Councilor Wood: Noted that the BR is hosting a robotics competition from 3/3 to 3/5 and that he is not seeking reelection.
- Councilor Chase: Congratulated Firefighter Hogg on his retirement and noted how important the 7/4 event is.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilor Chase read the Executive Session language into the record.

*Councilor George made a motion to enter into Executive Session which was duly seconded.*

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Absent; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea;  
Wood – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-0

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**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, March 7, 2023, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted, by a Roll Call vote 6-0-1**