

Town of Bridgewater Town Council

May 9, 2023
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, May 9, 2023 in the Council Chambers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) April 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Councilor George made a motion to approve the April 18, 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 – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Abstained; Robinson – Abstained. Motion passed 7-0-2

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

a) Outgoing Presidential Remarks

Council President Chase thanked the Town Council, Town Manager, Town Council Clerk and staff for their help with his tenure as President.

b) Reorganization of the Council: Elect President and Vice President

Town Clerk Marilee Hunt conducted the President election and read the oath of office into the record.

Councilor Chase made a motion for Erik Moore for President, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

Council President Moore conducted the Vice President election.

Councilor Chase nominated Councilor Gallagher for Vice President, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

c) Reorganization of Council Seats

Town Clerk Marilee Hunt conducted the reorganization of the council seats. New seat assignment: Chase, Murphy, George, Gallagher, Moore, Robinson, Perry, McKinnon, Linde

PROCLAMATIONS - None

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

Derrick Bennett, 180 Main Street: Spoke regarding the BSU Air Patrol, would like to build with community for aviation.

Councilor Linde motion to allow an out of town speaker, Capt. Loren Heering to speak, this was duly seconded.

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

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

Capt Loren Heering: Interested in working with the community on the aviation.

Janet Hansen, Pleasant Street: Discussed wording in the resolution.

Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: discussed grants on the agenda, downtown and historical commission.

APPOINTMENTS

a) Conant Trust Fund Committee: David Wolohojian (2023 to 2028)

Councilor Gallagher made a motion to appoint David Wolohojian to the Conant Trust Fund Committee, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy - Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

HEARINGS

a) Budget Order O-FY24-001: FY2024 Annual Town Budget

This hearing has been duly advertised in the Enterprise and on the Town's website. All orders relative to the FY2024 Budget may be finally voted this evening and are itemized under L: Legislation for Action.

Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 4/18/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Council President Moore opened the hearing at 7:24pm.

Town Manager Dutton noted that the FY24 resembles normalcy after covid budgets.

Council President Moore asked if there were any questions from the public. None

Council President Moore asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in favor. None

Council President Moore asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in opposition. None

Council President Moore asked if there were any questions from the councilors:

Councilor Gallagher noted that Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend.

Council President Moore closed hearing at 7:37p.m.

Councilor George made a motion to Budget Order O-FY24-001, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy - Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None

PRESENTATIONS –

a) Bridgewater Historical Commission – David Moore

Mr. Moore gave a presentation on historical commission issues. Would like the historical commission to be changed to administerial.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a) Fire Station Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that the Fire Station project was moving along.

b) High Street Bridge Closure

Town Manager Dutton once again noted that the bridge will be closed from 6/15 for about 4 months. Press releases being done, electronic sign board being put in place and sending letters to residents that are impacted by the closure.

Councilor Linde noted that cars roll past the stop sign at Wall and Oak Streets. Town Manager Dutton noted that he would have someone take a look.

Councilor Perry noted that at Oak and High Street the line of sight was poor. Asked that the growth be cut back by the DPW. Town Manager Dutton noted that he would inform DPW.

Councilor George asked about enhanced speed restrictions and Town Manager Dutton noted that he will check with the Chief.

c) PFAS Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that the town has not exceeded any thresholds on our wells.

Councilor McKinnon asked if High Street Water Plant was 100% and Town Manager Dutton noted that it was up and running and any dirty water will continue because of the flushing program.

Councilor Linde asked if a flyer can be put in the water bills notifying the residents of when flushing is being conducted. Town Manager Dutton noted that they can let residents know that hydrant flushing will be taking place but just can't say when because flushing is dependent on many factors.

Councilor George asked that BTV do a video of the hydrant flushing so that the residents are aware of what takes place with flushing.

Councilor Moore noted that it is critical for residents to report water issues to the town so the town.

d) Scotland Field Improvement

Town Manager Dutton noted that Scotland Field is looking better than it did. Dugouts have been removed and more work will be completed once the season is over.

DISCUSSION – None

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Councilor Chase made a motion to take Committee Reports out of order and combine with E. under Legislation for Action. This motion was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

a) Budget Order O-FY24-002: FY2024 Water Enterprise Fund Budget

Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 4/18/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Town Manager Dutton noted the Enterprise Fund is designed to charge user fees to self sustain/fully fund debt, staff and materials.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Budget Order O-FY24-002, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

b) Budget Order O-FY24-003: FY24 Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget

Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 4/18/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Budget Order O-FY24-003, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

c) Budget Order O-FY24-004: FY24 Transfer Station Enterprise Fund Budget

Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 4/18/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Budget Order O-FY24-004, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

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

Rules and Procedures voted 2-1 to not recommend.

Councilor Chase noted that the Rules and Procedures committee met and voted 2-1 to not recommend. Councilor Chase read his minority report into the record.

Councilor Robinson made a motion to take Order O-FY23-049 out of order, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon –

Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

Councilor Robinson noted that she does not believe that the Order is necessary, we have governance from the State. Feels like a guideline not a policy.

Councilor Linde noted that he concurs with Councilor Robinson but also wanted the new councilor to weigh in.

Councilor George noted that other towns have social media policies and that the order was in committee for 9 weeks.

Councilor George made a motion to continue Order O-FY23-049 to a date certain, which was duly seconded.

Councilor Robinson noted that she would like to vote on the Order tonight.

Councilor Gallagher noted that more work should be done on it, make it specific to council.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – No. Motion passed 8-0-0

d) Budget Order O-FY24-005: Authorization of Revolving Funds

Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 4/18/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Budget Order O-FY24-005, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

f) Order O-FY23-054: AFSCME Contractual Ratification

Budget & Finance voted 2-0 to recommend at their 5/9/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Town Manager Dutton noted that this is for a 3-year contract. Year one is no salary adjustment and year 2 and 3 will be 5%.

Councilor Gallagher noted that the Budget & Finance Committee voted 2-0 to recommend at their 5/9/23 meeting.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-054, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

g) Ordinance D-FY23-010: Establish Stabilization Fund – Opioid Legal Settlements

Budget & Finance voted 2-0 to recommend at their 5/9/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Town Manager Dutton noted that this was to create a fund to hold opioid settlements.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Ordinance D-FY23-010, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

h) Ordinance D-FY23-011: Special Purpose Stabilization Fund – Opioid Settlement

Budget & Finance voted 2-0 to recommend at their 5/9/23 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 4/24/23 meeting.

Town Manager Dutton noted that this was the second step in the opioid settlement.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Ordinance D-FY23-011, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

a) Order O-FY24-006: CPA Reserve Accounts – FY2024

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY24-006 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

b) Order O-FY24-007: Supplemental Appropriation – FY2024

Town Manager Dutton noted that the budget submitted did not include the Bristol Plymouth Technical School \$309k which was added to the budget after the town vote.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY24-007 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

c) Order O-FY23-055: Jenkins Pond Dam Removal and Bridge Replacement Grant Acceptance

Town Manager Dutton noted that this order accepts a number of grants that the town has been awarded.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-055 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

d) Order O-FY23-056: Capital Plan Transfers

Town Manager Dutton noted that this funds a number of much needed capital items.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-056 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

e) Order O—FY23-057: Acceptance of Donation

Town Manager Dutton noted that Black Hat Brew Works made a motion to the town.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-057 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

f) Order O-FY23-058: Transfer Order: Water Enterprise Fund Carver's Pond Filtration

Councilor Chase made a motion to refer Order O-FY23-058 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

g) Proposed Ordinance D-FY23-013: Zoning Ordinance – Amend Article III, Section 23 (a) Planning Board

Councilor Chase noted that this would enable associate members to participant in Planning Board meetings.

Town Manager Dutton referred to Bob Rulli who noted that this allow alternate members to attend all the meetings.

Councilor McKinnon made a motion to refer Proposed Ordinance D-FY23-013 to CED and Planning Baord, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

h) Resolution R-FY23-007: A Resolution of the Town Council In Support of Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Councilor Perry noted that this resolution is in support of the Downtown Revitalization and read the Resolution into the record.

Councilor McKinnon made a motion to retain Resolution R-FY23-007 at council level, which was duly seconded.

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

Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Janet Hansen, Pleasant Street: Fully supports the historical commission and does not receive emails about meetings.

Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: has website issue; energy committee meeting with fire station committee.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Chase: Pleased to see peaceful transfer and congratulated Erik and Dennis and welcomed Paul.

Councilor Murphy: Thanked everyone for coming out and voting.

Councilor George: Congratulated Paul on being elected and noted downtown is a multi-prong process.

Councilor Gallagher: Welcomed Paul and noted that he is entering his 9th year and is looking forward to serving as Vice President. Also noted that the Town Wide Clean up was well attended and the Fire for Effect event that was held was a successful event.

Councilor Robinson: Welcomed Councilor Murphy and congratulated president and vice president. Noted the social media policy and why not needed.

Councilor Perry: Welcomed new Councilor Murphy and congratulated the president and vice president. Thanked Troop 88 for helping out on clean-up day and looking forward to the downtown plan.

Councilor McKinnon: Welcomed Paul, thanked Fred and congrats to Erik and Dennis. Noted that the First Responders event was successful and the next event is May 20th.

Councilor Linde: Welcomed Paul, thanked Fred and congratulated Erik and Dennis.

Councilor Moore: Welcomed Paul, Thanked Fred and congratulated Dennis.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council President Moore noted that there was a need to move into Executive Session under: MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) (3): To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; and to adjourn from Executive Session.

Councilor McKinnon made a motion to move 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 – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

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, May 23, 2023, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.