



## **Town of Bridgewater**

### **Town Council**

July 11, 2023  
7:00 PM

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Erik Moore called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:00pm on Tuesday, June 20, 2023 in the Council Chambers.

#### ***PRESENT:***

Fred Chase, Paul Murphy, Shawn George, Dennis Gallagher, Erik Moore, Susan Robinson, Kevin Perry, Brad McKinnon and Mark Linde. Also in attendance was Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins.

A moment of silence was held for United States Army Veteran George J. Andruk, Sr. who passed away on June 19, 2023 and United States Navy Veteran Calvin J. White who passed away on June 16, 2023.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

##### **a) June 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

*Councilor George made a motion to approve the June 20, 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 – Yea; Robinson – Abstained. Motion passed 8-0-1

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

##### **PROCLAMATIONS - None**

#### **CITIZEN OPEN FORUM**

- Heidi and Michael Sullivan, 431 Vernon Street: notified the town on 3/8 regarding an issue with rats, continues to be an issue, would like something done.
- Gretchen Delutis, 436 Vernon Street: also noted about the rats and how she found one in her pool.
- Ed Ivaldi, Boxwood Lane: commented on Town Manager contract order.
- Pat Neary, Lakeside Drive: has an issue with the rat ordinance, Town Manager contract and people dumping trash at 330 Bedford Street.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

- a) Finance Committee Town Council Reappointment  
Nathan Schofield (2023-2026)

*Councilor George made a motion to reappoint Nathan Schofield to the 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

- b) Parks and Recreation Reappointment  
Michael Flaherty (2023-2026)

*Councilor George made a motion to reappoint Michael Flaherty to Park and Recreation, 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

- c) Planning Board Reappointment  
Michael MacDonald (2023-2028)

*Councilor Chase made a motion to reappoint Michael MacDonald to the Planning Board, 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

## **HEARINGS**- None

## **LICENSE TRANSACTIONS** – None

## **PRESENTATIONS**

- a) Auditors Presentation

Tony Roselli and Paul Gargano from Roselli, Clark & Associates gave a brief presentation on the Town audit. A few items to note:

- In 2008 negative balance, has increased up since; \$10.7M reserve balance, great bond rating.
- Tier 1 is 15% or higher – Bridgewater is just above.
- Bond rating is Aa3 with Moody's.
- Local receipts exceed forecast by \$2.5M.
- Challenges include: inflation cruising up; increased energy costs; wage inflation; financing costs increasing; construction increasing; goods and services increasing and property taxes can only go up 2%.
- Other Postemployment Benefits: rates going up, retirees living longer.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

a) High Street Bridge Closure Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that the closure has happened, there will be a slight delay with Verizon and additional signage will be put up. He also noted that the dam should be removed the week of 7/17, nothing exciting about it, no explosives will be used.

Councilor George asked that the Town Manager give an update on the Mobil station on the next agenda.

Councilor Linde asked that the flags at the Memorial Building be on the next agenda.

**DISCUSSIONS** – None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS** – None

**LEGISLATION FOR ACTION**

a) Order O-FY23-066: Contract Amendment - Town Manager

*Councilor George made a motion to amend Section 1 by replacing “June 30, 2027” with “June 30, 2025”, which was duly seconded.*

Councilor Moore noted that Bridgewater is accelerating key initiatives that require multi-year commitment, support the longer timeframe.

Councilor Gallagher noted that every town should have a vision, not reason to extend the contract. Supports the amendment.

Councilor Chase noted that he concurs with the projects and degree of interest and enthusiasm, did not see long term planning in the past. Does not support the amendment.

Councilor Robinson noted that there were skipped steps in the charter and the momentum is not one person, would like to get to know Town Manager. Supports the amendment.

Councilor Linde noted that he supports the amendment and worries about precedent.

Councilor Perry noted that projects are critical and a new leader could change the priority. Not in favor of the amendment.

Councilor Gallagher noted that changing the term to 2025 does not mean that the Town Manager is done in 2024, salary was the main reason.

Councilor Moore noted that when a Town Manager leaves it takes about 2 years before new Town Manager is up to speed. This is an investment in us, not just the Town Manager.

A voice vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – No; Linde – Yea; George – Yea; Moore – No; Chase – No; Gallagher – Yea; McKinnon – No; Murphy – No; Robinson – No. Motion to amend failed: 3-6

*Councilor Chase made a motion to approve Order O-FY23-066 , which was duly seconded.*

Councilor Perry noted that we have a good Town Manager in place, every year it gets better, do not want to rock the boat.

Councilor Linde asked when would evaluations begin and Councilor Moore noted that it would be August.

Councilor Chase noted that the current Town Manager contract was executed 1 ½ years ago, not done by a Review Committee but it was vetted and vigorous discussions were done.

Council Gallagher noted that the voted was close 1 ½ years ago.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to approve with the results recorded as follows:

Perry – Yea; Linde – No George – Yea; Moore – Yea; Chase – Yea; Gallagher – No; McKinnon –Yea; Murphy – Yea; Robinson – No. Motion passed 6-3

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

*Councilor George made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY23-013 to advertising, 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

a) Ordinance D-FY24-002: Rat Control and Prevention Ordinance

*Councilor George made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY24-002 to Rules & Procedures, 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

b) Resolution R-FY24-001: A Resolution to Apply for, Accept, and Expend a Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation services' Local Aquisitions for Natural Diversity (Land) Grant Program

*Councilor George made a motion to refer Resolution R-FY24-001 to Budget and 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

c) Order O-FY24-008 Transfer Order: Broad Street Two Lot Property Purchase

*Councilor George made a motion to refer Resolution R-FY24-001 to Budget and 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: would like to electric cars plug in usage at Town Hall ne put on next agenda.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- Councilor Chase: noted that it was a very productive meeting, served the town well and pleased with the result.
- Councilor Murphy: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee for their work, noted that the young families in town see the town grow.
- Councilor George: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee, great event.
- Councilor Gallagher: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee and respected all comments that were done tonight on Town Manager contract.
- Councilor Robinson: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee and noted that she is particular around process.
- Councilor Perry: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee, noted that they are looking for more volunteers, reach out if you can. Congratulated the residents who were reappointed and impressed with the council discussions tonight.
- Councilor McKinnon: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee and noted that Summerfest and Bark in the Park were great successes.
- Councilor Linde: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee and noted that the Auditors presentation was good.
- Councilor Moore: thanked the 4<sup>th</sup> of July committee, excited about the projects being done and future projects.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** - None

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Councilor George made a motion to adjourn, 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 – Yes. Motion passed 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

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, August 8, 2023, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.