



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

November 21, 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, November 21, 2023 in the Council Chambers.

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

Council President Moore asked for a moment of silence for a veteran who has recently passed: LeMoyne A. Benson "Lee" United States Army.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) November 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Councilor George made a motion to approve the November 7, 2023 meeting minutes, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Abstained; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 8-0-1

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

PROCLAMATIONS – None

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM – None

APPOINTMENTS – None

HEARINGS

a) Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-008: Bridgewater Town Charter Article II, Legislative Branch Section 2-13(a) Annual Stipend
Advertised in the 11/7/23 Enterprise.

Councilor Moore opened the public hearing at 7:02pm.

Councilor Moore asked if there were any questions from the public: None

Councilor Moore asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in favor: None

Councilor Moore asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in opposition:

Ed Ivaldi, 10 Boxwood Lane: against the Ordinance as written. Does not feel councilors should decide on their own raises; citizens should have input. Suggested establishing a Citizen Committee. Need more clarity on when paid and what happens if a new councilor comes in mid-cycle.

Councilor Moore asked if there were any questions from the Councilors:

Councilor Gallagher noted that he respects the comments and there has been a lot of talk about council stipends, wants to put before the voters.

Councilor Moore noted that the process for this ordinance would be the council votes on it then it is sent to the State for their approval and then would be put on as a ballot question during an Annual Election.

Councilor Murphy noted that there has been extensive discussion in Rules Committee and he is in support of continuing.

Councilor Chase noted that there is no Charter provision for a Citizen Committee and election day is starting point and that there is only one annual election a year. Change requires an ordinance which requires a public hearing so there would be citizen input.

Councilor Murphy made a motion to refer Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-008 back to Rules & Procedures for further discussion. The motion was duly seconded by Councilor McKinnon.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

Councilor Moore closed the public hearing at 7:16pm.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- a) Petition P-2024-004: Granting of a New Class II Used auto Dealers License - Northeast Motor Sales, 365 Elm Street

Abutter letters were sent certified mail on November 7, 2023 and notice was in the Enterprise on November 8, 2023.

Councilor Moore opened the public hearing at 7:16pm.

Petitioner Freddy Arriola noted to the council that he is requesting a Class II license at 365 Elm Street. Hours changing to Monday to Friday 9:00am to 6:00pm and Saturday 9:00am to 2:00pm.

Councilor Moore asked if there were any questions from the public: None

Councilor Moore asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in favor: None

Councilor Moore asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in opposition: None

Councilor Moore asked if there were any questions from the Councilors: None

Councilor Moore closed the public hearing at 7:17pm.

Councilor George made a motion to approve Petition P-2024-004, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

PRESENTATIONS- None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a) High Street Bridge Closure Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that the High Street Bridge was open as of Monday night but there is still more work to be done. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be scheduled once complete.

b) Fire Station Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that the sub-bids were under estimate.

Councilor McKinnon asked that a few items be added to the next meeting under Town Manager Update.

DISCUSSIONS – None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Chase noted that Rules & Procedures met on the recall provision ordinance and voted 3-0 with amendments to recommend.

Councilor George noted that the Review Committee met on November 20th and will be using the last form with updates from councilors and noted that the Town Manager goals will be delivered during the review.

Councilor Robinson noted that the Community and Economic Development Committee met on November 2nd and discussed the Annual election signs that the Town Clerk discussed. Council President Moore noted that it will be added to the December 5th agenda for discussion.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

a) Order O-FY24-015: Sewer Enterprise Fund

Budget & Finance voted to 3-0 to recommend at their 11/21/23 meeting. Finance Committee did not meet on 11/20/23.

Councilor Moore noted that the Finance Committee did not meet on November 20th so this item cannot be voted on tonight.

Councilor Linde made a motion to continue Order O-FY24-015 to the December 5th meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

- b) Order O-FY24-016: Transfer Order - Sewer Waste Water Treatment Facility Phase I
Budget & Finance voted to 3-0 to recommend at their 11/21/23 meeting. Finance Committee did not meet on 11/20/23.

Councilor Moore noted that the Finance Committee did not meet on November 20th so this item cannot be voted on tonight.

Councilor Linde made a motion to continue Order O-FY24-016 to the December 5th meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0

- c) Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-009: Bridgewater Town Charter Article III, Elected Officials Recall Provision
To be referred to Advertising.

Councilor Chase made a motion to replace “Article II, Legislative Branch” in the first paragraph to read “Article III, Elected Officials”. This was duly seconded by Councilor George.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

Councilor Chase noted that Rules & Regulations met and voted 3-0 to recommend with amendments. In Paragraph (b) (5), strike “lack of fitness” and paragraph (b) (6) strike “conviction of a felony involving moral turpitude”.

Councilor George made a motion amend Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-009 as recommended by Rules & Procedures. This was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Chase made a motion to refer Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-009 to advertising, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Order O-FY24-017: FY2024 Classification Tax Allocation - Adoption of Residential Factor
Town Manager Dutton noted that before the tax rate can be set the Town Council must hold a public hearing to set the tax rate.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY24-017 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

- b) Proposed Zoning Ordinance D-FY24-003: Chapter 7.7 - Specialized Energy Code

Councilor Moore noted that he was bringing this proposed zoning ordinance forward on behalf of the Energy Committee.

Councilor George made a motion to refer proposed Zoning Ordinance D-FY24-003 to the Planning Department and Community and Economic Development Committee. This was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

- c) Resolution R-FY24-003: Town Council Meeting Dates – 2024

Councilor Moore noted that this will set the council meeting dates for 2024.

Councilor George made a motion to keep Resolution R-FY24-003 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

- d) Resolution R-FY24-004: FY2025 Budget Resolution

Councilor Gallagher noted that this was standard every year, sets the tone and creates guidelines.

Councilor George made a motion to refer Resolution R-FY24-004 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0-0

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: commended the council for sending the stipend back to committee. Noted that the lighting of the common will be Sunday, November 26th at 7pm.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Robinson: Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Councilor Chase: Noted that on December 3rd Christmas on the Common will be taking place.

Councilor Perry: Noted that the Lions Club is putting the decorations on the Common on Saturday and are looking for volunteers. Also that he marched in the November 11th Veterans Day parade and it was a great turnout.

Councilor Murphy: Noted that he attended an event at the State House for Toys for Tots event that was great.

Councilor Gallagher: Thanked East Bridgewater for hosting the Veterans Day parade. Noted that the Christmas procession is taking place on December 3rd and glad that the lights will be going up.

Councilor Linde: Noted that he is looking forward to the lighting of the common and that the Library has a tree for giving and that the Fire Department is doing Toys for Tots.

Councilor McKinnon: Noted that BTV is still looking for volunteers. Congratulated Lt. Anne Schuster on her retirement and thanked all of the fire departments for their efforts on the fire that took place at Car Guys.

Councilor George: Congratulated all those that were able to fundraise for the lights and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Councilor Moore: Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and encouraged people to drive around town to look at the amazing light displays that people have.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Chase – Yea; Murphy - Yea; George – Yea; Gallagher – Yea; Moore – Yea; Robinson – Yea; Perry – Yea; McKinnon – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 9-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55p.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 5, 2023, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted, by a Roll Call vote 8-0.