



Town of Bridgewater Town Council

January 23, 2024
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, January 23, 2024 in the Council Chambers.

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

ABSENT: Brad McKinnon

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) January 2, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Councilor George made a motion to approve the January 2, 2024 meeting minutes, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT – None

PROCLAMATIONS

a) Firefighter/Paramedic David A. McGillis Retirement

Council President Moore read the Proclamation for retiring Firefighter/Paramedic David A. McGillis into the record and thanked him for his service to the town.

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

- Tina Larsen, Chair of the Cultural Council: gave an update on what was approved at Cultural Council.
- Frank Sousa, 596 Main Street: discussed needing a full time veterans agent for Bridgewater and the work that Roderick did while he was the agenda.

APPOINTMENTS

a) Veteran's Council: Johnathan Algarin (2024-2027)

Councilor George made a motion to approve the appointment of Johnathan Algarin to the Veteran's

Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

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

b) Veteran's Council: Lisa Buzzell-Curley (2024-2027)

Councilor George made a motion to approve the appointment of Lisa Buzzell-Curley to the Veteran's Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

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

HEARINGS – None

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS – None

PRESENTATIONS – None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a) Vision to Reality Update

Town Manager Dutton gave a brief update on Vision to Reality and noted that it is made up of many projects and it will position the Town for growth over generations. Active Projects and updates were given (ie. BSU Cyber Security; Central Square Parking; Community Outreach; Form Based Zoning Code; MBTA Platform Move; old Town Hall, private property development; sewer capacity; small business support and water capacity). Noted next steps = continued council involvement; finalize FBC; grant funding; mitigation plan and community education. Important response to MBTA housing requirements.

Councilor Gallagher asked if there were serious inquiries into the Friendly's properties on Broad Street. Town Manager Dutton noted that the private owner has the property on the market and there has been 5 or 6 people looking at what they could do once form based code is approved.

Councilor Robinson noted that there are big priorities, 12 projects, what are we trying to achieve, what is our goal and timing. Was hype created too early.

Councilor Moore noted that he has a different perspective to the hype thing. Important to have the community behind us. Timeline would be helpful. Project like this requires someone at the State level for help.

b) Winter Street Drainage Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that Winter Street was scheduled to be done in the Fall of 2023 but there were issues with the road layout which delayed it. Engineer corrected the issues and construction should begin in early Spring with Chapter 90 funds.

Councilor Moore asked if residents have been notified. Town Manager Dutton noted that residents were notified of the delay and will be notified right before construction happens.

c) Water Street Tire Issue Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that there was a resident that was concerned about the tire issue on property

on Water Street. The Fire Department noted that the tires have been there a long time and since the Town does not own the property there is no grant money available for clearing the tires. Town Manager Dutton noted that the Town has an ordinance that allows for tire dumps and suggested that the council look at the ordinance and change it.

d) Veterans Agent Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that since the retirement of the Veterans Agent the Town has been working to possibly create a Veterans District with Raynham. It would be for one full-time agent and one full-time support staff which will offer better services.

Councilor Gallagher asked if the creation of a district would require Council approval and noted that we need a full-time agent just for Bridgewater. Town Manager Dutton noted that if the district request requires council approval it will be come to the council. Right now Veterans Affairs, Accounts Payable and Senior Center Staff have been helping with the vacant position.

Councilor Linde noted that Bridgewater needs their own full-time agent.

Councilor Robinson asked if a district was needed. Town Manager Dutton noted that many cities and towns have created districts as it creates an attractive position and could offer a decent salary.

Councilor Gallagher asked that a Veterans update be on the next agenda and to find out if the council would approve the district and what the timeline of the district is.

Councilor Perry asked if we can hire someone now and Town Manager Dutton noted that the posting is up internally and once 10 days has elapsed, it will go out to the public.

e) Migrant Housing Crisis

Town Manager Dutton noted that Towns are not notified in advance of migrant housing and he is not aware of any in Bridgewater. Raynham does have some families.

Councilor Robinson noted that 48 children came to the district and they have not heard of any issues.

f) Sewer Project Update

Town Manager Dutton noted that the Town is doing everything they can to not raise sewer rates. New cost estimate of Phase 2 is \$57M, \$17M not revolving. Now total has tripled from 2017. Asking the State for an Affordability Analysis because residents cannot afford the rate increase it would take. 1/3 of the Town is sewer.

Councilor Moore asked what percent capacity is BSU and what are other option. Town Manager Dutton noted that he does not have that information but will get it.

Councilor Chase noted that the flow neutral ordinance helped us with loan obligations and are there any for Phase 2. Town Manager Dutton noted that Phase 2 requirements exploded and there is nothing in town regulation. More participants would spread the cost.

Councilor Moore asked that Sewer Project update be kept as a standing item on the agenda.

g) FY25 Budget & Capital Calendar

Town Manager Dutton discussed the budget process and the deadlines.

Councilor George noted that the April 16th date needs to be corrected to April 23rd.

Councilor Robinson asked that the budget sheet and the presentation from earlier be mailed to the Councilors.

Councilor McKinnon asked Council Moore to add Carver Pond Well replacement project to the next agenda.

Councilor Murphy would like the Fire Station Update and Stats on See Click Fix be added to the next agenda.

DISCUSSIONS – None

COMMITTEE REPORTS – None

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION – None

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

a) Order O-FY24-022: Acceptance of Gift

Councilor George made a motion to refer Order O-FY24-022 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

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

b) Order O-FY24-023: Acceptance of Donation - Oliari Charitable Foundation

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY24-023 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

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

c) Order O-FY24-024: Vote to Authorize the Town Council President and Town Council Vice President to Sign on Behalf of the Town of Bridgewater

Councilor Perry made a motion to retain O-FY24-024 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Robinson.

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Frank Sousa, 596 Main Street: discussed needed a full-time Veterans Agent.
- Kevin Marshall, 780 Auburn Street: noted that he sent an email regarding veterans agent and asked if the office clerk for the veteran agent would be a new person for that office or added to an existing clerk's position.
- Louie Almond, 12 Carver Drive: discussed needing a veterans agent.
- Jean Katis, discussed needing a full time veterans agent in Bridgewater.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Chase: No comment
- Councilor Murphy: thanked the Veterans for showing up tonight, not in favor of a district.
- Councilor George: noted that re-allocation for veterans is overdue, need to focus on agent for Bridgewater. Budget discussions this year will be different than in years past because of the State percentages and noted that he will not be seeking re-election.
- Councilor Linde: thanked Councilor George and Councilor Moore for their service and noted that we hear what the veterans want.
- Councilor Perry: thanked the veterans for coming out tonight and congratulated Firefighter McGillis on his retirement.
- Councilor Robinson: thanked the veterans for coming out tonight and voicing their concerns.
- Councilor Gallagher: gave an update of the MMA conference that he attended; thanked the veterans for coming to the meeting and noted that he will not be seeking re-election.
- Councilor Moore: thanked the veterans for coming to the meeting and also noted that he would not be seeking re-election.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:12pm

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, February 6, 2024, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.