



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

December 3, 2024

7:00 PM

66 Central Square

Academy Building/2nd Floor

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Kevin Perry called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:06pm on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 in the Council Chambers.

Present: Fred Chase, Paul Murphy, Mary McGrath, Kevin Perry, Brad McKinnon, Mark Linde, Adelene Ellenberg and Sonya Striggles.

Also in attendance was Acting Town Manager Blythe Robinson and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins.

Councilor Perry held a moment of silence for all veterans and their families.

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS – None

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT- None

C. PROCLAMATIONS - None

D. CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

- Ray Ajamian, 221 Aldrich Road: spoke about density bonuses, if you allow changes be careful of what you allow. If allow larger density should get something in return, ie. Requiring solar.
- James Wall, 60 Pleasant Street: in support of Senior Village Housing, has suggested amendments.
- Julie Caufield, Laurel Road: asked the town to purchase a primary flag pole for the US Flag and POW/MIA flag.

Councilor McKinnon made a motion to take H. Presentations out of order, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

E. APPOINTMENTS - None

F. HEARINGS

- a) Order O-FY25-023: FY2025 Classification Tax Allocation - Adoption of Residential Factor
***Public Hearing:** Advertised in the 11/22/24 Enterprise. Budget & Finance vote 3-0 at their 11/26/24 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 at their 11/18/24 meeting.*

Councilor Perry opened the Public Hearing @ 7:16pm.

Shelley McCauley, Chief Assessor, discussed the actions that are required before setting the tax rate: Determine the maximum amount it can levy under proposition 2 ½; Establish final values for all taxable real and personal property; decide its property tax policy and each of these actions is documented in forms that must be submitted and approved by the DOR.

Town Council must decide the percentage of the tax levy each class will bear. A residential factor is adopted to determine the percentage of the tax levy to be paid. The adopted factor cannot be less than the minimum factor calculated by the DOR. If a factor of “1” is adopted the tax rate would be the same for all classes.

Single Family impact rate would be a 5.9% increase from FY24. \$219 increase from FY24 to FY25.

Single rate commercial impact would be a 10% value increase from FY24 to FY25. \$909 increase from FY24 to FY25.

Additional information: 1) debt is approximately \$.77 of the tax rate; 2) the town has always maintained a single tax rate; 3) maximum levy limit \$60,908,073

Councilor Perry asked if anyone from the public had any questions: no questions were asked.

Councilor Perry asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in favor: no one spoke.

Councilor Perry asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in opposition: no one spoke.

Councilor Perry asked if any councilors had questions:

Councilor Ellenberg noted that she thought we had a 2 ½ percent limit on increases. Ms. McCauley responded that it is a 2 ½ % increase on the levy limit.

Councilor Perry closed the Public hearing at 7:28pm.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to approve Order O-FY25-023 and set a tax rate of 1. This was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

G. LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None

H. PRESENTATIONS

a) Tri-Town Veterans Day Parade Trophy Presentation

Best Marching Band: Bridgewater Raynham High School

Quinn Daley and Kayla Nesbitt

Veterans Agent Greg Martin presented a trophy to Quinn Daley and Kayla Nesbitt and thanked them for participating in the Tri-Town Veterans Day Parade.

Best Float: Fire for Effect Foundation

Al Lacerda

Veterans Agent Greg Martin presented a trophy to Al Lacerda and thanked him for participating in the Tri-Town Veterans Day Parade.

Judge's Choice: Pat Snow's Dance Academy

McKayla Coutie

Veterans Agent Greg Martin presented a trophy to McKayla Coutie and thanked her for participating in the Tri-Town Veterans Day Parade.

I. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT - None

J. DISCUSSIONS - None

K. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rules and Procedures: Councilor Chase noted that Rules and Procedures met last night and after a lengthy conversation, it was voted to continue Ordinance D-F25-009 until next week.

Town Manager Preliminary Screening Ad Hoc Committee: Councilor Murphy noted that the Ad Hoc Committee will be meeting via Zoom on 12/19 at 7:30pm.

L. LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

a) Ordinance D-FY25-001: Proposed Zoning Order Amendment - Senior Village Housing Development

***Refer to Advertising:** Planning Board and Community and Economic Development voted to recommend with amendments at their 10/16/24 joint meeting.*

Councilor McKinnon made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY25-001 to advertising, which was duly seconded by Councilor McGrath.

Councilor Ellenberg noted that Item 3 says Planning Board reserves – what progress are we making on water/sewer at this time. Councilor Perry noted that they would take that into consideration.

Councilor Ellenberg asked who would be managing the homeowner trust or association. Councilor Perry noted that it would be how it is set up when it is built.

Councilor Ellenberg asked if amendments can be made at the hearing and Councilor Perry noted that yes, it will be advertised and then amendments can be made at the public hearing.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to refer to advertising, with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

- b) Zoning Ordinance D-FY25-003: Proposed Amendment to Central Business District (CBD-S), Density Bonuses 9.6.7
Refer to Advertising: Planning Board and Community Economic Development voted not to recommend at their 10/16/24 joint meeting.

Councilor McGrath withdrew this Ordinance.

- c) Proposed Ordinance D-FY25-006: Bridgewater Town Charter Amendment for Gender Neutral Language
Refer to Advertising: Rules and Procedures voted to recommend at their 11/13/24 meeting.

Councilor Murphy noted this ordinance is to replace “his” that appears several times to “their” to be gender neutral.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY25-006 to advertising, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

Councilor Ellenberg made a motion to amend by striking the last sentence in Section 2-12 (a).

Councilor Chase noted that we have 3 pending charter changes and one is a recall amendment which mimics to what the councilor wants to strike. Thinks it is inconsistent with what is in process to be ratified by the legislator.

Councilor Ellenberg’s Amendment fails for lack of a second.

Councilor Murphy made a motion to amend to change “his” to “them” in Section 2-12 (a). This was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to amend, with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to refer to advertising, with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

- d) Proposed General Ordinance D-FY25-007: Acceptance of MGL c.33, Section 59 Military Service on Salary, Seniority and Leave Allowances for Public Employees
Refer to Advertising: Rules and Procedures voted to recommend at their 11/13/24 meeting.

Councilor McKinnon made a motion to amend to refer Ordinance D-FY25-007 to advertising, this was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to amend, with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

- e) Ordinance D-FY25-009: Veterans Volunteer Services Program (Work-off)
Refer to Advertising: Rules & Procedures meeting on 12/2/24.

This Ordinance is still in Rules and Procedure committee so it was not acted on. Will be on the next meeting.

M. OLD BUSINESS - None

N. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Order O-FY25-032: Acceptance of Non Recurring Revenue to Capital - Department of Corrections

Acting Town Robinson noted that this is money from the State that is not guaranteed but given to towns that have prisons in their towns. \$11k less than last year.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-032 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor McKinnon.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to amend, with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

O. CITIZEN COMMENTS – None

P. COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor McKinnon: no comments made
- Councilor Ellenberg: no comments made
- Councilor Murphy: thanked all the volunteers for Sundays event, great event, great day.
- Councilor Linde: echo what Mr. Murphy said, commend the Council President and the Lions Club for decorating the Common.
- Councilor Chase: wonderful work that was done by the Lions on the common, the lighting by the Winter Wonderful, very attractive holiday display on the public common.
- Councilor Striggles: the beauty of our common shines brightest this time of year; thank Mr. Wall for coming out tonight.
- Councilor McGrath: thanked the Bridgewater businesses that come out, and the Common event, it was wonderful.
- Councilor Perry: thanked all the volunteers that helped setting up the common, has been going on for many years. Thanked the BBA for the Christmas on the common, it was a wonderful job. It was crowded.
- Councilor Linde: 12/11 the Library is doing an Open House during the day with events and activities. Garden Club doing something also.

Q. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

R. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor McKinnon made a motion to adjourn, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

A voice vote was taken on the motion to amend, with the results recorded as follows: McKinnon – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Motion passed 8-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

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, January 7, 2025, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.