



Town of Bridgewater **Rules and Procedure Committee**

November 10, 2022

7:00 PM

MEETING MINUTES

A. Call to Order

Councilor Chase, Chair of the Rules & Procedures, called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

Council Members Present

Councilor Chase
Councilor Sousa

Council Members Absent

Councilor Colombotos

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a) October 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Councilor Sousa made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 20, 2022 which was duly seconded by Councilors Chase.

A roll-call vote was taken and the results were recorded as follows: Sousa – Yes; Chase – Yes’
Colombotos – Absent. Motion passed 2-0-0.

C. Public Comment – None

D. Legislation Referred

a) Ordinance D-FY23-005: General Ordinance - Amend Article II. Sec. 14. Citizens Comments

Councilor Chase briefly updated why he sponsored the ordinance. Not intended to restrict, just identify who the non-resident is.

Councilor Sousa noted that people have a hard time finding information so how will they know about the change and in 6 ½ years he has not seen more than 5 non-residents wishing to speak.

Councilor Chase noted that the Ordinance would need to be advertised and he does not want to restrict anyone. A resident who wants to bring someone in to speak will need to do due diligence.

Councilor Chase noted that he made a few amendments to the Ordinance, which include:

Under 1: “Not less than twenty four (24) hours”.....is changed to “Not less than six (6) hours....” Abd via email addressed to Towncouncilclerk@Bridgewaterma.org prior to, which shall include:

Under 1 d): Add “If applicable, a non-resident may include a” at the beginning of the sentence.

Under 2: “Within twelve (12) hours....” is changed to “Within six (6) hours....” At the beginning of the sentence and in the middle of the sentence “no case less than six (6) hours...” is changed to “no case less than two (2) hours...”.

New Header added: “Business Owners and Real Property Owners” and the following changes that are in red:

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the owner **of record** of a business, **real property or leasehold interest** in real property located within the Town who is a non-resident of the Town (or a designated employee, officer or **legal representative** of such business **or property owner or lessee**) shall be permitted to address the Town Council during such periods upon compliance with paragraph numbered 1 hereof, but shall not be required to adhere to the further requirements set forth within subparts (b) or (d), hereof.

And the Explanation be changed as noted in red:

The “Citizen Open Forum” and “Citizen Comments” periods are intended for solicitation of input from residents. Comment from a non-resident may, at times, also furnish valuable insight and should be allowed. Presently, the Council is presented with a request from a non-resident without advance notice and without any opportunity to properly identify the non-resident or, **in some instances**, evaluate the experience or background upon which basis the non-resident purports to speak. This proposed amendment would provide an opportunity for Council members to, should they individually so-choose, personally (delete: assess the merits of the comments to be rendered by) **ascertain the identity of** a non-resident **seeking permission** to speak during **a meeting of the Council** (delete: his or her allotted time).

Councilor Sousa made a motion to recommend Ordinance D-FY23-005 back to the Council with the proposed amendments, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

A roll-call vote was taken and the results were recorded as follows: Sousa – Yes; Chase – Yes; Colombotos – Absent. Motion passed 2-0-0.

E. Adjournment of Meeting

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

A roll-call vote was taken and the results were recorded as follows: Sousa – Yes; Chase – Yes; Colombotos – Absent. Motion passed 2-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48pm.

Meeting minutes being submitted in draft form by Town Council Clerk, Debra Ward