



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

April 8, 2025

7:00 PM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Council Chambers/2nd Floor

The Town Council meeting was streamed Live via BTV Television You Tube page.

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Town Council to order at 7:10pm on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 in the Council Chambers.

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

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

Councilor Perry read the names of veterans who have recently passed away and held a moment of silence:

- Leon "Skip" St. George, US Army. Passed away on March 16, 2025
- John Flaherty, US Marine. Passed away on March 27, 2025

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) March 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Councilor Chase made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 18, 2025, which was seconded by Councilor Loreti.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Town Clerk Tina Larson made an announcement regarding the Town Election. Thanked the candidates who stepped up and noted that ballots will not be mailed unless they were requested. To request vote by mail last day is . Vote in April 22nd. Also can vote absentee from tomorrow until 4/25/25. The cost of running an election is \$18k.

Council President Perry noted that sound budgets have been put together every year. Have a strong bond rating. Sharp increase in school funding, increased transportation, special education and insurance costs. Council bringing an order to propose an override to bring to the voters. Number set is a working number.

State budgets may not be fully funded leaving towns with the burden to fund departments. This override will help with funding the departments. 19 other MA communities are looking at overrides. Ask for constructive feedback.

PROCLAMATIONS

- a) Recognizing Bridgewater Television (BTV) for Its Dedication to Local Programming and Citizen Access

Dr. Perry read the proclamation and presented a proclamation to BTV Jeff Fowler, Al Lacerda and John Luck.

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

- Greg Martin, High Street: spoke about the Purple Heart Project and the signs that were installed around the Town. Formal request in front of council tonight for the raising of the Purple Heart Flag. If approved, May 1st there will be a ceremony with a flag raising. Selling Purple Heart yard signs, \$20, reach out to Veterans office. Property tax exception also on the agenda. Year 1 cost is \$3k
- Bill Wood, Hayward Street: Spoke about the flying of the Juneteenth and Pride flags. Urged the council to fly those flags for the 5th year. Spoke about 2010 override, does not stop growing. Urge caution on the \$11M increase.
- Sean Kennedy, 487 Summer Street: congratulated BTV. Spoke about the town override. Wants an audit of the school and town. Desi finds Special education out of compliance. Should not spend \$13k on a book or \$25k for a flagpole. Communication is key and need a five year budget.
- Marilee Hunt, 80 Austin Street: spoke about the presentation by Mr. Cormier conducted at the Greyhound tavern, first project using the form based code. Noted that a TIF would not benefit the town and a DIF would be a better option, such as Elm Street.
- Jim Wilder, 180 Curve Street: spoke about flags and they shouldn't fly. Does not like override. Town needs to support downtown, plan would cost nothing out of pocket, DIF would cost money.
- Lacey, Student at BR: spoke about behavior in the classroom with the number of kids and one teacher. Look at the override as a moral point of view.
- Senior at BR who lives at 2 Parkhill Lane: spoke about the importance of the Pride flag and was asked to speak two years ago during the ceremony.
- William Senesi, Student at BR: spoke about the override and how classes need to be smaller.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: spoke about the \$13k for the book and how it is funded with CPC monies and is not in favor of the override.
- Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: wants the difference between a TIF and a DIF from Finance Department.
- Anna Mitchell, 272 Flagg Street, sophomore at BR: spoke about the passion of learning and the need for funding for the schools.
- Mary Cambria, 3rd grader at Williams School: spoke about the size of the classrooms and how the teachers can't help her. Need to pass this override.
- Brad McKinnon, Spring Street: thanked Blythe for stepping up, how great Town Attorney is. Spoke about the homeless man at Friendly's and how the Town stepped up. April 19th is Town Clean up day at Town River Landing. Challenged all the candidates to bring a support group to clean portions of the town. Time not set in stone yet.
- Steve Black, 145 Lincoln Street: spoke about the division in the town and how Bridgewater needs to come together.

- Francis Sousa, Main Street: spoke about the Accessory Dwelling Ordinance and how they are needed to possibly generate income for someone to stay in their home but it needs to be 900 square feet not 800 square feet.
- Sidney Ellis, 760 North Street, 7th grade at middle school: spoke about the size of classrooms and the need for the override.
- Cynthia Bruce, 14 Heather Lane: sat silent for 45 seconds and spoke about LGPTQ youth attempting suicide and the problems they face in the schools and the Town.
- Mike Manter, Vernon Street: Spoke in support of the TIF agreement, net positive impact even with the TIF. Difficult to get financing today.
- Kristin Frechette, 1160 South Street: thanked the council about the discussions around town. Supports the override to go to the town for the vote.
- Jennifer Pimental, 10 Casey Circle: daughter is in 4th grade at Williams and now suffers from PTSD from her 3rd grade class, in favor of the override.
- Sam Baumgarten, 60 Short Street: thanked the councilors for their patience and kudos to the members of the students at BR for speaking. Noted that the welcoming resolution was tabled because we were welcoming. So the resolutions on the Pride and Juneteenth flags should be voted yes.
- Ashley Mallard, 270 Grange Park: spoke about the number for the override and why roads were added. Number is too high, fear you put in extra.

Councilor Linde made a motion to suspend the Council rules to allow Rachel King to speak, this was seconded by Councilor Striggles.

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

- Rachel King, lives in Raynham on School Committee: School Committee open and transparent, the community is concerned about class size, special education. Budget is what is needed right now.
- Christine Behkne, 36 Magnolia Way: spoke about the 6,000 students that are not being heard and their needs are not being met. Need an override to be successful.
- Kelsey Pickering, 40 Paul Joseph Lane: spoke in support of the override.
- Chrstine McStowe, 26 Magnolia Way: in favor of an override, has a 3rd grader at the Williams. People won't buy homes in Bridgewater, people will move out and home values will decrease because of the school system.
- Erin Ellis, 760 North Street : lives in Bridgewater, has 3 children in the school system and is a teacher at the Williams School; spoke in favor of the override.
- Dr. Michael Thomas, 72 Magnolia Way: in favor of the override, wants each department to give a line item of where the money is going to go so people can see where the money is going. Need strong schools to have a strong town.
- MJ Spagone, 5 Lakeshore Center: spoke about the \$13k for the book and the money that was received from CPC; also spoke about the Pride flag.

Recess from 8:40pm to 8:45pm

APPOINTMENTS

- a) Board of Registrars: Reappointment Christina Porter (R) 2025 – 2028
Councilor Striggles made a motion to re-appoint Christina Porter to the Board of Registrars, this was seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- b) DEIB Committee: Ashley Hansen-Brown 2025 – 2026
Councilor Striggles made a motion to appoint Ashley Hansen-Brown to the DEIB committee, this was seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

Councilor Linde requested that address not be redacted from resumes.

HEARINGS - None

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None

PRESENTATIONS

- a) Broad Street Project Update: Bob Cormier
Bob Cormier, Project Partner at Churchhill James, gave an update of the Broad Street Project. Resident of Bridgewater for 30 years, wife is a teacher in the district. Very challenging site. Two residents are on the cross-functional team, invested in the community.

Tax Increment Financing Agreement Proposal: not a familiar concept. An investment from the community in partnership with a private developer to encourage growth, increase tax revenue and boost economic activity. Requesting a 15 year TIF. Do not need to give a TIF for everyone. State specific guidelines for a residential mixed use TIF. Framingham approved a 15 year TIF. Showed the revamped design of the building(s). Cannot commit to commercial tenants but goal is to target a tap room brewery with common seating, an old school general store. Rear space – nice gym, physical therapy.

Community impact for school district for this type of project is low because of the closeness to a main road; projection is 4 – 6 students.

Councilor McGrath noted that she liked the change but had a few concerns about water, fire calls and police calls. Also spoke about what the project would pay for taxes over the 15 years.

Councilor Linde asked if a shorter TIF would work. Mr. Cormier noted that they are asking for what they need.

Councilor Murphy thanked Mr. Cormier for meeting with people and holding the forum and asked what would happen if the TIF does not pass? Mr. Cormier noted that he would 1) have to go back to the investors and they would pull money out and sell the parcel, 2) they could wait and sit on that lot until the Town changes; or 3) they could build it out and sell it cheap.

Councilor Ellenberg noted that she favors this as there is a blight downtown and asked what the parking situation is. Mr. Cormier noted that parking requirements for this project is 128 and they have 129. They also have parking options within 500 feet of the property.

Councilor Loreti asked about the importance of cash set aside to attract commercial business. Mr. Cormier noted that it is something that is required with the bank and they are going to want to know what the tenant improvement is.

Councilor Striggles noted that she has known Mr. Cormier for a long time and she proud of him and thanked him for believing in our town and our future.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT - None

DISCUSSIONS- None

COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

L. LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- a) Order O-FY25-042: Transfer Order - CPC Purchase and Restoration of Samuel Edson's Coroners Book
Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 3/18/25 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-0 to recommend at their 3/24/25 meeting.

Councilor Chase made a motion to approve Order O-FY25042 which was seconded by Councilor Murphy.

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

- b) Proposed Zoning Ordinance D-FY25-014: Zoning Amendment for Accessory Dwelling Units
Planning Board voted to recommend with amendments at their 2/19/25 meeting. Community and Economic Development meeting 4/7/25.

Councilor Perry noted that this item will be postponed until 4/22/25 because of issues with the 4/7/25 CED meeting.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Budget Order O-FY26-001: FY2026 Annual Town Budget
Town Manager Robinson gave a presentation of the FY26 budget. Noted the FY2026 Budget Objectives. This year our revenues cannot support the cost we are facing and it is not just because of the schools. Expenses on the town side of the budget will be cut. We are not alone. Other communities are looking at overrides. Noted the budget preparation and review process.

Noted that capital expenses are not counted in the key budget and other funding sources make up about 6% of the revenue.

Discussed the expenses including the State and County Assessments, ie. Mosquito control and MBTA.

54% of the budget goes to all of the schools and the rest goes to the town side. 82% is spent on people and the services they provide.

Debt Service Payments in FY26: voters were asked and voted yes. Listing of all debt service payments being made in FY26.

Budget challenges for FY26: most of the budget is people, salary and benefits. Expenses of utilities, gasoline, fix the buildings, janitorial services, annual audit, etc. The town will be dropping 6 positions in FY26.

School expense increases are above revenues.

Councilor Linde made a motion to extend the meeting past 10:00pm which was duly seconded by Councilor Ellenberg.

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

Steps taken to balance the budget: some hours were cut; reduce spending for expenses when it can be done.

Efficiency Measures taken over the years: contracted out animal control; shared conservation agent with Halifax; contracted out the Golf course; use SAVE and Veterans volunteers.

Capital Projects are planned and paid for from the Capital Stabilization fund – pay as you go. Include major repairs to buildings, vehicles, equipment, computers, etc.

Status of Union contract: Town has three year contracts with six unions (Police, fire, united steel workers, Library, BAA).

Service impact from Budget cuts: one firefighter/paramedic; one police cadet; Public Works – lost of mechanic and laborer; inspectional services – loss of additional help; town manager's office – less hours for one position.

Expense reductions: building supplies, training materials, conferences, janitorial services in various buildings, etc.

Proposed override details: understand impact on the residents is important but felt besides what the school needs other items should be considered.

Councilor Linde asked if more information would be given with the sewer rate increase.

Councilor Loreti asked what the current contribution for the insurance was. Ms. Robinson noted that it is 75%/25%.

Councilor McGrath asked if we have heard back from the prison on the money that they owed the Town. Ms. Robinson noted that they did meet and there were 3 different entities handling the billing. Should resolve itself.

Councilor McGrath asked why the Town stopped giving out hunting and fishing licenses? Ms. Robinson did not know.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Budget Order O-FY26-001 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

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

- b) Budget Order O-FY26-002: FY26 Water Enterprise Fund
Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Budget Order O-FY26-002 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

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

- c) Budget Order O-FY26-003: FY26 Sewer Enterprise Fund
Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Budget Order O-FY26-003 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- d) Budget Order O-FY26-004: FY26 Transfer Station Enterprise Fund
Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Budget Order O-FY26-004 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- e) Budget Order O-FY26-005: Authorization of Revolving Funds
Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Budget Order O-FY26-005 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

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

- f) Order O-FY25-048: Contract Ratification - Town Manager
Councilor Striggles made a motion to retain Order O-FY25-048 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- g) Order O-FY25-049: Order Approving a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement for the Development Project at 70-86 Broad Street

Councilor Chase made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-049 to Budget and Finance, Finance Committee and Community and Economic Development, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

Councilor Perry noted that he would also like the opinions of DPW, Town Attorney and CED Director. Attorney Rawlins noted that specific questions should be vetted and asked.

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

- h) Order O-FY25-050: Acceptance of Donation - Bridgewater Firefighter's Association
Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-050 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- i) Order O-FY25-051: Transfer Order - Flag Pole
Town Manager Robinson noted the transfer is on the agenda because in order for the town to contract with someone we need to have a transfer. To have it ready by June 1st had to get it on the agenda. Realize there is a fundraising effort taking place but if the town wants this to be done then a transfer needs to be done.

Councilor Perry noted that fundraising has raised approximately \$2,500 to date.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-051 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Loreti – No; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea. Motion passed 7-1

- j) Order O-FY25-052: Acceptance of Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs MVP Grant for Hanson Farm Conservation Restriction Purchase

Town Manager Robinson noted that this is for a grant for \$3M from the State for the purchase and development rights for Hanson Farm. Will be matched by 1% from CPC funds.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-052 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- k) Order O-FY25-053: Acceptance of Grant - High Street Dam - Town River Restoration
Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-052 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- l) Order O-FY25-054: Transfer Order - Conservation Easement/Restriction - Hanson's Farm
Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-054 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Ellenberg.

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

- m) Order O-FY25-055: Proposition 2 1/2 Ballot Question
Councilor Perry gave a brief update of the request for the override.

Councilor Striggles noted that councilors have been using the word override for several months and there has been a lot of work behind the scenes and that this is a first reading, it is a working number.

Councilor Murphy noted that he has little faith in referring this to Budget & Finance. Feels the roads need more like a debt exclusion down the road, believes school should be the priority and would just like to see that number on the override.

Councilor Linde noted that he thinks the council has an obligation to the voters to put it on the ballot. Wants the Budget and Finance meeting posted as a full in-person meeting and roads need to be a debt exclusion.

Councilor McGrath noted that we may want to hold off on the vote until after the new Town Manager starts. Let him have a say in this.

Councilor Loreti noted that an \$11M override with no discussion is fiscally irresponsible, no 5 year operating plan from school committee, need bi-weekly work sessions, attain 5 year forecast, host community input sessions and wants a third party audit.

Councilor Chase noted that the degree of due diligence that Councilor Loreti suggested is perfectly fine if the time allowed and have agreed that the school funding is what we need to address, need to advance it.

Councilor Murphy noted that he has met with our State Senator and State Representative and we need to keep going to the State. Improve our tax revenue and need the support from the tax payers in an override.

Councilor Striggles noted that she has been work with Councilwoman Riley in Raynham and they are bringing it to a vote to their voters on May 19th.

Councilor Perry noted that he would like more time but up against a time limit and wanted to get it on an agenda.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY25-055 to Budget and Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

- n) Order O-FY25-056: 2025 Special Election Warrant - June 21, 2025
Councilor Ellenberg made a motion to retain Order O-FY25-056 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

Councilor Striggles noted that she would like to have the special election the day as Raynahm.

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

- o) Ordinance D-FY25-019: Adoption of Clause 22I of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59, Section 5 (“HERO Act”)
Councilor Striggles made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY25-019 to Rules and Procedures, which was duly seconded by Councilor Murphy.

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

- p) Resolution R-FY25-009: A Resolution in Recognition of Pride Month
Councilor Striggles made a motion to retain Resolution R-FY25-009 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

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

- q) Resolution R-FY25-010: A Resolution Honoring Juneteenth
Councilor Striggles made a motion to retain Resolution R-FY25-010 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Ellenberg.

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

- r) Resolution R-FY25-011: A Resolution Honoring Purple Heart Month
Councilor Chase made a motion to retain Resolution R-FY25-011 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Eric Hoy, 120 Oakridge Lane: Teacher at the HS, urge to stick for June override vote. Major issue is retaining talent. Thanked Councilor Chase for acting now.

- Sean Kennedy, 487 Summer Street: on 4/23/25 there will be a meeting of SEPAC, for parents who have children on IEPs.
- Brady Thomas, 95 Magnolia Way: echo Councilor Murphy's frustration and reviewing information, the time for that was when the school brought up that information. Schools underfunded for years. This is not a wish list, it is a need.
- Ashley Mallard, 270 Grange Park: joint meeting held last year, the school sent an email in November, Covid money dried up. When have the police and fire taken cuts.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: not sure I would go for the override, just stick with the school. Voting – stay with Saturday.
- Elizabeth Sharp, 1000 South Street: thanked the councilors and Town Manager Robinson. The budget is \$4M short in level funding budget in having enough teachers to have 30 to 33 kids in class. Not something we can put off.
- Dan 15 Cherry Lane: In favor of an override and in favor of making the Broad Street project happen.
- MJ Spagone, 5 Lakeshore Center: budget presentation was a sobering conversation on the FY26 budget, look forward to working with the B&F committee. Recommend to the public to attend the meeting.

Councilor Linde made a motion to suspend the Council rules to allow Rachel King to speak, this was seconded by Councilor Striggles.

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

- Rachel King, lives in Raynham on School Committee: . If one town does not pass the override this would require a 40+ staff reduction. Retirements not filled. Average class size 30 to 40 students. HS – 30 to 45 students. Special Ed would be out of compliance. Loss of electives. Need to be partners in this and work together.
- Phillip Mallard, 270 Grange Park: Ashley has come to the meetings to explain what is needed, she has passion. She loves the schools, students and colleagues.
- Natalie Muurisepp, 45 Starr Road: fought hard for her children, special need twins. We need the June date for the vote.

Dr. Perry thanked everyone for coming out and speaking.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Loreti: thanked everyone for staying and appreciate the passion. Performance audit is an appropriate thing and we should consider it. How are we addressing rising yearly expenses. If passed this year what do we do next year.
- Councilor Ellenberg:: how can we increase revenue, I favor the TIF because it will bring revenue to the town in the long run. I support the override to the extent that it goes to the voters. Need more money out of the state.
- Councilor Murphy: would like the number to be \$7M or \$8M. Thanked former Councilor McKinnon for scheduling the Town Clean up Day. Fire for Effect will be 4/26 same as election day. Great t-shirts and sweatshirts for sale. Push everyone to check it out. Thanked Mr. Cormier for his presentation and outreach. Thanked the students and parents who continue to come out. We

need to move on this and that there is a ballot in June. Thanked Councilor McGrath for the incredible job that she has done.

- Councilor Linde: did not receive the November letter from the Superintendent. We cannot do behind the scenes work, there are open meeting laws.
- Councilor Chase: thanked everyone who came out this evening and those that are still here. Will be meeting with citizens at Bridgewater Bagel on Saturday from 9am to 11am and encourage people to stop by.
- Councilor Striggles: how we treat each other does matter. How we behave in this room matters, decorum matters. Emotions are very high. Been working since January to make sure I was well educated and understood every line item.
- Councilor McGrath: enjoy being a councilor to listen to the residents. April 19th is a cleanup at the Nip. Ironworks Park cleanup is the same day. Councilor Striggles represented us well, Wants Citizens Advisory Committee come before the council.
- Dr. Perry: thanked everyone for coming tonight. None of this is happening at an ideal time frame. There is not enough money in the pie. Last override passed in 2010. On the lower side of what we spend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a) Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

Councilor Perry noted that he will entertain a motion to move into Executive Session under Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

Councilor Chase made a motion to move into Executive Session, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

A Roll-Call Vote was taken with the results recorded as follows: Loreti – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Perry – Yea; Linde – Yea; Chase – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea;
Motion passes 8-0

ADJOURNMENT

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, April 22, 2025, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.