



Town of Bridgewater Rules and Procedure Committee

July 24, 2025

10:00 AM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Conference Room 201A/Second Floor

MEETING AGENDA

A Quorum of the Town Council may be in attendance.

A. Call to Order

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a) May 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes

C. Public Comment

D. Items for Discussion

- a) 2022 Town Council Charter Change Proposed Ordinances:

1. D-FY22-002: Town Charter correction of typographical and punctuation Errors
2. D-FY22-004: Town Charter Article III, Elected Officials, Library Trustees
3. D-FY22-005: Town Charter "Town" to "City" Amendment
4. D-FY22-006: Town Charter Article II, Term of Office
5. D-FY22-010: Town Charter Article IV, City Manager Term of Office
6. D-FY22-011: Town Charter Article V, Administrative Organizations, City Attorney, Term Limits

E. Public Comment

F. Adjournment of Meeting



Town of Bridgewater Rules and Procedure Committee

May 27, 2025

7:00 PM

The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.

To attend via video, click on the link below:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83275109787>

To attend via phone, dial: 1(646) 876-9923

Meeting ID: 832 7510 9787

MEETING MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor McGrath called the Town Council Rules & Procedures Committee meeting to order at 7:00pm pm Tuesday, May 27, 2025. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Council Members Present:

Councilor McGrath

Councilor Linde

Councilor Kennedy

B. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

C. ITEMS REFERRED

- a) Proposed Ordinance D-FY25-010: Proposed Amendment to Chapter 157, Article II, Section 1

Councilor McGrath noted what the requested changes are.

Councilor Kennedy agrees with the intent but thinks accordance with the Federal Public Law is referencing Federal buildings and is wondering if that needs to be changed.

Councilor McGrath noted that the State usually follows Federal when it comes to flags.

Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend a motion to change “accordance” t “the spirit of”. Which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Councilor Linde made a motion to recommend with amendments. Which was duly seconded by Councilor Kennedy.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

- b) Proposed Ordinance D-FY25-016: Bridgewater Town Charter Article III, Section 4-3, Elected Officials Powers of Appointment

Councilor McGrath noted that this references the wrong Charter information. Should make a recommendation that the Town Council amend because it is not listed correctly.

Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend amending the following: Change Article “III” to be “IV”; change “Elected Officials” to “Town Manager” and (b) “Multiple Member Appointive Organizations” to “Boards, Committees and Agencies”. This was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Councilor Linde noted that the request is from the Town Manager Ad Hoc Committee. It would need to go to the State and then back to the voters.

Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend that “majority” be changed to “2/3”, this was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

- c) Proposed Ordinance D-FY25-017: Proposed Amendment to Part II – Administrative Code: Chapter 60, Article I, Section 1 – Elections

Councilor Linde made a motion to take c) under Items Referred, which was duly seconded Councilor Kennedy.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Councilor Linde made a motion to suspend the rules and allow Tina Larson to speak, which was seconded by Councilor Kennedy.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Town Clerk Tina Larson spoke regarding the elections of the Town and feels that 7am to 8pm is a long day and her staff members get paid overtime for 15 hours, expensive proposition. With

early voting not so sure need extended hours. State election is mandated by the State, this is only for town elections. Would like to propose 10am to 8pm, that is what Raynham does.

Councilor Kennedy looked into this and where the Charter stands and MGL. From what he can tell you can move the time to 10am but it must end at 8pm. The Saturday date is in the Charter and would require a Charter change.

Councilor McGrath noted that many people work on Saturdays and the time should stay the same. Keep it the same so no one gets confused, paying overtime is not that much.

Councilor Linde noted that people should have every opportunity to vote; not concerned about the money. Not in favor of changing the hours.

Councilor Kennedy asked what the amount of savings it would be if shortening 3 hours. Town Clerk Larson noted that it would save 3 hours of overtime for staff and poll workers.

Councilor Kennedy concerned on who actually controls the decision. Mass General Laws gives it to the Town Clerk but we do not have anything in there. Wants to make sure it is something we can do. If there is nothing specific in the Charter that everything needs to be in accordance with State Law. Not sure we are able to do this.

Councilor McGrath noted that this goes through the Attorney, who looks at it prior to first reading.

Councilor Linde made a motion to keep hours that are set.

Councilor Kennedy questions whether the section referenced in the Charter is correct.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Councilor Linde withdrew his motion.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer to Town Council to discuss further, which was seconded by Councilor Kennedy.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

- d) Ordinance D-FY25-019: Adoption of Clause 22I of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59, Section 5 (“HERO Act”)

Councilor McGrath noted that this is to give veterans a cost of living.

Councilor Linde made a motion to recommend removing Fred Chase from being a sponsor, which was duly seconded by Councilor Kennedy.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend with amendments, which was duly seconded by Councilor Kennedy.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

- e) General Ordinance D-FY25-020: Adoption of Clause 22J of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 59, Section 5 (“HERO Act”)

Councilor McGrath noted that this is to give veterans with certain disability would get an increase. It would not be in effect until FY27 because of the timing.

Councilor Linde made a motion to recommend, which was duly seconded.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Councilor McGrath asked the other councilors if meetings should stay via Zoom and Councilor Kennedy noted that being able to do research on his home computer is beneficial to him.

Councilor Linde noted that there were some Charter orders that were submitted to Rules that never made it out of Rules.

Councilor McGrath noted that no committee should have anything more than a month, need to change the Charter.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

E. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Councilor Linde made a motion to adjourn, which was duly seconded Councilor Kennedy.

A roll call vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Linde – Yea. Motion passed 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

TOWN COUNCIL CHARTER CHANGE ORDINANCES-2022

ORDER NO.	DESCRIPTION	COUNCIL SPONSOR	DATE INTRODUCED (1 st READING)	Referred to Committee	Status
FY22-002	Town Charter Amendment for correction of typographical and punctuation errors	Gallagher and George	09/07/21	Rules & Procedures	Voted not to recommend at R&P meeting 3/24/22.
FY22-004	Town Charter Article III, Elected Officials, Library Trustees	Gallagher and George	09/07/21	Rules & Procedures	Voted not to recommend at R&P meeting on 4/11/22.
FY22-005	Town Charter "Town" to "City" Amendment	Gallagher and George	09/07/21	Rules & Procedures	Voted not to recommend; R&P meeting 3/24/22.
FY22-006	Town Charter Article II, Term of Office	Gallagher and George	09/07/21	Rules & Procedures	Motion to table by R&P on 1/5/22
FY22-010	Town Charter Article IV, City Manager Term of Office	Gallagher and George	09/07/21	Rules & Procedures	Voted not to recommend; R&P meeting 12/21/21.
FY22-011	Town Charter Article V, Administration Organizations, City Attorney, Term Limits	Gallagher and George	09/07/21	Rules & Procedures	Voted not to recommend by R&P 1/5/22.



Bridgewater Town Council

In Town Council, Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Council Ordinance: D-FY22-002

Introduced By: Councilor Dennis Gallagher and Councilor Shawn George
Date Introduced: September 7, 2021
First Reading: September 7, 2021
Second Reading:
Third Reading:
Amendments Adopted:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-002

Bridgewater Town Charter Amendment for Correction of Typographical and Punctuation Errors

ORDERED that the Town Charter shall be amended by fixing all typographical and punctuation errors that were present in the review of the charter by the charter review committee and notated on the proposed charter changes as highlighted. Such amendment shall be effective only after approval by the Town Council and the State Legislature.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Bridgewater Town Council

In Town Council, Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Council Ordinance: D-FY22-004

Introduced By: Councilor Dennis Gallagher and Councilor Shawn George
Date Introduced: September 7, 2021
First Reading: September 7, 2021
Second Reading:
Third Reading:
Amendments Adopted:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-004

Bridgewater Town Charter Article III, Elected Officials, Library Trustees

ORDERED that Section 3-2 of the Town Charter shall be amended as below:

“a)Composition, Election - There shall be a Board of Library Trustees composed of nine members, all elected by and from the voters at large.

b)Term of Office - The terms of Library Trustee members shall be staggered terms of three years each, beginning on the day following the election for 3 years and continuing until a successor is qualified.

c)Powers and Duties- The board of library trustees shall insure that the Bridgewater Public Library, a public institution supported and managed by the Library Department and the Library Board of Trustees provide all members of the Bridgewater community the right and means to free and open access to information and ideas and that the Bridgewater Public Library protects intellectual freedom, promotes literacy and encourages life-long learning. The powers set forth herein shall be vested in the Board of Trustees as a ministerial body in furtherance of these duties and obligations.

d)Filling of Vacancies - If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Library Trustees, whether by failure to elect or otherwise, the Library Trustees have 30 calendar days from the date the vacancy is declared to exist by the City Clerk under section 109 of chapter 41 of the General Laws, to act to appoint a person to fill the vacancy. The appointments will be approved by the City Council. If the vacancy is not filled within 30 calendar days after the vacancy is declared to exist, the appointment will defer to the City Council. The appointee will serve for the balance of the unexpired term. A person so chosen shall be sworn and commence to serve forthwith. Library Trustees or City Council shall give consideration to whichever of the defeated candidates for the seat in which the vacancy is declared to exist, received the highest number of votes at the last regular City election immediately preceding the date the vacancy is declared to exist.

(e)Collections – The books, periodicals, papers and any other material curated by the Bridgewater Public Library shall be in the custody and control of the board of library trustees, subject to the Director’s responsibility to manage circulating materials and disposition of outdated materials. The board of library trustees may direct the Director of the Library to make certain items, collections or items related to specific subject matters available as a special collection, subject to Director’s obligations regarding the orderly management of the Bridgewater Public Library and the Library Department. The board of library trustees may make, or authorize the Director to make such disposition of old and unused papers and books as they may think for the best interests of the City. The proceeds, if any, of such disposition shall be retained and segregated by the City. The board of library trustees shall have the full and sole power to expend such funds, solely in their discretion, to further the duties set forth in section 3-2 (c).

NOT FOR ACTION – FIRST READING ONLY

(f) Gifts - All gifts of property, including but not limited to funds, that have been, is, or will be given, to the Bridgewater Public Library shall be in the custody and control of the board of library trustees, subject to the board's acceptance of such property and any restrictions placed upon it. The board of library trustees shall have the power and authority to liquidate or dispose of any such gifted property, subject to any accepted restrictions. The board of library trustees shall have the full and sole power to expend any such funds, or the funds resulting from the liquidation or disposition of such property, solely in their discretion, to further the duties set forth in section 3-2 (c), herein, subject to any gift restriction. Any funds described herein shall be retained and segregated by the City. Property provided to the Library by the Library Department for the support, maintenance and operation of the Library by the Library Department, excluding property subject to 3-2(e), shall not be considered property given to the Library for purposes of this section.

(g) Library Director- Except as set forth herein, the Library Director shall only be hired upon the City Manager receiving a written recommendation from the board of library trustees. Except as set forth herein, the City council may not ratify the appointment of the Library Director if the City Manager has not received a written recommendation from the board of library trustees. Should the Library Board of Trustees fail to provide a written recommendation within 180 calendar days from the date the position becomes publicly posted, the City Manager may proceed with the hiring process without the Board of Trustees recommendation and the City Council may ratify such hiring. The City Manager will provide the board of library trustees with term length and renewal conditions of any employment contract entered into with the Library Director. The City Manager may only renew or extend the employment contract of the Library Director upon receipt of an additional written recommendation of the board of library trustees to do so. In the case of an employment at will situation, any period of consecutive employment for more than one year shall be considered an extension. The City Manager shall include that a member of the Board of Library Trustees is present for a least one interview for each potential candidate.

(h) City Collector-Treasurer- The City treasurer shall act as treasurer of the board of library trustees. The board of library trustees may request from the treasurer a report setting out the funds retained by the City and subject to the custody and control of the board of library trustees.

(i) Annual Fiscal Report- The board of library trustees shall make an annual report to the City, no later than January 1st, of its receipts and expenditures and of the property in its custody and control and of any gifts or bequests made to the library."

Such amendment shall be effective only after approval by the Town Council and the State Legislature.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Bridgewater Town Council

In Town Council, Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Council Ordinance: D-FY22-005

Introduced By: Councilor Dennis Gallagher and Councilor Shawn George
Date Introduced: September 7, 2021
First Reading: September 7, 2021
Second Reading:
Third Reading:
Amendments Adopted:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-005

Bridgewater Town Charter "Town" to "City" Amendment

ORDERED that the Town Charter shall be amended to change all references in the current charter that use term "town" to "city." Such amendment shall be effective only after approval by the Town Council and the State Legislature.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Bridgewater Town Council

In Town Council, Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Council Ordinance: D-FY22-006

Introduced By: Councilor Dennis Gallagher and Councilor Shawn George
Date Introduced: September 7, 2021
First Reading: September 7, 2021
Second Reading:
Third Reading:
Amendments Adopted:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-006

Bridgewater Town Charter Article II, Term of Office

ORDERED that the Town Charter, Article II Legislative Branch Sec 2-1c Term of Office shall be amended by deleting "beginning on the second Monday," and replacing it with "next business day." Such amendment shall be effective only after approval by the Town Council and the State Legislature.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Bridgewater Town Council

In Town Council, Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Council Ordinance: D-FY22-010

Introduced By: Councilor Dennis Gallagher and Councilor Shawn George
Date Introduced: September 7, 2021
First Reading: September 7, 2021
Second Reading:
Third Reading:
Amendments Adopted:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-010

Bridgewater Town Charter Article IV, City Manager Term of Office

ORDERED that The Town Charter, Article IV, Section 4-1 shall be amended to reflect a that the Council shall appoint a City Manager to a maximum 5-year renewable term. Such amendment shall be effective only after approval by the Town Council, the State Legislature and the voters of the Town of Bridgewater.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Bridgewater Town Council

In Town Council, Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Council Ordinance: D-FY22-011

Introduced By: Councilor Dennis Gallagher and Councilor Shawn George
Date Introduced: September 7, 2021
First Reading: September 7, 2021
Second Reading:
Third Reading:
Amendments Adopted:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-011

Bridgewater Town Charter Article V, Administrative Organizations, City Attorney, Term Limits

ORDERED that The Town Charter, Article V, Section 5-3, Town Attorney, paragraph (a) shall be amended by replacing the provision with "A city solicitor shall be appointed by the city council to a maximum of a 5-year renewable term." Such amendment shall be effective only after approval by the Town Council, the State Legislature and the voters of the Town of Bridgewater.

Explanation:

This changes the appointment authority to the Town Council and changes the title to City Solicitor.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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