



## Town of Bridgewater Rules and Procedure Committee

September 9, 2025

7:00 PM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Conference Room 201A/2nd Floor

and via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88414883048>

*A Quorum of the Town Council May be in Attendance*

### MEETING AGENDA

**A. Call to Order**

**B. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a) July 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes

**C. Public Comment**

**D. Items Referred**

- a) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-002: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter: Article IV, Section 4-1 Town Manager Term of Office
- b) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-003: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter Article VIII, Section 8-2 Citizen Referendum Petition Timeframe
- c) Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004: Amendment to Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 - Business Ethics and Conduct

**E. Discussion**

- a) 2022 Town Council Charter Change Proposed Ordinances
1. D-FY22-004: Town Charter Article III, Elected Officials, Library Trustees
  2. D-FY22-005: Town Charter "Town" to "City" Amendment
  3. D-FY22-011: Town Charter Article V, Administrative Organizations, City Attorney, Term Limits
- b) Suggested Charter Changes from the Charter Committee

**F. Public Comment**

**G. Adjournment of Meeting**



**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**

Councilor McGrath called the Town Council Rules & Procedures Committee meeting to order at 10:00a.m. on Thursday, July 24, 2025. The meeting was held in Conference Room 201A/2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Academy Building.

**Council Members Present:**

Councilor McGrath  
Councilor Linde  
Councilor Kennedy

**B. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a) May 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes  
*Councilor Kennedy made a motion to approve the May 27, 2025 meeting minutes, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.*

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

**C. Public Comment - None**

**D. Items for Discussion**

- a) 2022 Town Council Charter Change Proposed Ordinances:
  - 1. D-FY22-002: Town Charter correction of typographical and punctuation Errors  
*Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-002, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.*

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

2. D-FY22-004: Town Charter Article III, Elected Officials, Library Trustees  
*Councilor Linde made a motion to suspend the rules and allow Mr. Ivaldi to speak, which was duly seconded by Councilor Kennedy.*

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

Councilor Linde noted that the Library Trustees wanted to come before the Town Council to discuss this. Trustees have an issue about their role. Town Manager hires the Director of the Library not the Trustees.

Mr. Ivaldi noted that the Trustees want to provide a written recommendation not be the only one to hire. Trustees want to be present at each interview. Trustees are different than other boards and committees; want to have more control of the money they get and is spent. This is meant to give them more say in how the Library functions. Right now they have no say.

*Councilor Linde made a motion to postpone Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-004 to the next scheduled meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Kennedy.*

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

Councilor Linde would like a Library Trustee at the next meeting.

3. D-FY22-005: Town Charter "Town" to "City" Amendment  
Councilor Kennedy noted that there are designations that are specific to Town and Cities. Would like Town attorney to provide insight into this. Not saying I don't support this but not sure of the repercussions of this.

Councilor Linde noted that he believes there is more money available for cities, good to have legal advice. Should talk to MMA. People want the town feel but if we have the opportunity to get more money.

Councilor Kennedy noted that he has heard residents who do not want the Town to become a City. What is my effect down the road. If becoming a city does it give more control to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Ivaldi noted that the Charter Change Committee did this because we wanted to be consistent with what we are. We are a city form of government. Can still call yourself a town with signage.

Councilor McGrath asked why when formed did we keep it as Town and not change to a city and Mr. Ivaldi noted that people voted not to be called a city.

*Councilor Linde made a motion to postpone Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-005 to the next scheduled meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Kennedy.*

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

Councilor Linde noted that he would like to get more information and research from Attorney.

4. D-FY22-006: Town Charter Article II, Term of Office  
Councilor McGrath noted that D-FY22-006 was combined with D-FY22-007.

5. D-FY22-010: Town Charter Article IV, City Manager Term of Office  
Councilor Kennedy noted that shall appoint to a maximum 5 year renewable term to me notes that it is up to 5 years.

Councilor McGrath thinks 3 years is good and not 5 years, this already exists.

Mr. Ivaldi noted that the Charter dictates what the contract needs to say, nothing in there drives the contract.

Councilor McGrath recommended that the ordinance be tabled so we can make a charter change ourselves.

*Councilor Kennedy made a motion to table Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-010, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.*

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

6. D-FY22-011: Town Charter Article V, Administrative Organizations, City Attorney, Term Limits

Mr. Ivaldi noted that the Charter Review committee felt there needed to be a term put on the Town Attorney, recommending 3 year renewable term.

Councilor Lindae noted that he thinks it should be every 3 years, would love to see a municipal law firm.

Mr. Ivaldi noted that he has no idea who changed the wording. Don't feel the Town Manager should be hiring the Town Attorney. Shows that they are representing the Town Manager not the Town.

Councilor Kennedy noted that he would be in favor of this except the five year term.

Councilor McGrath noted that she would like to start fresh and look into it more, would like to speak with the Town Manager.

*Councilor Linde made a motion to table Proposed Ordinance D-FY22-011, which was duly seconded by Councilor Kennedy.*

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

**E. Public Comment**

Mr Ivaldi: only represented a small portion of what was recommended. Added a table of contents, update definitions, gender neutral language. We do not have a Home Rule Charter we have a Special Charter. Page 8 3 have moved forward. Page 9 none have been acted upon. Why post just on the Enterprise, should be posting on the Town Facebook page.

Councilor Kennedy noted that open meeting law says it needs to be posted in the Enterprise.

Mr. Ivaldi also noted that on page 10 right now it is 30 days for approval and want to change is to 72 hours.

Councilor Kennedy noted that he would need to look at citizen petitions. Not opposed to shorten it but has to be in accordance with other stuff.

Mr. Ivaldi: better clarity. Page 15 about financial management , not acted upon. List of the current approved projects and status. Annual audit looking at operational functions and making recommendations. Audit Committee that does it yearly – outside help or volunteers.

Mr. Ivaldi: citizen participation – lengthen the time to gather signatures. Article 9 no changes. Added Enforcement of Charter – gives the Council President to manage through any Charter violations. We have a standing violation now with Charter Objections. President is supposed to ask is there any Charter Objection before every vote. Removing Article 10. Not need anymore.

**F. Adjournment of Meeting**

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:57am.



## Bridgewater Town Council

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Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor  
Mark Linde, Councilor  
Date Introduced: 8/12/2025  
First Reading: 8/12/2025  
Second Reading:  
Amendments Adopted:  
Third Reading:  
Date Adopted:  
Date Effective:

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### **Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-002: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter: Article IV, Section 4-1 Town Manager Term of Office**

**ORDERED** that pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 43B; the Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in Town Council assembled vote to amend the Bridgewater Town Charter, Article IV, Section 4-1 as follows:

Replace existing language with the following:

The Town Manager shall be appointed by the Town Council for a term not to exceed three (3) years, which may be renewed for additional terms of up to three (3) years each upon a majority vote of the full Town Council, subject to the procedures for appointment and removal outlined in this Article.

**Said Amendment shall only become effective and is contingent upon approval by the Town Council, the State Legislature and the voters of the Town of Bridgewater.**

#### **Explanation:**

*As proposed by the 2021 Charter Review Committee, the purpose of this ordinance is to amend Article IV, Section 4-1 of the Bridgewater Town Charter to establish a maximum three-year term for the Town Manager, renewable by majority vote of the Town Council, to ensure periodic performance review while maintaining administrative stability, in compliance with M.G.L. c. 43B and the Charter (Article I, Section 1-4). Pursuant to Article II, Section 2-9, this ordinance shall be published in full in at least one newspaper of general circulation within the Town of Bridgewater at least ten (10) days before its final passage by the Town Council, or, if exceeding eight octavo pages, in a municipal bulletin or printed pamphlet. The ordinance shall take effect upon approval by the Town Council, the Massachusetts State Legislature, and a majority of Bridgewater voters at a regular or special town election, per Article II, Section 2-7(a) and Article I, Section 1-4.*

#### **Committee Referrals and Dispositions:**

NOT FOR ACTION - FIRST READING  
REFER TO RULES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Attachments:           None



## Bridgewater Town Council

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Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor  
Date Introduced: 8/12/2025  
First Reading: 8/12/2025  
Second Reading:  
Amendments Adopted:  
Third Reading:  
Date Adopted:  
Date Effective:

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### **Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-003: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter Article VIII, Section 8-2 Citizen Referendum Petition Timeframe**

**ORDERED** that pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 43B; the Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in Town Council assembled vote to amend the Bridgewater Town Charter, Article VIII, Section 8-2 as follows:

Replace the existing language regarding the timeframe for submitting referendum petitions with the following:

#### **Citizen Referendum Procedures; Referendum Petition; Effect on Final Passage**

If within **30 days** after the final passage of a measure, a petition signed by voters equal in number to at least 5 per cent of the total number of voters and addressed to the town council, protesting against the measure or any part thereof taking effect, is filed with the elected town clerk, the same shall thereupon and thereby be suspended from taking effect and the town council, as the case may be, shall immediately reconsider the measure or part thereof and if such measure or part thereof is not entirely rescinded, the town council shall submit the same, to a vote of the voters either at the next regular town election or at a special election which may, in its discretion, be called for the purpose and the measure or part thereof shall forthwith become null and void unless a majority of the voters voting on the same at the election vote in favor thereof.

**Said Amendment shall only become effective and is contingent upon approval by the Town Council, the State Legislature and the voters of the Town of Bridgewater.**

#### **Explanation:**

*As proposed by the 2021 Charter Review Committee, the purpose of this ordinance is to amend Article VIII, Section 8-2 of the Bridgewater Town Charter to extend the timeframe for submitting citizen referendum petitions from 10 days to 30 days after the final passage of a measure, enhancing voter participation and access to the referendum process while maintaining compliance with the Charter and M.G.L. c. 43B. This change provides citizens with additional time to organize and gather signatures for petitions, promoting greater engagement in town governance. The ordinance requires approval by the Town Council, the*

NOT FOR ACTION - FIRST READING  
REFER TO RULES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

*Massachusetts State Legislature, and the voters of Bridgewater, as mandated by Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution.*

**Committee Referrals and Dispositions:**

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Attachments:           None



## Bridgewater Town Council

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Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor  
Date Introduced: 8/12/2025  
First Reading: 8/12/2025  
Second Reading:  
Amendments Adopted:  
Third Reading:  
Date Adopted:  
Date Effective:

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### **Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004: Amendment to Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 - Business Ethics and Conduct**

**ORDERED** that pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 268A; the Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater, Massachusetts in Town Council assembled vote to amend the Bridgewater General Ordinances, Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1, Business Ethics and Conduct as follows:

Replace the existing language for Required Reporters with the following:

Pursuant to the provisions of Ordinance #D-FY26-004 (effective date: TBD) the Required Reporters are listed as the following:

A. Heads of the following departments:

- Board of Assessors (Principal Assessor)
- Fire and EMS (Fire Chief)
- Public Works (Director, including Roadways/Highway)
- Community and Economic Development (Director, including Building and Zoning Official/Inspector of Buildings)
- Plumbing and Gas Inspector
- Police (Police Chief)
- Sealer of Weights and Measures
- Finance (Director/Town Accountant, including Treasurer/Collector)
- Wiring Inspector/Assistant Inspector
- Human Resources (Director)
- Informational Technologies (Director)
- Hearings Officer
- Elder Affairs (Director)

NOT FOR ACTION - FIRST READING  
REFER TO RULES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

- Library (Director)
- Veterans' (Director/Veterans' Agent)
- Parks and Recreation (Director)

B. The following Town officials and Town employees:

- Conservation Agent
- Health Agent and Assistant Health Agent
- Town Council (All Members)
- Town Counsel and Associate Town Counsel
- Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager

C. All members of the following Boards, Committees, or Commissions:

- Affordable Housing Trust
- Board of Assessors
- Community Preservation Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Financial Committee
- Board of Health
- Historic District Commission
- Housing Authority
- Planning Board
- Water and Sewer Board
- Zoning Board of Appeals

**Explanation:**

*The purpose of this ordinance is to amend the Business Ethics and Conduct section of Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 of the Bridgewater General Ordinances, superseding Ordinance #D-2013-002 (effective November 15, 2013), to update the list of required reporters for the Statement of Financial Interest to promote transparency and accountability in compliance with the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter (Article I, Section 1-8) and M.G.L. c. 268A. It updates outdated references (e.g., changing "Roadways (Highway)" to "Public Works"), includes new departments formed after 2013, and expands the list to include members of boards, committees, and commissions with moderate to high risk of conflicts (e.g., those with regulatory, permitting, or fiscal authority, per M.G.L. c. 268A, Sections 19-23).*

**Committee Referrals and Dispositions:**

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
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Attachments:           None