



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

September 16, 2025

7:00 PM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Council Chamber - Second Floor

The Town Council meeting is being streamed Live via You Tube.

Go to the Town of Bridgewater Facebook Page for the link.

MEETING AGENDA

Due to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements, discussions will not take place during Public Comment periods. If appropriate, responses to questions and concerns will be given by the Town Manager at a future Town Council meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Loreti called the Town Council meeting to order at 7:00pm on Tuesday, September 16, 2025 in the Council Chambers.

Councilors Present: Adelene Ellenberg, Sonya Striggles, Mary McGrath, Johnny Loreti, Paul Murphy, Sean Kennedy, Marilee Hunt, Mark Linde and Dr. Kevin Perry.

Also in attendance was Town Manager Justin Casanova-Davis, Town Attorney Jason Rawlins, CED Director Bob Rulli and Finance Director Laurie Guerrini.

Councilor Loreti noted that there were no veteran deaths and asked for a moment of silence for all the veterans and their families.

Councilor Perry made a motion to take Q. Executive Session out of turn, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

Councilor Loreti read the Executive Session language into the record.

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

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

The Town Council went into Executive Session in Conference Room 201A at 7:03pm.

The Town Council came back from Executive Session at 7:21p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

September 2, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Councilor Hunt has edits to the September 2nd meeting minutes and asked that they be on the next agenda.

Councilor Perry made a motion to continue the September 2, 2025 meeting minutes to the next meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Councilor Loreti read a statement regarding 9/11, Charlie Kirk and about political violence.

PROCLAMATIONS

- a) Honoring Emily Stone on the Occassion of her 103rd Birthday
Councilor Loreti read the proclamation for Ms. Emily Stone on her 103rd birthday into the record.
- b) City of Peace Proclamation
Councilor Perry read the City of Peach proclamation into the record.

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

- Francis Jeffries, Michelle Road: spoke about the City of Peace proclamation, what it means and the events that will be taking place.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: in favor of ordinance 005 and of the staffing study. BSU gift generous but could have done better. Also commented on all alcohol licenses in town.
- Lisa Buzzell-Curley: thanked Marilee and the BIA for doing the winter lights and they are looking for others to take over that. Al, Lisa and Jeff Fowler are volunteering to take over that project. Not asking the town for money, not town funded, similar to the 4th of July.
- Al Lacerda: important that we keep this tradition going forward.
- MJ Spagone, 5 Lake Shore Center: spoke about the organizational review on the agenda. Also spoke about the marginalized communities.

APPOINTMENTS - None

HEARINGS - None

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None

PRESENTATIONS - None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- a) Fire Station Update

CED Director Rulli noted that they are working on delivery schedules. Still shooting for transition sometime in December. Turning on equipment, moving technology in. Ribbon cutting looking like it will be at the end of January/Early February. At about 85% completion. If anyone wants to do a tour of the station coordinate through the Town Council Clerk and then we can make that happen.

Councilor Murphy asked why the finance log is absent on this agenda and Mr. Rulli noted that there was no change line this month, first time since the project started.

b) SHI Update

CED Director Rulli noted that the Town is at 10.85% and intends on staying there. Jasmine Way has been dormant for 12 years, sold through a foreclosure. Adding Murphy's Landing that has for sale units. Comfortable we will stay above 10%.

Councilor Loreti asked how many units is .85 and Mr. Rulli noted that it would be between 80 to 90 units.

Councilor Ellenberg asked if Form Based zoning is applicable to this situation and will it be applicable to Hale Street. Mr. Rulli noted Form Based code does not have any bearing on this and the 5 stories is the rear of Campus Plaza.

c) 106 Hale Street Update

CED Director Rulli noted that his office has been in constant conversations with BSU and DCAM. Expressed the Town's concerns with respect to water and sewer capacity. DCAM has acknowledged that water and sewer is an issue and sent a letter that will be a positive for the town to get money. If this is going to work for the governor it has to work for the town.

Councilor Kennedy asked if there are any concerns about hazmat material on this property. Mr. Rulli noted that he has heard that a lot and that the Commonwealth will not buy dirty land. The Town does not own the land but it has been remediated.

Councilor Ellenberg asked if this is going to be applied with the 15 units per acre criteria at Hale Street? Mr. Rulli noted that 15 units per acre is a minimum requirement. What the exact number is he does not know. If they go by the Form Based code there are dimensional requirements that any developer has to follow.

Mr. Rulli noted that currently the property is an asset of the Commonwealth of MA. They have an RFP out to see if there is a developer that wants to build on that. If conveyed to a private developer then we would get tax dollars, which we currently do not get.

Councilor Kennedy asked if there is anything that the town can do to proactively to bring in more money for sewer and roads. Mr. Rulli noted that his office is currently doing that now, leveraging our position. Comfortable with the information that we received that the door is open more than ever before that the State knows we need assistance. We are looking at alternatives for water and sewer.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that the town is looking at the opportunity to leverage this. DCAM specifically mentioned a letter for grant funds. The Town raised traffic and safety concerns, not just sitting and allowing the project to happen.

d) Municipal Energy Aggregation Update

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that there is a timeline and prices in the packet, will be going out to the market to get the pricing. If not where we want it to be will not act on it. This is an opt out program.

Councilor Linde noted that he would like to see this as a presentation at a future council meeting.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that the Town would provide a lot of community notification if we execute pricing.

e) Town Website Update

Town Manager Casanova-Davis thanked the residents who replied to the on-line survey, had about 100 responses. Currently at the design phase. IT department is working with the departments. Will have a more robust roll-out when we get closer. Potential December launch. We will be changing from mass.org to a mass.gov domain. .gov domain provides more protection against phishing. We need more pictures of Bridgewater and will be asking residents for those.

f) Downtown Area Update

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that he is working with Fire, Police, DPW and CED to improve the pedestrian access in the Downtown area. Rapid flashing beacons are \$20k, looking at doing this work. Open period for submitting complete street grants and will be submitting for the downtown area.

g) Organizational Review

Town Manager Casanova-Davis discussed the draft scope of the review in the packet, noting that it is prudent to have a third party look at the organization. Cost is about \$30k. Would like to pursue this. If we execute a contract within the next few weeks we could get data by February or March. We would do a transfer in the middle of the year for the funds.

Councilor Perry noted that this is something that was addressed in the Town Manager goals and would be in support of this.

Councilor McGrath noted that she thinks this is a good idea and asked how this company was picked. Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that Collins Center has done many organizational reviews for other towns.

Councilor Kennedy noted that maybe the scope could be to include interviews with chair persons who interact with department heads. Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that he looked into that and it would cost more and would delay the timeline. Would push it further into the budget season.

Councilor Linde noted that he thinks this is a great idea.

Councilor Loreti noted that he is in full support of this and voted this in his Town Manager goals. Also noted that the Final report says February 2026 and asked if that would be beginning or end? Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that he is trying to be early February but did not want to commit, do not want to speed through this process.

Future items:

Councilor Murphy would like to know when a Town entity (ie Library) signs on to support town events is there a process and if not, need to address.

DISCUSSIONS

a) **Boards, Committees, Commissions**

Councilor McGrath noted that the Town has been trying to fill vacancies on the Board and Commissions and thought maybe the Town could reach out to a younger generation. The seniors do not have electives anymore so maybe boards could address the seniors and maybe reach out to BSU students.

Councilor Linde noted that there was an outreach effort made but it was only once. Also asked to be appointed to a board or commission do you have to be 18 years old?

Councilor Striggles noted that she thinks we need to re-examine who is eligible and see if we can get more people. Maybe add a line item to every agenda. Maybe get those that do not get elected to join a board.

Town Attorney Rawlins noted that a member of a board must be a register voter, which has an age limitation.

Councilor Murphy asked if a last updated date could be added to the on-line report.

Councilor Perry suggested more on the website.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that he has been working with Josh to have Boards, Commission come before the Town Council to give updates.

Councilor Kennedy noted that maybe the Town could let people know what the time commitment is to see if they can fit it into their schedule. Is there a guide we can point someone to with expectations of a meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Finance:

Councilor Murphy noted that the Budget & Finance Committee met before the Town Council meeting and had a good discussion on the general ledger.

Rules and Procedures

Councilor McGrath noted that the Rules and Procedures committee met last week and referred 3 items to the Town Council.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- a) Order O-FY26-014: Transfer Order - CPC First Parish Unitarian Church Window Project
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 9/16/25. Finance Committee voted 5-1 to recommend at their 9/8/25 meeting.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-014, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

Councilor Linde recused himself from the vote because he is a member of the church.

Councilor Hunt recused herself from the vote because she is married to the Chair of the CPC.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Recused; Linde - Recused.
Motion passed 7-0-2.

- b) Order O-FY26-018: Acceptance of Donation – Howard Foundation
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 9/16/25. Finance Committee voted 6-0 to recommend at their 9/8/25 meeting.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-018, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde – Yea.
Motion passed 9-0.

- c) Order O-FY26-019: Acceptance of Donation to Parks & Recreation Department - Ron Enos
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 9/16/25. Finance Committee voted 6-0 to recommend at their 9/8/25 meeting.

Councilor Linde made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-019, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

- d) Order O-FY26-020: Acceptance of Gift - Bridgewater State University
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance meeting 9/16/25. Finance Committee voted 6-0 to recommend at their 9/8/25 meeting.

Councilor Perry made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-020, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Order O-FY26-021: To Request the Legislation to Allow an Additional All Alcohol Beverages Package Store License for 233 Broad Street
Voice vote to Retain at Town Council.

Councilor Murphy noted that this is a request for special legislation for an All alcohol license for the store located inside Roche Bros.

Councilor Striggles noted that we should make sure we are helping an existing business. This business is in our only grocery store in town and this would help feed a business that gives back to a committee.

Councilor McGrath noted that she encourages businesses to grow and this would give a lot of foot traffic for Roche Bros. Glad to see them look at ways to grow.

Councilor Linde made a motion to retain Order O-FY26-021 at Town Council, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

- b) Order O-FY26-022: Bridgewater DPW Union, AFSCME Local 1700 Collective Bargaining Contract Ratification

Voice vote to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee.

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-022 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

- c) Order O-FY26-023: Bridgewater DPW Union, AFSCME Local 1700 Collective Contract Appropriation Transfer

Voice vote to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee.

Councilor Kennedy made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-023 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

- d) Order O-FY26-024: Bridgewater Public Library Staff Association Collective Bargaining Contract Ratification

Voice vote to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-024 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

- e) Order O-FY26-025: Bridgewater Public Library Staff Association Collective Contract Appropriation Transfer

Voice vote to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee.

Councilor Perry made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-025 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

- f) Ordinance D-FY26-005: Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment - Senior Village Housing Development

Voice vote to refer to Planning Board and CED Committee.

Councilor Hunt noted that she is sponsoring this Ordinance to ensure that there is efficient area in this new development for passive recreation.

Councilor Striggles made a motion to refer Ordinance D-FY26-005 to CED and Planning Board, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

Councilor Ellenberg asked where the development was and Councilor Perry noted that it is anything Residential D.

Councilor Striggles noted that this is an amendment to an existing ordinance, more in line with open space.

Councilor Perry noted that Residential D is closer to the Downtown area. Made it 20% because it is not as big as other districts. Can be vetted out at Planning and CED.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: was not clear on the all alcohol order and discussed Hale Street. Boards on website should include the time involved.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Linde noted that the Friends of the Library is having a book sale on 9/27.
- Councilor Hunt noted that on 9/27 she will have a table at Autumfest, sponsoring a walk and giving out literature and will be asking for donations for the lights downtown.
- Councilor Murphy thanked the Finance Director Laurie Guerrini for her dedication to the town, a real asset, thankful for her partnership. Thanked Lisa Buzzel-Curley and Al Lacerda for taking up the challenge of the lights in the common.
- Councilor Perry thanked the town staff on doing a great job. Thanked Al Lacerda and Lisa Buzzel-Curley and noted that he will reach out to them. Autumnfest is 9/27 from 10am to 4pm, also a 5k is

taking place. Car Show this weekend at Fire for Effect at Town River Landing. Thanked President Clark for the invitation to the football game this past weekend, it was a great time.

- Councilor Strigles thanked everyone who came out tonight. Thanked Lisa Buzzel-Curley, Al Lacerda and Jeff Fowler for all that they do for this town. When someone raises their hand they always step up. Encourage others to join them.
- Councilor Ellenberg had no comments
- Councilor Kennedy thanked the public for coming out and the councilors for a great meeting.
- Councilor McGrath noted that the Council just signed a City of Peace proclamation and if you look at comments on Facebook, they are hateful.
- Councilor Loreti noted the Car Show this weekend at Town River Landing and the Police 5K and Autumnfest the following weekend. Thanked all the residents for coming out. Planning a cool Halloween event near my home and would love some volunteers.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a) Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares; Bridgewater DPW AFSCME Local 1700, Bridgewater Public Library Staff Association, Bridgewater Firefighters' Union, Local 2611, Bridgewater Police Association, Bridgewater Administrative Association and United Steelworkers Local 9517 Unit 04.

See above for Executive Session

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Perry made a motion to adjourn, which was duly seconded by Councilor Striggles.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Kennedy – Yea; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 9-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07pm.

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