



**Town of Bridgewater**  
**Rules and Procedure Committee**

November 14, 2025

11:00 AM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Conference Room 201A/2nd Floor

and via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88082377215>

**MEETING AGENDA**

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

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes**
  - a) September 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- C. Public Comment**
- D. Items Referred**
  - a) Ordinance D-FY26-007: Ordinance Establishing the Process for Filling a Vacant Town Councilor Role
- E. Adjournment of Meeting**



**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 MINUTES**

**A. Call to Order**

Councilor McGrath called the Town Council Rules & Procedures Committee meeting to order at 7:00pm on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. The meeting was held in Conference Room 201A/2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Academy Building and via Zoom.

**Council Members Present:**

Councilor McGrath

Councilor Linde

Councilor Kennedy

**B. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

a) July 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes

*Councilor Linde made a motion to approve the July 24, 2025 meeting minutes, 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.

**C. Public Comment**

- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: noted that she sent an email to the subcommittee on 005, does not want to be known as a city, should stay a town.
- Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: thanked Councilor Kennedy for submitting new items and supports 003.
- James Walsh, 30 Pleasant Street: noted that he is in support of 30 day change on 003, opposes changing town to city, is there a specific benefit.

**D. Items Referred**

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

*After some discussion, Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-002 back to the Town Council. This was 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.

- b) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-003: Amendment to Bridgewater Town Charter Article VIII, Section 8-2 Citizen Referendum Petition Timeframe  
Councilor Kennedy noted that the time needs to be extended more than 10 days.

Councilor Linde and McGrath both noted that they agree with 30 days.

*Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-003 back to the Town Council. This was 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) Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004: Amendment to Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 - Business Ethics and Conduct

Councilor Kennedy noted that changes would hold people accountable and this would expand to those that deal with finances.

Councilor Linde thanked Councilor Kennedy for the hard work in writing up the Charter legislation.

*Councilor Kennedy made a motion to amend Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004 with Attachment A, 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.

*Councilor Linde made a motion to recommend Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004 with amendments, 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. 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

Discussion on D-FY22-004:

Councilor Linde noted that this is an elected body but powers have diminished; would like Library Trustees at a meeting for more input.

Councilor McGrath noted that meeting with Town Manager should take place before moving to change anything.

Discussion on D-FY22-005:

Councilor Linde noted grant money is available for cities and not towns. Randolph is a City but called Town. Goes on a ballot so residents would vote.

Councilor Kennedy noted that he appreciates town but needs to understand the pros and cons and review before sending to Town Council.

Councilor McGrath noted that she looked at MMA, not required to be called city. Rather see it as a town, 14 towns are city form of government but called Town.

Councilor Kennedy noted that he would like to make a few telephone calls, do not want the town to be wrapped into anything.

Discussion on D-FY22-011:

Councilor McGrath noted that the current Town Attorney has a contract, not paid by the hour. If paid by the hour it would cost more money to the town.

Councilor Linde noted that he was in agreement with Councilor McGrath and further noted that a conversation should be had with the Town Manager to see what direction he was going in.

Councilor Kennedy noted that should discuss with the Town Manager since he does the hiring; not opposed to it, do we feel we are being represented.

b) Suggested Charter Changes from the Charter Committee

**F. Public Comment**

- Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: noted that it was a good conversation but got lost. CED Subcommittee Chair is suppose to meet with the library trustees according to the Charter.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: noted that she is confused on D-FY22-011 and term limits. Don't want Library to loose control. If name change does that affect grants.

**G. 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 8:00p.m.



# Bridgewater Town Council

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Introduced By: Paul Murphy, Councilor  
Sean Kennedy, Councilor

Date Introduced: 11/4/2025

First Reading: 11/4/2025

Second Reading:

Amendments Adopted:

Third Reading:

Date Adopted:

Date Effective:

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## **Ordinance D-FY26-007: Ordinance Establishing the Process for Filling a Vacant Town Councilor Role**

### **Section 1: Purpose**

This ordinance supersedes Ordinance number D-2013-001 and is intended to create a process when a vacancy is to be filled pursuant to Article II, Section 2-5(c) of the Town of Bridgewater's Town Charter. Its purpose is to ensure continuity of governance while maintaining public trust and adherence to democratic principles.

### **Section 2: Scope**

This ordinance applies to all situations in which Article II, Section 2-5(c) of the Town of Bridgewater's Town Charter is applicable.

### **Section 3: Town Council Vote**

The Town Council of the Town of Bridgewater has the authority to fill any vacancy under Article II, Section 2-5(c) of the Town Charter. Prior to initiation of the process set forth below, the Town Council will vote as to whether or not it intends on filling the vacancy. To pass, the vote will require a majority vote of the remaining members of the Town Council. If the vote is not passed, the seat will remain vacant until the following scheduled town election, or if so decided by the Town Council, a special election.

### **Section 4: Notification of Vacancy**

1. Should the Town Council vote to fill the vacancy pursuant to Article II, Section 2-5(c), the Town Council Clerk shall post a public notice of the vacancy on the town's official website and at all public posting locations, including details about the application process and deadline.

### **Section 5: Appointment Process**

#### **1. Eligibility Criteria:**

NOT FOR ACTION - FIRST READING  
REFER TO RULES AND PROCEDURES

- Candidates must meet all eligibility requirements for serving as a Town Councilor as outlined in the Home Rule Charter and applicable state law.

## **2. Application Period:**

- A public application period of no less than fourteen (14) days from the date of the vacancy notice shall be observed.
- Interested candidates must submit a formal application, including a résumé, letter of interest, and a statement addressing their qualifications and vision for the town.

## **3. Interview Process:**

- The Town Council shall schedule candidate presentations and interviews as part of the next scheduled Town Council meeting following the close of the application period.
- All eligible candidates will be permitted to present a three (3) minute presentation followed by a brief interview by the remaining Town Council members during this meeting.
- Interviews shall be conducted in a fair and transparent manner, allowing each candidate equal time to present their qualifications and respond to questions.

## **4. Public Comment:**

- Residents shall be given the opportunity to provide input on the candidates during a designated public comment period following all candidate presentations and interviews.

# **Section 6: Selection**

## **1. Nomination Process**

- Following the interviews, each Council member may nominate one candidate.
- Each nomination must receive a second from another Council member to advance.
- This ensures the pool of nominees cannot exceed the number of seated Council members recognized as participants in the meeting, while guaranteeing that every Councilor has the opportunity to bring forward a candidate.

## **2. Voting Process**

- All nominated candidates shall be voted on by the Council members who are recognized as active participants in the meeting under the Town Charter and applicable state law, including but not limited to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
- Majority Defined: For purposes of this section, “majority” shall mean more than half of the Council members recognized as active participants in the meeting.
- The candidate who receives favorable votes from a majority and also receives more votes than any other candidate shall be appointed.

### **• Tie-Breaking Procedure**

- Second Round: If a tie exists among candidates who each received a majority in the first vote, a second vote shall be conducted limited to those tied candidates. In this round, Council members may vote for more than one tied candidate. This provides flexibility to narrow the field while preserving Councilors’ ability to support multiple nominees.
- Third Round: If a tie persists after the second round, a third vote shall be conducted limited to the tied candidates. In this round, each Council member may vote for only one candidate.
  - A candidate shall only be appointed if they receive both:

1. Favorable votes from a majority of the Council members recognized as active participants in the meeting; and
  2. More votes than any other candidate in that round.
- Failure to Appoint: If no candidate satisfies these conditions after the third round, the appointment process shall be deemed unsuccessful, and the vacancy shall be filled through a special election as outlined in Section 7.

**Section 7: Special Election Option**

**1. Triggering a Special Election**

- If the Town Council cannot appoint a candidate through the process outlined in Section 6, the vacancy shall be filled through a special town election.

**2. Candidate Pool**

- The pool of candidates for this election shall not be limited to nominees considered by the Council.
- Candidates must qualify for the ballot by collecting signatures and meeting all requirements established under state law and the Town Charter, consistent with the process for a regular town election.

**3. Election Timeline**

- A special town election shall be called and held within ninety (90) days of the Council’s failure to appoint a candidate.
- The timing and minimum requirements for holding a special election shall be governed by Massachusetts General Laws, including but not limited to M.G.L. c.41 §10 and c.53 §§7 & 10.
- All elections shall be conducted in compliance with applicable state and local election laws.

**Section 8: Effective Date**

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Town Council and publication in accordance with local and state laws.

**Section 9: Severability**

If any provision of this ordinance is found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

**Committee Referrals and Dispositions:**

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11/4/25: Referred to Rules and Procedures</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

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Attachments:           None