



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

January 6, 2026

7:00 PM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Council Chambers/2nd Floor

The Town Council meeting was streamed Live via You Tube.

The link was posted to the Town of Bridgewater Facebook Page.

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Johnny Loreti called the Town Council meeting to order at 7:16pm on Tuesday, January 6, 2026 in the Council Chambers.

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

Absent: Sean Kennedy and Sonya Striggles.

Also in attendance was Town Manager Justin Casanova-Davis and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins.

Council President Loreti noted that there were no veteran death and held a moment of silence for all veterans and their families.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) December 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes
Councilor Linde made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 16, 2025, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Council President Loreti reminded dog owners that 2026 license tags are due and that nomination papers are now available for the April 25th town election and details can be found on the town clerks website.

Councilor Hunt read a statement into the record about speaking with the State Ethics Commission about voting on CPA requests and she will be voting on CPA issues.

PROCLAMATIONS - None

- a) Recognition Honoring Emily Stone, Recipient of the Boston Post Cane
Council President Loreti noted that Ms. Emily Stone is a member of the Bridgewater community who is 103 years old and is the recipient of the Boston Post Cane. President Loreti read the proclamation into the record.

CITIZEN OPEN FORUM

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APPOINTMENTS - None

HEARINGS - None

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS – None

PRESENTATIONS - None

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- a) Water Update
William Young, Water Superintendent gave the water update. He noted that the approval for Middleboro was received and was hoping to start digging on Thursday and Friday, sampling over the weekend and then next week activating that service. Will be notifying the public using the reverse 911 and posting on the website. Noted that there will be some discoloration and will be asking homeowners to take out their filters. Treatment trailers working with the various departments and where they will sit on the property of Well 10. Hopefully by the end of January we will go out to bid. We have had several leaks over the past few weeks because of the weather and we offer a program that can detect leaks. The water department has been chasing these leaks because of the water issues. One critical away from activating Well 10.

Councilor Linde asked about the larger users like BSU and the prison and if any of the leaks were with them and if they were conserving water. Mr. Young noted that the prison is not on town water.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that they met with President Clark to communicate the need to conserve water and Bill will be meeting with their facilities team.

Mr. Young noted that BSU backflows are being done while they are not in session daily so that we can make sure it is flowing correctly. Also noted that Water Scope can help the homeowner prevent a small link become a larger problem.

Councilor Murphy asked if there were some ways to get more people signed up to Water Scope, not sure how many are signed up now.

Councilor Ellenberg asked if they have found any leaks and Mr. Young noted that two leaks have been found in commercial buildings, one at Perkins Foundry and one at 31 Perkins Street.

Councilor Loreti asked what the timeline was for the trailer development into the system and Mr. Young noted that it will be early March.

Councilor Murphy asked if there was any updates from the withdrawal from the DEP and DPW Director Azu Etoniru noted that we have to finish these steps here before we get to the level of withdrawal increase, this project is tied to that.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that we are doing everything we can so we do not have to turn Well 10 on, the storage tank levels have gone low because of these leaks. We will communicate on Facebook and Website.

Councilor Loreti asked when we do get 10A and 10B treated through the treatment trailer have we done the calculation if the blend will be low and Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that the team is looking into a variety of things.

b) Summer Street Project Update

CED Director Bob Rulli noted that the landscape plan was finalized today and that we do not have adequate funding to do landscaping and inside of the building. Landscaping will be done with what was drafted in 2024, we will do cosmetic improvements to the outside of the building and make the bathroom ADA compliant. A bid package will be put together in the next few weeks, we need to have the project completed by July 1st for the park grants. Had a public meeting over the summer and depends where we are with the funding for the outside feature.

Councilor Perry noted that there was discussions with BSU prior, can they help out more and Mr. Rulli noted that that is the next conversation with them.

Councilor Murphy asked if the cost breakdown could be shared to the council and Mr. Rulli noted he would send the packet out tomorrow.

Councilor Linde asked if there was any possibility that the town could reach out to Bristol Plymouth for some of the interior work. Mr. Rulli noted that the town worked with them for upgrades to the Senior Center a few years ago. There are aspects of cleaning up that site that could be Eagle Scout project. We would like this to be community focused.

c) Post Override Supplemental Update

Town Manager Casanova Davis gave an update on positions that were frozen with the post override supplemental budget:

Assistant Town Manager Position: Froze through December. Posted the position and wehtn through the interview process in December. Have not made a decision yet, probably sometime in February.

Executive Assistant, Town Manager's Officer: Reduced the Hours and Salary, hired Kajelyn for the position.

Finance Positions: Froze and admin assist/assessor position and reduced the hours of a collector position.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis also noted that we worked with the unions and non-union employees and department heads and reduced the COLAS for this year and next year.

d) Town Manager Open Office Hours

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that he will be having Town Manager open office hours on Friday, January 23rd from 8am to 12pm. These are more individual meetings and if residents would like to attend they can reach out to Kajelyn and schedule a time.

- e) **Roadway Improvements**
Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that the Town was one of the communities selected by the Healey-Driscoll administration to receive grant funding to pave a stretch of Route 104 within the Town for the Fiscal Year 2028 program year.

DISCUSSIONS

- a) **Discussion on Open Meeting Law Complaint Received December 19, 2025**
Councilor Loreti noted that we received the open meeting law complaint and it will be handled by the Town Attorney.

Councilor Linde noted that all of the licensing renewal information was in the packet and part of the agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Downtown Revitalization Committee:

Councilor McGrath noted that the Downtown Revitalization Committee had a meeting on December 18, 2025 and invited Brian MacMahon (Tree Warden), Ray Ajemian (Tree Committee) and Bill Smith (Historic District Commission) to discuss the downtown. Was a very productive meeting and will be having future meetings with them.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- a) **Order O-FY26-038: Transfer Order – CPC Town Owned Cemetery Assessment**
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend with amendments at their 1/5/26 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-3 to recommend at their 12/22/25 meeting.
Councilor Hunt made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-038 back to Budget & Finance, which was duly seconded by Councilor Ellenberg.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

- b) **Order O-FY26-039: Acceptance of Donation – McBee Enterprises dba McDonald's**
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 1/5/26 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-3 to recommend at their 12/22/25 meeting.
Councilor Ellenberg made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-039, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

- c) **Order O-FY26-040: Transfer Order - Water Capital Fund Transfer**
Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 1/5/26 meeting. Finance Committee voted 5-3 to recommend at their 12/22/25 meeting.
Councilor Perry made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-040, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

d) Order O-FY26-041: Transfer Order - Sewer Capital Fund Transfer

Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their meeting 1/5/26. Finance Committee voted 8-0 to recommend at their 12/22/25 meeting.

Councilor Perry made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-041, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

e) Order O-FY26-042: Transfer Order - General Fund Capital Plan Transfers

Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 1/5/26 meeting. Finance Committee continued to 1/12/26 at their 1/5/26 meeting.

Councilor Perry made a motion to continue Order O-FY26-042 to the next Town Council meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

f) Order O-FY26-043: Transfer Order - Ambulance Overtime Transfer Order

Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance voted 3-0 to recommend at their 1/5/26 meeting. Finance Committee voted 8-0 to recommend at their 12/22/25 meeting.

Councilor Perry made a motion to approve Order O-FY26-043, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

g) Order O-FY26-044: Water System Improvements Loan Authorization

Refer to Advertising. Budget & Finance meeting 1/5/26. Finance Committee voted 8-0 to recommend at their 12/22/25 meeting.

Councilor Hunt made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-044 to advertising, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

h) Order O-FY26-045: Adoption of a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan

Voice vote for approval. Budget & Finance made a motion to recommend at their 1/5/26 meeting. Finance Committee continued to 1/12/26 at their 1/5/26 meeting.

Councilor Perry made a motion to continue Order O-FY26-045 to the next Town Council meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

- i) Resolution R-FY26-006: A Resolution of the Bridgewater Town Council in Support of the Letter to Governor Healey and the Massachusetts Legislature Regarding the Urgent Need for Municipal Aid, Infrastructure Investment, and State Partnership
***Voice vote for approval.** This measure was not referred to committee. 14 days has elapsed per Section XVII of the Council Rules & Procedures, therefore this measure may be finally considered this evening.*

Councilor Ellenberg made a motion to approve Resolution R-FY26-006, which was duly seconded by Councilor Murphy.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Order O-FY26-046: Acceptance of Donation - Oliari Charitable Foundation
Refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee

Councilor Linde made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-046 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

- b) Order O-FY26-047: Acceptance of Donation - Bridgewater Police Association
Refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee

Councilor Perry made a motion to refer Order O-FY26-047 to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

- c) Resolution R-FY26-007: An Assessment of the Reuse of the Former Town Hall aka TOWN HOUSE
Retain at Town Council

Councilor Ellenberg handed out an amended Resolution and noted that the Chair of the CPC said that these would need to be made to be in compliance with the directions. The town already invested in the outside with a grant application and this is for the inside to be studied for electricity, water use and plumbing. This article is asking the CPC in managing this Old Town Hall renovation. Writing a letter to the historic commission and the CPC asking them to endorse this. The grant application deadline was in 6 days after finding out about the grant.

Town Manager Justin Casanova-Davis asked Councilor Ellenberg if this was asking if the amendments were asking the CPC to be in charge of and supervise the maintenance and repair of a town facility. Councilor Ellenberg noted that the CPC hired a manager to do the exterior work.

Councilor Hunt noted that the Town Manager requested the outside be done by submitting an application to the CPC, it was not the CPC requesting it. The Town Manager needs to ask the CPC to do it. It can't be the CPC doing it.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that a Resolution is something that can or cannot be done, and did not want the process to be a barrier to apply for the grant. This handout is beyond that scope.

Councilor Loreti asked Councilor Ellenberg if she would like to work with the Attorney and Town Manager to amend so it will be in compliance with the charter. Councilor Ellenberg noted that she has no problem working with either of them, did not want to miss the State grant timeline.

Town Attorney Rawlins noted that need to figure out what Councilor Ellenberg is trying to accomplish with this.

Councilor Loreti noted that we are all in support of the grant application but want to make sure it is written correctly.

Councilor Perry noted driven by the Town Manager, let's see what the process goes with the grant and then we can come up with the resolution on the way we want to go.

Councilor McGrath asked if during the assessment will we be told if the building is worth saving and Councilor Hunt noted that yes, it is worth saving, very important to the town.

Councilor Murphy noted that this building has sat vacant and we keep doing assessments, thinks the town should look at taking it out of the towns hands and have someone who can take care of it. The town may never be able to take care of it. We should search for other avenues to make that building work.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that we applied for the grant but I do think an assessment needs to be done so people can understand the cost. There is a monetary aspect to it. We will communicate with the council and the community, that is why it is a question on the survey.

Councilor Ellenberg noted that the grant says that a State person will be used for the assessment before they give us any money.

Councilor Linde noted that it is worth doing our due diligence.

Councilor Perry made a motion to continue Resolution R-FY26-007 to the next Town Council meeting, which was duly seconded by Councilor Hunt.

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Carlton Hunt, Austin Street: spoke about the Town House and the grant and work done previously. There is no need for another survey which was done 5 years ago. The CPC voted \$16k to look at the interior of the Town House that has not been sent to the Town Manager yet.
- Gina Guasconi : asked if the resolution was to tell the CPC what to do. Want to be clear what the resolution is for. CPC does not come forward, applications for a town building need to come from the Town Manager. CPC will sit with anyone that has questions, I would suggest looking at the CPC webpage. Is this a matching grant?

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Linde thanked everyone that came out for the General Meeting.
- Councilor Hunt noted that she attended a Boy Scouts event over the weekend where 4 of them received their Eagle Scout Awards.
- Councilor Murphy thanked everyone for attending the meetings tonight.
- Councilor Perry wished everyone a Happy New Year and noted he is looking forward to the upcoming new year, lot of work ahead of us.
- Councilor Ellenberg thanked everyone who came out tonight.
- Councilor McGrath thanked President Loreti for conducting the Public General Meeting.
- Councilor Loreti wished everyone a happy New Year to everyone and thanked the community for being engaged.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll-call vote was taken for the motion to amend with the results as follows: Kennedy – Absent; Ellenberg – Yea; Striggles – Absent; McGrath – Yea; Loreti – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea; Hunt – Yea; Linde - Yea. Motion passed 7-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:54pm.

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, January 20, 2026, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.