



Town of Bridgewater Budget & Finance Committee

January 20, 2026

6:00 PM

66 Central Square

Conference Room 201A

Bridgewater, MA

MEETING MINUTES

A Quorum of the Town Council May Be In Attendance

A. Call to Order

Councilor Murphy called the meeting to order at 6pm. The meeting took place in Conference Room 201A, 2nd Floor of the Academy Building.

Committee members present: Councilor McGrath, Councilor Loreti and Councilor Murphy.

Also in attendance were Town Manager Justin Casanova-Davis, Finance Director Laurie Guerrini and Chief Assessor Shelley MacCauley.

Councilor Linde was also in attendance.

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes - None

C. Legislation Referred

- a) Order O-FY26-046: Acceptance of Donation - Oliari Charitable Foundation
Councilor Loreti made a motion to recommend Order O-FY26-046, which was duly seconded by Councilor McGrath.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Loreti – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Murphy – Yea. Motion passed 3-0

- b) Order O-FY26-047: Acceptance of Donation - Bridgewater Police Association
Councilor Loreti made a motion to recommend Order O-FY26-047, which was duly seconded by Councilor McGrath.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Loreti – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Murphy – Yea. Motion passed 3-0

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

Councilor Loreti noted that an amendment needs to be made to remove Councilor Chase and Councilor Striggles from this ordinance and need to change FY26 to read “FY27”.

Chief Assessor Shelley MacCauley noted that there are 139 veterans this year and it would have been a 3.9% increase in the exemption. The State does not reimburse for this exemption.

Councilor Loreti made a motion to recommend Ordinance D-FY25-019, which was duly seconded by Councilor McGrath.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Loreti – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Murphy – Yea. Motion passed 3-0

- d) Order O-FY26-038: Transfer Order – CPC Town Owned Cemetery Assessment
Councilor McGrath noted that she found a company that has done this kind of work for many years and will give the town a free estimate and with this being town property the Town Manager could look at this instead of paying for an assessment.

Carlton Hunt, member of the CPC, noted that they have sent out requests for quotes from companies and they are due back 2/6/26.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that Mr. Hunt was being helpful with collaborating with Mr. McGraw from the Town Manager’s office in terms of this process to get some quotes.

Councilor McGrath noted that there are 14 burial grounds listed but only 10 are under town control, who controls the other ones? Mr. Hunt noted that they are all owned by private entities.

Councilor McGrath asked if the Town can do the cemetery boundaries rather than paying someone to do that. Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that we tend to have a third party survey that type of work.

Councilor McGrath made a motion to continue Order O-FY6-038, which was duly seconded by Councilor Loreti.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Loreti – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Murphy – Yea. Motion passed 3-0

D. Public Comment - None

E. Discussion

- a) FY27 Budget Timeline
Finance Director Guerrini discussed the draft of the budget timeline. Some of the tasks have already been completed. Will be sitting down and going over the financial forecast with the Town Manager. Have met with the School Committee and the Town of Raynham to have preliminary conversations. Hope to get more information from the Governors speech at the MMA Connect 351 conference this is taking place this weekend.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that the dates have been moved up two weeks than previous. This gives a good structure on where we are at.

Councilor Loreti asked when we expect excise tax estimates to come in and Ms. Guerrini noted that we just got the commitment and it came in more than last year. We are currently working on December which should be done shortly.

Councilor Murphy noted that the Budget & Finance Committee could schedule a meeting with Finance Committee to go over some numbers, maybe the 9th or the 10th. Will work with the Chair of the Finance Committee. Start at 6pm and then invite Finance Committee to join at 7pm.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that this is going to be a Budget workshop and Councilor Murphy noted yes.

b) Budget Workshop

Councilor Murphy noted that the Budget & Finance Committee could schedule a meeting with Finance Committee to go over some numbers, maybe the 9th or the 10th. Will work with the Chair of the Finance Committee. Start at 6pm and then invite Finance Committee to join at 7pm.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that this is going to be a Budget workshop and Councilor Murphy noted yes.

c) Meeting Frequency

Discussed above.

d) Tax Exemptions

Ms. MacAuley gave an update on Exemption 22J, are able to go to 100% increase, \$99,100 is what the cost to the Town if 100%.

Councilor McGrath asked what the lowest the Town can go and Ms. MacAuley noted you can go 10%. Exemption 22I and 22J go hand in hand each year if the Town decides to adopt both. The cost of living goes up every year

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that 22J needs to be part of the overlay and perhaps should be a hold for this year and look at some of the other exemptions available.

Ms. MacAuley noted that the equivalent to this one that will not cost the town as much is there is something called 17F. This is for seniors and it is one exemption per person. Right now the town has 4 senior exemptions with a total of 57 participants.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that we could take a look at what we have to maximize participation for state reimbursement. The State reimburses up to 60 anything over 60 is paid from the overlay fund. Ms. MacAuley can look at options and then have recommendation from the Board of Assessors.

F. Public Comment - None

G. Adjournment of Meeting

Councilor McGrath made a motion to adjourn, which was duly seconded by Councilor Loreti.

A voice vote was taken with the results as follows: Loreti – Yea; McGrath – Yea; Murphy – Yea.

Motion passed 3-0

Meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

In accordance with the applicable provisions of the Town of Bridgewater Home Rule Charter and Town Council Rules and Procedures, the Budget & Finance Committee assembled voted, at their meeting on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.