



Town of Bridgewater **Rules and Procedure Committee**

April 3, 2026

10:00 AM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Conference Room 201A/2nd Floor

and Via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81420021321>

MEETING AGENDA

A Quorum of the Town Council May Be In Attendance

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - a) February 20, 2026 Meeting Minutes
- C. Public Comment**
- D. Legislation Referred**
 - a) Proposed General Ordinance D-FY26-004: Amendment to Chapter 3, Article II, Section 1 - Business Ethics and Conduct
 - b) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-013: Adopt Chapter 220, Article III – Water Supply Capacity and Development Review
- E. Public Comment**
- F. Adjournment of Meeting**



Town of Bridgewater Rules and Procedure Committee

February 20, 2026

10:00 AM

66 Central Square

Academy Building

Conference Room 201A/2nd Floor

and via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87261055237>

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order

Councilor McGrath called the Town Council Rules & Procedures Committee meeting to order at 10:15am on Friday, February 20, 2026. The meeting was held in Conference Room 201A/2nd Floor of the Academy Building and via Zoom.

Council Members Present:

Councilor McGrath

Councilor Linde

Councilor Kennedy

Also in attendance was Town Manager Casanova-Davis.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

a) November 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Councilor Linde made a motion to approve the November 14, 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.

Public Comment

- Carlton Hunt, Austin Street (via Zoom): noted he was fine with eliminating the Agricultural commission, as long as it does not affect Bridgewater being a right to farm.

Legislation Referred

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

Councilor McGrath asked why some committees and commissions were added and Town Clerk Tina Larson noted that this order included not only Ethics, but Finance.

Councilor Kennedy noted that this was only for Ethics, and he plans on writing another Ordinance.

Councilor McGrath made a motion to hold this Order in Rules & Procedures for further clarification. This 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.

- b) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-008: Proposed Amendment to Part III – Administrative Code: Chapter 14, Article I, Section 1 Dogs

Councilor McGrath asked why removing Section 5, Kennels License Optional (Kennel A), when this is listed on Massachusetts website and Town Clerk Tina Larson stated that Massachusetts has made changes and this is one of them.

Councilor Linde made a motion to recommend Ordinance D-FY26-008, 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) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-011: Amend Part II Administrative Code, Chapter 1, Article III. Multiple Members Appointive Bodies

Councilor Linde noted that the Cable Advisory Committee is important for licensing and such.

Town Manager Casanova-Davis noted that since no members are on committee he is making this change.

Councilor McGrath noted that she wants to keep Agricultural committee and will try to recruit members.

Councilor Kennedy noted that just removing committees that have not been filled for some time.

Councilor Kennedy made a motion to recommend Ordinance D-FY26-011, which was duly seconded by Councilor Linde.

A roll-call vote was taken with the results as follows: McGrath – No; Linde – Yea; Kennedy – Yea. Motion passed 2-1.

- d) Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-012: Amend Part II Administrative Code, Chapter 2, Article I. Section 3 D. Department Heads

Councilor Linde asked why Assessor not department head and Town Manager Casanova-Davis explained the Assessor is a separate unit but under the finance department.

Councilor Linde made a motion to recommend Ordinance D-FY26-012, 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.

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.



Bridgewater Town Council

Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor
Date Introduced: 8/12/2025
First Reading: 8/12/2025
Second Reading: 10/21/2025
Amendments Adopted: 2/17/2026
Third Reading: 2/17/2026
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

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 with the following:

The continued success of the Town is dependent upon our citizens' trust, and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. The Town will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its department heads, supervisors, and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws, and to avoid any illegal or unethical conduct.

In order to comply with the 2009 Ethics Reform Act, all public employees are required to complete an ethics training program every two years. New employees must complete the training within 30 days of becoming a public employee and every two years thereafter. All public employees must also acknowledge receipt of the Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law within 30 days of hire and annually thereafter, as required by the State Ethics Commission. For purposes of this section, "acknowledge receipt" means the employee shall complete the electronic acknowledgment through the State Ethics Commission's online portal. Records of such acknowledgments are retained at the state level, and the Town Clerk may request verification as needed.

Ethics Training website – <https://massethicstraining.skillburst.com>

In accordance with Section 9-1 of the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter, certain exempt employees are required to complete a Statement of Financial Interest. The statement is a supplement to the State Conflict of Interest Law and prohibits Town employees from making, or participating in making, any decision on any issue in which they have an economic interest, unless they comply with the State Ethics Commission's advice or rulings

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under the Conflict of Interest Law, G.L. c. 268A.

Required reporting employees must complete and submit the statement within seven (7) days of employment, appointment, transfer, or promotion. Any employee who does not comply with the terms of this Ordinance shall be subject to appropriate discipline including suspension or termination, consistent with the requirements of the state civil service law and the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter, as well as to civil or criminal prosecution under any other applicable state laws.

Pursuant to the provisions of Ordinance #D-FY26-004 (effective date:) 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)
- 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

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- 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:

• Town Council	• 8/12/25: Referred to Rules & Procedures
• Rules & Procedures	• 9/9/25: Voted 3-0 to recommend with amendments
• Town Council	• 10/21/25: Motion to continue
• Town Council	• 2/17/26:: Amendments made and referred back to Rules & Procedures
• Rules & Procedures	• 4.3.26:

Attachments: None

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Bridgewater Town Council

Introduced By: Sean Kennedy, Councilor
Johnny Loreti, Councilor
Date Introduced: 3/17/2026
First Reading: 3/17/2026
Second Reading:
Amendments Adopted:
Third Reading:
Date Adopted:
Date Effective:

Proposed Ordinance D-FY26-013: Adopt Chapter 220, Article III – Water Supply Capacity and Development Review

WHEREAS, the Town of Bridgewater is authorized pursuant to the police powers granted under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, §21 et seq., and its authority to manage, protect, and regulate municipal water systems, to adopt ordinances necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bridgewater operates a public water supply system subject to operational, seasonal, and regulatory constraints, including but not limited to source availability, treatment capacity, distribution limitations, and emergency conditions; and

WHEREAS, the availability of potable water supply is a fundamental prerequisite to public health, fire protection, emergency response, and the safe occupancy of buildings and structures; and

WHEREAS, periods of reduced water system capacity may arise due to infrastructure maintenance, source impairment, regulatory compliance requirements, drought conditions, or other operational factors beyond the Town's immediate control; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and appropriate for the Town to ensure that new development and intensified uses do not exceed the Firm Capacity of the municipal water system; and

WHEREAS, the Town has a compelling interest in reserving sufficient water system capacity to meet fire protection and emergency response demands required under applicable fire code authority, including for industrial and warehouse uses; and

WHEREAS, the regulation of water supply capacity is distinct from land use regulation and zoning, and applies neutrally and uniformly to all development regardless of use, location, or zoning district; and

NOT FOR ACTION - FIRST READING
REFER TO RULES & PROCEDURES

WHEREAS, nothing in this Ordinance is intended to prohibit development, but rather to ensure that development proceeds in a manner consistent with available infrastructure and public safety requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that requiring case-specific water availability determinations supported by written findings prepared by qualified municipal officials is a reasonable, narrowly tailored, and legally defensible means of protecting the Town's water supply and public safety; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council further finds that establishing clear administrative standards for water capacity review will promote consistency, transparency, and predictability in permitting decisions while preserving flexibility to respond to changing system conditions;

NOW THEREFORE, the Town Council of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, in Town Council assembled, hereby adopts Chapter 220, Article III – Water Supply Capacity and Development Review, as set forth on the attached.

Explanation of Proposed Ordinance

The proposed ordinance establishes a formal process for evaluating whether the Town's water system has sufficient capacity to support new development and increased water demand.

The Town's public water system operates under a variety of physical and regulatory constraints, including source capacity, treatment limits, distribution infrastructure, and state regulatory requirements. Periods of reduced capacity may occur due to infrastructure maintenance, regulatory compliance requirements, drought conditions, or emergency system conditions.

The purpose of this ordinance is to ensure that new development proceeds only when the municipal water system has sufficient reliable capacity to safely support that development without compromising public health, fire protection, or emergency response.

The ordinance establishes a process known as a Water Availability Determination (WAD). This determination evaluates whether the Town's water system has sufficient Firm Capacity to serve the projected demand associated with a proposed project.

Firm Capacity is defined using a standard engineering approach used by public water systems. It represents the amount of water the system can reliably provide when the largest supply source is unavailable for service. This ensures that the system remains capable of meeting demand even during equipment failure or maintenance conditions.

For projects that may significantly increase water demand, the ordinance requires a 2-Dimensional Water Supply Impact Study. This study evaluates the projected water demand associated with the project and compares that demand to the Town's available water supply capacity.

The ordinance also ensures that water capacity necessary for fire protection and emergency response is reserved and cannot be consumed by new development. This protects the Town's ability to meet required fire flow standards for industrial, commercial, and residential buildings.

The ordinance does not prohibit development. Instead, it ensures that development proceeds in a manner consistent with available infrastructure. Where water capacity is limited, projects may still proceed if the applicant reduces demand, phases development, or provides permanent infrastructure improvements.

NOT FOR ACTION - FIRST READING
REFER TO RULES & PROCEDURES

The ordinance is administered by the Town Manager as the chief administrative officer of the Town, with technical determinations prepared through the Department of Public Works and the Water Superintendent.

The ordinance applies uniformly to all development town-wide and does not alter zoning regulations or land use approvals. It establishes an infrastructure capacity review process intended to protect public safety and ensure responsible long-term management of the Town’s water system.

Committee Referrals and Dispositions:

Referral(s)	Disposition(s)
•	•
•	•
•	•

Attachments: 1. Water Supply Capacity and Development Order Attachment

Chapter 220.

Article III.

Water Supply Capacity and Development Review

****Section 1.**

Purpose**

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that new development and intensified uses do not exceed the Town's available water supply capacity, impair public health and safety.

****Section 2.**

Applicability**

A Water Availability Determination ("WAD") shall be required prior to the issuance by the Town of any written permission, permit, or authorization to connect to, activate, expand, or modify service from the municipal water system (a "Municipal Water Service Authorization") for any project that:

- (a) creates a new water service connection; or
- (b) increases the size of an existing service connection; or
- (c) materially increases potable water demand, as determined pursuant to administratively adopted demand calculation standards.

For projects that require municipal water service for occupancy, the Building Commissioner may require proof of an issued WAD as part of the building permit application submission materials.

Such determination shall apply to:

- a) all new construction that requires a new water service connection; and
- b) any addition, alteration, or change of use that materially increases water demand; with the exception of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as provided herein.

This Article shall apply town-wide and to all uses, regardless of zoning district.

****Section 3.**

Definitions**

For purposes of this Article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

Application

A complete written submission for a WAD on forms and with contents established by the Town Manager or designee, including demand calculations, plans, and supporting documentation.

Water Availability Determination (WAD)

A written administrative determination issued under this Article stating whether Firm Capacity exists to reliably serve the project's projected demand, subject to any terms applicable to Municipal Water Service Authorization.

Municipal Water Service Authorization

Any written permission, permit, approval, or authorization issued by the Town to connect to, activate, expand, or modify service from the municipal water system, including permission to make a connection, issuance of a service permit, or authorization to activate service.

Non-Permanent Capacity

Any water supply, treatment, storage, or interconnection capacity that is emergency, provisional, interim, mobile, rental, short-term contractual, not fully permitted/authorized for sustained municipal use, or otherwise not reasonably reliable for long-term planning purposes.

Average Day Demand (ADD)

The projected average daily potable water demand attributable to a proposed project, expressed in gallons per day (GPD).

Firm Capacity

Firm Capacity shall mean the maximum reliable potable water supply that the municipal water system can provide when the largest individual water supply source is unavailable for service.

Firm Capacity shall be calculated as the reliable operational capacity of all permanent water supply sources currently in service, including wells and treatment facilities, subject to applicable regulatory limits, minus the maximum operational yield of the largest individual water supply source.

The inputs used in calculating Firm Capacity shall reflect the actual operational condition of the municipal water system at the time an application subject to this Article is deemed complete, including:

- a. the operational capacity of wells, treatment facilities, and other permanent sources of supply currently in service;
- b. applicable regulatory limits governing the water system, including water withdrawal permits issued by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection;
- c. known operational constraints affecting the water system at the time of determination; and
- d. the reservation of sufficient system capacity necessary to maintain adequate fire protection and emergency response capability.

2-Dimensional Water Supply Impact Study (2D Study)

A study that quantifies projected Average Day Demand attributable to a proposed project and compares such demand to the Town's Firm Capacity at the time of application.

****Section 4.**

2-Dimensional Water Supply Impact Study Requirement**

A 2-Dimensional Water Supply Impact Study shall be required for any project that meets any of the following criteria:

- a) Any proposed new water service connection greater than one (1) inch in diameter, or any increase of an existing service connection to a size greater than one (1) inch;
- b) Any project creating four (4) or more additional dwelling units, including multifamily buildings, townhouses, subdivisions, or cumulative residential development under common ownership or control;
- c) Any project projected based on Massachusetts Title 5 (310 CMR 15.000) demand calculation standards to increase Average Day Demand by five thousand (5,000) gallons per day or more; or
- d) Any project below the foregoing thresholds where, based on written findings the Water Superintendent, determines that site-specific conditions indicate a material risk to water supply reliability.
- e.) The Town Manager or designee may require independent peer review of a 2D Study or related technical submittals when reasonably necessary due to project size, potential impacts, or complexity. Consultant review fees, if imposed, shall be assessed and administered in accordance with M.G.L. c. 44, §53G and any rules adopted thereunder. Fixed administrative fees

for WAD processing, if any, shall be established pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, §22F and applicable local vote.

****Section 5.**

Capacity Determination Standard**

No approval subject to this Article shall be issued unless the Town Manager or designee, determines that Firm Capacity exists to reliably serve the proposed demand, accounting for current system conditions, operational limitations, requires reserves and applicable restrictions, at the time of application and anticipated occupancy.

All capacity determinations required under this Article shall be supported by written findings prepared in accordance with administratively adopted procedures approved by the Town Manager or Designee.

No WAD Application shall be deemed complete, and no Municipal Water Service Authorization subject to this Article shall be issued, unless and until a WAD is issued in accordance with this Article

****Section 6.**

Seasonal and Restricted Conditions**

Capacity determinations shall be based on the most restrictive predictable operating condition, including seasonal peak demand periods and recurring water use restrictions. Average annual conditions shall not be relied upon where they do not reflect known periods of system stress.

****Section 7.**

Temporary or Emergency Capacity**

(A) General Rule.

Non-Permanent Capacity shall not be included as Firm Capacity for purposes of approving permanent or long-term increases in water demand.

(B) Written-Findings Exception.

Capacity that would otherwise be classified as Non-Permanent Capacity may be included in Firm Capacity only upon written findings by the Town Manager or designee that such capacity is:

- (1) legally authorized and fully permitted/approved for sustained municipal use as required;
- (2) reasonably reliable for long-term planning purposes; and
- (3) not merely an emergency, provisional, or short-term measure.

(C) Limit on Scope of Conditions.

Nothing in this Section authorizes the Town Council to issue conditional land-use approvals. Any time limits or conditions pursuant to this Section shall attach only to Municipal Water Service Authorization and/or to the WAD itself.

****Section 8.**

Fire Protection and Emergency Reserve Capacity**

In determining Firm Capacity the Town Manager or designee shall reserve sufficient system capacity to meet the maximum fire-flow and emergency response demands required under applicable fire code authority, including but not limited to industrial and warehouse uses. Such reserved capacity shall not be considered available for new or intensified development.

The determination of such reserved capacity shall account for required fire-flow rates, duration, storage availability, delivery capability, and simultaneous system demands, and shall be evaluated based on current system conditions.

The Town Manager or designee shall consult with the Fire Chief or the Fire Chief's designee for the purpose of establishing baseline fire protection and emergency response assumptions applicable to capacity determinations under this Article. Such consultation shall be documented in writing and may be relied upon for subsequent capacity determinations unless material changes in system conditions, land use, or applicable fire code requirements occur.

Individual project-specific consultation may not be required where the capacity determination is consistent with the established baseline assumptions. The absence of additional consultation shall not invalidate a capacity determination otherwise supported by written findings.

****Section 9.**

Relation to Other Reviews**

This Article establishes a water supply capacity determination only and does not replace or supersede requirements for fire protection, fire flow, hydrant spacing, residual pressure, distribution system design, or other life-safety or technical reviews required under applicable codes, regulations, or permitting processes, which shall be reviewed separately under applicable fire code authority.

****Section 10.**

Mitigation and Phasing**

Where capacity is constrained A WAD may be issued only upon a showing, supported by the 2D Study and written findings, that projected demand will be reduced, or that permanent infrastructure improvements or enforceable phasing of Municipal Water Service Authorization will ensure that Firm Capacity is not exceeded.

****Section 11.**

Enforcement**

Failure to comply with this Article shall constitute grounds for denial, suspension, or revocation of any permit or approval issued by the Town.

Administration and Delegation

This Article shall be administered by the Town Manager as the Town's chief administrative officer pursuant to the Bridgewater Home Rule Charter, including Article IV, §4-2(2) and §4-2(21). The Town Manager may delegate technical review and issuance of Water Availability Determinations to qualified municipal officials or consultants retained by the Town; actions taken under such delegation shall be deemed acts of the Town Manager.

****Section 12.**

Severability**

If any provision of this Article is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.