



### **CALL TO ORDER:**

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Dennis Gallagher called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:06 pm, on June 2, 2020 via Zoom©.

### **PRESENT:**

Council members present via Zoom© were, Francis Sousa, Fred Chase, Mark Linde, Shawn George, Dennis Gallagher, Matthew Rushton, Aisha Losche, Peter Colombotos and Timothy Fitzgibbons. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

**ABSENT:** *No Councilors were absent.*

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

A moment of silence was held for all veterans who have passed including:

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- May 19, 2020

**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

**Discussion:** None

A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Linde – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

### **PROCLAMATIONS**

### **CITIZENS OPEN FORUM**

- Sam Baumgarten, Short Street: Mr. Baumgarten spoke about the efforts of Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect and invited the Councilors to join in the stand-out this upcoming weekend.
- Ed Ivaldi, Boxwood Lane: Mr. Ivaldi inquired about the possibility of Mr. Wood being re-elected and whether that would begin a new first term for him.
- Dan Clancy: Mr. Clancy inquired as to where he could find the proposed Zoning updates on the website.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

- Charter Review Committee

1. Cleonie Mainvielle

**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

**Discussion:** None

A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George – YEA; Linde – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

2. Scott Pitta

**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.

**Discussion:** None

A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Linde – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

### **HEARINGS**

### **LICENSE TRANSACTIONS**

### **PRESENTATIONS**

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Dutton reported on information about various activities happening around town and highlighted meetings and events. Items of note included:



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- **Mitchell School Update (Standing Item)**  
The demolition notice to proceed were sent out 6/1/20 to abutters within 300 feet of the school's property line. We are still looking at a 2022 completion. The budget is \$80,600,000; \$46,771,000 to be paid by the taxpayers and \$33,828,000 to be paid by MSBA. The next meeting is Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, then June 29<sup>th</sup> and July 13<sup>th</sup>. The school proposal is coming up to the conservation commission, it will also go to the Zoning Board of Appeals and will then go to the Planning Board. Information can be found at [ww.bridgewaterschoolproject.com](http://ww.bridgewaterschoolproject.com)  
Councilor Fitzgibbons asked about a memorial tree which needs to be preserved. Mr. Fitzgibbons expects the demo will not destroy the tree.
- **COVID-19 and Budget Impact**  
We are down to 32 total active cases. The planning process has begun for the reopening of buildings. The Governor's orders about offices are fairly rigid in terms of capacity and required protections. There will be a significant investment in purchasing supplies and cleaning items and will have to have specialized cleanings. Since everyone is looking for same supplies, getting those supplies is a challenge. Mr. Dutton clarified; while the building hasn't been open to the public the staff continue to work and serve the citizens.  
Mr. Dutton addressed reopening of local businesses and the Governor's directive that restaurants can only serve food outdoors.  
Mr. Dutton then addressed election hours as requested by a citizen. He explained the hours could not be altered at this point as the election warrant had already been published.  
Budget update: We have been carefully tracking due dates on real estate property tax and utility bills. We will not require any short term borrowing for the FY20. Mr. Dutton spoke about the FY21 budget stressing local aide amounts are still not known. We are assuming local aide cuts of 10%. The school superintendent still does not know their Chapter 70 school funding will look like. Mr. Dutton has reached out to the Baker administration who are waiting for the legislature. Mr. Dutton reminded all that they will be looking to offset the FY21 revenue loss with a transfer from Stabilization. President Gallagher commented; if there is another round of stimulus money, they want to include something for local cities and towns.
- **CARES Act Grant Funding**  
We are about to submit first reimbursement under the Cares Act, which will be done before June 12th. That will assist in not having cash flow issues until Free Cash is certified. They are on a two-week submission schedule. We feel confident that everything we've submitted will be reimbursed. We are also prepping for FEMA reimbursement, which comes first. Councilor George asked if Plymouth County indicated when they'll issue funds and what happens if there are funds left over? Mr. Dutton responded, funds not expended go back to federal government. Plymouth County has roughly \$90MM for disbursement. They have taken 5% of that and allocated that according to population in cities and towns. It amounted to approximately \$1.1MM for us. Plymouth County has outlined a calendar of submission dates of every two weeks.
- **Update on Compensation Survey**  
Mr. Dutton explained the Town contracted with a consulting company who got underway. We put it on hold due to the difficulty in collecting data at this time. The intention is to get back at it when we know we can get the data we need.
- **Update on Marketing Consultant**  
Mr. Dutton explained; the circumstances over the last three months have put that on hold, but we anticipate picking right up with that and have been in contact with them. We've been in discussions with them and they've had some suggestions for helping keep businesses afloat and business recruitment strategies. They've also provided data for financial modeling in anticipation of marketing the opportunity zone.
- **Items for Next Meeting:**  
Councilor Fitzgibbons would like to see better answers to citizens comments. President Gallaher noted he does not think we should be adding these items to the agenda. Mr. Gallagher takes the opportunity to reach out to people who ask questions after the meeting. Will put it on the agenda for discussion of how we go forward.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**



## LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order O-FY20-056: Affix Town Clerk Salary  
President Gallagher read the committee dispositions.  
**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.  
**Discussion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons noted this seemed consistent and as an elected official it's the responsibility of the Council to take this action.  
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:  
Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George – YEA; Linde – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
- Order O-FY20-057: Town Council Acceptance of Electronic Signatures by Municipal Boards Recording Standard  
Councilor George noted this item was approved 2-0 in committee last evening.  
**Motion:** Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.  
**Discussion:** At Councilor Linde's request, Attorney Rawlins confirmed this action is offered through the Registries of Deed through the COVID-19 state of emergency. Attorney Rawlins then confirmed the follow up necessary with the Council Clerk.  
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:  
Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Linde – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

## OLD BUSINESS

### NEW BUSINESS

- Order O-FY20-058: FY20 End of Year Transfers  
**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.  
**Discussion:** None  
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:  
Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George – YEA; Linde – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
- Order O-FY20-059: FY20 End of Year Transfer - Olde Scotland Links Golf Course  
**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.  
**Discussion:** Councilor George noted the title of the order didn't include the additional transfer to the Transfer Station.  
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:  
Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Linde – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
- Order O-FY20-060: Acceptance of a Gift - Parks and Recreation  
**Motion:** Councilor George made a motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.  
**Discussion:** None  
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:  
Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – NO; Losche – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George – YEA; Linde – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion passed 8-1.
- Order O-FY20-061: Abate Local Meals Tax From March 1, 2020 - June 30, 2020  
**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.  
**Discussion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons would like to see this referred to committee.



**Motion:** Councilor George made a motion to make a friendly amendment to add the town will also waive local meals tax for July, August and September of 2020. which was duly seconded.

**Discussion:** Councilor Rushton offered his support for the amendment. Councilor Chase agrees the impact has been severe, but he believes there will be some legal issues with this action. Councilor Colombotos also would like some clarification on how this would work. Attorney Rawlins advised the Town would have to rescind MGL 64L which is the Local Options Meal Tax, which is paid for by the consumer, not the restaurant. The more proper thing to do would be to bring forward legislation to rescind MGL 64L.

Scheduling a special meeting was discussed for the purposes of introducing new legislation. Councilor George withdrew his motion to amend and Councilor Rushton withdrew his second.

**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to table indefinitely which was duly seconded.

**Discussion:** None

A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Linde – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

The Council then discussed scheduling a special meeting in order to introduce new legislation on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

#### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- William Akins, Oak Meadow Place: Mr. Akins feels disenfranchised with the reduced voting hours for the Annual Election. Mr. Akins then spoke about his issue not being selected for Charter Review Committee because he was an Associate Member on another board. Mr. Akins feels the restaurants deserve some type of compensation for having been shut down.
- Dr. Carlton Hunt, 80 Austin Street: Dr. Hunt does not agree with abating the meals tax. He suggested another revenue source as the solar field. Dr. Hunt also hopes the council will begin having committee presentations again.

#### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Thanked Mr. Gallagher for running another good meeting. Mr. Fitzgibbons thanked everyone who comes out and participates. He asked that they consider having the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting in public space and not a Zoom call.
- Councilor Colombotos: Nothing
- Councilor Losche: Nothing
- Councilor Rushton: Nothing
- Councilor George: Appreciates the comments regarding the local meals tax. Budget & Finance and Finance Committee will look at it and ask how it will impact FY21 budget.
- Councilor Linde: Applauded the Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect for holding peaceful protests. Mr. Linde agrees with Mr. Fitzgibbons on holding the public hearing in person.
- Councilor Chase: Hopes to join BCCR on Saturday. Mr. Chase thinks they do tremendous work.
- Councilor Sousa: None
- Councilor Gallagher: Congratulated those who have peacefully protested in our community. We have a right to do that. Regarding the meals tax, Mr. Gallagher thinks Mr. Fitzgibbons and Rushton brought up something very good. Finally, Mr. Gallagher spoke about the Charter Review Committee being up and running. They now have a full committee.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – *No Executive Session was held.*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to adjourn which was duly seconded.

A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George – YEA; Linde – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.



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The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.  
Minutes submitted by: Ann Holmberg

**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, June 23, 2020, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a Roll Call vote (9-0).**

**A TRUE COPY ATTEST:**

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Ann M. Holmberg  
Town Council Clerk