



Town of Bridgewater  
Town Council Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 8, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER:**

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Edward Haley called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:34 pm, on January 8, 2019 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

**PRESENT:**

Council members present were, Peter Colombotos, William Wood, Dennis Gallagher, Edward Haley, Fred Chase, Shawn George, and Aisha Losche. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

**ABSENT:**

- Councilor Tim Fitzgibbons
- Councilor Frank Sousa

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

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

- Robert Stearns
- Donald Bergstrom

*\*President Haley announced the meeting was being aired live and recorded.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- December 18, 2018

**Motion:** A motion to postpone was made by Councilor Gallagher. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

**Discussion:** None.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

- President Haley announced nomination papers are available for elected positions in the upcoming Town election.

**PROCLAMATIONS** - *None*

**CITIZENS OPEN FORUM** - *No citizens came forward.*

**APPOINTMENTS** - *None*

**HEARINGS**

- **7:35 p.m.:** Order O-FY19-036: Transfer Order - Capital Transfer - Lease Payments

President Haley opened the hearing at 7:35 p.m.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Wood to continue the hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.

A voice vote was taken and the motion to continue passed 7-0.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Losche to take agenda item J: Discussions out of order. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSIONS** (*Taken Out of Order*)

- **Joint Meeting with Town Manager, Finance Committee and School Committee Chair (or designee)**

President Haley announced Finance Committee member, Jerry Muller is joining via telephone.

Dr. Prewandowski opened the School Committee meeting at 7:38 p.m.

All present introduced themselves.

Mr. Dutton explained the Council has adopted Budget Resolution for FY20 elaborating on the Resolution; detailing the sections. Mr. Dutton cited roadways as a hot-topic for the Town noting there are three almost total failures in drainage. He would like to meet with the school committee more frequently and take a more holistic approach to the budget process.



Town of Bridgewater  
Town Council Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 8, 2019

Superintendent Swenson spoke for the school district, agreeing it is early in the process. He has met with the Director of Finance and school department heads to ask what they need to run their departments. Now it becomes a matter of prioritization. They will be presenting the preliminary budget to the full committee 1/23/19 @ 7:00 at Raynham Middle School. Mr. Swenson spoke about funding through Chapter 70 and 71 and the assessments, noting; both towns are growing. Since summer registration, another 250 students have moved into the district. They are seeing an increase in social/emotional issues and will therefore I be advocating for support in that area. Mr. Swenson spoke at length about class size.

**Councilor Questions:**

Mr. Swenson answered a variety of questions by the Councilors speaking about long term (financial) planning and cost saving measures which have been implemented. He noted; They try to look to see what can be pre-purchased with E&D money which cannot be used for recurring costs. The Facilities Manager works with Columbia Gas, National grid to seek out grants for green initiative updates. They took steps to reduce substitute costs, and switched Insurance carriers. Mr. Swenson also spoke briefly about school choice, stating approximately 100 students/year leave for school choice. The Superintendent spoke about special needs and highlighted the fact that they have created a lot of in-district special needs programs to prevent students from having to leave the district. School Committee Vice Chair, Mike Dolan spoke briefly about the Mitchell School Building Committee. Mr. Dolan spoke about the public presentation which will be held Thursday at 10:30 a.m. at the Senior Center or 7:00 p.m. at the Mitchell School, reminding all that the survey closes on the 14<sup>th</sup>. School Committee member, Rachel King spoke about the high-class sizes. She explained; this is a preliminary budget – the departments wish lists. Ms. King stated; we all agree the social/emotional component is a priority. One adjustment councilor can make a higher-class size seem more manageable.

Finally, Dr. Prewandowski outlined the upcoming school district budget meetings.

The School Committee closed their meeting at 8:47 p.m.

*\*8:48 p.m.: President Haley called a recess.*

*\*8:56 p.m.: President Haley called the meeting back to order.*

- Sign Ordinance Compliance

Councilor Colombotos explained; Section 7.64 was passed at town meeting. He is concerned the Town doesn't adhere to that; noting Skips has a bunch of neon signs. Mr. Dutton responded; we can send the Building Inspector out to do a review of the signs. Councilor Wood pointed out the Town is looking at all the zoning right now and this section probably needs a re-definition. Mr. Dutton agreed the ordinance should be updated.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Losche to return to regular order of business: Hearings. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**HEARINGS (Continued)**

- Order O-FY19-036: Transfer Order - Capital Transfer - Lease Payments (*Continued*)

President Haley re-opened the continued hearing at 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Dutton provided a brief explanation of the transfer.

President Haley invited any questions from the public – None came forward.

President Haley asked if there was anyone speaking in favor – None came forward.

President Haley asked if there was anyone speaking in opposition - None came forward.

President Haley entertained any questions from councilors:

- No councilor questions.

President Haley closed the hearing at 9:13 p.m.

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Councilor Chase. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood

**Discussion:** None

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



Town of Bridgewater  
Town Council Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 8, 2019

Sousa – ABSENT; Colombotos – YEA; Wood – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Haley – YEA; Chase – YEA; George - YEA; Losche – YEA; Fitzgibbons - ABSENT. The motion passed 7-0.

#### LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

- Petition P-2019-001: Common Victualler Annual Renewal - Flippin' Burger's

Mr. Dutton briefly explained the petition.

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Councilor Losche. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

**Discussion:** None

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.

- Petition P-2019-002: Second Hand Gold/Pawn Shop Annual Renewal - Gamestop, Inc, dba, Gamestop #3776

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Councilor Losche. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

**Discussion:** None

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.

#### PRESENTATIONS - None

#### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- Mr. Dutton reported on information about various activities happening around town and highlighted meetings and events. Items of note included: The Town Manager's office Confidential Assistant has left for another opportunity; therefore the office is a little short-handed. Mr. Dutton spoke about the Mitchell School Committee who will be hosting two info sessions on Thursday, 10:30 a.m. (Senior Center) and 7:00 p.m. at the old High School. The committee's charge is to narrow the options down to one, to be submitted to the MSBA. There is a special website for Mitchell School information – [bridgewater-schoolproject.com](http://bridgewater-schoolproject.com). The Town is applying for a \$50K feasibility funding grant through the Mass Cultural Council for the old Town Hall Building. The proposed Charter Changes have cleared House and Senate and is waiting signature by Governor. They approved the changes with one ballot question. The town is going through its, state funded, municipal vulnerability preparedness program; which identifies areas of town susceptible to natural and man-made disasters. Mr. Dutton updated all on the paid parking program which begins 1/14/19, noting signage will be going up this week. The meters don't take cash, but people can use the smartphone app. Progress continues Elm Street and they have begun to interact with National Grid. Mr. Dutton spoke about a proposed 300-400K square foot facility on Elm Street. The tax foreclosure sale grossed \$240K. Those funds return to General Fund. The FY2018 Audit is completed. Finally, Mr. Dutton noted the LED streetlight initiative has begun and spoke about openings on boards and committees.

#### Councilor Questions:

- Councilor George clarified the LED street lights are not traffic lights. He asked if we determined who approved the drainage structure on the Bridge Street project. Mr. Dutton responded; it's probable we won't find any paperwork on that. It's not the bridge, but the abutting bank.
- Councilor Gallagher asked about next steps on the abandoned Mobile Station. Mr. Dutton responded; the next step should be to spend a little money on the appraisal. At Councilor Gallagher's request, Mr. Dutton spoke about Rainbow's End noting he has the agreement. BYSA is willing to come in and have a conversation. Finally, M. Gallagher asked if the Charter changes can go on April ballot? Mr. Dutton responded; you have roughly 35 days prior to the election to put something on the ballot.
- Councilor Wood spoke about the odor from the water treatment plant requesting the town closely monitor when people notice it.

#### SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget & Finance: Committee Chair Wood stated the committee voted to support O-FY19-037 unanimously.

#### LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order O-FY19-013: Highway Garage - Spring Street

Councilor Colombotos explained; the committee thought it made sense to put a deadline on the order.

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Colombotos to amend as written.

*\*Motion withdrawn.*



**Discussion:** Councilor Colombotos asked the Town Manager if the deadline was doable? Mr. Dutton responded; Memorial Day would be a better deadline due to the potential remediation and the need for an appropriation. Councilor Losche walked through the potential timeline with Mr. Dutton and discussion continued as Councilors offered their opinions on the proposed amended deadline. Mr. Dutton re-emphasized – if there is soil contamination, it will be an entirely different process.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Losche to amend the deadline to May 1, 2019, barring any major environmental hazards and to change “seek” to “receive”. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.

**Discussion:** None

A voice vote was taken and the motion to amend passed 7-0.

**Discussion (on main motion):** Councilor Gallagher explained his reason for putting this order forward.

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

Fitzgibbons – ABSENT; Losche – YEA; George – YEA; Chase – YEA; Haley – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa - ABSENT. The motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY19-035: Acceptance of a Gift

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.

**Discussion:** None

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

Sousa – ABSENT; Colombotos – YEA; Wood – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Haley – YEA; Chase – YEA; George - YEA; Losche – YEA; Fitzgibbons - ABSENT. The motion passed 7-0.

- Order O-FY19-037: Acceptance of Other Revenue from American Tower

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

**Discussion:** None

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

Fitzgibbons – ABSENT; Losche – YEA; George – YEA; Chase – YEA; Haley – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa - ABSENT. The motion passed 7-0.

- Resolution R-FY19-003: Air Space Resolution

Councilor Colombotos explained the origin of the resolution, stating it probably should be an ordinance. The committee suggests tabling. The Town Manager will put together an ordinance.

*\*Councilor Haley, the sponsor, withdrew the measure.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

- Ordinance D-FY19-004: General Ordinance - Acceptance of MGL c.40, Section 22A, 22B, 22C Concerning Parking Meters

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Gallagher to send to advertising. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

**Discussion:** None

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Dutton briefly explained both orders and recommended they be referred to Public Safety committee for review.

- Order O-FY19-038 - Adoption of MGL c. 147 s. 21A - Authorizing the Appointment of Police Cadets

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor George to refer both items (a) and (b) to the Public Safety committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Losche.

**Discussion:** None

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

- Order O-FY19-039: Home Rule Petition - Authorizing the Town of Bridgewater to Appoint Police

*\*Referred to Public Safety committee per motion above.*

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**



Town of Bridgewater  
Town Council Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 8, 2019

- Dr. Carlton Hunt, 80 Austin Street: Thanked the Council for not “tabling” the Air Space Resolution. He has reached out to the attorney who assisted with writing the document so he may connect with the Town Attorney and Community & Economic Development Director.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Absent
- Councilor Losche: Thanked school committee for attending tonight.
- Councilor George: None
- Councilor Chase: Reminder all to return census’.
- Councilor Gallagher: Thanked School Committee and Finance Committee for coming in tonight. Thanked Michael Spagone for his time serving as an employee and volunteer.
- Councilor Wood: Thanked Lions for the holiday decorations on the Common. Thanked School and Finance Committees. Spoke about the B-R Robotics team, noting they are host for one of the district events. Mr. Wood invited all to attend.
- Councilor Colombotos: Nothing
- Councilor Sousa: Absent
- Councilor Haley: Thanked the School Committee and Finance Committee for attending.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION –**

***Motion:*** A motion was made by Councilor Losche to move into Executive Session under: MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) (2): To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel and to adjourn from Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chase.

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

Sousa – ABSENT; Colombotos – YEA; Wood – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Haley – YEA; Chase – YEA; George - YEA; Losche – YEA; Fitzgibbons - ABSENT. The motion passed 7-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Open session adjourned at 10:00 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, January 22, 2019, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a voice vote (6-0-2) (Councilors Fitzgibbons and Sousa abstained, Councilor Losche not present).**

**A TRUE COPY ATTEST:**

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Ann M. Holmberg  
Town Council Clerk