



CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Edward Haley called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:30 pm, on February 5, 2019 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

Council members present were, Francis Sousa, Peter Colombotos, William Wood, Dennis Gallagher, Edward Haley, Fred Chase, Shawn George, Aisha Losche (participating remotely), and Timothy Fitzgibbons. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

ABSENT:

No Councilors were absent. With the approval of the Council President, Councilor Aisha Losche participated remotely via telephone.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

President Haley announced Councilor Losche is participating remotely via telephone.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- January 22, 2019

Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Sousa.

Discussion:

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

- President Haley announced the meeting was being aired live and taped.

PROCLAMATIONS

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM - None

APPOINTMENTS

- Town Manager – *Michael Dutton (Reappointment)*

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons to postpone agenda item E: Appointments until after item L: Legislation for Action. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

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

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

HEARINGS - None

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None

PRESENTATIONS

- Public Safety Buildings – Next Steps

Mr. Dutton presented an update on public safety buildings in town. He spoke about the Fire Department Buildings, walking through the history of the buildings. He noted currently fire trucks barely fit through the doors at Station #1 as it was built long ago for smaller vehicles. Fire Station #1 has leaks and tight working and sleeping quarters and tight/inadequate storage area for equipment and supplies. Mr. Dutton pointed out the façade is in good shape but is just covering up the older building. He then spoke about issues with Fire Station #2 noting; mostly the inside systems need some help. Then Mr. Dutton moved on to the Roadways Barn which experiences accelerated wear and tear due to nature of work and materials. The Police Station is 17 years old, but in fairly good shape. There are some storage constraints and some systems are at end of their life expectancy. Typically, 15 years is the useful life. He noted they definitely have storage needs.



Mr. Dutton then spoke about the life expectancy of current buildings: Fire Station #1 has far exceeded its life expectancy. Fire Station II is coming to the end of its construction bond in 2020. They are due for some upgrades to extend its useful life. The Police Station is also coming to the end of its construction bond and are due for some major HVAC systems upgrades to extend its useful life. The Roadways Barn is coming to end of their construction bond and needs major upgrades including new skin, HVAC, roof and doors to extend useful life. Councilors briefly asked questions about the buildings and their useful lives. Councilor Gallagher asked if maintenance work could be built into the Capital Plan for Fire Station #2, Police Department and Highway Barn to extend their useful lives. To that point, Councilor Fitzgibbons noted his opinion that regular maintenance items should be part of the operational budget, not capital items. Mr. Dutton explained the potential costs for each building and explained; the next step is to fund a feasibility study and explained what it could do.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Dutton reported on information about various activities happening around town and highlighted meetings and events. Items of note included: Work that has begun on the Comprehensive Master Plan Committee, noting there is a lot of public outreach. The McElwain School Residences has received their site eligibility approval letter from the Mass Department of Housing & Community Development which allows the comprehensive permitting process to go forward with the ZBA. Mr. Dutton provided a brief update on the burst sprinkler in the Academy Building, noting it will be fixed as soon as new heater comes in. The Mitchell School Building Committee voted to submit the new school proposal to the MSBA as its preferred schematic option. The MSBA will vote on that at their April meeting. The second phase out at the Claremont property has been approved by the ZBA. Claremont continues to do additional planning for their properties. Mr. Dutton spoke about the pickleball courts at the Senior Center, stating the initiative is in a holding pattern because the location planned for the courts is actually the Mitchell School property. Mr. Paskell is looking to possibly submit something this month for site plan review to the Planning Board for Broad Street. Mr. Dutton gave an update on Elm Street progress stating state and environmental application have been filed. The Debarlow property owners are working closely with town. They secured site plan approval from Planning Board last month and would like to begin construction in March. Finally, Mr. Dutton highlighted openings on Boards and Committees.

Councilor Questions:

- Councilor George asked Mr. Dutton what will be brought to voters for funding mechanism for the school? Mr. Dutton responded; it would be debt exclusion. He explained; it's common to hear it referred to it as an override, which is totally different. A Debt Exclusion is a temporary increase in taxes to fund a specific project, where an override is a permanent increase in taxes. Councilor Fitzgibbons noted; the other thing about a Debt Exclusion is that it has to be used for the specific purpose it's voted for. An Override can be used town-wide. When the town goes forward to ask for vote, the form of vote has to be for full amount of project, regardless of reimbursements. Mr. Dutton confirmed the information Mr. Fitzgibbons offered was correct.
- At Councilor Gallagher's request, Mr. Dutton provided an update on the Spring Street Highway Barn stating an assessment has been completed. There's asbestos, which needs to be eradicated. They are still waiting for ground testing results. Mr. Gallagher followed up asking for any update on the Mobile Station. Mr. Dutton responded; there has been no additional correspondence from them. It's on the market and has been cleaned up a bit.
- Councilor Wood asked about pavement for First Street. Mr. Dutton responded; there is MassWorks funding for sewer installation for First Street. Mr. Wood followed up; asking about repairs to Oak Street. Mr. Dutton confirmed it is on the Capital Plan for 2021.
- At Councilor Sousa's request, Mr. Dutton spoke about the Senior Center explaining; the Elder Services board is looking at several smaller projects up there. Mr. Dutton is meeting with them next week to discuss.
- Finally, at President' Haley's request, Mr. Dutton explained the water meter project was a little over 2/3 complete two weeks ago. They're expecting them to be done at the end of February.

DISCUSSIONS - None

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:



- Budget & Finance: Councilor Wood stated the Council cannot vote on two items this evening. However, the Budget & Finance committee voted to recommend approval of acceptance of non-recurring revenue. The committee discussed Affixing Town Clerk's salary. The salary amount on order is \$69,900. The committee is recommending funding as professional position at \$75,000 which puts in middle of Town Clerk's salaries.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order O-FY19-040: Affix Town Clerk Salary

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Wood to postpone items a) and b). The motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgibbons.

Discussion: Councilor Wood noted Finance Committee had not met on these items as yet.

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

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

- Order O-FY19-043: Acceptance of Non-Recurring Revenue to Capital
Postponed per motion above.

- Order O-FY19-044: Ballot Question - Town of Bridgewater Home Rule Charter Changes

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

Discussion: Councilor Losche briefly outlined the history of the Charter Review process. Now that it's finally back from State we're ready to move forward with the ballot vote. Discussion followed as councilors expressed their opinions on the State's return of the approved Charter Changes with only one question to be put before the voters. Several councilors wished to have had the changes broken out into separate questions for citizens to vote on, in particular, the question of an appointed versus elected Town Clerk was the main topic of concern. Councilor Gallagher asked if the state provided any information on why they approved one question. Mr. Dutton responded there was no clear answer. It was noted by some Councilors that the possibility existed to not approve adding the Charter Changes question to the April ballot; start over and go through another review cycle. Councilor Fitzgibbons disagreed with not adding it to the ballot; explaining his preference to let the voters decide and not throw away all those years of work. Councilor Wood supported moving forward and again outlined the public process followed. Councilor George expressed his disappointment with the format of the question but will vote to put it before the citizens. Finally, Councilor Losche pointed out it will be very important for citizens to be well informed.

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

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Losche – YEA; George – YEA; Chase – NO; Haley – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos – NO; Sousa - NO. The motion passed 6-3.

- Order O-FY19-045: Contract Ratification - Town Manager

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

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons to amend the order by changing January 26, 2019 to February 5, 2019 and December 31, 2021 to February 4, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

Discussion: Councilor Colombotos stated; we haven't reviewed performance adequately. This will be last time he votes for three-year contract without a review.

Sousa – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Wood – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Haley – YEA; Chase – YEA; George - YEA; Losche – YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion to amend passed unanimously.

A roll call vote was taken, on the main motion to approve, with results recorded as follows:

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Losche – YEA; George – YEA; Chase – YEA; Haley – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion to approve, as amended, passed unanimously.



Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons to bring back agenda item E: Appointments. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gallagher.

Discussion: None

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

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

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons to re-appoint the Town Manager. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

Discussion: None

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

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

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- Order O-FY19-048: Acceptance of MassWorks Grant

Motion: A motion was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

Discussion: None

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

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- David Hansen, Plymouth Street: Mr. Hansen spoke about Charter Changes. He doesn't agree with appointment of Town Clerk or stipend for Councilors.
- Janet Hansen: Mrs. Hansen asked; why did Council feel the need to make the changes? She thinks the Town Clerk should still be elected. Also agrees shouldn't be receiving stipend.
- Marilee Kenney Hunt, 80 Austin Street: Thanked the Budget & Finance Committee for consideration on Town Clerk salary. Congratulated Mr. Dutton on his reappointment. Regarding the Charter; she stated; it will be difficult. Ms. Hunt does not want an appointed Town Clerk, but there are many other things that need to be changed. Finally, Ms. Hunt stated; papers are still available to be pulled for seats on Town Council.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Sousa: No comments.
- Councilor Colombotos: No comments.
- Councilor Wood: Thanked the Hansen's for coming this evening. Mr. Wood hopes people would vote for the Charter Changes.
- Councilor Gallagher: Regarding the Charter Review/Recommendations; Mr. Gallagher supports it going to the voters but will most likely not vote for the changes himself. He explained it's required to look at it every six years. Mr. Gallagher congratulated Mr. Dutton on his reappointment.
- Councilor Chase: No comments.
- Councilor George: Thanked Mrs. Hansen for her comments. In Mr. George's opinion, when you're on a committee you make recommendations. He is very disappointed this is one question and will not support the changes for that reason. Mr. George congratulated Mr. Dutton on his reappointment.
- Councilor Losche: Was happy to hear everyone's comments on the Charter updates. She encouraged folks to go back and read charter before deciding whether they can support the changes or not. Mrs. Losche highlighted the amount of time it has taken to get the charter changes to this point.
- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Responded to Mrs. Hansen stating; he was on the Rules & Procedures committee when we got the recommendation to appoint Town Clerk. Mr. Fitzgibbons spoke about the School Building Committee



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decision on preliminary design stating the vote was 11-1-1 to go forward with a new building option. He thanked Mr. Dolan and Mr. Chipman for running good meetings.

- Councilor Haley: Mr. Haley commented; he wonders how this Charter Review recommendation process will play into the next process.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – *No Executive Session was held.*

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 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, February 26, 2019, to approve the aforementioned Order by a voice vote (9-0).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk