



CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Dennis Gallagher called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:30 pm, on March 10, 2020 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

Council members present 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:

- William L. Clapp
- Donald F. Bullock

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- February 24, 2020

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

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 9-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

- State of the Town Address

Two weeks from this evening we will hold the State of the Town Address at 6:30 p.m. March 24th.

- Charter Review Committee

We are still looking for citizens to serve on the Charter Review Committee. President Gallagher would like to appoint at the first meeting in April.

PROCLAMATIONS

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM

- Bill Aikens, Meadow Place: Mr. Aikens recapped what he's been doing over the last couple of weeks. He spoke about the District 6 vacancy created by Mr. Wood's resignation and his consideration to run for the District 6 vacancy. Mr. Aikens feels Mr. Wood is going around the Charter and has a problem with that. Finally, Mr. Aikens expressed his frustration in trying to get an answer.
- Ed Ivaldi, Boxwood Lane: Mr. Ivaldi spoke about the upcoming election stating he feels Mr. Wood's candidacy is clouding the election and challenging the Charter. He stated it raises a larger question about who is responsible for this decision. Mr. Ivaldi cited the Charter stating he feels this is exploiting a loophole.

Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to take agenda item "F: Hearings" out of order which was duly seconded.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 9-0.

HEARINGS *(Taken Out of Order)*

- 7:33 PM: Petition P-2020-006: New Class II Auto Dealer License: 039 Auto Sales, Inc. 944 Bedford Street
President Gallagher opened the hearing at 7:43 p.m.

Attorney Pellegrini came forward on behalf of the petitioner and explained; this is a transfer of assets to a new owner.

President Gallagher invited any questions from the public - None came forward.



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President Gallagher asked if there was anyone speaking in favor – None came forward.
President Gallagher asked if there was anyone speaking in opposition - None came forward.
President Gallagher entertained any questions from councilors: No councilor questions.
President Gallagher closed the hearing at 7:45 p.m.

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

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 9-0.

Return to regular order of business (appointments)

APPOINTMENTS

**7:47 p.m., Councilor Fitzgibbons exited the room.*

- Jennifer Rogan – Cultural Council

Mr. Dutton spoke on behalf of Ms. Rogan and encouraged the appointment.

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

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 8-0.

- Lorraine Carrozza – S.A.V.E. Committee

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

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 8-0.

- Lorraine Carrozza – Disabilities Commission

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

Discussion: None

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 8-0.

**7:48 p.m., Councilor Fitzgibbons returned to the meeting.*

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS

PRESENTATIONS

- Elder Affairs

Mr. David Frim came forward and provided a report on the Elder Affairs Commission, speaking about the current members and work with the Senior Center Director. Mr. Frim spoke about several programs offered at the Senior Center in addition to meals. He spoke about partnership efforts to the Nursing Home and Bridgewater Housing Authority.

Councilor Rushton thanked Mr. Frim and all Commissioners who volunteer their time.

- Disabilities Commission

Mr. David Frim spoke about the Disabilities Commission, speaking about the current members and mission of the Commission. Mr. Frim spoke about events and outreach efforts of the Commission. He spoke about the partnership effort with the Town Manager to address the side door handicapped entrance and parking issues. Mr. Frim spoke about feedback they were able to offer for Marathon Park.

Councilor Fitzgibbons would like to see the commission include people with cognitive issues as well.

Councilor Rushton asked if there is a process in town that brings the Disability Commission into the Mitchell School Building Committee? Mr. Frim stated he had not been called to do that.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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

- Mitchell School Update (Standing Item)

The committee met last night and continue to be on track. They went through another design cost estimate. Both estimates came within a few dollars of each other. They are still working with the \$80.6MM number.



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\$46,771,000 will be paid by taxpayers, \$33,828,000 paid by the commonwealth. The Finance Director and School Business Manager are looking at whether bonding the project now to take advantage of the good rates is a good idea. Meetings are usually held the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month in Council Chambers. Information about the project and meetings can be found at www.bridgewater-school-project.com

- Councilor Fitzgibbons asked; if we borrow the money now when does it show up on tax bills? Mr. Dutton responded; it would show up earlier.
- Councilor Rushton stated; at the meeting they talked about borrowing a portion now. Mr. Dutton explained they're looking at a Bond Anticipation Note. The Finance team is currently looking at whether the savings is significant enough to make it worth it.
- Councilor Fitzgibbons clarified; whether we bond now or later, we still need to pay the \$80.6MM in principle
- COVID-19 Response Update
The Governor just issued a state of emergency for the State. He did it to get ahead of the issue. There are 91 presumptive cases and been only one confirmed case in MA. Mr. Dutton held an emergency management meeting this afternoon to make sure we addressed continuity of operations. We will be doing a decontamination of all town buildings, police and fire vehicles. Plymouth County Health Departments have conducted table-top planning sessions. BSU is having discussions about what they'll do after break ends. Schools have been disinfected.
 - Councilor Linde asked if any extra precautions were in place for the Senior Center? Mr. Dutton responded; we will be there tomorrow morning with high powered disinfectant.
 - Councilor Fitzgibbons asked if anything needs to be done to declare an emergency in the Town to qualify for finding? Mr. Dutton responded; yes, if there is an emergency, he will issue a Declaration.
- Budget Update
Mr. Dutton held a department head meeting this morning. Currently have a working deficit of about \$200,000 that they're working through.
Budget & Finance and Finance Committees will begin the joint meetings. Mr. Dutton will have a balanced budget by 4/1/20
- Old Town Hall Feasibility Update
Have signed the contract and consultants are scheduled to come in on the 17th and 18th. They'll be reaching out to several members of the community, boards and commission. We are trying to be as inclusive as possible. If any Councilor wants to meet with the consultants reach out to Mr. Dutton.
- Zoning Recodification Update
Mr. Dutton clarified; the recodification was not set up to make any significant changes to the zoning. In terms of process; it will come back to Council for a hearing. We will have Attorney Bobrowski present for the hearing.
 - Councilor Colombotos expressed concern that the last version didn't show sections that had been taken out.
- Memorial Building Update
Mr. Dutton spoke to the available funds of approximately \$700,000 in bonded money. That money must be spent on that project this year. The cost estimate was close to \$1.7MM. We have asked the CPC for \$550,000 and are looking at Water/Sewer Capital accounts to split about \$450,000. The question of why we need that building for office space. We tried to create administrative space in new water treatment plant; but DEP said it is not appropriate. We anticipate completing DPW by bringing on a Director in 2021 and will need space in the Memorial Building for probably six people. People have asked; why not use the Highway Barn? The answer is; it is not appropriate for the number of people and the type of jobs they have to do.
 - Councilor Linde asked how he can see the inside of the Buildings. Mr. Dutton responded; through him.
 - Councilor Sousa stated a whole staff moved to the Highway Barn before. He feels the town should be looking at the Highway Barn for office space. The Memorial Building is supposed to be for display items.
- Items for Next Meeting:
Councilor Sousa requested a response from Town Manager about the Highway Barn office space.



DISCUSSIONS

- Annual Election Candidate Eligibility
President Gallagher explained he put this on the agenda because he thinks there are some who are looking to us to make a decision. Has asked Town Manager to ask town Attorney for opinion and read the opinion into the record (attached to minutes)
 - Councilor Colombotos asked if the intention of the Charter allow Mr. Wood to run? Attorney Rawlins responded; he is only looking at the plain language and legal interpretation.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Public Safety Committee: Committee Chair Rushton stated the committee met 2/27/20. They had a lengthy discussion about East Street. After reviewing the activity, nothing really stood out related to speed and accidents. They looked at 3,337 cars. The speed limit is 35 mph and the average speed was 35. The committee didn't feel it was necessary to take any action on the order at this time, but will look at it again as a broader issue.
- Fire Station Committee Update: Mr. Rushton provided an update on the committee's activity stating at the end of 2019 the RFQs went out and responses have been reviewed. It's been narrowed down to three candidates. We will have the candidates come in for presentation to full committee before moving forward.
 - President Gallagher asked if the East Street issue is over? Mr. Rushton responded; the committee will meet and look at a broader issue.

LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Ordinance D-FY20-005: General Ordinance - Commercial Parking Licensing
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.
- Order O-FY20-043: Construction Vehicle Restriction on Wally Krueger Way
Public Safety Committee Chair Rushton stated the Public Safety Committee met 2/27/20 with a variety of stake holders, including the Director of Elder Affairs, Police, Fire and the Elementary School Designers. The committee supported this legislation unanimously.
Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons would like to take a survey of South Street before and after to assess any damage.
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.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- Ordinance D-FY20-002: General Ordinance - Dumpsters in Residential Zoning Districts
Motion: Councilor Fitzgibbons made a motion to refer to Community & Economic Development Committee which was duly seconded. Councilors Colombotos and Losche pointed out this measure had already been discussed in committee. The motion to refer and second were subsequently withdrawn.
Motion: Councilor Chase made a motion to send to advertising which was duly seconded.
Discussion: Councilor Fitzgibbons noted he would like to add his name as co-sponsor. Councilor Colombotos spoke briefly about the process in committee. Discussion briefly turned to the length of time a dumpster would be allowable.
Motion: Councilor Colombotos made a motion to amend the last paragraph by striking the word "construction" and adding "but not limited to" after "including". The motion was duly seconded.
A voice vote was taken, and the motion to amend passed 9-0.



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A voice vote was taken, and the motion to send to advertising, as amended, passed 9-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilor Sousa: Mr. Sousa appreciated the presentation by Mr. Frim. The Elder Affairs Director is having a fire side chat for anyone who is interested.
- Councilor Chase: Reminded all that there are several vacancies on Charter Review Committee. He suggested; people who are concerned or angry about the term limit issue may want to consider joining the committee.
- Councilor Linde: Attended zoning meeting and found it to be informative. Mr. Linde supported Mr. Colombotos' previous comments.
- Councilor George: Hopes people are taking advice of the CDC to stay educated on Coronavirus and trying to stay away from some of the hysteria.
- Councilor Rushton: Echoed Councilor Chase's comments. He noted citizens can also participate during the election. Mr. Rushton congratulated the Bridgewater-Raynham Girls Basketball team for a great season. He also gave a shout out to Bridgewater Police Department and officer Michael Clark and Officer Kingsley for delivering a baby in the Home Depot parking lo
- Councilor Losche: Nothing
- Councilor Colombotos: Echoed Mr. Rushton's comments about voting in District 6.
- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Mr. Fitzgibbons doesn't want anyone to come onto any Town board or committee because they're angry. He wants people to take the longer view and do what's right for the Town. There's a lot of other things in the Charter that need changing too and he doesn't want people to focus on just one thing. Finally, Mr. Fitzgibbons encouraged people to go in with an open mind.
- Councilor Gallagher: Hopes a few more people step up to volunteer on Charter Review Committee. Will hope to appoint committee at the first meeting in April. Two weeks from tonight at 6:30 p.m. will be the State of the Town Address.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – *No Executive Session was held.*

ADJOURNMENT

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

A voice vote was taken, and the motion to adjourn passed 9-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 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, April 7, 2020, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a roll call vote (9-0).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk