



Town of Bridgewater  
Town Council Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER:**

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Dennis Gallagher called the special meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:31 pm, on May 14, 2019 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

**PRESENT:**

Council members present were, Francis Sousa, Fred Chase, William Wood, Shawn George, Dennis Gallagher, Matthew Rushton, Aisha Losche, Peter Colombotos and Timothy Fitzgibbons. Finance Director Anthony Sulmonte and Town Attorney Jason Rawlins were also present.

**ABSENT:** Town Manager, Michael Dutton

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

A moment of silence was held for all veterans who have passed since the last meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT - None**

**PROCLAMATIONS - None**

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

**APPOINTMENTS - None**

**Motion:** A motion to take agenda item "G: License Transactions" out of order was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

**Discussion:** None

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

**LICENSE TRANSACTIONS (*Taken out of order*) - None**

**Motion:** A motion to take agenda item "H: Presentations" out of order was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

**Discussion:** None

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

**PRESENTATIONS - None**

**Motion:** A motion to take agenda item "K: Committee Reports" out of order was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

**Discussion:** None

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

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Budget & Finance: Councilor Wood reported; Budget & Finance Committee has met on the items before the Council and recommended all.
- Rules & Procedures: Councilor Losche reported; the committee held their first councilor orientation this evening. She felt it went well.

\* *Return to regular order of business "F: Hearings".*

**HEARINGS -**

• **7:35 p.m. HEARING: FY2020 Annual Town Budget**

President Gallagher opened the hearing at 7:35 p.m., and asked Finance Director, Anthony Sulmonte to present. Mr. Sulmonte began stating he is presenting a balanced budget. He will cover the highlights and answer questions. Mr. Sulmonte spoke about revenue sources highlighting \$500,000 in new growth, there were no changes in state receipts. Mr. Sulmonte then briefly spoke about ambulance receipts and cited total revenue at \$58,683,973.



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Mr. Sulmonte then spoke about use of funds, noting the different categories, he explained they're broken out that way for transparency. He briefly spoke about benefits, liability insurance and gas & oil. Finally, Mr. Sulmonte cited uses as \$25,910,702.

President Gallagher stated; there have been many committee meetings over the past months to go over this and a lot of work going on in the meetings.

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

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:

- Councilor Wood clarified the voting format, stating we only vote expenses and reminded all that ambulance receipts has to carry a 2/3 vote.
- Councilor Fitzgibbons asked how much higher the revenue is than last year? Mr. Sulmonte responded; in the 3% area.
- Councilor Colombotos asked Mr. Sulmonte to highlight the most dramatic changes from last year. Mr. Sulmonte responded; changes were looked at relative to the operation inside the general government. For example; we didn't need to fill a position in the finance department because we could use technology. There were no major changes on the expense side. On the public safety side, we had contractual obligation. We had to transition the SAVER grant positions. We also did some work in Highway Department. He then spoke about some of the additional help in Highway provided by the Capital Plan which was approved. Regarding pension/benefits – fortunately, Mayflower wasn't a huge increase. Councilor Colombotos asked if building maintenance is part of the budget. Mr. Sulmonte responded; yes, there were some adjustments to be made at a higher level, but the position is posted on the website. Councilor Colombotos asked if there's room in the budget for contracting for building maintenance. Mr. Sulmonte responded; we have some more work to do there.
- Councilor George asked if we have any money coming back from golf course? Mr. Sulmonte note; in the order there's \$100,000 being transferred to stabilization. Councilor George asked if, after the transfer, do they owe us anything? Mr. Sulmonte responded; legally we can't recoup any additional costs, however, if the revenues come in well, there may be another \$100,000 in the fall.
- Councilor Gallagher stated; there will be a supplemental budget coming forward and asked how the Part-Time Steward would be funded. Mr. Sulmonte responded; we will encumber \$15,000. We will move some funds into the line item for FY20.

President Gallagher closed the hearing at 7:56 p.m.

**Motion:** A motion to close the hearing was made by Councilor Losche. The motion was seconded by Councilor George.

**Discussion:** None

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

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

Councilor Colombotos asked Attorney Rawlins if this would be an appropriate time to request the Town Manager provide updates on particular items. Attorney Rawlins confirmed this is appropriate or an email can be sent to the Town Manager. Councilor Colombotos requested the following updates be included in Town Manager's report next week:

- Relocation of Fire Department
- Overall debt load – outstanding bonds and when satisfied
- Town Hall Update: status of National Historic Places registration and when it will be emptied out.



- Internal striping on private lots

**DISCUSSIONS** – *None*

**LEGISLATION FOR ACTION**

- Order O-FY20-001: Budget Order - FY20 Annual Town Budget

President Gallagher read the committee dispositions.

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

**Discussion:** None

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

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

**Motion:** A motion to approve FY20 – annual town budget order was made by Councilor Wood. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chase.

**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; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

- Order O-FY20-002: Budget Order - FY20 Water Enterprise Fund Budget (Proposed Amendment)

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

**Motion:** A motion to amend as presented was made by Councilor Fitzgibbons. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wood.

**Discussion:** Councilor Wood explained the original figures were preliminary.

A voice vote was taken and the motion to amend passed unanimously.

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

Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – YEA; George – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion to approve, as amended, passed 9-0.

- Order O-FY20-003: Budget Order - FY20 Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget (Proposed Amendment)

It was noted that as with the previous order, the original numbers were preliminary.

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

**Discussion:** None

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

**Discussion:** None

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

Seeing no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:

Fitzgibbons – YEA; Colombotos – YEA; Losche – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Sousa - YEA. The motion to approve, as amended, passed 9-0.

- Order O-FY20-004: Budget Order - FY20 Transfer Station Enterprise Fund Budget

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

**Discussion:** Councilor Wood noted; this is balanced now.

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

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

- Order O-FY20-005: Budget Order - FY20 OSLGC Enterprise Fund Budget

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

**Discussion:** Councilor Colombotos asked Mr. Sulmonte if there would be any other money from the golf course above the \$200,000? Mr. Sulmonte responded; no.



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

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

- Order O-FY20-006: Authorization of Revolving Funds

8:06 p.m. Councilor Wood recused himself.

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

**Discussion:** None

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

Sousa – YEA; Chase – YEA; Wood – RECUSED; George – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Losche – YEA; Colombotos - YEA; Fitzgibbons - YEA. The motion passed 8-0.

\*8:07 p.m., Councilor Wood returned to the meeting.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- Jenny Burr, 45 Hartswood Way: Thanked the Council for all the hours spent looking at the budget. She would like more updates from a committee on the Towns revenue as she thinks it would help us understand and have better goals.

#### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- Councilor Fitzgibbons: Thanked all for the work on the budget. Regarding collective bargaining; he heard revenues are growing 3.3% each year. Anytime we exceed that amount we have to squeeze it out from someplace else.
- Councilor Colombotos: He welcomes Mr. Fitzgibbons' comments. There are a lot of structural deficits in the roadways around town. Ms. Burr's question is a good one. There's a lot being done. It may be useful to have the CED Director come in and give an overview. There hasn't been the continuity in that department, but with Ms. Burke it's headed in the right direction.
- Councilor Rushton: Understanding some of the challenges with the budget, he feels the school district is paramount and briefly mentioned the significant mental health issues affecting youth today.
- Councilor Losche: Encouraged people to volunteer for committees.
- Councilor George: Reminded all that Saturday was the rescheduled clean-up day. He spoke about the number of nips collected. The committee and volunteers did a great job. Mr. George sees Elm Street as a major win. He thanked all involved with the budget.
- Councilor Wood: With regard to comments about increasing revenue, he is looking forward to the zoning updates which will help potential new businesses.
- Councilor Chase: Regarding zoning – many citizens have brought their concerns about the solar farm on Auburn Street. He suggested citizens attend the planning board meeting tomorrow evening at 6:30 p.m.
- Councilor Sousa: Thanked all who put the budget together.
- Councilor Gallagher: Thanked the Finance Director and team for the detail we got in committee. We have a balanced budget. Mr. Gallagher enjoyed the cleanup on Saturday. He reminded all; this is a Special Meeting. We meet again next week.

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

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** A motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Losche. The motion was seconded by Councilor George. MTA A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 9-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Ann Holmberg



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**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, May 21, 2019, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted by a voice vote (7-0) (Councilor Sousa absent, Councilor Losche not present).**

**A TRUE COPY ATTEST:**

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Ann M. Holmberg  
Town Council Clerk