



Town of Bridgewater
Town Council Meeting – Meeting of the General Public
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 28, 2017

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Dennis Gallagher called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:01 pm, on February 28, 2017 in the Academy Building Council Chambers, 66 Central Square, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

Council members present were, Sandra Wright, Peter Colombotos, Dennis Gallagher, Aisha Losche, William Wood, Kevin Perry and Frank Sousa. Town Manager Michael Dutton and Town Attorney Mark Gildea were also present.

ABSENT:

- Councilor Edward Haley
- Councilor Timothy Fitzgibbons

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Gallagher thanked everyone for attending and apologized for not being able to broadcast live noting it is not BTV's fault for not being able to broadcast. President Gallagher then briefly explained the format for this evening pointing out; Councilors can ask questions, but it is not a time necessarily for back and forth dialogue.

FINANCIAL POLICIES OF THE TOWN

Mr. Dutton spoke briefly on the budget policy guideline, which serves as the town's fiscal policy, noting this year's budget policy's guidelines remain very conservative. The finance team is in the process of putting together a more comprehensive financial policy. Mr. Dutton then spoke on some of the key budgeting guidelines.

OTHER ITEMS OF A GENERAL NATURE THE PUBLIC WANTS ADDRESSED

- a. Bridgewater Citizen's for Civility and Respect – Mr. Sam Baumgarten
 - Sam Baumgarten, 60 Short Street: Mr. Baumgarten spoke about the Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect group, referencing the proclamation that the Council signed and noting they have come up with a mission statement.
 - Mary Jane McCool, 2 Aldrich Place: Ms. McCool Spoke about the Bridgewater Citizen for Civility and Respect and the proclamation which has become the guidelines by which they operate. Ms. McCool recounted an experience she witnessed of hatred, which ultimately resulted in the formation of Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect. Ms. McCool spoke briefly about activities of the group.
- b. Walkability In Bridgewater – Ms. Marilee Hunt
 - Marilee Hunt, 80 Austin Street: Ms. Hunt provided materials to the Councilors (included in materials). She began by stating she is not here to complain about the Highway Department; rather is making a plea to correct some of the deficits in the Highway Department. Ms. Hunt walks to work and showed pictures six days after the snowstorm; of snow banks making it difficult to use crosswalks and sidewalks covered in snow. She noted she has lived in towns that required citizens clear the sidewalk in front of their houses within 12 hours of the snowfall or the town issued fines.
- c. Green Communities Ideas – Ms. Pat Neary
 - Pat Neary, 225 Lakeside Drive: Ms. Neary is with the Bridgewater Green Committee. She thanked the Town Council for passing the Plastic Bag Ordinance. She thanked Mr. Dutton for the installation of the hydration station in the building. Ms. Neary thinks the Ordinance about trash left on the side of the road is a good idea. She asked if we can we designate someone to be in charge of litter pickup in the town. Ms. Neary then spoke about the meetings being streamed online and not broadcast live. The town website should have the agenda next to the listed meeting.
 - Bernice Morrissey, Lakeside Drive: Ms. Morrissey spoke about the Green Communities Committee. Ms. Morrissey's priority within the group is water. Ms. Morrissey is concerned about Lake Nippenicket with regard to the development around the area and possible zoning changes. She briefly spoke about ecological impacts.



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- Michael (speaker did not provide last name or address): He has an initiative towards sustainability and spoke at length about a proposal offering tax breaks for being sustainable and outlined several suggestions. Then he answered questions from the public.
- d. Stetson Street & Other Issues – Mr. James Candito
- James Candito, Stetson Street: Mr. Candito spoke about Stetson Street and Curve Street issues. Mr. Candito thinks funding should go to infrastructure, roads, Highway Department. He noted the new speed limit sign on Stetson Street should be moved and is requesting a no parking sign on Stetson Street during the day for more than an hour. He would also like the town to work with BSU police to direct people to go through center of Town versus cutting through Stetson and have the road repaved and the curbs replaced. Mr. Candito noted truck traffic on Stetson Street should be eliminated; there used to be signs, but they're gone now. Finally he spoke about the elimination of residential dumpsters.
Councilor Wood stated the speed limit sign was put up on Stetson Street, but parking is a larger issue than just Stetson Street. He noted Mr. Candito has done an excellent job communicating these issues.
- e. Community Shelter Needs - Mr. Curtis Markley
- Curtis Markley, 37 A Wall Street: Mr. Markley thanked the Town Council for holding the meeting. Mr. Markley spoke at length about student homelessness providing statistics and asked the Council what the town is doing about student homelessness.
- f. Transit X
- Dr. Carlton Hunt, 80 Austin Street: Regarding Transit X, Dr. Hunt feels it's a high benefit, low risk project, but isn't really here to speak about Transit X. Dr. Hunt spoke about development. He suggested the Executive Branch provide a full accounting of the progress of commercial economic development in town for the past two years. He is looking forward to the Council's recommendation on the strategic planning consultant. And agrees with previous speakers that Public Works, Parks and recreation and Economic Development should be better staffed. He requested the 85% requirement in the budget policy be loosened up. Dr. Hunt thanked all the volunteers in the town who dedicate their time and suggested a volunteer celebration should be held.
 - Mr. Stephen Black, 145 Legge Street : Mr. Black spoke in favor of Transit X, stating he feels Bridgewater is uniquely suited for this service. Mr. Black hopes the next step will be taken. He explained there will be more informational sessions and cited the website as www.transitx.com
- g. Parks and Recreation Department Assist with Passive Recreation and Open Space – Mr. Stephen Black
- Stephen Black, 145 Legge Street: Mr. Black spoke about getting more people involved with the maintenance of open space. As Parks & Recreation gets reorganized, he asked the Council to consider his request.
Councilor Wood stated he feels there isn't enough information yet on Transit X and spoke briefly about traffic in downtown at lunch time. Mr. Wood addressed Dr. Hunt's concern about the 85% guideline noting; we do tend to loosen up as the budget process moves along. Finally, he encouraged people to attend the budget meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion to approve was made by Councilor Perry. The motion was seconded by Councilor Losche. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 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, March 21, 2017, to approve the aforementioned minutes by a voice vote (6-0-2) (Councilor Wright Absent, Councilors Fitzgibbons and Haley abstained).

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

Ann M. Holmberg
Town Council Clerk