



CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being duly present, Town Council President Shawn George called the meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council to order at 7:00pm, on May 11, 2021 via Zoom©.

PRESENT:

Council members present via Zoom© were, Kevin Perry, Peter Colombotos, Francis Sousa, Matthew Rushton, Shawn George, William Wood, Fred Chase, Erik Moore and Dennis Gallagher. 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:

- Frank C. Hammond

President George announced: Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Bridgewater Town Council will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. There will be no in person attendance permitted. Citizens who wish to tune in to the meeting may do so via Facebook Live.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- April 27, 2021

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

Discussion: None

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

Perry – ABSTAIN; Colombotos – ABSTAIN; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Moore – ABSTAIN; Gallagher - YEA. The motion passed 6-0-3.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Outgoing Presidential Remarks

President George spoke about his time as Council President recounting the many accomplishments achieved, despite the pandemic. He highlighted the many acts of kindness displayed throughout the pandemic. Mr. George also acknowledged fellow Councilors and many Town employees for their assistance during the year.

- Reorganization of Council

Town Clerk, Marilee Kenney Hunt, called for nominations for Council President.

Councilor Gallagher nominated Councilor Rushton for President. Councilor George seconded the nomination.

Discussion: No additional nominations were put forward.

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

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

Newly elected President Rushton called for nominations for Vice President.

Councilor Wood nominated Councilor Chase for Vice President. Councilor Sousa seconded the nomination.

Discussion: No other nominations were put forward.

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



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Perry – YES; Colombotos – YES; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; George – YEA; Wood – YEA; Chase – YEA; Moore – YES; Gallagher - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

Councilors then drew numbers to assign new seating, with seat #1 to the Presidents far right. Seat assignments were drawn as follows:

1. Councilor George
2. Councilor Gallagher
3. Councilor Perry
4. Vice President Chase
5. President Rushton
6. Councilor Sousa
7. Councilor Moore
8. Councilor Wood
9. Councilor Colombotos

PROCLAMATIONS

CITIZENS OPEN FORUM

- Ray Ajemian, 221 Aldrich Road: Mr. Ajemian spoke as Vice Chair of the Planning Board addressing an article in the Enterprise relative to the Broad Street project. Mr. Ajemian spoke about the process, noting it was the most difficult project to work through, but acknowledged the hard work of the Planning Board Chair and the Board.
- Mark Linde, 56 Michael Road: Thanked Council for appointment to Housing Authority.

APPOINTMENTS

- Roadways Superintendent - *Paul DeCosta*
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: None
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Colombotos - YEA; Wood - YEA; Moore – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Chase – YEA; Perry – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.

HEARINGS

- **7:10 p.m. (Continued from 03/09/2021):** Petition P-2021-004: New Lodging House License - 84 South Street, NormaJean Begley & William F. Saba dba, the South Street House
President Rushton re-opened the hearing at 7:31 p.m.
Mr. Dutton requested the hearing be continued to 6/8/21 at 7:15 p.m.
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to continue the hearing to June 8, 2021 at 7:15 p.m. which was duly seconded.
Discussion: Councilors encouraged the applicants to meet with the Town Manager’s office.
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
George - YEA; Gallagher - YEA; Perry – YEA; Chase – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Moore – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
- **7:15 p.m.** FY2022 Annual Town Budget Hearing
President Rushton opened the hearing at 7:36 p.m.
Mr. Dutton provided highlights on the FY2022 budget process.
President Rushton invited any questions from the public – No questions.
President Rushton asked if there was anyone speaking in favor - No citizens speaking in favor.
President Rushton asked if there was anyone speaking in opposition – No citizens speaking in opposition.
President Rushton entertained any questions from councilors:
 - Councilor Wood asked if New Growth is related to Elm Street or is it spread around? Mr. Dutton responded; it is spread around. Mr. Wood asked about ambulance receipts being down due to the pandemic. Mr. Dutton confirmed that it did factor into the transfer. Finally, Mr. Wood asked if we are confident in the level of state support for the schools and are there any contingency plans? Mr. Dutton responded; we have budgeted as conservatively as we can.



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- Councilor Gallagher spoke briefly about the process this year and the state of the re-opening after the pandemic.
- Councilor Perry asked what percentage this budget goes above last year? Mr. Dutton responded; 3.71%.
- Councilor Sousa asked if there were additional employees to Highway? Mr. Dutton responded; not in this budget. There are budgeted open positions but it's difficult to find qualified candidates.
- President Rushton asked we keep an eye in FY22 budget to keep an eye on tax receipts. Echoed previous comments about smooth process and complimented Councilor Gallagher on Chairing the Budget & Finance Committee.

President Rushton closed the hearing at 8:09 p.m.

LICENSE TRANSACTIONS - None

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:

- Mitchell School Update (Standing Item)
Work continues as planned, on schedule. Some concerns nation wide about construction materials. The contractor did a great job pre-ordering materials. More information can be found at www.bridgewaterschoolproject.com.
- COVID-19 Update
The Town is down to 19 active cases and BSU has 3 students in quarantine. The DOC has no cases. Mr. Dutton spoke about BSU being approved as a regional vaccination site at the Kelly Gym. People can sign up, but they will also take walk ins. A little over 35% of residents have been vaccinated and a little over 50% have had at least 1 shot. Mr. Dutton answered questions from Councilors, speaking about CARES funding available and the reimbursements being submitted. He noted we can spend through 12/31/21. Mr. Dutton also spoke about traffic impacted due to the vaccination clinic noting there have been virtually no traffic issues. Superintendent Derek Swenson gave a brief update on the effort to vaccinate high school students as well as any faculty who have not been vaccinated yet.
- Items for Next Meeting: None were brought forward at this time.

DISCUSSIONS

- Recruitment Process – Town Council Clerk Position
Councilor George began the discussion stating he believed a temp would be the best short-term solution. Discussion continued while Councilors recalled the recruitment process prior to the current Clerk's hiring. Councilor Wood noted he believes there was a committee of three. Councilors expressed their opinions on the general recruitment process. Councilors Gallagher and Colombotos noting they believe the hiring is solely at the Council's discretion. Councilor Gallagher noted he would like to see the position advertised as full-time and a salary commensurate with experience. President Rushton pointed out the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager have worked hard to develop a successful hiring process that is much improved. He hopes the Ad Hoc committee will lean heavily on the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager to find the highest quality candidate. Councilors expressed concern over timing. President Rushton stated Councilors wishing to be on the Ad Hoc committee should reach out to him by Friday. Attorney Rawlins encouraged the committee to reach out to him for help with the Open Meeting Law.

Motion: Councilor Wood made a motion to form an ad hoc committee which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

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

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:



LEGISLATION FOR ACTION

- Order O-FY21-040: Transfer Order - Capital Item(s) Special Purpose - High Pond Meter Project
Mr. Dutton briefly explained the order.
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: None
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
George - YEA; Gallagher - YEA; Perry – YEA; Chase – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Moore – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
 - Order O-FY21-041: Transfer Order - Water Mains Hayward to Curve Street Project
Mr. Dutton briefly explained the order.
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: None
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Colombotos - YEA; Wood - YEA; Moore – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Chase – YEA; Perry – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
 - Resolution R-FY21-006: Amend June 2021 Meeting Date
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: None
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
George - YEA; Gallagher - YEA; Perry – YEA; Chase – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Moore – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
- FY2022 Budget Orders:
- Order O-FY22-001: Budget Order - FY22 Annual Town Budget
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: Councilor Wood explained the council only votes expenses, not revenue. He proceeded to give a brief explanation of the budget and voting process.
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Colombotos - YEA; Wood - YEA; Moore – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Chase – YEA; Perry – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
 - Order O-FY22-002: Budget Order - FY22 Water Enterprise Fund Budget
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: None
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
George - YEA; Gallagher - YEA; Perry – YEA; Chase – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Moore – YEA; Wood – YEA; Colombotos - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
 - Order O-FY22-003: Budget Order - FY22 Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: None
A roll call vote was taken with results recorded as follows:
Colombotos - YEA; Wood - YEA; Moore – YEA; Sousa – YEA; Rushton – YEA; Chase – YEA; Perry – YEA; Gallagher – YEA; George - YEA. The motion passed 9-0.
 - Order O-FY22-004: Budget Order - FY22 Transfer Station Enterprise Fund Budget
Motion: Councilor George made a motion to approve which was duly seconded.
Discussion: Councilor Wood asked if there is a risk we'll have to move additional funds later in the year? Mr. Dutton explained we did a rate increase for certain items and that seems to have brought in enough. Intend to



close FY21 in a balanced situation. The same formula will be used for FY22. Councilor Colombotos asked what the gross revenues are for the Transfer Station? Mr. Dutton responded, approximately \$350,000. Councilor Gallagher noted usage is also up.

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

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

- Order O-FY22-005: Budget Order - FY22 OSLGC Enterprise Fund Budget

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

Discussion: WW- same question – is it projected to be a good year for golf? MD – yes. Anticipating a very good year for golf. Seen a significant bump.

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

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

- Order O-FY22-006: Authorization of Revolving Funds

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

Discussion: None

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

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

- Order O-FY22-007: CPA Reserve Accounts - FY22

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

Discussion: WW – explained the numbers and the five buckets they go into.

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

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

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- Order O-FY21-042: Rescind Elm Street Roadway Project Loan Authorization

Motion: Councilor George made a motion to refer to the Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

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

- Order O-FY21-043: Transfer Order - First Street Roadway Betterment

Motion: Councilor George made a motion to refer to the Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

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

- Order O-FY21-044: Acceptance of a Grant - Complete Streets Tier 3 Construction Grant

Motion: Councilor Wood made a motion to refer to the Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Wood wanted everyone to be aware that there's a multi-page document that explains the improvements.



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

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

- Order O-FY21-045: Capital Transfer Order - General Fund

Motion: Councilor George made a motion to refer to Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.

Discussion: Councilor Wood asked if the mower was for use on Legion Field. Mr. Dutton stated he believes so, but can confirm.

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

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

- Order O-FY21-046: Capital Transfer Order - Water Fund

Motion: Councilor George made a motion to refer to the Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

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

- Order O-FY21-047: Capital Transfer Order - Sewer Fund

Motion: Councilor George made a motion to refer to the Budget & Finance and Finance Committees which was duly seconded.

Discussion: None

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

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

- Resolution R-FY21-007: A Resolution In Recognition of Gay Pride Month

Councilor Gallagher stated this does not need to be referred to any committee. It can simply come back at the 5/25 meeting. Councilor Gallagher explained the purpose for the Resolution. Several Councilors expressed support for the Resolution and the citizens who have spoken in favor of flying the flag. This measure was not referred to any committee.

- Resolution R-FY21-008: A Resolution Relative to Diversity and Respect

President Rushton explained the reason for the Resolution and thanked Town Manager's office for work on DE&I. Embassy's have been given permission to fly pride flag, we should too.

This measure was not referred to any committee.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Vernon Domingo, 36 Saddle Drive: Mr. Domingo is very happy to see the Resolution on the agenda. He feels it will be great for the young people in Town to feel included.
- Sam Baumgarten, 60 Short Street: Mr. Baumgarten is feeling very excited about the attitude of the Council towards these issues.
- Rebecca Fleish-Cordeiro, Deerfield Drive: Thanked the Councilors for putting these orders forward. Thanked the Council for the support.
- Janet Hanson, Pleasant Street: Sounds like the Councilor will be listening to citizens. Thanked Mr. Ajemian for speaking earlier.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- *Councilor George: Congratulated President Rushton and Vice President Chase. Mr. George thanked all for their input. Congratulated new councilors.
- Councilor Gallagher: Thanked Councilor George for Presidency. Congratulated Councilors Rushton and Chase on President & Vice President. Welcomed back Councilors Perry and Colombotos and welcomed Councilor Moore.



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Mr. Gallagher wished the Council Clerk well in her new position. Mr. Gallagher is working towards a town-wide cleanup on 6/5.

- Councilor Perry: Thanked Councilor George for his Presidency. Congratulated Councilor Rushton and Chase on President and Vice President. Thanked voters of Precinct 2 for voting for him. Councilor Perry congratulated Fire Chief MacDermott and Paul DeCosta. Dr. Perry thanked Council Clerk for her work with the Council. Thanked the Town and departments who helped out with the Lions Club Fishing Derby.
- Councilor Chase: Thanked Councilor Rushton and Councilor George for his Presidency. Thanked all the Councilors for their vote for Vice Presidency. Welcomed back returning Councilors and Councilor Moore.
- Councilor Sousa: Thanked Councilor George and congratulated Councilor Rushton and Chase as President and Vice President. Welcomed back returning Councilors and welcomed Councilor Moore.
- Councilor Moore: Thanked Councilor George for Presidency. Congratulated Councilor Rushton and Chase on Presidency and Vice President. Mr. Moore is looking forward to working with rest of Councilors and Town Manager. Thanked Council Clerk and wished luck in new role. Looks forward to representing citizens of Precinct 1.
- Councilor Colombotos: Optimistic the Council will be in a good place. Would like to see more diversity.
- Councilor Wood: Congratulated new members and returning members. Thanked Councilor Colombotos for stepping up. Thanked wife for words “as council we need to determine our own future”. Mr. Wood spoke about the zoning ordinances that were modified years ago that made the Broad Street project even possible. Mr. Wood spoke about the Broad Street project and the Perkins Foundry.
- Councilor Rushton: Thanked members for supporting his Presidency. He thanked Councilor George for his Presidency. Mr. Rushton reminded the Councilors about the Ad Hoc Committee stating he would like to have it decided by Friday. He asked Councilors to reach out to the Council Clerk with Committee preferences. May 15th is National Peace Officers Memorial Day. This week is Police Appreciation week. Spoke about the quality of public service. Encouraged all to thank a Police Officer.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – *No Executive Session was held.*

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted in draft form by: Ann Holmberg