

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER
SELECTBOARD/SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING

JANUARY 27, 2026

Draft

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Owen Astbury, Chair

Present: Norman (Nope) Martin, Selectboard Member and Steve Tarleton, Selectboard Member
Randy Kennedy, Road Foreman, Melissa Spear, Treasurer and Nancy Robinson, Clerk

Visitors: In person – Antonio Drucot, Darnell Martin, Elizabeth Hollinshead, George Spear,
Greg Jenne and Pam White, VT Standard Photographer, Robert Pauly arrive during meeting.

Zoom: The Wideman's, Tom Ayers, VT Standard Reporter and Ipad(?),

Additions to agenda: None

Nope moved and Steve seconded to approve the minutes of January 13, 2026, and January 20, 2026, as written. Motion carried.

Scheduled Visitors: Antonio Ducrot came before the board to discuss the status of a petition that was submitted to the selectboard regarding declaring Bridgewater an Apartheid free community. Owen explained that while the board recognized the petition with approx. 50 signatures on it, this was not an item that the board had any authority to put into the town meeting warning. Suggested that this item could be discussed under “Other or non-binding” business after the business part of town meeting was concluded.

Highway Report: Plowing and sanding after the weekend storm. Everything made it through. Sand pile is getting low, an order has been placed, not sure when it will be delivered. Randy reported to the board that he had been contacted by Milton Catapiller in Richmond regarding a new grader that had been ordered and not picked up. This grader is very similar to the ones that he had been checking into with plow and wing with a 7-year warranty. The cost with trade is approx. \$372,000. To order a new grader will take several months, not sure when delivery will be or costs due to tariffs. Getting levers instead of stick would be a special order and longer delivery time. If purchased now, town could take delivery in a couple of months. Discussion of where funds to purchase outright would come from, equipment sinking fund and/or highway and general account surpluses. If purchased now, town would not incur loan and interest fees. Owen moved to purchase the 2026 grader at the cost not to exceed \$380,000 to be funded by equipment fund and surpluses. Nope seconded the motion and motion carried. Highway Safety Improvement Program grant has been applied for in the amount of \$40,000 to cut trees along Gold Coast Road. Trees are within town Right of Way and need to be cut down before they fall and do damage. Property owner will be contacted.

Treasurer's File: Expense warrant #26-14 (e-ck's #3012-3014 and ck's 22248-22265) and payroll warrant #26-07 were reviewed and signed.

Clerk's File: February calendar was reviewed with the board. Next meeting scheduled on February 10, 2026, will begin at 4:00 pm for the Mountainside Bridge discussion with VTRANS and interested parties.

January 27, 2026 minutes cont.

Nancy asked if the board could do the VHB contact next to then be able to move into budget review and adoption. Owen moved to approve and sign the VHB Landfill Monitoring contract, Steve 2nd the motion and motion carried. This contract is for landfill testing for fall 2026 & 2027.

Visitors: Robert Pauly spoke to the board and Randy about road conditions after storms. Bob has a student that drives to school and finds that the road is often not plowed or sanded in time for her to get out. Went off the road a couple of weeks ago and had to be pulled out. Requested that Randy contact the school district when the roads will not be taken care of by driving time to get to school.

Old business: Melissa gave the board members, Randy and Nancy copies of the budget pages with totals and overall summary of taxes to be raised. Brief discussion of re-allocating funds within the Capital Reserve account, bottom line will not change.

New business: Budget summary for all accounts was reviewed. Owen moved to adopt the General, Highway and Wastewater budget as presented. Steve seconded the motion and motion carried. Nancy reviewed the draft budget with the board. Owen moved and Steve seconded to approve the warning for the 2026 Town Meeting. Motion carried.

Beng no other business to come before the board, Owen moved to adjourn at 5:50 pm. Steve seconded the motion and carried motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Robinson

Nancy Robinson,
Clerk