

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER, NH
Annual Town Meeting
March 10, 2026

The Annual Bridgewater Town Meeting began at approximately 7:27 PM opening with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Moderator Matt Denton, Selectman Terence Murphy, Selectman Wesley Morrill and approximately 114 residents. Selectman Maurice Jenness was not present.

Article #1 - "To choose a Selectman for three (3) years and all other necessary Town officials."

Selectman – 3 Years

Maurice (Skip) Jenness – 142 votes

Town Clerk – 3 Years

Colleen Kenny – 144 votes

Moderator – 2 Years

Matt Denton – 142 votes

Trustee of the Truste Fund – 3 Years

Karen Simula – 138 votes

Library Trustee – 3 Years

Rose Williams – 141 votes

The Pasquaney School District votes are as follows:

Bridgewater Votes:

School Board Member at Large – 2 Years

Erick Piper – 140 votes

School Board Member at Large – 3 Years

Richard James – 132 votes

Moderator – 1 Years

Roger Larochelle – 138 votes

Hebron Votes:

School Board Member at Large – 2 Years

Erick Piper – 88 votes

Write Ins - 2

School Board Member at Large – 3 Years

Richard James – 91 votes

Write Ins - 1

Moderator – 1 Years

Roger Larochelle – 93 votes

Groton Votes:

School Board Member at Large – 2 Years

Erick Piper – 44 votes

Write-Ins - 1

School Board Member at Large – 3 Years

Richard James – 45 votes

Write-Ins - 1

Moderator – 1 Years

Roger Larochelle – 51 votes

School Board Member – Town of Groton – 2 Years

Alison Bagley – 53 votes

Write-Ins – 1

Combined votes for all three Towns:

School Board Member at Large – 2 Years - Erick Piper – 272

School Board Member at Large – 3 Years – Richard James – 268

School Board Member – Town of Groton – 2 Years – Alison Bagley – 53 votes

Moderator – Roger Larochelle – 282

Article #2 – “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,894,450 which represents the operational budget. Said sum does not include amounts in separate or special warrant articles.” Recommended by the Selectmen. Majority vote required.

Ralph Lyford moved this Article as written, which was seconded by E. Wayne Thompson. Selectman Murphy discussed the budget with is up approximately \$1 on the tax rate.

Questions: Can this meeting be put on the web via UTube? Selectman Murphy stated that type of technology was not available at this time.

No further questions. All in favor. Article #2 has passed.

Article #3 – “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$100,000 for the necessary repairs on Highway Department vehicles from the 2025 undesignated fund balance for that purpose.” Recommended by the Selectmen. Majority vote required.

This Article was moved as written by Terence Murphy and seconded by E. Wayne Thompson. Selectman Morrill spoke on this Article citing the truck repairs needed to these vehicles as it would be far more costly to replace with new vehicles at this time.

Questions: Does the Town have quotes for these repairs? Selectman Morrill said yes, which was \$48,000 per vehicle.

Selectman Murphy stated that since the funds for these repairs would be coming from the undesignated fund balance there would be no impact on the tax dollars.

No further questions. All in favor. Article #3 has passed.

Article #4 – “Petitioned Article: To see if the Town of Bridgewater will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$603,817.50 for the purpose of paving and improving Dick Brown Road from Clements Corner to the Plymouth Town line, including any necessary preparation, grading, drainage improvements and paving; and to authorize the Select Board to enter into contracts and expend

funds for such purposes. Said sum shall be funded by general taxation.” Not recommended by the Selectmen. Majority vote required.

This Article was moved as written by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Warren Pezold. Ryan Salmon spoke on this Article as he was the one who presented it to the Board and stated this piece of road is approximately six miles, however the quote did not include culvert repair/replacement.

Questions: Are these funds in the budget? Selectman Murphy stated these funds were not and the increased costs for culvert repair/replacement would bring this total amount closer to \$850,000 as opposed to the amount in the Petitioned Warrant Article.

Further discussion on culvert inventory to determine which culverts needed to be replaced. Selectman Murphy stated he spoke with GMI and culvert replacement were suggested.

Selectman Murphy also spoke on the increases costs in all areas of the economy and that this Petitioned Warrant Article would be approximately a \$2 increase on the tax rate. With the unknown costs of Grafton County and the school this could cause hardship to many residents.

Selectman Murphy named all of the roads in Town that were redone in 2022 which caused no tax burden on residents as surplus funds were used. This Petitioned Warrant Article states the repair/repaving of Dick Brown Road as written states the full cost would need to be paid in one year which would raise the taxes for one year. This would mean the second half tax bill would be \$8 +/- . Selectman Murphy stated the Board does not recommend moving forward on this now but slated it for the future and with a 5-year bond as opposed to paying in one year.

Question: If we need funds why doesn't the Town move forward and sell Town-owned property? Selectman Murphy stated typically Towns have to wait for 10 or so years and after the taxes for that property have been paid the rest goes to the heirs of the owner of the property.

Question: Why doesn't the Town put it on the market? Selectman Murphy said there are issues with the property in question as the septic tank cannot be used due to the close proximity to running water behind the house and if someone purchased it they would have to tear down the current structure and building further back which makes this property less desirable to any potential buyer.

Some discussion on the use of Dick Brown Road by residents. Selectman Murphy stated that no one is saying this doesn't need to be done, by the timing is not right with the current economy and utilizing a 5-year bond would be a better solution.

Question: Does that mean that this will be in the plans for next year? Selectman Murphy stated no guarantees as this will depend on the state of the economy. Selectman Morrill also stated that we need to change the way we are going to do this in our current economy.

Question: Can we just do patches to piece meal? Selectman Murphy said we can try but residents need to be patient.

Question: We need to get our ducks in a row and get a culvert survey done we can fix the infrastructure first.

Question: Oil is huge and we should have a clearer idea of the true costs and doing this quickly is not a good idea. We need to make a plan and then move forward. Selectman Murphy stated he has been consulting with experts and the Board does not plan on doing this project in the dark.

Resident: I agree that the road is bad but I oppose a raise of this amount on our taxes.

No further discussion. This Article was voted down. Article #4 did NOT pass.

Article #5 – “Petitioned Article: To see if the Town of Bridgewater will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$22,432.50 for the purpose of paving and improving Dick Brown Road from Route 3A to Poole Hill Road including any necessary preparation, grading, drainage improvements and paving; and to authorize the Select Board to enter into contracts and expend funds for such purposes. Said sum shall be funded by general taxation.” Not recommended by the Selectmen. Majority vote required.

This Article was moved as written by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Warren Pezold.

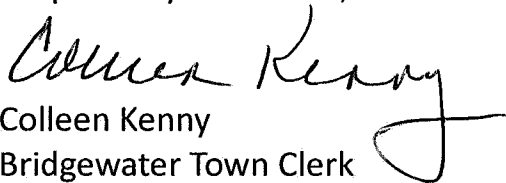
There was no discussion on this Article as it directly relates to Article #4. This Article was voted down. Article #5 did NOT pass.

Resident: Thanked the Board of Selectmen for a job well done and encouraged the residents to let them do their job.

8:02PM – Selectman Morrill made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by John Erickson.

Meeting closed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen Kenny". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name and title.

Colleen Kenny
Bridgewater Town Clerk