

ARTICLE III. THE TOWN MEETING

Section 3-1. The Town Meeting.

Except as otherwise provided in this Charter, the legislative body of the town shall be the Town Meeting, with all the powers conferred by the General Statutes and by this Charter.

Section 3-2. Members of the Town Meeting.

Members of the Town Meeting shall be electors of the town or property owners entitled to vote at Town Meetings as prescribed in the General Statutes, except in the case of a Town Meeting considering a recall referendum, when it shall be restricted to electors of the town.

Section 3-3. The Annual Town and Budget Meeting.

The Board of Selectmen shall, in January of each year, appoint an annual Town Meeting Committee. The Committee shall consist of five (5) electors, appointed for a two year term. In the first year of implementation three members are appointed (only) for a one year term.

The annual Town Meeting Committee shall be responsible for planning the annual Town and Budget Meeting. Emphasis should be on promotion, community involvement and elector attendance.

The annual Town and Budget Meeting shall be held on the first Monday of May each year. It shall receive a "State of the Town" address by the First Selectman and long and short term planning reports from selected boards and the town attorney, as determined by the annual Town Meeting Committee.

The Board of Finance shall present the final budget proposed for adoption. The Town Meeting shall review and comment on the material presented for the benefit and guidance of all elected officials, including the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen and shall conduct and vote on any business, including the budget, that may be outlined in the call.

Adoption of the annual budget should be by majority vote of those qualified to vote, present and voting at the meeting. The procedure to be followed in preparing and submitting the budget for the meeting shall be as prescribed by law and Article X of this Charter. The meeting may delete or decrease the budget amounts, but may not increase budgeted amounts nor add additional items to the budget.(13)

Section 3-4. Special Town Meetings.

Special Town Meetings may be called from time to time by the Board of Selectmen and as required by this Charter.

Section 3-5. Petitioned Town Meetings.

A Town Meeting shall be called by the Board of Selectmen, upon receipt of a petition, under the following circumstances:

- a) for matters involving expenditures up to \$250,000, the petition shall be signed by two (2) percent of the total number of electors as determined by the last completed registry of the town as verified by the Town Clerk; or

- b) for matters involving expenditures of \$250,000 or more, the petition shall be signed by five (5) percent of the total number of electors as determined by the last completed registry of the town as verified by the Town Clerk; or
- c) for matters not involving expenditures, the petitions shall be signed by two (2) percent of the total number of electors as determined by the last completed registry of the town, as verified by the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk shall, prior to any action by the Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance, verify the petition. The Town Clerk shall then provide the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance with copies of the verified petition.

Both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance shall hold public hearings regarding the verified petitions which meet the requirements of (a) and (b) above and shall vote on the subject of the petition within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the verified petition. The public hearings may be held jointly, upon agreement of both boards.

If both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance approve the petition, the Board of Selectmen shall call a Special Town Meeting to be held within forty-five (45) days of approval by the Board of Selectmen. If either or both boards vote to deny the petition or fail to act within said forty-five days of receipt of the verified petition, the Board of Selectmen shall remove the matter from the Town Meeting and submit the matter to referendum. Said referendum shall be held within forty-five (45) days of the denial or failure to act by either board.

The Board of Selectmen shall hold a public hearing regarding a petition not involving an expenditure of any funds which meet the requirements (c) above. Neither the Board of Finance nor the Board of Selectmen shall be required to make a recommendation on such petition. The vote on the subject of the petition shall occur within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the verified petition.

All matters which the petitioners for a Special Town Meeting desire acted upon, and which meet the signature requirements as verified by the Town Clerk, if they are proper subjects for action at a Town Meeting determined by the attorney for the town, shall be put in proper form for the call of a Town Meeting and for a Town Meeting resolution with the assistance of the town attorney and these matters shall come first in the Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen, at its discretion, may add other matters to the call of the meeting.

Section 3-6. Legal Notice.

Legal notice of all Town Meetings shall be advertised in a newspaper having a general circulation in the town at least five (5) days prior to Town Meeting. A copy of this notice signed, by the Selectmen or a majority of them, shall be posted at a readily accessible place at Town Hall. It shall be typewritten or printed and must contain place, date and hour of the meeting and list all articles to be acted upon. Before or on the date of the meeting, the Board of Selectmen shall cause the copy of the notice, along with the return of notice, to be filed with the Town Clerk, and the Town Clerk shall cause such copy and return to be recorded in the Town Meeting record book.

(2)

Section 3-7. Organization and Procedure.

The First Selectman or a representative of the First Selectman shall call the meeting to order and the meeting shall choose a moderator. All business shall be conducted as provided by Chapter 90 of the General Statutes, as amended, and in accordance with "Robert's Rules of Order

- of latest revision. Unless otherwise provided by this Charter, action of all Town Meetings shall be by a majority of the members of the Town Meeting present and voting.

The Town Clerk or Assistant Clerk shall serve as clerk of the meeting. In their absence, a clerk shall be chosen by the meeting. Meetings shall be tape recorded. Such tape recordings shall not eliminate the customary written minutes of the meeting, which shall be made available to the public at a readily accessible place in Town Hall not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the meeting. (2)

Section 3-8. Ordinances; General Powers and Provisions

(a) The Town Meeting shall have the sole power to enact or repeal ordinances consistent with this Charter and the General Statutes, except as provided in section 7-4 of this Charter under emergency conditions.

(b) Any ordinance enactment or repeal may be initiated by the Board of Selectmen or by a petition, as defined by section 3-5 of this Charter. The call for the proposed meeting shall state the proposed ordinance in full and the final resolution shall provide for a yes or no vote. Such ordinance, if enacted, shall be published within ten (10) days in a paper having a general circulation in the town and shall become effective fifteen (15) days after the publication thereof.

Section 3-9. Sale, Lease or Purchase of Real Estate.

The sale, lease or other disposition of real estate of the town and the purchase or other acquisition of real estate shall require approval of Town Meeting, except for powers delegated solely to the Board of Selectmen in Article VII, Sections 7-3(h) and (i). The Town Meeting shall consider no proposal to dispose of or acquire real estate of or for the town excepted as referred to above, unless and until the Board of Selectmen or other agency proposing such disposition or acquisition first shall hold a duly noticed public hearing not less than ten (10) days prior to the Town Meeting which shall consider such proposal. (5)

Section 3-10. Bonds and Notes.

Issuance of bonds or notes (except notes in anticipation of taxes to be paid within the fiscal year in which issued) shall require approval by vote of Town Meeting.

Section 3-11. Special Appropriations.

Special appropriations shall be acted on only in accordance with Section 10-4 of this Charter.

Section 3-12. State or Federal Grants.

Initial application for state or federal grants involving a local financial share estimated to exceed one-half (1/2) of one per cent of the total annual budget for the then-current fiscal year shall require approval by vote of Town Meeting.

Section 3-13. Creation of New Boards, Commissions.

The creation of any permanent board, commission, department or agency not otherwise provided for in this Charter shall require approval by vote of the Town Meeting.

Section 3-14. Membership in Regional Organizations.

The town may, by ordinance approved by the Town Meeting and pursuant to provisions in the General Statutes, join, determine how it shall choose representatives, or discontinue its membership in any such regional, intergovernmental organization created by state law, in such a manner as is consistent with this Charter.

Section 3-15. Referendum (*deleted*)