

ARTICLE IV. ELECTIONS AND ELECTIVE OFFICERS

Section 4-1. Elective Offices, Boards and Commissions.

The following are the elective offices of the Town of Ridgefield: Board of Selectmen, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Tax Collector. The following are the elective boards and commissions of the Town of Ridgefield: Board of Education, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Appeals on Zoning, Board of Tax Review, Board of Police Commissioners and Board of Finance.
(6)

Section 4-2. General.

Nomination of federal and state officers, including Registrars of Voters, and of such elective municipal officers, boards, and commissions as are provided for in this Charter, shall be conducted and the registrars of voters shall prepare lists of electors qualified to vote therefor, in the manner prescribed in the Constitution and General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, except as hereinafter provided.

Section 4-3. Town Elections.

A meeting of the electors of the Town of Ridgefield, hereinafter called the "regular town election", shall take place on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November 1979, and biennially thereafter. Special town elections may be called from time to time in accordance with the General Statutes.

Except as otherwise provided by this Charter or the General Statutes, all elective town officers shall take office on the second Tuesday following the day of the regular town election at which they were elected, and they shall continue in office until their successors have been chosen and qualified. Officers who are elected for a deferred term of office shall take office the following year, on the second Tuesday following the day of the regular state elections; the Town Clerk, Registrars of Voters and Judge of Probate shall take office on the first Monday of January succeeding their election. (4)

Section 4-4. Board of Admission of Electors.

The Town Clerk and the registrars of voters shall constitute the board of admission of electors in accordance with the provisions of Section 9-15a of the General Statutes.

Section 4-5. Eligibility for Election to Town Offices.

A person who at the time of his or her election is not both an elector and resident of the town shall not be eligible for election to any town office, and any person ceasing to be either an elector or resident of the town shall immediately notify the Town Clerk, in writing, and thereupon cease to hold elective office in the town and the office shall be deemed vacant and filled pursuant to Section 4-7. All elective officers shall be sworn before taking office and the officer administering the oath shall record such fact in the office of the Town Clerk. (2)

Section 4-6. Minority Representation.

Minority representation on any elective board or commission shall be determined in accordance with provisions of the General Statutes, unless otherwise specified in this Charter.

The maximum number of any such board or commission who may be members of the same political party shall be as specified in the following table:

Total Membership	Maximum One Party
3	2
4	3
5*	4*
6	4
7	5
8	5
9	6
more than 9	2/3 of total membership

*However, in accordance with the General Statutes, the maximum number of members of a five-member (5) Board of Selectmen who may be members of the same political party shall be three (3). (5)

Section 4-7. Vacancies; Elective Boards, Offices and Commissions.

In the event an elected town office becomes vacant, due to a tendered written resignation or other cause, the Board of Selectmen, within thirty (30) days, shall, by majority vote, appoint an interim replacement for the unexpired portion of the term or until the next regular election as defined in Section 9-1, et seq. of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, whichever event shall first occur. Within seven (7) days of said vacancy, notice shall be given by the Board of Selectmen, for publication, in a newspaper having general circulation in the town for the purpose of filling said vacancy.

In the event an elected board or commission member's position becomes vacant due to a tendered resignation or other cause, such board or commission, within thirty (30) days, shall, by majority vote, appoint an interim replacement for the unexpired portion of the term or until the next regular election as defined in Section 9-1, et seq. of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, whichever event shall first occur. If such board or commission fails to fill a vacancy within thirty (30) days, the Board of Selectmen shall fill the vacancy by majority vote. Within seven (7) days of said vacancy, notice shall be given by such board or commission, for publication, in a newspaper having general circulation in the town for the purpose of filling said vacancy.

When the person vacating the office shall have been elected as a member of a political party, such vacancy shall be filled by the appointment of a member of the same political party.

Vacancies on the Board of Selectmen shall be filled in the manner prescribed in Section 9-222 of the General Statutes.

Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the Board of Selectmen or board or commission, as the case may be, from commencing the process set forth herein to fill an elected office, or vacancy on a board or commission once the resignation has been tendered, in writing, to the Town Clerk.

Section 4-8. Election of the Board of Selectmen.

Commencing with the regular town election of November , 2007, and at each regular town election quadrennially thereafter, the electors shall elect a First Selectman and four (4) members

of the Board of Selectmen who together shall comprise the Board of Selectmen. No more than three (3) members of such Board of Selectmen may be members of the same political party; no elector may be a candidate for both the office of First Selectman and that of the Board of Selectmen by virtue of nomination by a major or minor party or a nominating petition or registration of write-in candidacy, or any combination thereof. Pursuant to provisions of section 9-188 of the Connecticut General Statutes, votes cast for a candidate for First Selectman shall count for that office only. Votes cast for an unsuccessful candidate for First Selectman shall not be counted as votes for such a candidate as a member of the Board of Selectmen. Electors may vote for the same number of candidates for the Board of Selectmen as there are members to be elected to the Board at any election. Commencing with the November 2007 election, these officers shall serve terms of four (4) years, and shall have the powers and duties prescribed by law. (5)(12)(13)

Section 4-9. Election of Tax Collector, Treasurer and Town Clerk.

At each regular town election there shall also be elected a Tax Collector, Treasurer and Town Clerk. The Treasurer shall exercise the functions of the agent of town deposit fund. Within thirty (30) days from taking office, the Town Treasurer shall appoint, subject to approval by a majority vote of the Board of Selectmen, a Deputy who shall, in the temporary absence or disability of the Town Treasurer, perform all his or her duties. These officers shall serve terms of four (4) years and shall have the powers and duties provided by law.

Section 4-10. Board of Education.

The Board of Education shall consist of nine (9) members, who shall serve four (4) years each. Four (4) members shall be elected in 1993 and every four (4) years thereafter. Five (5) members shall be elected in 1995 and every four (4) years thereafter. Electors may vote for the same number of candidates as there are members to be elected to the board at any election. The maximum number of board members from any one political party shall be determined by Section 4-6. (11)(12)

The Board of Education shall maintain good public elementary and secondary schools and provide such educational activities as in its judgment will best serve the interests of the town. The Board of Education shall make continuing study of the need for school facilities; shall have the care, maintenance and operation of buildings, lands, apparatus and other property used for school purposes; shall employ and dismiss administrators and teachers of the schools; shall perform all acts required of them by the town or necessary to carry into effect the powers and duties imposed upon them by law.

Section 4-11. Planning and Zoning Commission; Inland Wetlands Board.

Effective with the election of 1995 the two-year term for a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be eliminated, converting all nine (9) members to four-year terms with either four (4) or five (5) members elected every two (2) years amending (this) section 4-11. Four (4) members shall be elected in 1995 and every four (4) years thereafter and five (5) members shall be elected in 1997 and every four (4) years thereafter. (11)

The functions and responsibilities of the Planning and Zoning Commission include the preparation and adoption of a plan of development, the designation of zoning districts in accordance with that plan, and the preparation, adoption, and implementation of zoning and subdivision regulations in furtherance of the plan of development as specified in Chapters 124 and 126 of the General Statutes. To the extent provided by the General Statutes, and within the limits of its appropriations, the commission shall appoint, by vote of a majority of its members, a Director of Planning and a Zoning Enforcement Officer, and engage such employees as are necessary for its work and may contract with professional consultants.

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall serve as the Inland Wetlands Board for the town, and shall have such powers and duties as are prescribed by Section 22a-36 through 22a-45 of the General Statutes, as amended.

The functions and responsibilities of the Inland Wetlands Board shall include the adoption of regulations, pursuant to state law, for determining the type and extent of activities to be permitted in various different wetlands and watercourses, the administration of said regulations, and the adoption, regular updating and promulgation of a map which shows those wetlands and watercourses where regulated activities are subject to its review.

Section 4-12. Board of Appeals on Zoning.

The Board of Appeals on Zoning shall consist of five (5) members, and three (3) alternates serving five (5) years each. Such board shall have the powers and duties prescribed by law.

The functions and responsibilities of this board include:

- a) Determining and varying the application of zoning regulations of the Town of Ridgefield as specified in the Connecticut General Statutes.
- b) Hearing and deciding appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirement, decision of the official charged with the enforcement of the zoning ordinance, as specified in the Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 4-13. Board of Assessment Appeals. (14)

The Board of Assessment Appeals shall consist of three (3) members serving four (4) years each. Electors may vote for the same number of candidates as there are members to be elected to the board at any election. Such board shall have the powers and duties prescribed by law. (14)

The functions and responsibilities of this board shall include the hearing of grievances regarding tax assessments, and the making of such adjustments to the Grand List as are provided for by Section 12-111ff of the General Statutes. (12)

Section 4-14. Board of Police Commissioners.

The Board of Police Commissioners shall consist of five (5) members who shall serve four (4) years each.

The Board of Police Commissioners shall organize, maintain, and have the general management and control of the police department and its apparatus and equipment. It shall have the powers and duties prescribed by law.

It shall make all necessary regulations for the government of the police department not contrary to law and prescribe suitable penalties for the violation of any such regulation, including suspension or removal from office of any officer or member of the police department.

The board shall have the sole power of appointment, promotion and removal of the officers of the police department.

Section 4-15. Board of Finance

The Board of Finance shall consist of five (5) members serving four (4) year terms each. Three (3) members and two (2) members shall be elected at alternating town elections. The members shall choose a chairman from its members annually at the first meeting in January.

The Board of Finance shall recommend to the annual Town Meeting the town budget and the property tax rate, approve deficiency appropriations, determine how the town financial records are kept, arrange for an annual town audit for town records, prepare and publish the annual town report and shall have the powers and duties in accordance with Article X of the Charter, the General Statutes and applicable ordinances. (7)

Section 4-16. Additional Elective Boards and Commissions.

By ordinance submitted to and approved by the Town Meeting, additional elective boards may be established, as provided for in the General Statutes. Such ordinance shall specify the board's powers and duties, enabling statute, terms of office, and method of filling vacancies. (7)

Section 4-17. Terms of Office and Transition.

The number of officers elected to boards other than Board of Education and Planning and Zoning Commission at regular town elections during each successive four (4) year interval shall continue to be as follows:

	Regular Town Election of 1991 and Quadrennially Thereafter	1993 and Quadrennially Thereafter
Board of Appeals on Zoning	1 + 1*	1 + 1*
Board of Appeals on Zoning - Alternates (as determined by successive five- (5) year terms)		
Board of Tax Review	1	2
Board of Police Commissioners	2	3
Board of Finance	3	2

*Officers elected to a deferred term of office, starting on the succeeding year.

Section 4-18. Restriction on Multiple Elected Offices

No person shall hold more than one elective office of the Town of Ridgefield at the same time.

Any person who holds an elective office or seat on any elective board or commission of the Town of Ridgefield is prohibited from holding any other position on any other elective board or commission of the Town of Ridgefield at that time.