

TOWN OF BOLTON
PUBLIC INFORMATION BROCHURE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
PROPOSED REVISED BOLTON TOWN CHARTER
REFERENDUM DATE: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021

October 1, 2021

Dear Bolton Resident,

This document provides background information on the Proposed Revised Charter. The Proposed Revised Bolton Town Charter is under consideration in a series of ten questions to be voted on at a public referendum to be held in conjunction with the Municipal Election on November 2, 2021.

The following proposed changes to the Bolton Town Charter have been recommended by the Charter Revision Commission and approved by the Board of Selectmen. The proposed changes are not final unless approved by the Bolton voters at referendum. Each of the 10 charter revision questions (Questions 2 -11 on the ballot) is listed below. Following each question is a brief explanation of the changes. Each question will have a yes/no vote on the ballot and acceptance of each provision will be counted and implemented separately.

Question 2. Shall the town charter be amended: (a) to replace the Board of Finance with a Finance Committee composed of two members of the Board of Selectmen, two members of the Board of Education and three elected members at-large, (b) to allow the new Finance Committee to assume the role of the Capitol Acquisition, Planning, and Allocation Committee, (c) to increase the Board of Selectmen from five to seven members with staggered four-year terms, and (d) to prohibit members of the Board of Selectmen from serving simultaneously in other elected town offices?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 2 Explanation.

Change eliminates the current, seven-member Board of Finance and replaces it with a Finance Committee composed of two members of the Board of Education, two members of the Board of Selectmen, one of whom shall be First Selectman, and three elected at large members. Board of Education and Board of Selectmen members would be required to be of different political parties. No member of the Board of Education or Board of Selectmen may serve as an at large member of the Finance Committee. Change eliminates the Capital Acquisition and Planning Committee and assigns the duties to the Finance Committee. Change also increases the size of the Board of Selectmen from five members (including First Selectman) to seven members; provides for staggered terms of First Selectman and Board of Selectmen for four years each. Currently the term of First Selectman and Board of Selectmen is two years, with all members elected at the same time. Change also prohibits any member of the Board of Selectmen from serving on another elected board or commission. Currently this prohibition applies only to the First Selectman.

Question 3. Shall the town charter be amended to change “reduce” to “revise” in the provision relating to a failed budget referendum thereby permitting either an increase or decrease in the proposed budget?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 3 Explanation.

Change allows the Finance Committee to revise the total budget, by proposing either a reduction or an increase to total expenditures after a failed referendum. Current provisions allow for reduction only.

Question 4. Shall the town charter be amended to change the title of Administrative Officer to Town Administrator and to change the role and responsibilities of that position?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 4 Explanation.

Change defines the role of the Town Administrator so the individual will have significant autonomy over day-to-day operations, but with enough oversight by the BOS to prevent overreaching of the Administrator's authority. The new provisions clarify the lines of responsibility and authority among the Town Administrator, First Selectman and the Board of Selectmen. The current provision which requires a vote of four members of the Board of Selectmen to hire or discharge the Town Administrator is eliminated. Termination of the Town Administrator will be handled according to the terms of their employment contract. The title of the position will change from Administrative Officer to Town Administrator (the former is not a widely understood or used term). The current Administrative Officer's job description, adopted by the BOS on August 4, 2016, and employment contract provided the foundations for this change.

Question 5. Shall the town charter be amended to prohibit the Administrative Officer or the Town Administrator, if the change in Question 4 is approved, from serving in organizations including but not limited to Bolton Land Trust, Bolton Volunteer Fire Department, Bolton Parent Teacher Association, Community Voice Channel or holding any other appointed town positions, such as Fire Chief, Emergency Services Director, Fire Marshal or their deputies which may be conflicting with the responsibilities

of the position of Administrative Officer or Town Administrator, as applicable?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 5 Explanation.

Change prohibits the Town Administrator from participating in outside town groups or organizations where a conflict of interest could occur or from holding certain other appointed positions within town government operations. This is a change from current practice where such charter restrictions are not in place, however could be put in place at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen.

Question 6. Shall the town charter be amended to change the title of Chief Financial Officer to Director of Finance?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 6 Explanation.

Change would call the head of the Finance Department the Director of Finance. The change would be in line with the titles of other department heads. The current title for the head of the finance department is Chief Financial Officer.

Question 7. Shall the current thresholds for borrowing and supplemental appropriations in the town charter be lowered, so amounts above 2% of last approved Total Expenditure Amount must go to referendum?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 7 Explanation.

Change will require referendum approval for supplemental appropriations and borrowing in excess of 2% of the total

expenditure amount (currently approximately \$456,000). The current provision for supplemental appropriations and threshold for borrowing that may be approved by town meeting are based the grand list value and have higher numerical values. Referendum approval is intended to allow broader opportunities for resident participation.

Question 8. Shall the town charter be amended to merge the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Inland Wetlands Commission, make members of that combined board, its alternates, and members of the Zoning Board of Appeals and its alternates appointed positions?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 8 Explanation.

Change combines existing Planning and Zoning and Inland Wetlands Commissions into one commission, changes new commission from elected to appointed positions. Changes Zoning Board of Appeals from elected to appointed. Currently Planning and Zoning and Zoning Board of Appeals are elected boards, Inland Wetlands is appointed. Change allows for greater participation in membership without requiring political affiliation and makes it more efficient for applicants who may now have to submit applications to both Inland Wetlands and Planning and Zoning Commissions.

Question 9. Shall the town charter be amended to change how vacancies on appointed boards are filled and the procedure for removal of members of appointed boards?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 9 Explanation.

Change will move all language related to replacement and removal of members of boards and commissions to Chapter 12 of the charter. Change will remove the requirement of replacing regular members with alternates, permitting the appointment of external candidates. Change will provide a definition of removal for cause, requiring credible allegation of facts and remove the existing deemed resignation provision.

Question 10. Shall the town charter adopt gender neutral language and replace the current Selectman/Selectmen terms and pronouns throughout the charter?

YES _____ NO _____

Question 10 Explanation.

Change would adopt gender neutral language throughout the charter, change his or hers to their; change Selectman to Select Person, Board of Selectmen to Select Board. The references to Connecticut General Statutes concerning Board of Selectmen will continue to remain the same.

Question 11. Shall the town charter be amended to make following technical changes:

- a) change the Economic Development Committee from a required to an optional board,
- b) add a definition of Total Expenditure Amount,
- c) change the timing of notices of transfers of special appropriations,
- d) decrease the term of fire commissioners to four years and change the timing of the appointment of said members,
- e) change the timing of the election of chairmen of elected and appointed boards and commissions,
- f) clarify conflict of interest provisions,

- g) change the method of resolving a tie vote to a coin toss
- h) add provisions for posting and recording materials of certain board and commission meetings,
- i) change the timing of the selection of the auditor,
- j) change the provision re the appointment of the treasurer,
- k) add a requirement of a plain language summary of the budget,
- l) change the date of publication of the annual report,
- m) remove references to the judge of probate,
- n) change the definition of a majority of the Board of Selectmen,
- o) allow additions to Board of Selectmen agendas, change the duration of the Temporary Public Building Commission,
- p) and make such other grammatical, stylistic and technical changes as are recommended in the final report of the Charter Revision Commission or are otherwise required to reflect those amendments to the charter that are approved by the electors.

YES _____ NO _____

Question 11 Explanation.

A yes vote will approve all of the following remaining provisions of the Charter.

Letter	Explanation
a	A regional Economic Development Commission (EDC) is being formed, membership on the local commission is low. Board of Selectmen will continue to have the authority to appoint an EDC in the future.
b	Total expenditure information will be required to determine amounts required to go to referendum. Total expenditure will be defined as last approved total budgeted appropriation, including Town Government operations, Board of Education appropriation and Debt service.

c	Change provides for written notice of transfers of unexpended balances to be provided to the Finance Committee prior to its next scheduled meeting. This is in keeping with current practice. Current notice provision is four business days.
d	Change will decrease the term of appointed fire commissioners from 5 years to 4 years and stagger the terms of appointees requiring at least one appointee per year.
e	Change will extend the required timeframe for elected boards and commissions to elect chairman from 45 days each year to two months following each municipal election.
f	Changes add beneficial interest to conflict definition and requires written disclosure of conflicts, and disqualification of conflicted individual in decision process for contracts, transactions and decisions.
g	Changes the order of resolving a tie in an elected position, other than First Selectman, so coin toss is first option. Candidates can still request a special election.
h	Change will require all meetings of Board of Education, Board of Selectmen or Finance Committee to be recorded by audio or video, and require prompt website posting of minutes, recordings and materials for BOS, BOE and BOF meetings, where practical and feasible.
i	Establishes a maximum term of appointment of the town auditor to 4 years, not to extend more than one year past the next regularly scheduled election of First Selectman.

j	Clarifies the Treasurer is appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Treasurer may be appointed or removed by a majority of the Board of Selectmen, and Board may appoint the Director of Finance or Town Administrator as Town Treasurer.
k	Requires the Finance Committee provide a simplified summary of the proposed budget, including a simplified financial statement to the Town Clerk at least 5 days prior to annual budget referendum.
l	Changes publication date of Annual Report to March 15. Current requirement is to publish the annual report by February 1 however audit report is not available until after Feb 1.
m	Remove references to Judge of Probate which is no longer a municipal elected official.
n	Defines supermajority of the Board of Selectmen as the number of votes equal to a majority of all members of a Board or Commission plus one additional vote. Takes into account an increase in the number of Selectmen, if Q2 is approved. Current definition of a majority is three votes and supermajority four votes.
o	Formally allows additions to Board of Selectmen agenda when approved by at least three members at a regular meeting, as is current practice.
p	Permits the Temporary Building Commission to remain in place until the project(s) are completed, rather than current eighteen months life.

q	Allows grammatical, stylistic or technical changes in order to reflect these approved amendments.
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A complete copy of the Proposed Revised Charter, including a black lined version outlining each proposed revision, and of the Final Report of the Charter Revision Commission are available in the Bolton Town Clerk's office during regular business hours and can be viewed on the Town of Bolton website at <https://town.boltonct.org>. The Town Clerk will mail or otherwise provide a complete copy upon request.

**THIS PUBLIC INFORMATION BROCHURE WAS
APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN TO
PROVIDE A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE CHARTER
REVISION COMMISSION'S PROPOSED REVISED
CHARTER.**

This Charter as revised shall become effective upon the approval of a majority of the Town electors voting thereon at the regular election in November, 2021 in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 99 of the General Statutes. The effective date of the approved changes proposed in this Charter Revision is July 1, 2022, except those provisions pertaining to the November, 2023 Town election when the first set of officials to be elected if approved as proposed under this revised Charter shall be elected, and the provisions relating to the creation of the Finance Committee in place of the Board of Finance shall become effective.

Board of Selectmen

Sandra Pierog, 1st Selectman
Kim Miller, Deputy 1st Selectman
Robert DePietro, Jr.
Michael Eremita
Robert Morra

Charter Revision Commission

Gwen Marrion, Chair
Eleanor Georges, Vice Chair
James Aldrich
Jay Brudz
Richard P. Hayes, Jr.
Adam Teller
John B. Toomey, Jr.