

**AMENDMENTS TO THE BARRINGTON HOME RULE CHARTER**

**NOVEMBER 3, 2020**

**LOCAL BALLOT QUESTIONS**

**(Approved at the Town Council meeting held on April 6, 2020)**

**Question #1:**

**CHARTER AMENDMENT RE:**

**COUNCIL - NUMBER, SELECTION, TERM** (Amends §2-1-1)

Approved by the Town Council on April 6, 2020.

**Ballot Question:**

Shall outdated language regarding the terms of the 1996 Council members be removed from the Charter, as such language is currently unnecessary?

- Approve
- Reject

**Charter Language:**

§2-1-1 Number, Selection, Term

The Council shall consist of five (5) members elected from the Town at large by the electors (hereinafter "registered voters") of the Town of Barrington as hereinafter provided at the regular biennial elections held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. ~~At the 1996 election, the three (3) candidates who, among the five (5) winning candidates, who receive the most votes, shall be elected to serve for terms of four (4) years, and the two (2) candidates who, among the five (5) winning candidates, receive the fewest votes, shall be elected to serve for terms of two (2) years. At the 1998 election, and every fourth year thereafter, two (2) members shall be elected to serve for terms of four (4) years (and thereafter until their successors are elected and qualified), and at the 2000 election, and every fourth year thereafter, three (3) members shall be elected to serve four (4) year terms (and thereafter until their successors are elected and qualified).~~ The Council member's term of office will be four (4) years. Elections will be held every two (2) years with to elect three (3) candidates and (2) candidates running in alternating election cycles.

**Explanation:**

When the Council switched to staggered terms in 1996, the 1996 Council members served terms of various lengths to begin the staggering process. This language is no longer necessary, as it does not apply to any Council member elected after 1996.

**Question #2:**

**CHARTER AMENDMENT RE:**

**FINANCIAL TOWN MEETING—LIMITATIONS ON MOTIONS** (Amends §7-1-15)

Approved by the Town Council April 6, 2020.

**Ballot Question:**

Shall the language in the Charter to either increase or decrease appropriations at a Financial Town Meeting be clarified and simplified without making substantive changes?

- Approve
- Reject

**Charter Language:**

§7-1-15 Limitations on Motions

~~No motion to consider an appropriation in excess of \$25,000, except appropriations recommended by the Committee on Appropriations shall be in order at a Financial Town Meeting unless such notice of intention to include such appropriation shall have been inserted in the warrant for such meeting. Such notice when presented to the Town Clerk by any registered voter for such meeting shall be included by the Town Clerk in the warrant for such meeting, if the same is presented to the Clerk at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set for the meeting at which such motion is to be considered; provided, however, that nothing contained in this Charter shall be construed to prevent the increase or decrease of any appropriation which is lawfully contained in the warrant or which is recommended by the Committee on Appropriations; provided, further, that no motion to increase or decrease an appropriation contained in the warrant or recommended by the Committee on Appropriations by more than \$50,000, or twenty percent (20%) of a particular line item, whichever is less, shall be in order for consideration at a Financial Town Meeting unless the person making such motion shall have filed a copy thereof with the Town Clerk at least five (5) business days prior to the date of such meeting.~~

Except for appropriations recommended by the Committee on Appropriations, all motions in excess of \$25,000 must be presented by a registered voter to the Town Clerk at least thirty (30) days prior to the Financial Town Meeting and included within the warrant for such meeting. Further, a motion to increase or decrease an appropriation by more than \$50,000, or twenty (20%) percent of a particular line item, whichever is less, shall be filed with the Town Clerk at least five (5) business days prior to the Financial Town Meeting.

**Explanation:**

This proposal would clarify awkwardly worded and difficult to understand language, simplifying the time requirements and restrictions on the amount that an appropriation can be changed at the Financial Town Meeting, without making substantive changes.

**Question #3:**

**CHARTER AMENDMENT RE:**

**POLICE DEPARTMENT – CONSTABLES** (Deletes §10-1-4)

Approved by the Town Council April 6, 2020.

**Ballot Question:**

Shall the Chief of Police no longer have authority to appoint constables for occasional service and for limited terms; deleting this section of the Charter?

- Approve
- Reject

**Charter Language:**

§10-1-4 Constables

~~In addition to the members of the permanent police force for the Town, the Chief of Police may, from time to time, appoint additional constables for occasional service and for limited terms. The constables shall receive such compensation according to the nature and extent of their duties as shall from time to time be fixed by the Council.~~

**Explanation:**

Constables are no longer utilized. This provision would remove the Police Chief's authority to appoint constables.

**Question #4:**

**CHARTER AMENDMENT RE:  
FINANCIAL PROVISIONS – PROPOSED BUDGET** (Amends §6-4-2)  
Approved by the Town Council June 8, 2020.

Ballot Question:

Shall the Town Manager submit to the Town Council and the Committee on Appropriations a summary of the balances of each municipal capital reserve account and include the School Committee budget; however such budget shall not be subject to the Manager’s review.

- o Approve
- o Reject

Charter Language:

§6-4-2 Proposed Budget

The Manager shall submit to the Town Council, and the Committee on Appropriations, not later than the second Monday in March, a proposed budget of receipts and operating and capital expenditures and an explanatory budget message together with a summary of the balances of each capital reserve account and a summary of the actual and anticipated additions to and expenditures from each such account for the current fiscal year. For such purpose, the Manager shall obtain from the head of each office, department and agency estimates of its revenues and expenditures and such supporting data as the Manager may request. In preparing the proposed budget, the Manager shall review the estimates and may revise them as the Manager may deem advisable. The proposed budget as prepared by the Manager shall show all anticipated revenue and all proposed expenditures including capital expenditures, and the total of proposed expenditures shall not be greater than the total of anticipated revenues. The Manager’s proposed budget shall include the School Committee Budget as set forth in Section 6-4-4 gross school revenues and expenditures, as submitted by the School Committee; however, such figures budget shall not be subject to the Manager’s review.

Explanation:

New language clarifies that the Town Manager’s proposed budget will include the School Committee Budget to be submitted to the Town Council and the Committee on Appropriations, however, such budget shall not be subject to the Manager’s review.

**Question #5:**

**CHARTER AMENDMENT RE:  
FINANCIAL TOWN MEETING: CHAPTER 7-3 EMERGENCY BUDGET  
APPROVAL PROCESS** (Adding §7-3-1; §7-3-2 Procedure for Town Council to Approve Budget and §7-3-3 Limitations for Approved Budget and Tax Levy)  
Approved by the Town Council June 22, 2020.

Ballot Question:

Shall the Barrington Home Rule Charter include a new Chapter 7-3: EMERGENCY BUDGET APPROVAL PROCESS - §7-3-1 Town Council Conditional Authority to Approve Budget §7-3-2 Procedure for Town Council to Approve Budget and §7-3-3 Limitations for Approved Budget and Tax Levy)

- o Approve
- o Reject

Charter Language:

§7-3-1 Town Council Conditional Authority to Approve Budget

Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the case of an emergency, the Town Council may vote on and approve a budget and tax levy for the town and the schools provided that the following conditions are met:

1. The Governor of the State of Rhode Island has declared a state of emergency, which emergency begins before the date for the Financial Town Meeting (FTM) and continues past the date for the FTM; and
2. The Town of Barrington has declared a state of emergency; and
3. Conditions are such that an FTM cannot be held without violating the Governor’s Emergency Orders; and

§7-3-2 Procedure for Town Council to Approve Budget

Before approving a budget as set forth above, the Town Council shall receive from the Committee on Appropriations its Recommended Budget, and the Town Council shall hold a public hearing, which may be held remotely via virtual meeting technology, at which meeting members of the public shall be allowed to speak and make suggestions to the Town Council. Any motions to amend the budget adopted at this meeting must come from a member of the Council and must pass by a majority vote of the total Council membership. Approval of the budget must also be done by vote of a majority of the total Council membership.

§7-3-3 Limitations for Approved Budget and Tax Levy

If the Town Council exercises its authority under this Chapter to pass a budget in an emergency, it is limited to approving a budget and Tax Levy wherein the Tax Levy shall not exceed 102% of the previous year’s tax levy.

Explanation:

New language defines conditional authority of the Town Council to approve a budget, in case of an emergency, in which they may vote on and approve a budget and tax levy, wherein the tax levy shall not exceed 102% of the previous year’s tax levy, for the town and the schools by meeting certain conditions.