

Exhibit "A"
PROPOSED CHANGES TO TOWN CHARTER
For review at Annual Town Meeting on May 13, 2025

CHAPTER 2 – TOWN MEETING

2-2-3 **AMEND** to read as:

“When the number of voters in attendance at Town Meeting is determined to be less than the established quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned forthwith to a stated date, time, and place, or, at the option of Town Meeting, dissolved.”

2-3-2 **AMEND** to read as:

“Where required by applicable law, the Town Meeting shall consider and act upon, with or without amendments, all proposed operating and capital budgets, bond issues, and other financial proposals of the Town.”

2-4-2 **AMEND** to read as:

*“In all procedural matters, the Town Meeting shall follow the latest edition of **Town Meeting Time**, except as provided by General Law, this Charter or by the By-law.”*

2-4-5 **AMEND** to read as:

*“A copy of the Warrant for any Town Meeting shall be **mailed** to each residence in the Town at at least seven days prior to commencement of said meeting.”*

2-4-6 **AMEND** to read as:

*“The order of consideration of the articles on the Warrant may be changed **at the discretion of the Town Moderator.**”*

2-4-8 **AMEND** to read as:

*“The Town Meeting shall **receive** Finance Committee recommendations **on all Town Meeting articles concerning financial matters, provided that failure to submit a recommendation may not preclude Town Meeting action.**”*

2-4-9 **AMEND** to read as:

*“**The Town Meeting shall receive a Planning Board recommendation on all Articles involving planning, zoning, subdivision control, land acquisition, conservation extension of sewer lines, and all other matters relating to land and the environment, provided that a failure to submit a recommendation may not preclude Town Meeting action.**”*

2-4-10 **AMEND** to read as:

"The substance of any article defeated at Town Meeting shall not again be placed on the warrant for the period of one year."

2-4-11 **AMEND** to read as:

"The substance of any article entailing zoning, which has been defeated at any Town Meeting shall not again be voted on by the Town Meeting for a period of two years thereafter, unless the Planning Board shall have recommended resubmission of the Article."

CHAPTER 3 - ELECTIONS

3-1-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*"The regular Election for all Town offices shall be by official ballot held on the third Tuesday in May of each year. **The Select Board may change the date of the Town Elections due to reasons relating to public health, safety and welfare, provided that the new date is in conformance with state law.**"*

3-1-2 **AMEND** to read as:

*"Any person duly elected to any office or board shall take up the duties of **their** office immediately, provided that they first shall have been sworn to the faithful performances of **their** duties."*

3-4-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*"An elected officer of the Town may be recalled and removed from public office by the voters of the Town as herein provided. Any voter of the Town may file with the Select Board a petition containing the name and title of the elective officer whose removal is sought together with a statement of the grounds for their removal. Said petition shall be filed with said Board and shall be signed in ink or indelible pencil by qualified voters of the Town equal in number to at least **twelve percent of the voters** registered at the last regular municipal election, provided that no recall petition may be filed against any officer until he shall have their office before the taking of such vote. Said recall vote shall be called and conducted in the same manner as is provided by General Law for the call and conduct of a special election."*

3-4-2 **AMEND** to read as:

*"If, within five **business** days after receipt of the petition.....special election."*

3-4-3 **AMEND** to read as:

*"The form of the question to be voted upon shall be substantially as follows: "Shall (here insert the name and title of elective officer whose recall is sought) be recalled?" A majority vote of the voters to recall such elective officer shall not be effective unless a total of at a **majority of twelve percent** of the electorate entitled to vote on the question shall be voted. Recall of such elective officer shall become effective upon certification of the results of the voting thereon, regardless of any technical deficiency in the recall petition. If any elective officer shall be recalled, the vacancy*

created thereby shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of this Charter and General Law.”

CHAPTER 4 - SELECT BOARD

AMEND Chapter 4 title to read as:

****CHAPTER 4 – SELECT BOARD”***

4-1-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*“A **Select Board** of five members shall be elected for three year overlapping terms. The regular election for the office of **Select Board** shall be held in accordance with Chapter 3 of this Charter.”*

4-1-2 **AMEND** to read as:

*“Vacancies in the office of the Select Board **may** be filled by special election in accordance with the provisions of General Law.”*

4-4-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*“The Select Board may make investigations and may authorize the Town Administrator or other agent to investigate the affairs of the town and conduct of any **town board**, department **or** office including any claims against the Town.*

CHAPTER 5 – OTHER ELECTED TOWN BOARDS

AMEND Chapter 5 title to read as:

“CHAPTER 5 - “OTHER ELECTED BOARDS AND OFFICIALS”

5-1-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*“**Other Town Boards and Officials** to be elected by vote of the Town shall be: An Elementary School Committee, a Regional School Committee, a Planning Board, a Board of Assessors, a Board of Library Trustees, a Town Clerk, a Housing Authority, Electric Light Commissioners, a Constable, and **a Town Moderator.**”*

5-1-4 **AMEND** to read as:

*“Members of boards and commissions established under this Charter who serve without compensation may receive actual and necessary expenses incurred in the **rightful** performance of their duties, within limits of **both their authority and** an appropriation made for that purpose.”*

5-2-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*“Vacancies in the Town Boards established under this **Chapter** shall be filled by the Select Board together with the remaining members of the respective board, in accordance*

with General Law. **Vacancies in other elected offices shall be filled in accordance with state law.**

5-3-3 **AMEND** to read as:

“At least two weeks prior to submitting a budget to the Town Accountant, the **Elementary School Committee** shall conduct a public hearing on the school budget. Said Committee shall have preliminary summaries of its recommendations available at said hearing, which shall be distributed to those who request them.”

5-4-2 **AMEND** to read as:

“*Two alternate members shall be appointed jointly by the **Select Board** and the Planning Board For one-year terms. The chairperson of the Planning Board may designate an alternate member to sit on the Planning Board to vote and act on all **zoning and subdivision** matters in the event of a board member’s absence, inability to act, conflict of interest or vacancy on the board. [Added by Ch.375 of the Acts of 2014]*”

CHAPTER 6 – APPOINTMENTS MADE BY THE SELECT BOARD

6-1-1 (a) **AMEND** to read as:

“*The following officers each for a term of three years: a Town Counsel **and** a Town Accountant.*

(c) **AMEND** to read as:

“*The following officers for indefinite term: a Police Chief **and** a Fire Chief.*

6-3-1 (d) **AMEND** to read as:

“*A Conservation Commission, a Recreation Commission, and an Historical Commission, such boards to be composed of five members each, who shall be appointed for three year overlapping terms.*”

6-5-1 **AMEND** to read as:

“*Any appointed officer or **salaried** employee of the Town, not subject to the provisions of the State Civil Service law, whether appointed for a fixed or an indefinite term, may be suspended or removed from office by the appointing authority for good cause. The term good cause shall include, but not be limited to the following: incapacity other than temporary illness, inefficiency, insubordination and conduct unbecoming of office.*”

6-5-2 **AMEND** to read as:

“*Any appointed officer or **salaried** employee of the Town may be placed on paid administrative leave from office by the appointing authority if such action is deemed to them to be necessary to protect the interests of the Town. Administrative leave may be conterminous with the removal and shall not interfere with the rights of the officer or employee under the removal procedure given below.*”

6-5-3 **AMEND to read as:**

- (b) "Within five days of delivery of such notice the officer or employee may request a public hearing at which **they** may be represented by counsel, shall be entitled to present evidence, call witnesses, and to question any witness appearing at the hearing."
- (c) "Between one and ten days after a public hearing is adjourned, or if the officer or employee fails to request a public hearing between six and fifteen days after delivery of the notice intent to remove, the appointing authority shall take final action either removing the officer or employee, or notifying **them** that the notice is rescinded."

6-7-1 **AMEND to read as:**

"The Town Administrator shall be directly responsible to the **Select Board** for the performance of **their** duties, and shall be principal full-time administrative officer of the Town.

6-7-4 **AMEND to read as:**

"They shall assemble and present to the Select Board, **in-coordination with the Town Accountant**, the annual budgetof this Charter."

*** **ADD NEW SECTION:**

"The Town Administrator shall supervise all appointed department heads. The Town Administrator shall be the Select Board's agent for collective bargaining and may request The Town Counsel to assist in the performance of these duties. The Town Administrator shall Administer the Town's personnel by laws, including, but not limited to, personnel policies and practices, rules and regulations, including provisions for recruitment, an annual employee performance review, employee grievance procedures and discipline, workplace safety and collective bargaining agreements entered into by the Town. The Town Administrator shall inquire, at any time, into the conduct of an office or the performance of the duties of any officer or employee, department board, commission or other town agency."

6-7-7 **AMEND to read as:**

"The Town Administrator shall serve as the Town's Chief Procurement Officer and shall be responsible for purchasing all material, equipment, supplies and services for the Town except those which Town Bylaw requires competitive bids. A vote of the Select Board is required to award a contract other than the lowest bidder (Amended 5-18-1984 ATM by Art.52, approved 5-10-85)."

6-7-11 **AMEND to read as:**

"The Town Administrator shall perform any other duties as required to be performed by the Town Administrator By-laws, administrative codes, binding votes of Town Meeting, votes of the Select Board or otherwise."

6-8-3 **AMEND to read as:**

"The adoption of said resolution shall serve to **place** the **Town** Administrator **on administrative**

leave for a period of not more than forty-five days, unless extended by the vote of the Select Board, during which his salary shall continue to be paid. A copy of such resolution shall be delivered to the Town Administrator who shall have **five business days** in which to request a hearing, **in accordance with the Open Meeting Law**. If hearing shall be requested, the Select Board shall schedule it within two weeks.”

6-8-4 **DELETE** section.

6-9-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*“In the event of temporary absence, disability, suspension, or vacancy in the office of the **Town** Administrator, the Select Board by an affirmative vote of at least three members may appoint an acting Town Administrator. The term of the acting **Town** Administrator shall not exceed 90 days, **except as may be extended by the Select Board, and they shall perform all duties required of the Office of the Town Administrator**. An acting **Town** Administrator appointed under this section shall receive compensation as set by the affirmative. An acting **Town** Administrator appointed under this section shall receive compensation as set by the affirmative.”*

CHAPTER 7 – FINANCES AND FISCAL PROCEDURES

7-2-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*“**An annual audit** of all accounts, books, records, and financial transactions of every department, board, and commission of the Town government, including the **elementary** school department, **shall be conducted as required by M.G.L.**”*

7-4-2 **DELETE** section.

7-4-3 **DELETE** section.

7-4-4 **DELETE** section.

*** **ADD NEW SECTION:**

*“**No later than 90 days prior to Annual Town Meeting, the Town Administrator shall submit to the Select Board and Finance Committee a proposed operating budget of the ensuing fiscal year. No later than 60 days prior to the Annual Town Meeting, the Town Administrator shall submit to the Select Board and Finance Committee a proposed capital budget of the ensuing fiscal year.**”*

7-4-5 **AMEND** to read as:

*“The Finance Committee shall prepare and present a budget message **concerning its recommendations to** the Annual Town meeting. The budget message shall also be included in the annual Town Report.”*

7-4-6 **AMEND** to read as:

“The budget message shall explain the budget both in fiscal terms and in terms of work programs. It shall: (1) outline the proposed financial policies of the Town for ensuing fiscal year;

(2) describe the features of the budget; (3) indicate any major changes from the current year in financial policies, expenditures, revenues together with the reasons for such; (4) summarize the Town's debt positions; (5) estimate the impact of the total budget upon ensuing tax rate; (6) include such other material as the Finance Committee shall deem desirable. **The Select Board may also submit a budgetary message to the Town Meeting.**"

7-5-1 **AMEND** to read as:

"The Town Administrator shall submit a capital improvement program to the Select Board and the Finance Committee at least one hundred fifty days before the start of each fiscal year. It **may** be based on material prepared by **Department Heads**, including: (1) a clear, concise general summary of its contents; (2) a list of all capital improvements proposed to be undertaken during the next ensuing five years, with supporting information as to the need for each such capital improvements; (3) cost estimates, methods of financing and recommended time schedules for each improvement; and (4) the estimated annual cost of operating and maintaining each facility and piece of major equipment involved. This information is to be annually revised by **the Town Administrator** with regard to the capital improvements still pending or in the process of being acquired, improved or constructed."

7-6-1 **AMEND** to read as:

"The Finance Committee **shall make available to the residents of the Town**, a notice stating: (1) the time and places where copies of the operating budgets and capital improvement program are available for inspection; and (2) the date, time and place, not less than seven days after such publication, when the Finance Committee and Select Board jointly conduct one or more public hearings on proposed operating budget and capital improvements program."

7-10-1 **AMEND** to read as:

"An appropriation made by a separate Warrant Article shall continue in force until the purpose for which it was made shall have been accomplished or abandoned. The purpose of any such appropriation shall be deemed abandoned if three years shall pass without any disbursement from or encumbrance by contract of the appropriation."

7-11-1 **AMEND** to read as:

"In addition to the prohibitions prescribed by law, the submission of a bid by any compensated town officer or employee on any contract to be awarded by the Town shall serve **as notice to resign their** office, unless otherwise authorized by General Law."

CHAPTER 8 – ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

8-1-1 **AMEND** to read as:

"The Planning Board established under Chapter 5, Section 4 of this Charter **may** make recommendations to the Select Board on all matters concerning the physical, economic, and environmental development of the Town, as prescribed by General Law, and this Charter."

8-2-1 **DELETE** section.

CHAPTER 9 - ADMINISTRATION

9-5-2 **AMEND** to read as:

*"The **Town Administrator**, shall propose, and **the Select Board** may adopt personnel rules relating to all Town positions, **except as otherwise provided by law or as may be superseded by collective bargaining agreements**. Such rules shall provide for: (1) the classification of all positions based on the duties, responsibility and authority of each position, with adequate provision for reclassification of any position whenever warranted by changed circumstances, (2) a salary and pay plan for all positions, (3) methods of determining the merit and fitness of candidates for appointment and promotion, (4) policies and procedures regulating the removal of employees, consistent with this Charter, (5) hours of work, attendance regulations, and provisions for sick, vacation, military and other leave of absence, (6) policies and procedures governing persons holding provisional appointments, (7) policies and procedures governing relationships with employee organizations, (8) policies regarding service training programs, (9) grievance procedures, and (10) such other practices and procedures as may be necessary for the administration of the personnel system."*

CHAPTER 10 – GENERAL PROVISIONS

10-1-1 **AMEND** to read as:

"The Town Moderator shall appoint a new Charter Review Committee every 10 years. The Charter Review Committee shall review the Town Charter and make recommendations for appropriate revisions to Town Meeting."

10-4-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*"It shall be the responsibility of the Select Board to insure, through an appointed By-law Committee, that the **General** By-laws of the town shall be reviewed at least every five years, and copies shall be made available to all registered voters requesting them"*

10-5-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*"All boards, commissions and committees of the Town shall: organize annually and elect a **Chair** and other necessary officers; adopt rules of procedure and voting; maintain meeting minutes, copies which shall be a public record."*

10-6-1 **AMEND** to read as:

*"No meeting of any Town board, commission, committee or subcommittee shall be held in executive session except **as allowed by Massachusetts General Law.**"*

MISC CHANGES

RENUMBER Charter Pages. After discussion, put *Introduction* in Appendix and renumber pages starting at *Preamble Page* as C-1 through C-19.

**Renumbering will be done by General Code*