

# **Government Study Committee**

**2018 Annual Town Meeting**

# **Purpose**

**Authorized by ATM 2015 to study the Town's form of government, organizational structure and General By-Laws, and present its recommendations to Town Meeting.**

# **The Moderator appointed members:**

**Julia Adams**

**Theodore Flynn**

**Eugene Blanchard**

**Kathleen Glynn**

**Alex Chin**

**Gay Shanahan (Chair)**

**Susan Curtis (resigned 2017)**

**John Tuffy (resigned 2016)**

**Martin Desmery (resigned 2017)**

**Anne Ward**

# **Process**

**The GSC met in open session to determine a workflow and to gather input via a resident survey, interviews with town and state officials, a public forum and a review of best practices.**

**The GSC presented interim reports at ATM 2016 and 2017 and has made its final report available to the public through the *Clipper*, a public forum, the town website, and ATM 2018.**

# **The GSC recommendations include:**

- 1. Non-substantive General By-Law revisions (Art. 20)**
- 2. Increasing the Moderator's term (Art. 21)**
- 3. Amending the procedure for reconsideration (Art. 22)**
- 4. Changing the appointing authority for the Town Planner (Art. 23)**
- 5. Establishing an Audit Committee (Art. 24)**
- 6. Prohibiting the holding of dual offices (Art. 25)**
- 7. Permitting payment plans for tax title properties (Art. 26)**
- 8. Denying licenses for failure to pay taxes (Art. 27)**
- 9. Disbanding the Personnel Board (Art. 28)**

# **Other Recommendations:**

- **Keep Open Town Meeting**
- **Consider a later date for ATM in 1-3 years**
- **Continue with Electronic Balloting at ATM**
- **Do not pursue a recall provision**
- **Maintain the BoS at 3 members**
- **Monitor health insurance options/Trust Fund**
- **Determine process for major building projects**
- **Establish an IT Steering Committee**

# **Article 20**

## **General By-Law Revisions**

**General By-Law Revisions are non-substantive and have been reviewed by Town Counsel (former and current).**

**Revisions showing all deletions and additions are on file with the Town Clerk.**

# **Article 21:**

## **Increase the Moderator's Term**

**An amendment to increase the Moderator's term of office from 1 year to 3 years**

- **State law permits 3-year terms**
- **All other elected officials have multi-year terms**
- **Annual campaign expense and effort can be a burden**



# **Article 22:**

## **Reconsideration**

- **Rarely used for its intended purpose, which is to re-vote an article based on *new information***
- **Has been used to “freeze” a vote or to overturn a vote without notice or new information**
- **Amendment requires new, factual information to be provided to the Moderator for a motion to reconsider**

# **Article 23:**

## **Town Planner Appointing Authority**

- **Amends the appointing authority of the Town Planner from the Planning Board to the Town Manager**
- **Town Planner works with multiple boards and committees and is currently supervised day-to-day by the Town Manager**
- **Planning Board retains an advisory role**

# **Article 24:**

## **Audit Committee**

- **Proposed By-law establishes an Audit Committee to assist BoS with oversight of the annual audit process and the system of internal financial controls**
- **Audit Committee will consist of 2 Finance Committee members and 1 Fiscal Advisory Committee member**

# **Article 25:**

## **Prohibition on Holding Dual Offices**

- **No current town employee can also hold elective office**
- **Takes effect July 1, 2018**

# **Article 26:**

## **Partial Tax Payments**

- **State law requires a by-law permitting partial payments for tax liens**

# **Article 27:**

## **License Denial for Failure to Pay Taxes**

- **Current By-law permits the Town to deny, revoke or suspend licenses and permits for failure to pay taxes *over* 12 months.**
- **Amendment allows the Town to deny permits and licenses for non-payment of taxes for a period *less than* 12 months.**

# **Article 28:**

## **Disband Personnel Board**

- **The responsibilities of the Personnel Board have been impacted by the addition of a Human Resources Director and related staff.**
- **HR Director oversees personnel functions for 250 Town employees, 480 school employees and 400 retirees and reports to Town Manager**
- **Functions of the Personnel Board and HR Director are duplicative.**

**Thank you.**



