



RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

**RE: Appointment & Duration of the
Chester Charter Commission**

Adopted: April 12, 2023

Introduction

- **BOS Charter Resolution adopted: April 12, 2023**
- **Pursuant to Statute:**
 - ✓ Within 30 days of adoption BOS required to appoint Commission
 - ✓ 5-15 Members
 - ✓ Not more than 1/3 can hold any other public office in Town
 - ✓ Can only have bare majority of any one political party
 - ✓ Upon appointment Commission proceeds to draft Charter
 - ✓ Draft report (report and charter) submitted to BOS by 5/15/24
 - ✓ Commission terminates upon acceptance or rejection of its final report by the BOS
 - ✓ Commission is authorized to consider matters as it deems desirable or necessary to improve the governance of the Town
- Resolution requests best efforts by Commission to submit draft report no later than 4/1/24 to assure final report, proposed charter and question(s) will be submitted to be considered at referendum in 2024 general election



The Resolution Charge: By the BOS

- **Review the Chester Governance Study Report (02/09/2023) for background**
- **Consider provisions to address issues the Town has been experiencing in recent years that form the basis for drafting a Town Charter as specified in the Chester Governance Study Report**
 - ✓ **increased complexity of the town's government;**
 - ✓ **continuity of executive leadership;**
 - ✓ **diffused executive governance authority;**
 - ✓ **difficulty recruiting and maintaining professional staff;**
 - ✓ **difficulty in finding volunteers to serve and fill vacancies on boards and commissions; and**
 - ✓ **low Town Meeting participation.**



The Resolution Charge: By the BOS (cont.)

- **Consider Charter provisions to expand the Board of Selectmen to more than the current three members with staggered terms.**
- **Consider Charter provisions providing for shared legislative authority between the Town Meeting and Board of Selectmen.**
- **Consider Charter provisions that align the Town's fiscal authorities with the responsibility to support and achieve Town policy and initiatives.**
- **The Charter Commission may consider other provisions beyond those identified above.**



Process

- Review BOS Charter Resolution, Governance Study Report, State Statutes, & Charter Adoption Process and Timeline
- Receive presentations to inform Commission members and residents on Charter considerations
- Discuss to reach consensus for developing Charter provisions to be addressed in accordance with the Charter Resolution.
- Prepare and Finalize Draft Charter
- *Note: Consideration of Charter adoption is a deliberative 2-year process starting with BOS decision to create Governance Study Committee through completion of work by the Charter Commission*



Members of the Charter Commission

- **BOS named Nominating Committee to recommend candidates for the Charter Commission**
- **Nominating Committee considered 14 applications for the Commission & recommended candidates for a 7 member commission**
- **BOS accepted recommendations of the Nominating Committee and appointed the Commission on 5/10/23**
- **Commission members: Mark Borton, Brian Daley, Lol Fearon, Jesse Gnazzo, Pat Holloway, Ian McLachlan, & Richard Strauss**



Charter Development/Adoption Schedule

DATE	DAYS	ACTIONS
4/12/2023	START	RESOLUTION ADOPTION (INITIATION)
5/12/2023	30	30 days after Initiation – Deadline for appointment of Charter Commission
6/21/2023		Prior to beginning substantive work – Charter Commission holds an initial public hearing
		Commission meets and prepares draft report
		After completion of draft report but before submission to Board of Selectmen Charter Commission holds a second public hearing
4/1/2024	323	Draft report submitted to Town Clerk, who forwards same to Board of Selectmen
		Board of Selectmen holds at least one public hearing
5/15/2024	45	45 days after submission to Board of Selectmen – last date on which last public hearing may be held by Board of Selectmen
5/30/2024	15	15 days after last public hearing – deadline for Board of Selectmen to recommend changes to Charter Commission. If no changes are recommended, report becomes final
6/29/2024	30	30 days after receiving recommendations for changes from Board of Selectmen – Deadline for Charter Commission to respond to Board of Selectmen with final report
7/14/2024	15	15 days after receiving final report from Charter Commission – Deadline for Board of Selectmen to approve or reject some or all proposed charter provisions
8/29/2024	45	45 days after rejection of proposed charter by Board of Selectmen – Deadline for submission of petition calling for referendum on rejected provisions
8/13/2024	30	30 days after approval of report by Board of Selectmen or submission of petition calling for rejection – deadline for publishing full charter or proposed provisions
9/5/2024	60	60 days before general election – Deadline for final town (BOS) action to set referendum question(s). In the case of the adoption of an initial charter, it probably makes sense to have it be one single question unless there are specific issues of concern.
9/20/2024	PROJECTED DATE	45 days before general election – Deadline for Town Clerk to certify questions to SOTS (NOTE: BASED ON PRIOR ELECTIONS 2019, 2021, 2023 - SOTS DATE IS 1 THURSDAY IN SEPTEMBER.)
11/5/2024		Election Day
12/5/2024		30 days after Election Day – deadline for Town Clerk to forward revised charter to state.



Meeting Schedule

May 31: Organizing

June 6: Familiarization – Governance Study Report Review

June 20: Chester Board/Commission Chairs

June 21: Public Hearing & Commission Meeting

June 26: Speaker - Mark Walter, Town Administrator, Columbia

June 29: Speaker - Karl Kilduff, Town Manager, Clinton

July 6: Speaker - Matt Hart, Exec. Dir., Capitol Region Council of Governments; and Matt Knickerbocker, Town Administrator, Wilton

July 19: Speaker - Sam Gold, Executive Director, RiverCOG

July 25: Speakers - former & current First Selectman, Portland Susan Bransfield & Ryan Curly

August 2: Charter Drafting Workshop Session

August 21: Speaker - Andy Tierney, Town Manager, Hebron

Additionally meetings: 9/6 & 9/27 (Meeting House); 10/10, 10/26, 11/20, 12/5, 12/18

2024 Meetings January – May to be determined

Meeting Location: Town Hall – Meeting Room (unless noted)

Start Times: As posted online on the Commission's webpage

Meeting schedule is subject to change based on the effort necessary to meet the deadline for completing the work of the Commission.

