

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
2020 TOWN CHARTER REVISION PROPOSALS**

The Trumbull Town Council adopted a series of proposals to revise the Charter of the Town of Trumbull and voted to present these proposed revisions on the ballot in the form of the following three questions:

- 1. Shall there be a general revision of the Charter of the Town of Trumbull with respect to revisions other than those referenced in questions #2 and #3 below?**
Yes ___ No ___

- 2. Shall there be a revision of the Charter of the Town of Trumbull to provide an eight (8) member Board of Education with not more than four (4) members from the same political party with staggered four (4) year terms so that the terms of four (4) members expire every two (2) years?**
Yes ___ No ___

- 3. Shall there be a revision of the Charter of the Town of Trumbull to provide that the threshold for requiring a referendum on bonding authorization for projects be adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index?**
Yes ___ No ___

The majority vote on each question determines whether the proposed revisions pertaining to that question are approved or not. The majority vote on a given question does not affect or condition the outcome of the vote on either of the other questions. For example, a “Yes” vote on Question No. 1 is not a “Yes” vote on Question No. 2 or Question No. 3.

Question No. 1 contains multiple proposed revisions, some of which are technical in nature and do not propose substantive revisions to the current Town Charter. Technical revisions include language changes, grammar and spelling, punctuation, formatting and renumbering of text, pagination and cross-referencing and will be identified as such in the explanatory text below.

Question No. 2 presents a proposal to restructure the number and terms of members of the Board of Education, and Question No. 3 presents a proposal to adjust the amount of bonding that would require a referendum on bonding authorizations.

Copies of the current (2011) Town Charter, the proposed new Town Charter and a document comparing the current (2011) Charter to the proposed new Charter are available in the office of the Town Clerk and on the Town of Trumbull website, www.trumbull-ct.gov.

Copies of the proposed revisions and this Explanatory Text will be available at each polling place on Election Day.

EXPLANATORY TEXT OF THE PROPOSED REVISIONS

This Explanatory Text describes the intent and purpose of the proposed revisions that are addressed by each of these three questions.

- 1. Shall there be a general revision of the Charter of the Town of Trumbull with respect to revisions other than those referenced in questions #2 and #3 below?**

The following proposed revisions are the general revisions of the Charter that are referred to in Question No. 1. Chapter and Section references are to the proposed Sections, except where noted. A “Yes” vote is a vote for the adoption of all of the following revisions. A “No” vote is a vote against the adoption of all of the following revisions, and to leave the following Chapters and Sections of the current Charter unchanged.

Chapter/Section	Intent and Purpose of Proposed Revision
Chapter I. Incorporation and General Powers	
Chapter I, Section 4B	The current Charter defines all references to "day(s)", unless otherwise specified, to mean business days. The proposed revision defines “business days” as any date that the Town Clerk’s Office is open Monday through Friday and provides that all references to “day(s)” in Chapter II of the Charter are calendar days.
Chapter II. Legislative Branch	
Chapter II, Section 1	The proposed revision is technical in nature.
Chapter II, Section 2	The proposed change provides that the number of voting districts may be changed by a two-thirds vote of the Town Council, and the district boundaries may be changed by a majority vote of the Council. Voting districts must contain substantially equal population.
Chapter II, Section 5A	The proposed change adds the requirement of posting Town Council meeting notices, including the agenda, on the Town website.
Chapter II, Section 5B	The proposed change brings the Charter in line with the Freedom of Information Act and adds "non-privileged" language to clarify that privileged documents, such as those to be discussed in executive session, need not be posted. It also clarifies that minutes of all meetings must be posted on the town's website by the end of the 7th calendar day following the date of the meeting.
Chapter II, Section 6	The proposed change eliminates the waiting period for appointments to become effective in order to fill boards, commissions and committees more quickly. The appointments will become effective upon posting of notice on the town website.
Chapter II, Section 7	The proposed change revises the name of the section since it only deals with Legislation, not appointments.
Chapter II, Section 8	The proposed change provides for posting of adopted legislation on the town website in addition to publication in the newspaper.
Chapter III. Executive Branch	
Chapter III, Section 2C	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter III, Section 3	The proposed revision provides a clear and unambiguous process for both the temporary and permanent succession of a First Selectman.
Chapter III, Section 6B	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter III, Section 6G	The proposed revision deletes items that are in the town Purchasing Policy and ensures that future editions of document will include, at a minimum, multiple bids

	and competitive sealed bidding at such thresholds as may be adopted by the Town Council. In addition, the revision clarifies that purchasing contracts may not be signed between the election and installation of new town officers unless authorized by two-thirds of the Town Council present and voting.
Chapter III, Section 12B	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter III, Section 15	The proposed revision brings the charter into conformity with actual practice in Trumbull, other area communities and state statute concerning bonding of Town employees.
Chapter IV. Adopting the Annual Budget	
Chapter IV, Section 2B	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter IV, Section 3A	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter V. Appropriations from the General Fund and the Capital and Nonrecurring Fund During the Course of the Fiscal Year	
Chapter V, Section 2C	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter V, Section 2D	The proposed revision updates the threshold for Town Council review of Board of Finance actions since the dollar amounts have not been changed since 1981.
Chapter V, Section 2E	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter VI. Bond Issues	
Chapter VI	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter VII. Boards and Commissions	
Chapter VII, Section 4B	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter VII, Section 8A	The proposed revision brings the charter into compliance with state statute regarding the number of members on the Police Commission.
Chapter VII, Section 11E	The proposed revision clarifies that gifts to the Parks & Recreation Department may be accepted for recreation purposes in addition to park purposes.
Chapter VII, Section 17	The proposed changes clarify who the Ethics Code applies to, adds reference to applicable state statute, and brings into conformance with FOI which does not allow for private hearings.
Chapter VII, Section 21	The proposed revision creates the Commission on Aging to address the needs of the senior population of Trumbull. This commission would replace the Senior Citizens Commission, which is not included in the current charter.
Chapter VII, Section 22	The proposed revision reinstitutes a Youth Commission to the Charter to address the needs of Trumbull's youth.
Chapter VII, Section 25D (current Section 23)	The proposed change provides a mechanism for removal of an appointed, but not elected, member of a board, commission, or committee when that member does not meet a minimum attendance standard. Removal is discretionary and not mandatory to account for potential issues such as illness or other hardship of a member. The section is also renumbered.

Chapter VII, Section 26 (current Section 24)	The proposed revision clarifies that all boards, commissions and committees must follow posting requirements for meetings as specified in Chapter II, Section 5B. The section is also renumbered.
Chapter VIII. Electoral Process	
Chapter VIII, Section 4	The proposed revision changes the title of this section from "Majority Limitation" to "Minority Representation" to conform to the statute it references, Section 9-167 of the General Statutes. In addition, the revision clarifies that the numbers of nominees and candidates voters can vote for under the requirements of this section are not intended to be in conflict with the General Statutes or other sections of the charter which deal with nominating and voting processes.
Chapter VIII, Section 5	The proposed revision provides for posting of board or commission vacancies on the town website, thereby providing a fairer process for the public. The section is also reorganized for clarity.
Chapter VIII, Section 6C	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter VIII, Section 7B	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter VIII, Section 7D	The proposed revisions are designed to remove confusion caused by use of the terms "voting machine" and "ballot labels".
Chapter VIII, Section 7F	The proposed revision clarifies the timing of post-referendum actions so that days are counted from the date the vote is certified.
Chapter VIII Section 7H	The proposed revision adds posting of referendum questions on the town website in addition to publication in the newspaper.
Chapter VIII, Section 7I	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter VIII, Section 8B	The proposed revision specifies that "days" are calendar days.
Chapter VIII, Section 8D	The proposed revisions are designed to remove confusion caused by use of the terms "voting machine" and "ballot labels".
Chapter VIII, Section 9C-E	The proposed revisions provide a procedural framework to guide the town in holding a referendum on bonding projects over \$15 million.
Chapter VIII, Section 10	The proposed revision removes the last sentence of the section because state statute covers the issue of deputy registrars.
Chapter IX. Adoption and Amendment Procedures	
Chapter IX, Section 7	The proposed revision refers to the date the revisions are being submitted to voters (November 3, 2020) and the effective date if the revisions are approved (December 1, 2020).

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2. **Shall there be a revision of the Charter of the Town of Trumbull to provide an eight (8) member Board of Education with not more than four (4) members from the same political party with staggered four (4) year terms so that the terms of four (4) members expire every two (2) years?**

The intent and purpose of these proposed revisions are several fold: first, to increase the size of the Board of Education due to the heavy workload taken on by board members; second, to return the board to an even number of members from each party to create a less political environment; and finally, to return to four-year terms (staggered) to provide greater continuity and institutional memory which will benefit our educational system.

A “Yes” vote is a vote for the adoption of this proposal. A “No” vote is a vote against the proposal.

The proposed revision appears in Section 3 of Chapter VII, which reads as follows:

Section 3. Board of Education.

A. *Composition and Election.* The Board of Education shall continue as established, subject to and pursuant to the General Statutes, consisting of seven (7) members, each of whom shall be elected for a two (2) year term. Commencing with the 2021 election, the Board of Education shall be composed of eight (8) members.

Each political party may nominate candidates for election as members of the Board of Education as provided in Section 9-204a of the General Statutes, provided however that not more than one-half (1/2) of the total membership shall be registered with the same political party.

In the 2021 election, four (4) members shall be elected for a two (2) year term. Not more than one-half (1/2) of those members elected shall be registered with the same political party. In the 2021 election, four (4) members shall be elected for a four (4) year term. Not more than one-half (1/2) of those members elected shall be registered with the same political party.

Commencing with the 2023 election, all members shall be elected for a four (4) year term.

B. *Powers and Duties.* The Board of Education shall have all of the powers and duties conferred or imposed by the General Statutes on Boards of Education.

3. Shall there be a revision of the Charter of the Town of Trumbull to provide that the threshold for requiring a referendum on bonding authorization for projects be adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index?

This section was added in the 2011 charter revision, and requires a referendum vote on all debt taken out exceeding \$15 million. However, the \$15 million threshold amount was not indexed for inflation and has already become outdated. A provision for adjusting for inflation to respond to changes in economic conditions over time was added.

A “Yes” vote is a vote for the adoption of this proposal. A “No” vote is a vote against the proposal.

The proposed revision appears in Section 9B of Chapter VIII, which reads as follows:

Section 9. Bonded Debt.

B. For debt taken out for all purposes (including but not limited to education, construction, golf course or other enterprise fund debt) referendum must be held for all projects exceeding \$15 million. The \$15 million amount shall be indexed annually in January using the annual Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast Region, with \$15 million and the 2020 annual CPI-U for the Northeast Region used as the baseline for the calculation. If the indexing calculation results in an amount lower than \$15 million, the floor for the referendum requirement will remain at \$15 million. The indexed amount will be by vote of the Board of Finance and approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Town Council. A single project cannot be bonded in multiple smaller amounts in order to avoid this referendum provision.