


To: Charter Revision Commission Members

From: Melody A. Currey 

Date: November 9, 2021

Re: Questions ask of the publice

Question 1: form of government

Chief Operating Officer to assist the Mayor – if you elect to recommend this option, you should include enabling language that allows a Mayor to decide whether or not they want to include within their administration as it is an added expense that may not be required and/or necessary. If this option is ultimately recommended, it is imperative that the position must be appointed by the Mayor, work at the pleasure of the Mayor, and answer to the Mayor.

Mayor vs Town Manager. –The way this question is formed demonstrates a strong mayor seems to be off the table for your consideration already.

MAYOR	TOWN MANAGER
Elected by the people and serves at the pleasure of the people	Appointed by the Town Council and serves at the Town Council's pleasure
Ability to be nimble as required for making of day to day operations	Inability to make quick decisions that would require Town Council approval which is complicated by meeting only twice a month
Full time job for 1 person	Full time but requiring once again too much approval by town council.
Directors – appointed by and work directly for the Mayor	Directors – approved by Council but work for Town Manager – or do they? Confused about who's the boss
Economic Development – interested businesses can go directly to a Mayor for advice, interest and process. Mayor would bring before Commissions and appropriate governmental bodies	Town Manager would need to constantly consult with the Council. Complicates people coming before the town to move forward. We need to keep this easier, not more complicated
Mayor can direct where the town is headed	Town Council takes too long to make decisions but does have final oversight in many areas.
Mayor continues to recommend and vet appointments to boards and Commissions	Under a town manager form of government we would most likely have the Council making all of those decisions.
Mayor recommends and supports their budget to the Council	Town Manager would not have the flexibility of disagreeing with their bosses and it might limit what is put forth for consideration.
And again, and most importantly, I, as a resident, get to pick my Mayor	The Town Council Picks my Town leader for me.

2nd question:

Government Operations:

As to how departments function and flexibility in how they are structured, I suggest you give our newly elected Mayor an opportunity to evaluate and make a recommendation to this commission before any decisions are made. I would be concerned about adding costs to the taxpayer and/or negatively impacting services and the overall operations of the town. As long as a Mayor is allowed to appoint, hire, and the employees work for the Mayor, I would support some flexibility, assuming this aligns with the Mayor's recommendations.

3rd Question:

length of terms and simplification of elections

The Mayor should be given a 4 year term while the Council remains at 2 year terms. That is similar to the Governor and Legislature in CT. Part of my decision is in attracting people to Director positions. Offering individuals a 2 year job and attracting the best is not an easy task. By maintaining a 2 year term for the Council we, the electors, would have an opportunity to correct, change, or maintain the check and balance.

I understand the simplifications of the elections is the eliminations of Constables and Selectmen from the ballot. I assume instead that the Town Council would then appoint these positions. These are consistently the top vote getters during our municipal elections which would indicate that the electors wish to continue to make these choices.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that we now have 3 councilors sitting on this Commission so it may not be appropriate, due to the current make up of this body, to be making decisions on terms for themselves. Geographically, this commission has 3 members all living on the same street, a majority of members are from the north end of town, and I don't believe enough thought was given to how this commission was formed. No elected individuals should be sitting on this commission as this body is meant to be a true representation of our community members and not those they've elected to make choices for them. Please preserve our right to elect our community leader, our Mayor.

Thank you for your consideration.