

WILTON'S PROPOSED NEW CHARTER

SUMMARY

August 17, 2009

UNCHANGED (from current charter)

- Basic Selectman/Town Meeting structure of government that has served us well since 1802.
- Legislative powers shared by Town Meeting and Board of Selectmen
- Term limits for members of appointed and elected Boards
- The principle that a significant number of voters must participate (15%) in order for a majority to reject the annual budget or overrule certain decisions by the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Finance.
- Compliance with Connecticut Statutes, including minority representation requirements on all Boards and Committees.
- Annual budget may be rejected only once in a year.

REVISIONS (compared with current Charter)

- Language throughout the Charter simplified to make it user-friendly and remove many redundancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies and grammatical errors.
- Election of the First Selectman separated from that of the remaining Selectmen. (Now, unsuccessful candidate in competition for seat on Board)
- Four-year term for First Selectman with no limit on number of terms. (Now two years, with no limit.)
- Salary of the First Selectman determined each year as part of budget process. (Now may not be changed during the term of office.)
- Four-year overlapping terms for remaining Selectmen, with limit of two full consecutive terms. (Now two years, with no limit.)
- Provision for a one-time only transition election in 2011 for Board of Selectmen.
- Requirement for a special election to fill a vacancy in office of First Selectman. Second Selectman to fill such vacancy until election is held.

- Petitions to require signatures of 2% of town voters (about 220) instead of 50 as now.
- Change in budget approval process to permit Board of Selectmen to overrule a Board of Finance line item reduction in their budget provided that at least four Selectmen vote to take such action and that the Selectmen's budget total agrees with that set by the Board of Finance.
- Four-year terms for Registrars of Voters beginning in 2012. (Now two years.) Registrars to be elected in Presidential election years.
- Authorization for electors to vote for the full number of candidates for Board of Education and Board of Selectmen, to align with other elected Boards. (Now one may vote for only a bare majority for those two Boards.)
- Chairs of all Boards and committees to be elected by the members of those groups, unless otherwise required by law.
- Vacancies on Planning and Zoning Commission to be filled by vote of the remaining members. (Similar to Boards of Education, Finance, and Selectmen.)
- Requirement for distribution of Code of Ethics to all Town officials.
- Enabling provision should Connecticut law be changed that would permit recall of elected officials.