

EXPLANATORY TEXT FOR PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS

On August 22, 2011, the Cromwell Board of Selectmen voted to approve the Charter amendments proposed by the Cromwell Charter Revision Commission and to submit the proposed amendments to the voters for approval as one question at the regular election on November 8, 2011.

The proposed amendments make the following changes, among others, to the Cromwell Charter:

- Establish a Town Manager/Town Council form of government while maintaining the existing Board of Finance;
- Provide for the election of six members of the Town Council, with a Mayor, who will also be elected, serving on the Town Council as the seventh member;
- Create a budgetary approval process involving the department heads, the Town Manager, the Town Council, and Board of Finance, with final approval of the Annual Budget by the electors at the Annual Budget Referendum;
- Permit the Board of Finance, upon the recommendation of a majority of the entire Town Council, to make supplemental appropriations not to exceed a cumulative amount of one percent (1%) of the total annual appropriation in any one fiscal year, but additional supplemental appropriations require special town meeting approval;
- Permit, upon the recommendation of at least four members of the Town Council and an affirmative vote of not fewer than four members of the Board of Finance, emergency appropriations for the purpose of meeting a public emergency threatening the lives, health or property of citizens not to exceed two percent (2%) of the current tax levy in any one fiscal year, but additional emergency appropriations require special town meeting approval;
- Eliminate the Board of Police Commissioners and provide that the Chief of Police is appointed by and may be removed by the Town Manager, with approval of the Town Council;
- Provide for selection of a Town Manager with assistance of an independent search firm and by a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Request for Proposal (RFP) process;
- Provide that the Town Manager appoints and may suspend or remove a department head or other official with the approval of the Town Council and consistent with any collective bargaining agreement and with other laws;
- Provide that a department head shall appoint and may suspend or remove a department employee with the approval of the Town Manager and consistent with collective bargaining agreements and other applicable laws;
- Allow the Mayor and Town Council Members to call special meetings of the Town Council;
- Require the presence of five members at a meeting of the Town Council to constitute a quorum;
- Provide for a Senior Center and Human Services Director;
- Merge the functions of the Town Treasurer and the Finance Director;
- Require the Town Manager to prepare and submit to the Town Council a five (5) year capital improvement program each year and requires the Town Council to hold a public hearing prior to its adoption of such program;
- Provide that the Mayor and Town Council members serve without compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses.

If approved by a majority of those casting ballots on November 8, 2011, the proposed charter amendments shall become fully effective on November 6, 2013.

A "Yes" vote is a vote in favor of approving the proposed amendments to the Charter and a "No" vote is a vote against approving the proposed amendments to the Charter. A complete copy of the proposed amended Charter is available in the Town Clerk's office and on the Town website.