

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES
IN TOWN GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION & PROCEDURES
DRAFT BETHANY CHARTER 06-04-2022**

Charter Section	Current	Proposed	Comment
2.5 Legal Notice	Advertise Town Meetings in newspaper having general circulation in town at least 5 days before meeting	Advertise Town Meetings in publication having general circulation in town at least 7 days before meeting	Allows notice in publications other than newspapers, such as the town newsletter <u>Bethany Bulletin</u> ; increases notice to 7 days
	Mail notice to all box holders in town (no time before meeting specified)	Mail notice to all box holders in town at least 7 days before meeting	Specifies mailing minimum 7 days before meeting
2.7 Ordinances	No requirement	Proposed amendments to ordinances will show underlined new text and strike through deleted text	
	Town Meeting can be called by Board of Selectmen or a petition of at least 20 people	Town Meeting can be called by Board of Selectmen or a petition of at least 50 people	
	No public hearing requirement	Board of Selectmen must hold a public hearing on proposed ordinances prior to calling a Town Meeting	
2.8 Resolutions	Town Meeting can be called by Board of Selectmen or a petition of at least 20 people	Town Meeting can be called by Board of Selectmen or a petition of at least 50 people	
2.9 Sale or Purchase of Real Estate by the Town	Not specified	Town Meeting vote required to purchase or sell real estate	Clarifies that Town Meeting approval is required
2.10 Referendum	Not specified	Add majority vote at Town Meeting as a method of calling for a referendum vote	
	Voting from 12 noon to 8 pm, unless Town Meeting votes to increase hours to 6 am	Voting 6 am to 8 pm	All referendum voting shall be from 6 am to 8 pm
	Not specified	Petition for budget referendum may begin prior to final budget amount	Clarifies that final budget amount is not required on referendum petition forms

Charter Section	Current	Proposed	Comment
3.1 Town Elections	Currently, all elected town officials take office on July 1. Now that the town is required to hold elections in November, all elected town officials will take office 2 weeks after the election, except the Town Clerk will take office the 1st Monday in January (CGS 9-187a)	All elected officials take office on January 1	Maintains same time period between election and taking office as current
3.4 Vacancies in Elective Offices	Board of Selectmen fills all vacancies until next election, except Planning & Zoning, Bethany Board of Education, and Board of Finance, where the boards fill the vacancies, and the Amity Board of Education, which is filled at a Special Town Meeting	Board of Selectmen fills all vacancies until next election, except Planning & Zoning, Bethany Board of Education, Board of Finance, and the Zoning Board of Appeals, where the boards fill the vacancies	Adds Zoning Board of Appeals to list of elected boards that fill their own vacancies, and provides for Board of Selectmen filling Amity Board of Education vacancies
	No requirement to fill vacancy with a member of the same party	Vacancy required to be filled with a member of the same political party	
3.11 Election of Board of Finance	6 year terms	4 year terms	
3.15 Election of Bethany Board of Education	6 year terms	4 year terms	
4.1 Appointive Boards	Chapter 28 of the Ordinances establishes the Economic Development Commission (EDC)	Not included in draft charter, but EDC will continue to exist under the ordinances	Consider eliminating the EDC when ordinances are reviewed. This commission has periodically been rejuvenated with new members, meets for a while, then becomes dormant again. If EDC not eliminated, consider changing to Board of Selectmen appoints and removes members
4.2 Conservation Commission	5 members with staggered 3 year terms and 2 alternates with staggered 5 year terms	5 members with staggered 2 year terms	
	First Selectman appoints and removes members	Board of Selectmen appoints and removes members	
4.3 Wetlands Commission	5 members and 2 alternates with staggered 3 year terms	5 members with staggered 2 year terms	

Charter Section	Current	Proposed	Comment
4.4 Parks and Recreation Commission	Up to 7 members	5 members with staggered 2 year terms	
4.5 Cemetery Commission	5 members and 2 alternates with 3 year terms	5 members with staggered 2 year terms	
5.2 Procedure and General Powers	No requirement	Board of Selectmen normally meets twice per month	
	Not specified	Motions may be considered without the need for a second	Parliamentary procedure for small assemblies of 12 members or fewer typically does not require motions to be seconded to be considered
	Not specified	Any member may add items to meeting agendas	
	Not specified	Meetings may be called by a majority of members	
5.3 Special Powers and Duties	Not specified	Board of Selectmen approves grants to the Town	
6.2 Duties of First Selectman	Not specified	Act as purchasing agent; implement bidding procedures; oversee financial accounting	
6.3 Duties Relating to the Budget	Not specified	Assemble preliminary budget requests of Town departments and submit to Board of Finance	
6.4 Emergencies	Not specified	First Selectman may declare a state of emergency and take necessary action, subject to ratification by the Board of Selectmen and other bodies as required	
7.1 Administrative Officials	Not specified	Define administrative officials (appointed and removed by the Board of Selectmen)	
	Not specified	First Selectman manages and disciplines all administrative officials	
	Building Official appointed by First Selectman for 4 year term	Building Official appointed by Board of Selectmen for indefinite term as an employee at will	

Charter Section	Current	Proposed	Comment
7.4 Constables	No specified number of constables; 2 year term	Up to 5 constables; indefinite term as an employee at will	
7.7 Assessor	2 year term	Indefinite term as an employee at will	
7.10 Tree Warden	2 year term	Indefinite term as an employee at will	
7.12 Employees	Not specified	First Selectman hires, manages, disciplines, and fires all employees	
	Not specified	Procedures for hiring and termination of employees to be established by ordinance. Public notice of job openings and job and salary descriptions required for hiring employees	
8.3 Preparation of the Budget for the Coming Fiscal Year	Not specified	Board of Finance to meet with the Board of Selectmen at the beginning of the annual budget process	
	Not specified	Board of Selectmen to submit preliminary budget requests from Town departments to the Board of Finance	
	Not specified	Board of Finance to review its preliminary budget with the Board of Selectmen	
	Not specified	Notice of Budget Hearing and Proposed Budget to be mailed to all box holders in town and posted on the town website at least 5 days prior to the hearing	

Charter Section	Current	Proposed	Comment
	CGS 7-344 requires towns with populations above 5,000 to publish the final proposed budget in a newspaper having general circulation in the town prior to the Annual Town Meeting / Annual Budget Meeting. Bethany does not comply with this requirement, but in practice mails the final proposed budget to all boxholders in town with the notice and warning of the Annual Town Meeting, and also posts the budget on the town website.	Notice of Annual Town Meeting / Annual Budget Meeting and final proposed budget to be mailed to all box holders in town and posted on the town website at least 7 days prior to the meeting	Charter proposes to eliminate requirement of newspaper publication of the proposed budget, and add requirement for mailing the proposed budget to residents and posting on the town website at least 7 days before the meeting.
8.4 Management and Monitoring of the Budget for the Current Fiscal Year	Final audit report is submitted to the Board of Finance	Final audit report is submitted to the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen	
	Town departments submit requests for additional appropriations to the Board of Finance	Town departments submit requests for additional appropriations to the Board of Selectmen, which then forwards the requests to the Board of Finance	Board of Selectmen is kept informed of requests for additional appropriations
	The Board of Finance may approve an additional appropriation of up to \$20,000 per department without Town Meeting approval; no limit on total \$ amount of additional appropriations allowed without Town Meeting approval; departments are not defined	The Board of Finance may approve an additional appropriation of up to 0.333% of the non-education budget (currently about \$30,000) per department, up to a total maximum of 1.5% without Town Meeting approval; departments are defined for purposes of this section	
	The Board of Finance may transfer unexpended balances from one appropriation to another	The Board of Finance may transfer funds between line items in a department, but Town Meeting approval is required to transfer funds between departments; departments are defined for purposes of this section	

Charter Section	Current	Proposed	Comment
8.5 Expenditures and Accounting	Publicly advertised sealed bids are required for expenditures over \$20,000 per Chapter 12 of the Ordinances	Lists general parameters of purchasing ordinance	Would require revisions to existing purchasing ordinance to include all parameters listed in Charter, such as continuing orders or contracts and sale or disposition of equipment or other assets of the Town
	Not specified	Bills required to be approved by department head and Director of Finance	
8.8 Long-Range Financial Planning for the Town	Not specified	Town departments to submit 5-year capital plans to the Board of Finance	
9.2 Time Limit on Meetings	Not specified	No decisions of town boards after 11:30pm	