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H.524

Introduced by Representatives Christie of Hartford, Buckholz of Hartford, and  
Lucke of Hartford

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Municipal government; municipal charters; Town of Hartford;  
amendments

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to approve  
amendments to the charter of the Town of Hartford.

An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of  
Hartford

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. CHARTER AMENDMENT APPROVAL

The General Assembly approves the amendments to the charter of the Town  
of Hartford as set forth in this act. Proposals of amendments were approved by  
the voters on March 7, 2017.

Sec. 2. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 123A is amended to read:

CHAPTER 123A. TOWN OF HARTFORD

\* \* \*

1 § 103. PARTICULAR POWERS

2 In addition to powers otherwise conferred upon it by law, the Town is, for  
3 the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience,  
4 authorized to adopt and enforce ordinances, rules, and regulations concerning  
5 any matter or activity permitted by general law, including:

6 \* \* \*

7 § 201. TOWN MEETING

8 \* \* \*

9 (b) School and Town Meeting Committee. To augment the statutory  
10 responsibilities for the annual Town and School District meetings that are  
11 specified to the Town and the School District and their respective officers,  
12 there shall be a School and Town Meeting Committee ~~which~~ that shall  
13 organize, arrange, and provide for the comfort, presentation, publicity,  
14 program, refreshments, entertainment, and other nonstatutory aspects of the  
15 ~~budget discussion/candidates night meeting (hereafter referred to as pretown~~  
16 ~~meeting), and the combined Town/School District Meeting (hereafter referred~~  
17 ~~to as the floor meeting)~~ town meeting cycle, such as the Budget and  
18 Candidates Night meeting and the Town and School District Day meeting.

19 The Town Clerk shall appoint one member for a two-year term. The  
20 Selectboard shall appoint one member for a two-year term and one member for  
21 a three-year term. The School Board shall appoint one member for a two-year

1 term and one member for a three-year term. No School Board member,  
2 Selectboard member, or Town Clerk may serve on the School and Town  
3 Meeting Committee. Each appointing body or person shall have the power to  
4 remove any incumbent member of the School and Town Meeting Committee  
5 appointed by that body or person and shall have the power to appoint a  
6 replacement member to serve the unexpired term of any person who is  
7 removed or who resigns.

8 \* \* \*

9 (e) Meetings, dates, times, votes, ballots:

10 (1) ~~Pretown~~ Budget and Candidates Night meeting. At 7:00 p.m. on the  
11 ~~final~~ Monday night in February ~~that meets the statutory warning requirement~~  
12 ~~for the town meeting day Australian ballot vote at a place determined by the~~  
13 ~~School and Town Meeting Committee~~ eight days prior to Voting Day, a Town  
14 and School District budget discussion and candidates night meeting shall be  
15 called for the purpose of:

16 \* \* \*

17 (C) any other appropriate informational matters ~~or discussion of~~  
18 ~~articles to be voted on by Australian ballot.~~

19 (2) Town and School District Meeting Day. The annual Town and  
20 School District floor meetings shall be called and held on the Saturday

1 preceding Voting Day held under subdivision (3) of this subsection, subject to  
2 change as provided by general law. The floor meetings shall:

3 (A) be the venue for any public hearing to be held in advance of  
4 Voting Day;

5 (B) receive the reports of Town and School District officers;

6 (C) determine the compensation to be paid Town and School District  
7 officers for the ensuing year;

8 (D) serve as the public informational hearing for matters to be  
9 considered by Australian ballot; and

10 (E) conduct other business not determined at Australian ballot  
11 election.

12 (3) Voting Day. Voting Day ~~Australian ballot/election day. Australian~~  
13 ~~ballot/election day~~ shall be on Vermont Town Meeting Day, the first Tuesday  
14 in March, at which time any business, budgets, and candidate election  
15 involving Australian ballots will be transacted beginning at 7 a.m. until closing  
16 at 7 p.m. The Town budget as warned by the Selectboard and the School  
17 District budget as warned by the School Board shall be submitted to the  
18 electorate at this Town election. A majority vote shall be a simple majority of  
19 votes cast in this election. ~~Under~~ All public questions and all matters relating  
20 to the adoption of the Town and School District budgets shall be considered by  
21 Australian ballot under this subdivision:

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\* \* \*

~~(3) Floor meeting. The annual Town and School District floor meeting shall be called for the fourth Saturday following the Australian ballot/election day held under subdivision (2) of this subsection. If the Town or School District budget fails in the Australian ballot, deciding votes at the floor meeting shall provide a further opportunity for consideration of any rejected budget and a final vote by the Town voters. In addition to budget votes, the floor meeting may consider:~~

- ~~(A) the state of the Town and of the School District;~~
- ~~(B) long range planning, capital improvement projections;~~
- ~~(C) other business not determined at Australian ballot election.~~

\* \* \*

(h) Presiding officials:

(1) A Moderator shall preside at ~~pretown meeting, the floor meeting, all town meeting cycle events, such as Budget and Candidates Night, Town and School District Meeting Day,~~ and any special Town or School District meetings. In the Moderator's absence, the Town Clerk shall appoint a Moderator Pro Tempore to preside for the duration of the meeting.

\* \* \*

§ 202. ELECTED OFFICERS

\* \* \*

1 (e) The elected officers of the Town shall be:

2 \* \* \*

3 (3) ~~a Town Clerk, elected for a three year term;~~

4 ~~(4) three listers, one elected each year for three years;~~

5 ~~(5) a Town Treasurer, elected for a three-year term;~~

6 ~~(6) three trustees of public funds, one elected each year for three years;~~

7 ~~(7)~~(4) all other Town officers provided in this chapter or State statute.

8 \* \* \*

9 (h) Compensation for elected officers of the Town and School District shall  
10 be determined by vote at the annual Town and School District meeting as a  
11 separate item in the annual Town and School District budgets as provided in  
12 subdivision 201(e)(2)(C) of this chapter.

13 § 203. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

14 (a) Selectboard.

15 \* \* \*

16 (2) Organization.

17 \* \* \*

18 (E) The presence of four or more members shall constitute a quorum  
19 for the purposes of holding a meeting. The affirmative vote of a ~~simple~~  
20 majority of the members present ~~and voting~~ at a meeting at which a quorum is  
21 present shall be necessary to adopt any matter before the Selectboard.

1 \* \* \*

2 (4) Powers and duties.

3 \* \* \*

4 (B) Powers. The Selectboard may:

5 \* \* \*

6 ~~(3) [Repealed.]~~

7 \* \* \*

8 (c) Town Clerk. The Town Clerk shall be appointed by and shall serve at  
9 the pleasure of the Selectboard. The Town Clerk shall perform all duties and  
10 responsibilities prescribed by the laws of the State of Vermont and any  
11 additional duties set forth in this chapter.

12 (d) ~~Listers:~~ Assessor. The Selectboard shall contract with or employ a  
13 qualified professional assessor, who need not be a resident of the Town. The  
14 Assessor shall have the same powers and responsibilities, and shall perform the  
15 same functions as prescribed by law for listers and boards of listers.

16 ~~(1) shall perform all duties and responsibilities prescribed by this~~  
17 ~~chapter and the State of Vermont;~~

18 ~~(2) may appoint professional appraisers to help perform their duties. An~~  
19 ~~appraiser shall be under the direction and supervision of the elected listers and~~  
20 ~~shall adhere to all personnel rules and regulations of the Town.~~

