H.743 Page 1 of 21

1	H.743
2	Introduced by Representative Troiano of Stannard
3	Referred to Committee on
4	Date:
5	Subject: Municipal government; municipal charters; Town of Hardwick
6	Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to approve the
7	amendments to the charter of the Town of Hardwick to:
8	(1) merge the town offices of Town Clerk and Town Treasurer into the
9	Town Clerk and Treasurer;
10	(2) rename the Zoning Board of Adjustment the Development Review
11	Board;
12	(3) require digital notice of all regular and special town meetings;
13	(4) eliminate some town offices; and
14	(5) make clerical edits.
15	An act relating to amending the charter of the Town of Hardwick
16	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
17	Sec. 1. CHARTER AMENDMENT APPROVAL

2022 Page 2 of 21

1	The General Assembly approves the amendments to the charter of the Town
2	of Hardwick as set forth in this act. The voters approved the proposals of
3	amendment on December 9, 2021.
4	Sec. 2. 24 App. V.S.A. chapter 123 is amended to read:
5	CHAPTER 123. TOWN OF HARDWICK
6	Subchapter 1. Incorporation And and Grant Of of Powers
7	§ 101. CORPORATE EXISTENCE RETAINED
8	The inhabitants of the Town of Hardwick as presently constituted and the
9	inhabitants of the Village of Hardwick as constituted by 1890 Acts and
10	Resolves No. 84, as amended by 1892 Acts and Resolves No. 6, 1892 Acts and
11	Resolves No. 121, 1894 Acts and Resolves No. 180, 1894 Acts and Resolves
12	No. 181, 1898 Acts and Resolves No. 192, 1902 Acts and Resolves No. 220,
13	1904 Acts and Resolves No. 235, 1906 Acts and Resolves No. 270, 1908 Acts
14	and Resolves No. 271, 1912 Acts and Resolves No. 315, 1915 Acts and
15	Resolves No. 296, 1923 Acts and Resolves No. 198, 1933 Acts and Resolves
16	No. 183, 1939 Acts and Resolves No. 283, 1942 Acts and Resolves No. 182,
17	1947 Acts and Resolves No. 234, 1949 Acts and Resolves No. 308, 1961 Acts
18	and Resolves No. 313, and 1963 Acts and Resolves No. 251 are hereby
19	incorporated and declared to be a body corporate and politic under the name of
20	the Town of Hardwick and under that name may sue and be sued, prosecute,
21	and defend in any court; may have a common seal and alter it at pleasure; may

1	borrow money on the credit of the Town in the mode and under the restrictions
2	hereinafter provided in this charter and as provided by the general law of this
3	State; and generally shall have, exercise, and enjoy all such rights, immunities,
4	powers, and privileges as are conferred upon, or are incident to, towns in this
5	State; and shall be subject to like duties, liabilities, and obligations, except as
6	otherwise provided in this charter.
7	* * *
8	§ 105. RESERVATION OF POWERS TO THE TOWN
9	Nothing in this charter shall be construed to in any way limit the powers
10	and functions conferred on the Town of Hardwick, the its Selectboard of said
11	Town, or its elected and appointed officials by general or special enactments of
12	State statutes or regulations in force or effect or hereafter enacted after
13	adoption of this charter, and the powers and functions conferred by this charter
14	shall by this charter be cumulative and in addition to the provisions of such
15	general enactments unless this charter otherwise provides.
16	* * *
17	§ 107. ORDINANCES; ADOPTION BY <u>THE</u> SELECTBOARD
17 18	§ 107. ORDINANCES; ADOPTION BY <u>THE</u> SELECTBOARD (a) If the Selectboard desires to adopt an ordinance, they the Selectboard
	<u></u>

subject to final approval after the public hearing as hereafter set forth in this

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section. The ordinance shall then be posted in three public places within the

2 Town and published by title and summary setting forth the subject matter,

effective date, and penalty for violation thereof of the ordinance in a

4 newspaper of general circulation in the Town, together with a notice of the

time and place of a public hearing to consider the ordinance for final passage,

such the publication and posting to be on a day at least one week and not more

7 than two weeks prior to the hearing.

8 ***

(c) After the public hearing, the Selectboard may finally adopt the ordinance, with or without amendment. If it the Doord ordinance ordi

9 ***

§ 110. NONAPPLICABILITY NON-APPLICABILITY OF ZONING AND

11 SUBDIVISION

The provisions of sections 107, 108, and 109 of this charter shall not apply to the enactment, amendment, or repeal of any zoning ordinance or bylaw, any

Page 5 of 21

land subdivision ordinance or land subdivision bylaw, nor to the enactment,
amendment, or repeal of any municipal plan, or comprehensive regional plan,
the enactment, amendment, or repeal of such zoning ordinances, bylaws, and
plans being specifically controlled by 24 V.S.A. chapter 117, or by such other
statute regulating zoning, subdivision, and municipal and regional plans as
may be enacted from time to time. The adoption, amendment, or repeal of all
other ordinances shall be in conformity with sections 107, 108, and 109 of this
charter.
* * *
§ 112. AUTHORITY OF POLICE OFFICERS
The police Police officers of the Town shall have those powers conferred
upon them by 24 V.S.A. chapter 55 and by all other laws applicable to
municipal police officers.
§ 113. OPEN MEETINGS
Meetings of all Town boards and commissions shall be open and held in
accordance with the general law of this State relating to public meetings. The
record of all official proceedings shall be available for public inspection and
copying as provided by the general law of this State, commissions, and formal
committees shall conform with the provisions of 1 V.S.A. §§ 310–314 of
Vermont's Open Meeting Law.
§ 114. FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The municipal government provided by this charter shall be known as the council anager manager form of government. Pursuant to its provisions and subject only to the limitations imposed by the Vermont Constitution and by this charter, all powers of the Town shall be vested in an elective Council, which shall be known as the Selectboard n, which shall enact ordinances, codes, and regulations; propose budgets; determine policies; and appoint the Town Manager, who shall execute the laws and administer the government of the Town. All powers of the Town shall be exercised in the manners prescribed by this charter or prescribed by ordinance.

10 ***

§ 116. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The Town, through its Selectboard or Board of School Directors, or both, may enter into any agreement with the United States of America or in the State of Vermont, or both, or with any subdivision, department, agency, or activity of the United States of America or the State of Vermont, or both, to make public improvements within said the Town, or upon property or rights of said the Town outside its corporate limits, whether owned by said the Town as sole owner or owned by said the Town in common with another municipality or other municipalities, and may make appropriations consistent with this charter to accomplish such this purpose.

§ 117. TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT: ESTABLISHMENT

1	The Town of Hardwick, as established in section 101 of this charter, shall
2	constitute the Hardwick Town School District. [Repealed.]
3	* * *
4	Subchapter 3. Officers
5	* * *
6	§ 302. ELECTIVE OFFICERS
7	(a) The officers elected and their compensation fixed by the Town at its
8	annual meeting shall be:
9	* * *
10	(3) three trustees of public funds; [Repealed.]
11	(4) three auditors; [Repealed.]
12	(5) Town Clerk and Treasurer;
13	(6) Town Treasurer; [Repealed.]
14	(7) listers; [Repealed.]
15	* * *
16	(14) one or more fence viewers; [Repealed.]
17	* * *
18	§ 304. OTHER ELECTIVE OFFICES
19	(a) The three auditors shall be elected. The auditors' duties shall otherwise
20	be as established by the general law of the State. [Repealed.]

2022 Page 8 of 21

1	(b) The Town Meeting Moderator shall be elected and shall perform those
2	duties prescribed by the general law of this State.
3	(c) The Town Clerk and Treasurer shall be elected for a three-year term
4	and shall carry out the duties of the town clerk and treasurer as specified by
5	statute and by this charter and shall:
6	(1) promptly deposit funds in the depositories as may be designated by
7	the Selectboard;
8	(2) invest Town funds in the manner designated by statute;
9	(3) keep books and accounts as may be required by the Selectboard or
10	the Town Manager in addition to those required by law;
11	(4) make reports to the Selectboard or the Town Manager monthly or at
12	other times as they may require showing the condition of the Town's finances;
13	<u>and</u>
14	(5) perform other duties with respect to the Town's finances as the
15	Selectboard may request.
16	§ 305. TREASURER
17	(a) The Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting and shall serve for
18	a three-year term. An Assistant Treasurer may be appointed by the Treasurer
19	as provided by Vermont State Statutes.
20	(b) The Treasurer shall perform the duties required by statute or provided
21	by this charter and shall:

2022 Page 9 of 21

1	(1) Promptly deposit funds in such depositories as may be designated by
2	the Selectboard.
3	(2) Invest Town funds in the manner designated by statute.
4	(3) Keep such books and accounts as may be required by the
5	Selectboard or the Town Manager in addition to those required by law.
6	(4) Make reports to the Selectboard or the Town Manager monthly or at
7	such other times as they may require showing the condition of the Town's
8	finances.
9	(5) Perform such other duties with respect to the Town's finances as the
10	Selectboard may request. [Repealed.]
11	§ 306. APPOINTED OFFICERS
12	(a) The Selectboard may appoint any officers required by the Town's
13	personnel regulations or this charter.
14	(b) The Town Manager shall function as the personnel officer of the Town.
15	(c) The Town Manager shall function as the personnel officer of the Town.
16	(1) A Zoning Administrator whose powers and duties shall be
17	established by law and by ordinance of the Town The Zoning Administrator
18	shall be appointed in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 4448. Upon appointment,
19	the Zoning Administrator shall be under the direction of the Town Manager for
20	faithful performance of the Zoning Administrator duties as prescribed in the
21	Vermont statutes and this charter.

2022 Page 10 of 21

1	(2) A Civil Defense Director whose powers and duties shall be
2	established by law.
3	(3) A Town Service Officer whose powers and duties shall be as
4	established by law.
5	(4) A Town Recreation Committee.
6	(5) Planning commissioners/Zoning Development Review Board of
7	Adjustment whose powers and duties shall be those established by law.
8	(6) Representative to the Regional Planning Commission whose powers
9	and duties shall be as those established by law.
10	(7) Town Energy Coordinator.
11	(8) Dog Warden.
12	(9) Pound Keeper. [Repealed.]
13	(10) Health Officer.
14	§ 307. VACANCIES AND APPOINTMENTS
15	(a) When the term of any member of the Zoning Development Review
16	Board of Adjustment, the Planning Commission, or any other Town board or,
17	commission, or formal committee expires, or when the term of any officer
18	appointed by the Selectboard or the Town Manager expires, or when there is a
19	vacancy in any such board, commission, committee, or office, the Town
20	Manager may cause to be published, in a newspaper or digital news forum of

1	general local circulation or availability, and on the Town website, a notice of
2	the vacancy or the expiration of the term.
3	(b) Any qualified voter of the Town may, within 10 days of the
4	publication, may submit his or her their own name to the Town Manager as an
5	applicant for the vacant or expired office. At the expiration or 10 days from
6	the date of publication, the names of all persons being considered shall be
7	entered in the Selectboard minutes. The Selectboard shall not fill the vacancy
8	or expired term until after at least seven days from the date the names of the
9	applicants are entered in the minutes.
10	* * *
11	§ 309. OATH OF OFFICE
	All elective officials and all municipal police officers of the Town shall,
	before assuming office, take, subscribe, and file with the Town Clerk and
	<u>Treasurer</u> the following oath:
12	"I,, solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office
13	of of the Town of Hardwick to the best of my judgment and abilities,
14	according to law, so help me God (or I so affirm)."
15	* * *
16	Subchapter 5. Selectmen Selectboard
17	§ 501. POWERS AND DUTIES
18	* * *

1	(7) Exercise each and every power not specifically set forth herein in
2	this section, which is granted to selectboards the Selectboard by the laws of
3	this State.
4	§ 502. ORGANIZATION
5	(a) Forthwith after their After the election and qualification of the
6	Selectboard, the Selectboard shall organize and elect a Chair and Vice Chair by
7	a majority vote of the entire Board.
8	(b) The Board Selectboard shall conduct its business in accordance with
9	Robert's Rules of Order. The Chair shall be entitled to participate as a full
10	voting member.
11	(c) Three Selectboard members shall constitute a quorum. No action of
12	such Board the Selectboard shall be valid or binding unless adopted by the
13	affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum present. In cases where statute
14	requires a greater fraction of the authorized Board for an affirmative vote than
15	as specified above, such the statute's provisions of law shall control.
16	(d) All meetings of the Board Selectboard shall be open to the public in
17	accordance with the provisions of 1 V.S.A chapter 5, subchapter 2 the Vermont
18	Open Meeting Law.
19	(e) The agenda of the Selectboard meetings shall be made available to the
20	public at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and posted in one public place.
21	[Repealed.]

1	(f) The agenda of the Selectboard meetings shall be made available to the
2	press at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. [Repealed.]
3	(g) Any members of the Board may add items of business to the written
4	agenda upon commencement of the meeting, provided that a majority of the
5	quorum present votes to add such items to the agenda. [Repealed.]
6	§ 503. RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
7	(a) It shall be the duty of the Selectboard to keep an official record of its
8	proceedings that shall be open for public inspection under State statutes.
9	(b) The minutes of each meeting shall be approved by the Selectboard and
10	shall be filed in the Town Clerk's office and Town Manager's office, a duly
11	certified copy of such minutes, attesting to the accuracy and recording thereof
12	shall constitute the official transcript of such meeting and shall constitute
13	prima facie evidence of the conduct thereof and the action taken thereat.
14	[Repealed.]
15	* * *
16	Subchapter 7. Town Manager
17	* * *
18	§ 704. DUTIES OF <u>THE</u> MANAGER
19	* * *
20	(h) The Manager shall furnish a monthly quarterly financial statement to
21	the Selectboard, with the assistance and cooperation of the Town Clerk and

Page 14 of 21

1	Treasurer and the Business Manager, who shall furnish whatever financial data
2	are necessary to enable the Town Manager to fulfill his or her their budgetary
3	and financial responsibilities.
4	* * *
5	§ 706. ABSENCE
6	In the event of a temporary absence or disability, the Town Manager may,
7	with the consent of the Board Selectboard, designate by letter filed with the
8	Town Clerk a qualified person to perform the Manager's duties. If the
9	Manager fails to make such the designation, the Selectboard may appoint a
10	person to perform the duties of the Manager until he or she the Town Manager
11	shall return or his or her the Town Manager's disability shall cease.
12	Subchapter 9. Commissions And and Appointments
13	* * *
14	§ 902. WATER SUPPLY; DUTIES OF SELECTBOARD MEMBERS
15	It shall be the responsibility of the Selectboard, acting as water
16	commissioners, to furnish a clean and sufficient supply of potable water to
17	those parts of the Town served by an existing Town-owned water storage,
18	transmission, and distribution system. In order to implement said the
19	authority, the Selectboard shall have, in addition to those powers enumerated
20	in the general laws of this State with respect to water works and supply, the
21	following powers:

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§ 903. SEWAGE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL; DUTIES OF

SELECTBOARD

It shall be the responsibility of the Selectboard, acting as sewer commissioners, to provide adequate collection and disposal for domestic and industrial sewerage sewage within those parts of the Town served by existing a Town-owned sewage collection and distribution system. In order to implement said the authority, the Selectboard shall have, in addition to those powers enumerated in the general laws of this State with respect to sewage disposal, the following powers:

(1) Whenever the public health or convenience shall require the construction of a common sewer or sewers in the Town, the Selectboard is hereby authorized and empowered to so construct said sewers and to repair replace the same from time to time when necessary, and for such purpose may take the land of individuals and corporations on making compensation for the lands so taken for construction or replacement of a common sewer or sewers, and the Selectboard shall proceed in the same manner as is prescribed by law for selectboards in taking for public highways and in awarding damages therefore for the taking of land, and the said Selectboard Selectboard shall make a return of their doings to the office of the Town Clerk of said Town and Treasurer who shall record the same in the Town records of the Town, and said

the Town may also lay p	pipes along and	d across the	streets, all	eys, lanes,	and
highways in said Town	Hardwick.				

- (2) The Selectboard shall have the power by ordinance and regulations to require any building owner to connect to and use any sewer drain or line installed and maintained along and across the streets, alleys, lanes, and highways of the Town that abut or adjoin such that building.
- (3) Said The Selectboard, in making, installing, maintaining, or repairing sewers and drains, shall have the power, on giving 12 days' notice to the parties interested of the time and the place of hearing, to assess the owner or owners of land or lands benefited thereby by access to sewers and drains, so much of the expense of making altering or repairing the same as said the Selectboard shall judge such those lands to be benefited thereby by access to sewers and drains.
- (4) When said the Selectboard enters upon lands under the authority and for the purpose stated in subdivision (3) of this section, they the Selectboard shall give 12 days' notice to all persons owning or interested in such those lands when they the Selectboard will hear and consider the question of assessments for benefits, or both. And in all cases when either assessments are made or damages are allowed, the said Selectboard shall forthwith make a report of their the Selectboard's doings, which report they the Board shall

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Town meeting Meeting.

unless otherwise determined by the Selectboard.

2	record the same in the <u>Town</u> records of said Town.
3	(5) When any person shall be dissatisfied with the decision of said the
4	Selectboard in the award of damages for laying, making, altering, or repairing
5	any sewer and drain, or in any assessment for benefits of the same, such those
6	persons may petition a court of competent jurisdiction for a reassessment of
7	such related damages or benefits. Said The petition shall be served on the
8	Town Clerk of said Town and Treasurer within 60 days next after said award
9	of damages or assessment for benefit shall be filed in said Clerk's the Town
10	<u>Clerk and Treasurer's</u> office, and such the petition shall not delay the making
11	or repairing of such the sewer or drain, or sidewalk or culvert, or laying said
12	the water pipe.
13	* * *
14	§ 905. FIRE DEPARTMENT; APPOINTMENTS
15	(a) A slate of Fire Department officers, including the Fire Chief, shall be

provided to the Town Manager by the Town Fire Department prior to Town

Meeting as a recommendation for election by the voting residents of the Town.

(b) The Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief shall be elected at large at

(b)(c) Members of the Fire Department shall be residents of the Town,

cause to be filed in the office of the Town Clerk and Treasurer, who shall

2022 Page 18 of 21

1	§ 906. POLICE DEPARTMENT; APPOINTMENTS
2	The Whenever the Town of Hardwick shall maintain a police department,
3	the Police Chief shall be appointed by the Town Manager.
4	* * *
5	Subchapter 11. Town Meeting
6	* * *
7	§ 1103. POLLING PLACES
8	In any annual or special Town or Town School District meeting for the
9	purpose of the election of officers and the voting on all questions to be decided
10	by Australian ballot, such polling places as needed shall be established by the
11	Board of Civil Authority. The Board of Civil Authority shall establish a
12	polling place or places as it shall determine appropriate whenever any annual
13	or special Town or Town School District meeting is being held for the purpose
14	of the election of officers or the voting on questions to be decided by
15	Australian ballot.
16	* * *
17	Subchapter 13. Zoning And and Planning
18	§ 1301. APPLICABILITY OF STATE LAW TO ZONING AND
19	PLANNING
20	The Zoning Administrator under the Hardwick zoning ordinance or bylaw
21	shall be appointed annually by the Selectboard after the annual meeting and

1	shall serve for one year or until a successor is appointed and qualified The
2	Zoning Administrator shall be nominated by the Planning Commission and
3	appointed by the Selectboard for a term of three years promptly after the
4	adoption of the first bylaws or when a vacancy exists. The appointment shall
5	be in accord with 24 V.S.A. § 4448. All other matters pertaining to zoning
6	land subdivision, municipal, and regional plans shall be exclusively controlled
7	by the general law of the State of Vermont, except as specifically provided in
8	this charter.
9	§ 1302. RATIFICATION OF PRESENT ZONING ORDINANCE
10	The Town of Hardwick zoning and flood hazard regulations, revised and
11	adopted April 1979, as amended, are hereby ratified and approved, subject to
12	provisions of 24 V.S.A. chapter 117. [Repealed.]
13	§ 1303. MINUTES
14	(a) Copies of the minutes of the Zoning Development Review Board of
15	Adjustment or the Hardwick Planning Commission, or portions thereof of the
16	minutes, shall be made available to any member of the public upon request to
17	the Town Manager and at cost.
18	(b) Copies of the minutes of the Zoning Development Review Board of
19	Adjustment and the Planning Commission shall be filed and kept in the Town
20	Clerk's office in separate books provided for that purpose.

H.743 Page 20 of 21

1	Subchapter 15. Budget And and Taxation
2	* * *
3	§ 1502. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF BUDGET
4	* * *
5	(b) At least 10 days before the annual meeting of the Town, the
6	Selectboard shall publish in a newspaper of general local circulation and post
7	on its website a notice containing the amount that the Town anticipates must
8	be raised by Town taxes and to be voted at its annual meeting.
9	* * *
10	§ 1506. BUDGET LIMITATIONS- BORROWING
11	* * *
12	(b) The Town, through the its Selectboard, may borrow money in
13	anticipation of taxes.
14	(c) The Town, by vote at the annual or a special meeting, may borrow
15	money under such terms and conditions and for such lawful municipal
16	purposes as the Town shall vote.
17	* * *
18	(e) The Selectboard, in the name of the Town, may borrow funds in
19	anticipation of federal and State funds that have been approved and
20	committed, until such time as such those funds are available, but in no event

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Page	21	of 21

1	for a term of longer than one year. Any debt so incurred for a project shall be
2	repaid from the first federal or State funds received for that project.
3	* * *
4	§ 1509. FEES AND FINES
5	All fines and penalties payable to the Town by reason of any violation of
6	any law, or ordinance or bylaw, shall be paid over promptly upon receipt to the
7	Town Treasurer for inclusion in the General Fund of the Town. All fees
8	established by law or ordinance and payable to any Town officer, except those
9	fees payable to the Town Clerk, shall be paid over promptly upon receipt to
10	the Town Treasurer for inclusion in the General Fund of the Town. [Repealed.]
11	Subchapter 17. General Provisions
12	* * *
13	§§ 1702–1704. [TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.]. [Repealed.]
14	§ 1705. AMENDMENT OF CHARTER
15	This charter may be amended as set forth by the general law of this the
16	State of Vermont, 17 V.S.A. § 2645.
17	* * *
18	§§ 1707–1715. [VILLAGE-TOWN MERGER TRANSITIONAL
19	PROVISIONS.]. [Repealed.]
20	Sec. 3 EFFECTIVE DATE
21	This act shall take effect on passage.