

1 H.888

2 Introduced by Representatives Cole of Hartford and Christie of Hartford

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

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

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to amend the
7 charter of the Town of Hartford to hold Warrant Information Nights. It
8 proposes to modify appointments to the School and Town Meeting Committee.

9 The bill proposes to increase the terms of the Town Moderator and School
10 Moderator from one to three years. It proposes to modify quorum and majority
11 vote requirements for Selectboard actions. The bill proposes to designate the
12 Town Manager as the Delinquent Tax Collector. It also proposes to enable the
13 Town Treasurer to appoint an Assistant Town Treasurer.

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

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

17 Sec. 1. CHARTER AMENDMENT APPROVAL

18 The General Assembly approves the amendments to the charter of the Town
19 of Hartford as set forth in this act. The voters of the Town approved the

1 proposals of amendment on March 5, 2024. The voters of the School District
2 approved the proposals of amendment on April 15, 2024.

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

4 CHAPTER 123A. TOWN OF HARTFORD

5 * * *

6 § 103. PARTICULAR POWERS OF THE TOWN

7 * * *

8 § 201. TOWN MEETING

9 * * *

10 (b)(1) School and Town Meeting Committee. To augment the statutory
11 responsibilities for the annual Town and School District meetings that are
12 specified to the Town and the School District and their respective officers,
13 there shall be a School and Town Meeting Committee that shall organize,
14 arrange, and provide for the comfort, presentation, publicity, program,
15 refreshments, entertainment, and other nonstatutory aspects of the Town
16 meeting cycle, such as the Warrant Information Night and School District Day
17 meeting. ~~The Town Clerk shall appoint one member for a two-year term.~~

18 (2) The Selectboard shall appoint one member for a two-year term and
19 one member for a three-year term. The School Board shall appoint one
20 member for a two-year term and one member for a three-year term. No School
21 Board member, Selectboard member, or Town Clerk may serve on the School

1 and Town Meeting Committee. Each appointing body ~~or person~~ shall have the
2 power to remove any incumbent member of the School and Town Meeting
3 Committee appointed by that body ~~or person~~ and shall have the power to
4 appoint a replacement member to serve the unexpired term of any person who
5 is removed or who resigns.

6 * * *

7 (e) Meetings; dates; times; votes; ballot.

8 (1) Warrant Information Night; "Information Night" Meeting. Prior to
9 Budget and Candidates Night, the Town and School Meeting Committee may
10 call a meeting for the purpose of providing presentations and discussion of
11 items that may be placed on the warrants for Voting Day.

12 (2) Budget and Candidates Night meeting. ~~At 7:00 p.m. on~~ On the
13 Monday night in February eight days prior to Voting Day, a Town and School
14 District budget discussion and Candidates Night meeting shall be called for the
15 purpose of:

16 * * *

17 ~~(2)~~(3) Town and School District Meeting Day. The annual Town and
18 School District floor meetings shall be called and held on the Saturday
19 preceding Voting Day held under subdivision ~~(3)~~(4) of this subsection, subject
20 to change as provided by general law. The floor meetings shall:

21 * * *

1 ~~(3)~~(4) Voting Day. Voting Day shall be on Vermont Town Meeting
2 Day, the first Tuesday in March, at which time any business, budgets, and
3 candidate election involving Australian ballots will be transacted beginning at
4 7 a.m. until closing at 7 p.m. The Town budget as warned by the Selectboard
5 and the School District budget as warned by the School Board shall be
6 submitted to the electorate at this Town election. A majority vote shall be a
7 simple majority of votes cast in this election. All public questions and all
8 matters relating to the adoption of the Town and School District budgets shall
9 be considered by Australian ballot under this subdivision.

10 * * *

11 (g) Warnings. Warnings for Town ~~or~~ and School District meetings shall be
12 posted on the Town ~~or~~ and School District websites, printed in area
13 newspapers, posted on social media, and posted in at least 12 public places in
14 the Town under a schedule that is in accordance with State statute. The
15 warning shall be signed and recorded by the Town Clerk before it is posted.
16 Budgets and other applicable reports shall be available not later than 10 days
17 prior to the budget informational meeting as established under subdivision
18 ~~(e)(1)~~(2) of this section.

19 * * *

20 § 202. ELECTED OFFICERS

21 * * *

1 (d) Qualifications for serving in elected Town office:

2 * * *

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

4 * * *

5 (2) one Moderator, elected for a ~~one-year~~ three-year term;

6 * * *

7 (f) The elected officers of the School District shall be:

8 (1) one Moderator, elected for a ~~one-year~~ three-year term;

9 (2) five School Board members, elected in accordance with State statute.

10 * * *

11 § 203. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

12 (a) Selectboard.

13 * * *

14 (2) Organization.

15 * * *

16 (E) The presence of four or more members shall constitute a quorum
17 for the purposes of holding a meeting. The affirmative vote of ~~a majority of~~
18 ~~the~~ three members present at a meeting at which a quorum is of at least five
19 members are present shall be necessary to ~~adopt any matter before the~~
20 ~~Selectboard~~ exercise authority.

21 * * *

1 § 301. APPOINTED OFFICERS

2 * * *

3 (c) Collector of Delinquent Taxes. These duties shall be assumed by the
4 Town Manager or the Town Manager's designee.

5 (d) Assistant Town Treasurer. The Town Treasurer may appoint an
6 Assistant Town Treasurer who may be delegated some or all of the powers of
7 the Town Treasurer on a temporary basis by the Town Treasurer upon notice to
8 the Town Manager and the School Superintendent. The Assistant Town
9 Treasurer shall be compensated at the same rate as the Town Treasurer when
10 exercising the powers of the Town Treasurer. In the event the office of Town
11 Treasurer becomes vacant, the Assist Town Treasurer shall become the Town
12 Treasurer for the remainder of the Town Treasurer's term of office.

13 * * *

14 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on passage.