

June 26, 2025

Woodbury Board of Selectmen
281 Main Street South
Woodbury, CT 06798

VIA: Hand Delivery

Re: 2025 Charter Revision Commission Final Charter

Dear Madam First Selectman and Honorable Selectmen:

Please accept this letter as a summary of the material changes proposed by the Charter Revision Commission (the "Commission") in its final draft charter, which is being submitted to you on a date even herewith. This letter is not intended to restate each and every proposal made. For example, this summary will not address proposals such as changes to punctuation, spelling corrections, or corrections to section references.

I. Chapter I: Incorporation and General Powers

The primary changes proposed in Chapter I are the expansion of Section 105 to include more defined terms and the creation of an oath of office in a new Section 106.

Many of the new defined terms proposed are intended to create clarity in the budget process. For example, proposed Section 105 incorporates a definition of "Annual Education Budget", "Proposed Annual Budget", "Final Proposed Annual Budget", and "Proposed BOS Budget." Similarly, the existing definition of "Annual Budget" is expanded to meet with the current reality that Woodbury's budget is comprised of not only its municipal budget, but also the Annual Educational Budget, the Town's share of the Housatonic Valley Health District budget, the town's share of the Region #22 Probate Court budget and the Town's share of any other third-party budget.

Chapter I also introduces a proposed oath of office, which would be sworn by each and every member of any Town board, commission, agency, or committee, elected or appointed, before an individual takes office.

II. Chapter II: The Town Meeting

The primary change proposed in Chapter II is clarifying when the Registrars of Voters may set the list of individuals eligible to vote in a Town Meeting for those not otherwise entitled to vote. Under this proposal, the Registrars of Voters may set the list at 12:01pm on the last business day before the Town Meeting.

Chapter II also includes the Commission's proposed language clarifying that a Town Meeting is not required for the sale of Town real property having a value of less than \$5,000.00. By way of note, the previous list of Special Acts included in Chapter II has been moved to Appendix C.

III. Chapter III: Elected Officers, Boards, Agencies, and Commissions

The most substantive change proposed in Chapter III is the modification to the term of office for the First Selectman. Under the Commission's proposal, and beginning with the 2027 municipal election, the term of the First Selectman would be increased from two years to four years.

Other notable proposals include increasing the term of the Town Meeting Moderator from two years to four years, mandating that Deputy Registrars of Voters receive at least 40 hours of training on an annual basis, and clarifying that members of the Board of Finance are permitted to serve on the Charter Revision Commission.

IV. Chapter IV: Board of Selectmen

The Commission's first major proposal in Chapter IV is the creation of a process by which a hiring authority would report the total cost of new hire's compensation package to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance before the offer is extended. An identical process is also proposed for the situation where a hiring authority is expanding an existing Town position in a manner that would necessitate expansion of fringe benefits outside of the Pay Plan.

The Commission also proposes that the Board of Selectmen adopt a five-year strategic plan in advance of the annual budget process. The strategic plan would identify the Board of Selectmen's goals, objectives, and policy priorities for the Town for the next five years.

Additionally, the Commission proposes language to clarify that, while certain entities must be invited to the joint meeting between the land use commissions and the Board of Selectmen, all entities and persons interested are welcome to attend.

The Commission further proposes that the Board of Selectmen publish notice of its intent to sell real property having a value of \$5,000 or less on the Town's website and a requirement that the Board of Selectmen create a commission to develop a code of conduct.

V. Chapter V: First Selectman

No substantive changes are proposed for Chapter V.

VI. Chapter VI: Appointed Officers, Boards, Agencies, Committees and Commissions.

In Chapter VI, the Commission proposes the creation of four new commissions: the Technology Commission, the Shade Tree and Sidewalk Commission, the Arts & Culture Commission, and the Business & Economic Development Commission. The Commission also proposes adding two alternate members to the Public Building Commission and adding clarifying language regarding the roles and duties of existing boards and commissions.

VII. Chapter VII: Finance and Taxation

The most substantive change proposed in Chapter VII is the proposal to align the Town's budget referendum and the Region 14 Board of Education's budget referendum to permit the Town's voters to vote on both budgets on the same day.

Chapter VII, if adopted, would also require that the Board of Selectmen identify how its proposed budget aligns with its strategic plan. The Commission's proposal further requires that the Board of Selectmen identify any capital projects with a cost of \$100,000 or more that it intends to undertake in the next ten years.

VIII. Chapter VIII: Administrative Departments and Employees

In Chapter VIII, the Commission proposes eliminating the non-existent position of Assistant Building Official and the creation of two new positions, a personnel administrator and building maintainer.

IX. Chapter IX: Standards of Conduct

The first change of consequence in proposed Chapter IX is clarifying that, when alternate members are available, they must be seated to replace an absent regular member, even if quorum can be achieved otherwise.

The only other change of consequence in proposed Chapter IX is the addition of a requirement that all Town boards, agencies, commissions, and committees adopt Roberts Rules of Order.

X. Chapter X: Transition and Miscellaneous Provisions

No substantive changes were made to Chapter X.

We appreciate your faith in our efforts and look forward to your feedback on our proposals.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hon. Salvatore C. Agati (Ret.)

Stephanie E. Cummings