



# Town of Charlotte

ESTABLISHED 1762

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To: Joe McLean  
From: Charlotte Selectboard  
Re: Legislative Charter Regarding the Voting of Articles that Affect the Municipal Budget  
Date: March 31, 2015

The Selectboard would like you to move forward with drafting a legislative charter to change the way the town votes on articles that affect the municipal budget. Please note—although our discussion over the past few months have focused on the article that asks voters whether or not to adopt the Selectboard's budget, it is the intent of the Selectboard to include all articles which could have an effect on the budget in the voting procedure to be created by the legislative charter. For example, articles voting on a bond or an allocation to a reserve fund should be included in this procedure.

The basic procedure for voting budget-related articles is:

- All budget-related articles will be warned and voted on at Town Meeting.
- Budget-related articles that are approved at Town Meeting will be warned for voting by Australian ballot after Town Meeting. Motions that are approved at Town Meeting will bind the Selectboard to warn the Australian ballot articles for the dollar amounts approved at Town Meeting.
- Approved motions on budget-related articles at Town Meeting will not be actionable in terms of creating approved budgets. Only articles approved by Australian ballot votes will result in actionable budgets or budget-related articles. (This may be redundant).
- If an Australian ballot budget article fails, the Selectboard shall revise the budget, and warn a re-vote by Australian ballot on the revised budget; there will not be another Town Meeting vote. This provision is the same as existing statute, so may not need to be detailed in the charter, but perhaps the statute should be reference.

The charter may also need to address timelines for warnings and hearings for Town Meeting, Australian ballot votes and re-votes of revised budgets. Seemingly these can all be the same as provided in current statute, but re-stating them within the charter could provide for greater clarity. Additionally, the date for the Australian ballot vote could potentially always be held on the first Tuesday in April, which would provide a consistent timeline. This date would seemingly always fall within the 30-40 day timeframe indicated in existing statute.

Could you please draft a legislative charter that can be reviewed by the Selectboard? If possible, we would like to have this on the agenda for discussion at the Selectboard meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Please contact Lane Morrison, Chair, or Dean Bloch, Town Administrator, with any questions.  
Thank you.

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