

VERMONT **GENERAL ASSEMBLY****The Vermont Statutes Online****Title 17 : Elections****Chapter 055 : Local Elections****Subchapter 002 : Town Meetings And Local Elections In General****§ 2645. Charters, amendment, procedure**

(a) A municipality may propose to the General Assembly to amend its charter by majority vote of the legal voters of the municipality present and voting at any annual or special meeting warned for that purpose in accordance with the following procedure:

(1) A proposal to adopt, repeal, or amend a municipal charter may be made by the legislative body of the municipality or by petition of five percent of the voters of the municipality.

(2) An official copy of the proposed charter amendments shall be filed as a public record in the office of the clerk of the municipality at least 10 days before the first public hearing and copies thereof shall be made available to members of the public upon request.

(3) The legislative body of the municipality shall hold at least two public hearings prior to the vote on the proposed charter amendments. The first public hearing shall be held at least 30 days before the annual or special meeting.

(4) If the proposals to amend the charter are made by the legislative body, the legislative body may revise the amendments as a result of suggestions and recommendations made at a public hearing, but in no event shall such revisions be made less than 20 days before the date of the meeting. If revisions are made, the legislative body shall post a notice of these revisions in the same places as the warning for the meeting not less than 20 days before the date of the meeting and shall attach such revisions to the official copy kept on file for public inspection in the office of the clerk of the municipality.

(5) If the proposals to amend the charter are made by petition, the second public hearing shall be held no later than 10 days after the first public hearing. The legislative body shall not have the authority to revise proposals to amend the charter made by petition. After the warning and hearing requirements of this section are satisfied, proposals by petition shall be submitted to the voters at the next annual meeting, primary, or general election in the form in which they were filed, except that the legislative body may make technical corrections.

(6) Notice of the public hearings and of the annual or special meeting shall be given in the same way and time as for annual meetings of the municipality. Such notice shall specify the sections to be amended, setting out sections to be amended in the amended form, with deleted matter in brackets and new matter underlined or in italics. If the legislative body of the municipality determines that the proposed charter amendments are too long or unwieldy to set out in amended form, the notice shall include a concise summary of the proposed charter amendments and shall state that an official copy of the proposed charter amendments is on file for public inspection in the office of the clerk of the municipality and

that copies thereof shall be made available to members of the public upon request.

(7) Voting on charter amendments shall be by Australian ballot. The ballot shall show each section to be amended in the amended form, with deleted matter in brackets and new matter underlined or in italics and shall permit the voter to vote on each proposal of amendment separately. If the legislative body determines that the proposed charter amendments are too long or unwieldy to be shown in the amended form, an official copy of the proposed charter amendments shall be maintained conspicuously in each ballot booth for inspection by the voters during the balloting and voters shall be permitted to vote upon the charter amendments in their entirety in the form of a yes or no proposition.

(b) The clerk of the municipality, under the direction of the legislative body, shall announce and post the results of the vote immediately after the vote is counted. The clerk, within 10 days after the day of the election, shall certify to the Secretary of State each proposal of amendment showing the facts as to its origin and the procedure followed.

(c) The Secretary of State shall file the certificate and deliver copies of it to the Attorney General and Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Senate, and the chairman of the committees concerned with municipal charters of both houses of the General Assembly.

(d) The amendment shall become effective upon affirmative enactment of the proposal, either as proposed or as amended by the General Assembly. A proposal for a charter amendment may be enacted by reference to the amendment as approved by the voters of the municipality. (Added 1977, No. 269 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; amended 1979, No. 200 (Adj. Sess.), § 100; 1981, No. 239 (Adj. Sess.), § 22, eff. May 4, 1982; 1983, No. 161 (Adj. Sess.); 1987, No. 63.)