

Charter Ballot Questions Explanatory Text

1. Shall the Suffield Charter be revised by adopting the technical corrections and (non-substantive) changes recommended by the 2015 Charter Revision Commission?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to adopt the technical (spelling and punctuation) corrections and other non-substantive changes recommended by the 2015 Charter Revision Commission.

2. Shall the Suffield Charter section 302 be amended to provide that the WPCA annual budget must be submitted to the Board of Finance for review, comment and advice?

The WCPA is almost completely independent of the Town with its own budget and assessments for sewer services provided to Town residents. The purpose of this proposed amendment is to provide for a closer coordination between the WPCA and the Town's Board of Finance.

3. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended to provide an addition to Charter section 502 "Powers and Duties" (The First Selectman), subsection F which will give the First Selectman executive authority in consultation with any board or commission over town employees on matters requiring consistency and coordination across Town Departments and their employees?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to recognize the First Selectmen's authority in areas which require a uniform or coordinated approach across the Town's departments. This authority over the town employees must be exercised in consultation with any respective board or commission and only on matters requiring consistency and coordination across Town Departments and their employees. (Excepted from this provision are the Board of Education, WCPA and the Director of Finance).

4. Shall section 611 "Director of Finance", subsection A of the Suffield Charter be amended to add a requirement that the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen must meet 90 days prior to the expiration of the Director of Finance's appointment to discuss the reappointment of the Director of Finance to a new term?

In the past, the provision in the Charter that requires the appointment of the Director of Finance for a term of up to 4 years has not been followed. The purpose of this proposed amendment is to strengthen the current provision by adding a requirement that the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen must meet 90 days prior to the expiration of the Director of Finance's appointment to discuss and evaluate the reappointment of the Director of Finance as presently required in the Charter.

5. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended by deleting Charter section 706 "Appointed Boards and Commissions", subsection P thereby deleting the reference to the Public Works Commission?

The functions of the Public Works Commission have been absorbed into other Town departments or commissions and this commission has been inactive for some time. The purpose of this proposed amendment is to delete the Charter reference to the Public Works Commission.

6. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended to change the rules in Section 802 “General Powers and Duties of the Board of Finance” limiting the number of members seated at a meeting to 6 members and to eliminate the different treatment accorded regular member and alternate members of the Board of Finance from Charter section 804 “Other Financial Matters”, subsection D?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to simply limit the number of members (alternate or regular member) seated at a Board of Finance meeting to 6 members. Similarly other Charter sections are amended to remove any distinction between alternate and regular members.

7. Shall the Suffield Charter Section 1006 “Actions Requiring a Town Meeting”, subsection G be amended to provide that real estate leases that are in excess of an aggregate of 5 years would require Town Meeting approval and that leases of exactly 5 years or less do not require Town Meeting approval?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to clarify the Charter provisions which define what lease terms entered into by the Town require Town Meeting approval. Specifically, it provides that leases that are in excess of an aggregate of 5 years would require Town Meeting approval and that real estate leases of exactly 5 years or less do not require Town Meeting approval.

8. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended to change Charter section 1006 “Actions Requiring a Town Meeting”, subsection H to remove the Town’s acceptance of roads in new developments from the Town Meeting requirement if they are constructed in accord with plans approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to remove the Town’s acceptance of roads in new developments from the current Charter provision requiring Town Meeting approval if the roads are constructed in accord with plans approved by the Planning and Zoning commission.

9. Shall the Suffield Charter sections 1008 “Limitations Regarding Appropriations” and 1009 “Referendum by Petition” subsection C be amended to lower the limits for a petition for a (non-budget) referendum from 10% of registered voters to 6% and to

- a) **add a time limit for the gathering of signatures of 21 days from the date of the action for which the referendum is sought and**
- b) **to expressly limit signatures to those obtained after the action for which the referendum is sought?**

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to lower the limits for a petition for a (non-budget) referendum from the current 10% to 6% of registered voters and to:

- a) add a time limit for the gathering of signatures of 21 days from the date of the action for which the referendum is sought and
- b) to expressly limit signatures to those obtained after the action for which the referendum is sought.

10. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended to implement the ability for the Board of Selectmen to call a Town meeting where there would be a guaranteed referendum to follow it by adding new Charter "Section 1010 - Adjourned Town Meeting. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1007 and section 1009A of this Charter, the Board of Selectmen may present any issue to the Town at an adjourned Town Meeting, as defined by Connecticut law for a vote by ballot."?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to allow the Board of Selectmen to call a Town meeting where there would not be a binding vote at that Town meeting, but instead there would be a subsequent vote by ballot at the polling place.

11. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended to change section 1102 of the Charter to clarify that the code of ethics applies to all town employees, officers and board and commission members by adding "The Town's Code of Ethics shall govern the conduct of elected and appointed officers, employees, and board and commission members of the Town."?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to clarify that the Town's code of ethics applies to all town employees, officers and board and commission members.

12. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended to allow non substantive changes to be made to the Town's charter at a Town Meeting by adding "Section 1212 Non substantive changes to the Charter. The Town Meeting may make minor and technical revisions of a non-substantive nature to the Charter provided such revisions are deemed minor, technical and non-substantive by a two-thirds majority vote of such Town Meeting."?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to allow non-substantive changes to be made to the town's charter at a Town Meeting.

13. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended by eliminating the following references: Section 303 "Elected State Officers" subsection B a Judge of Probate for the Probate District of Suffield; Section 605 "Superintendent of Public Works"; Section 606 "Tree Warden"; Section 607 "Dog Warden"; and Section 610 "Building Inspector"?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to eliminate the following references in the Charter to certain positions that remain in existence as Town employees:

Section 303 "Elected State Officers" subsection B a Judge of Probate for the Probate District of Suffield

Section 605 "Superintendent of Public Works"

Section 606 "Tree Warden"

Section 607 "Dog Warden"

Section 610 "Building Inspector".

These positions will remain in existence even though reference to them will be deleted from the Charter.

14. Shall the Suffield Charter be amended by eliminating the first sentence in Section 609 Assessor, "The Assessor shall serve a term of four years, the term of which shall have commenced on February 1, 1983"?

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to eliminate the first sentence to remove the term of appointment for the Assessor position.