



Town of Greenwich
Town Hall – 101 Field Point Road - Greenwich, CT 06836-2540
Phone: (203) 622-7700

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Adrienne Singer
Phone: 203-622-7715

REVISION OF THE GREENWICH CHARTER

In June of this year, the Greenwich Representative Town Meeting approved an amendment to sections 21 and 91 of the Greenwich Charter, giving the First Selectman a substantial role in the review of budgets of Town boards and departments, and in establishing the requirement for submission of operations plans by most town agencies, which would be subject to the First Selectman's review and revision. These provisions were drafted by the Charter Revision Committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen and received unanimous approval of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Estimate and Taxation. Pursuant to the provisions of the Charter, the amendment must now to be approved at the November election by a majority of the voters voting thereon in order to be effective. The question presented on the ballot is:

“Shall the Town of Greenwich Charter be amended under Section 66 of the Charter to provide for First Selectman review and revision of proposed Town budgets and operations plans?”

The Board of Selectmen urges the voters of Greenwich to support this needed change. A copy of the exact changes to the Charter as passed by the RTM is attached. Under the approved amendment, the First Selectman would:

- review all budgets from all Town Agencies and make revisions where appropriate, except for operations budgets submitted by the Board of Education and, unless requested by the Board of Estimate, except for fixed charges proposed by that Board;
- develop goals and objectives for spending town wide;
- establish priorities for recommended capital spending for all Town agencies;
- develop a long-range capital spending plan; and
- submit budgets to the BET.

The role proposed for the First Selectman with respect to budgets conforms for the most part with current practice prescribed by the BET. The proposed amendment would incorporate this into the Charter. It also provides that no revision in any budget would be made that would prevent any Town officer or board from exercising any power, or performing any duty or obligation, specified or mandated by Town Charter or state statute. The amendment further provides that nothing in it should be construed as preventing any board or officer from submitting a request to the BET for an addition to, or reinstatement of, any item omitted from, or deleted from, its budget.

In addition, the approved amendment provides that all Town departments, boards and officers will prepare and submit operations plan each year to the First Selectman. These plans would contain a concise and comprehensive report of the administrative activities of the agency showing services, activities and work accomplished during the current year and to be accomplished during upcoming fiscal year. Except for those submitted by the Board of Education and the BET, the First Selectman would have the opportunity to revise them. In the case of the Independent Boards and Commissions, revisions would only be made after consultation with the affected agency. Under the proposed amendment, there is no change in the legal responsibilities of the Independent Boards and Commissions. They continue to exercise their statutory duties to the fullest extent. The First Selectman's role is that of oversight and town-wide coordination.

The Board of Selectmen urges all Greenwich voters to vote "yes" in favor of Charter change in the November election.

Richard V. Bergstresser, First Selectman

Peter J. Crumbine, Selectman

Penny Monahan, Selectman

TOWN OF GREENWICH CHARTER

Sec. 21. Annual Budget and Operations Plans.

(a) By Departments, Divisions and Officers. The head of each department and division under the supervision and control of the Board of Education, the Board of Health, the Board of Social Services, the Board of Estimate and Taxation and the First Selectman and all other officers and boards of the Town shall annually prepare and submit to their supervising authority a proposed budget report and an operations plan presenting the proposed financial and operational plans for the ensuing fiscal year. The proposed budgets shall be presented at such time, in such form and with such content as shall be prescribed by the Board of Estimate and Taxation and shall contain such additional information as is requested by the First Selectman or the Board of Estimate and Taxation. Such proposed budgets shall include a detailed estimate of the amount of money which will be required to meet the obligations of the Town for such board, department, office or division to provide for its expenses for the ensuing fiscal year, shall list capital requests separately from operating expenses and shall identify capital items that are anticipated to be requested within at least the next five fiscal years but are not being requested at the present time. The operations plans shall set forth in such form as shall be prescribed by the First Selectman, a concise and comprehensive report of the administrative activities of the board, department, division or office showing services, activities and work accomplished during the current year and to be accomplished in the ensuing fiscal year. Such operations plans shall contain a table of organization for the agency preparing it and shall list any changes in personnel proposed in the budget request for the ensuing fiscal year.

(b) Review and Revision by First Selectman. Upon completion of their review, and at such time as shall be prescribed by the First Selectman, such boards, departments, divisions and officers of the Town, shall submit such proposed budgets and operations plans to the First Selectman. The First Selectman shall review all proposed budgets received and shall make such revisions and modifications in such proposed budgets as the First Selectman deems necessary or appropriate, except for the operations budget submitted by the Board of Education, and, unless requested by the Board of Estimate and Taxation, except with respect to fixed charges as proposed by the Board of Estimate and Taxation. The First Selectman shall review all operations plans received and shall make such revisions and modifications in such operations plans as the First Selectman deems necessary or appropriate, except for those submitted by the Board of Education and the Board of Estimate and Taxation and, with respect to those plans submitted by departments, boards or officers not under the supervision and control of the First Selectman, only after consultation with such department, board or officer affected. Revisions and modifications to such proposed budgets or operations plans by the First Selectman shall not be such as to prevent any Town officer or board from performing or exercising any power, duty or obligation specified or mandated by Town Charter or state statute. In connection with such reviews, the First Selectman shall (1) develop goals and objectives and establish priorities for spending for the ensuing fiscal year; (2) establish

priorities with respect to recommended capital spending for all Town agencies; and (3) develop a long range capital spending plan.

(c) Submission to the Board of Estimate. On or before December 1 in each year, or at such other time as the Board of Estimate and Taxation shall prescribe, the First Selectman, for and on behalf of said boards, departments, divisions and offices and the Board of Education, shall submit to the Board of Estimate and Taxation with copies to the Budget Overview and Finance Committees of the Representative Town Meeting and such other Committees of the Representative Town Meeting as the Moderator may direct, such proposed budgets, as revised, with such comments as are appropriate, presenting the proposed financial plans for said boards, departments, divisions and offices for the ensuing fiscal year, including detailed estimates of the amount of money which will be required to provide for anticipated operating and capital expenses for the ensuing fiscal year. Such proposed budgets shall be in such form as the Board of Estimate and Taxation shall prescribe. Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing any board or officer from submitting a request for addition to, or reinstatement of, any item omitted from, or deleted from its budget directly to the Board of Estimate and Taxation in accordance with procedures prescribed by said board.

(d) Publication of Estimates. The Board of Estimate and Taxation shall, on or before April 10 in each year, cause to be published in a newspaper published in the Town, a summary of such estimates.

Sec. 91. Commission budget.

On or before December 1 in each year, or at such other time as the Board of Estimate shall prescribe, the Commission shall prepare and submit a budget request presenting its requirements for the ensuing fiscal year in accordance with Section 21. The Commission may accept gifts for its purposes, but all of its expenditures, exclusive of such gifts, shall be within the amounts appropriated for its purposes.

The foregoing proposal for home rule action that has been approved by the Representative Town Meeting requires approval at referendum by a majority of electors voting thereon.