



**Town of Chester**  
**Governance Study Committee Report**

**Submitted to the Board of Selectmen**  
**February 9, 2023**

# Town of Chester Governance Study Committee Report

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## **PREFACE**

Chester's Board of Selectmen appointed a study committee to identify alternatives to our Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government to improve the town's ability to proactively plan and manage our affairs.

This report is focused on providing the Board of Selectmen, and by extension, the residents of Chester, with the legal definition and options of alternative forms of government coupled with the real-world perspective of how relevant municipalities and agencies have or intend to address the challenges of municipal governance and management.

This study is intended to be informational and not prescriptive. The Committee's view of potential next steps and considerations are provided as requested in the charge from the Board of Selectmen. We acknowledge that our researched findings are not only objective, but that we offer an educated subjective commentary under considerations and next steps. That being stated, our study of alternative governance structures and Chester gathered data analyses are complete and thorough.

The Committee is very appreciative of our municipal and regional government colleagues who provided insights and observations that added their pragmatic and experiential value to this study.

We thank the Board of Selectmen who authorized this research effort and for the opportunity to provide the study's information to Chester's leadership, and its residents.

Sincerely,

The Chester Governance Study Committee

Pat Bandzes

Briana Jewczyn

Jon Joslow, Co-Chair

Cindy Lignar

Ed Meehan

Michael Sanders, Co-Chair

Richard Strauss

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New England Selectmen-Town Meeting\* form of local government originated in the 1600's. Today, in Connecticut, it serves as the form of government a town is required to use unless it adopts an alternative form of government documented by a charter.

Like many towns, Chester faces challenges with the increasing complexity of municipal government, maintaining near-term and long-term staffing levels with the skillsets required to deliver high-quality town services, and the need to ensure continuity among the group of elected officials and town staff.

The challenges and complexities of governing today and into the future led our town leadership to question and examine options for the town to manage its affairs and delivery of services more efficiently and effectively to its residents.

The Chester Governance Study was commissioned on August 10, 2022 by the Board of Selectman. The Board acknowledged the need to examine several critical issues facing the town, and appointed a study committee ("Committee") to "...identify and analyze alternative governance structures for the purpose of improving the town's ability to proactively plan and manage its affairs."

The charge further requested that the study "Define the various forms of town government organization and structure that may achieve a more effective governance structure relevant now and, in the future," and to "recommend the next steps to achieve these prospective improvements, as indicated by the findings and conclusion."

The Committee simultaneously conducted extensive research into various alternative forms of government, interviewed peer towns to evaluate other Connecticut municipalities' responses to the challenges of municipal governance and management, and researched potential and observed issues that Chester has been experiencing in recent years. Soon after research began, it became evident that Connecticut municipalities share common issues:

- Increased complexity of municipal government
- Continuity of executive leadership.
- Diffused executive governance authority.
- Difficulty recruiting and maintaining professional staff
- Difficulty in finding volunteers to fill vacancies on boards and commissions.
- Low town meeting (legislative body) participation

Through the research, the Committee identified actions Chester may implement to address these issues and others that it might deem important. The information contained in this report should provide the reader with the framework under which issues and opportunities can be addressed. It provides approaches that Chester can take by administrative action, by ordinance in accordance with state statutes, and those that can be better or only addressed by adopting a town charter.

Should the Board of Selectmen determine to act on the options presented in this report, the Committee suggests it should simultaneously explore changes that can be initiated immediately or in the near-term within the statutory framework of Chester's Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government, while also considering the creation of a charter commission to address those issues that can be solved more specifically or only through adoption of a charter.

## BACKGROUND

The need and justification for self-examination has been discussed over the years but became a priority in early 2022 when the recently re-elected First Selectwoman resigned to become a town manager in another state. The First Selectman while being the chief elected official, is also the chief executive officer. In this capacity the First Selectman serves as the head of the executive branch of the town and is responsible for managing the town's administrative functions on a day-to-day basis. This resignation created a need to appoint a replacement for the First Selectman position and left a void in the chief executive officer responsibilities for town management. This set of circumstances and its impact on continuity and administration exposed deficiencies and vulnerabilities in the town's management and governance structure.

Another factor leading to the timeliness of this study is the possibility that all three currently serving selectmen may not run again for municipal office in 2023, which may also break the continuity of leadership and administration of the town.

The charge of the Study Committee ('Committee') acknowledged challenges related to town-wide engagement, shortages of elected, volunteer, and paid staff, as well as the need to improve accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and overall responsiveness.

During this period several key issues and concerns (real or perceived) have been raised including:

- **Staffing of full-time and part-time employees**

The town's employees, many of whom provide part-time delivery of services to the public, also perform other vital and mandated functions of town government. In recent years, the town has had difficulty recruiting and replacing employees who have left town service. For example, in the past two years, long-term vacancies in two critical functions have occurred, including the inland wetlands and zoning compliance officer positions, both mandated under state statute for towns operating without a charter. In addition, since November 2021, retirements created vacancies in the elected positions of Town Clerk and Treasurer, as well as appointed positions of Town Assessor, and for the Public Works Department.

- **Staffing volunteers on boards and commissions**

The town also relies on boards and commissions to be responsible for functions that in other towns are assigned to employees. Some of these boards and commissions are elected, while others are appointed. Other boards have statutory roles while some boards are simply advisory to the Board of Selectmen. Many of these boards and commissions have had difficulty maintaining their full complement of members. There are many reasons for this, but regardless of whether the board is elected or appointed, the major issue is that they serve the function of delivering services to the public. Without their full complement of members their mandated or advisory functions cannot be completed as effectively as desired.

- **Leadership continuity and professional credentials of the executive body**

All the above concerns - the turnover in the Board of Selectmen and First Selectman, the difficulty in filling employee positions, the difficulty in recruiting members for elected or appointed boards and commissions, and the challenges of managing a town in an increasingly complex environment - led to questions and examination of our town's ability to sustain itself to continue to deliver quality, timely and effective services to its residents.

Various citizens and members of boards and commissions discussed these concerns over the course of early 2022. In July 2022, residents Michael Sanders and Jon Joslow approached the Board of Selectmen to inquire if there might be opportunities for the town to assess its management and governance structure. The discussion

with the Board focused on administrative management of the town and opportunities to research alternative forms of government that might provide a better structure to manage the town more efficiently and effectively.

The Committee was officially commissioned on August 10, 2022 by a unanimous vote of the Board of Selectmen. The charge issued to the Committee (see Appendix F) including the following goals:

- *Identify and analyze alternative governance structures for the purpose of improving the Town's ability to proactively plan and manage its affairs.*
- *Define the various forms of town government organization and structure that may achieve a more effective governance structure relevant now and in the future; and*
- *Recommend the next steps to achieve these prospective improvements, as indicated by the findings and conclusion.*

The Committee was formed to explore options that relate to helping Chester now and in the future. The intention was not to make specific organizational recommendations, but to “recommend the next steps” for the consideration of the Board of Selectmen and the community. The intention was also for the Board of Selectmen to consider the study’s findings and determine actions to be taken, whether by ordinances per state statutes approved by town meeting or referendum, and/ or to appoint a charter commission to evaluate solutions available via adoption of a town charter.

For those seeking further background information on municipal government in the state of Connecticut, links to the sources researched are provided, including a presentation by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities titled “Fundamentals of Municipal Government dated January 2022” which provides a comprehensive summary description of the issues that face Chester and other Connecticut towns. (See Appendix G: References)

### **Scope Limitations**

With the pending municipal election in November 2023, and party caucuses meeting as early as June 2023 to select candidates for the Board of Selectmen and various elected boards and commissions, and the town’s budget season approaching, the Committee observed the need to complete this study as soon as possible, so that the current Board of Selectmen and candidates running will have been advised of the relevant findings of this study for optimal decision-making.

## COMMITTEE FORMATION

Potential membership of the Committee was included in the charge document. However, at the time, not all potential members had yet agreed to serve. Time was required to contact these members. Michael Sanders and Jon Joslow held an organizational meeting with prospective members on October 25, 2022 to discuss the principles of the study, the proposed planning process, anticipated required research tasks and the timeline for the project.

Prospective Committee members agreed that the study should begin immediately as the town required as much time as possible to consider suggested changes to its governance and management structure. Important factors were considered for timely study completion, including the upcoming November 2023 municipal election, the likely retirements of all three Selectmen and concerns regarding governance continuity, and difficulty recruiting and retaining board and commission volunteers as stated in the First Selectman's letter to the public. The fast-approaching budget season, with the potential need for allocation of funds for decision-making, was also considered.

After all prospective Committee members agreed to the general scope of work and timeline, an initial public meeting was arranged for November 16, 2022. Regardless of the timeliness factor, the Committee member designees recognized and agreed to act in the town's best interest to initiate the study immediately, even though the work would need to continue throughout the holidays.

### After Committee Appointment

Because the Committee was appointed by the Board of Selectmen, all aspects of the process were subject to the Freedom of Information Act and open meetings law. Therefore, public notices of the first meeting and the agenda were posted for the mandated public awareness.

At the first public meeting on November 16, the Committee Co-Chair explained the planned process as the opening item of the agenda. This included a statement of the Board of Selectmen's expectations for the Committee, the outline of the work effort, and the Committee's subcommittee structure and assignments.

Based upon the 9-week window for completion, the Committee originally planned to complete its report to the Board of Selectmen in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January, 2023. The Committee examined the timeline to ensure enough time was allocated to meet workload requirements. Requirements included time allocation for organizing, researching, summarizing, and presenting the report based upon the initiation date of November 16. The Committee decided to split the various tasks into subcommittees with assignments permitting simultaneous research, analysis, and interviews over a condensed work schedule. The three subcommittees were tasked to complete their work in weeks three to seven with weeks eight and nine scheduled for summary and presentation.

### Subcommittee Structure

- **Subcommittee #1: Identify Chester's key governance and management issues**

This subcommittee's work included the identification of Chester's present and future attributes of municipal governance and management as part of the evaluation of alternative governance structures. Briana Jewczyn was selected to lead this effort.

- **Subcommittee #2: Identify and describe alternative forms of Connecticut municipal government**

This part of the study focused on describing the characteristics, common issues, and considerations of Connecticut's various allowable alternative forms of government, including the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government used by Chester. Richard Strauss was selected to lead this effort.

- **Subcommittee #3: Interview relevant Connecticut municipalities**

The goal of this subcommittee's work was to discuss the experiences, concerns, and lessons of other towns who have or are considering a change in their town's governance and/or management structure.

Pat Bandzes was selected to lead this effort.

After completion of work, the Committee's presentation to the Board of Selectmen will outline the process, assumptions, scope, findings, and potential next steps for the Board and public to consider.

### **Public Information**

The Committee's work was primarily research and municipal interviews and therefore did not include solicitation of public input about issues, perspectives, and feelings regarding governance. The Committee's work was based on fact-finding for applicable evidence, and that any change to governance would involve engaging residents in discussion of the results of this study and any changes proposed by the Board of Selectmen. It was recognized that the basic information regarding elements of governance options should be accessible to the townspeople and Selectmen as a foundation to moving forward. However, the public was asked to submit comments, information and suggestions to the First Selectman's office. While the Committee did not receive any information or comments from the public via the First Selectmen's Office, we received and appreciated input for consideration by several townspeople who attended the Committee's meetings.

It should be noted that the opportunity for public commentary will start after the Board of Selectmen and town receives the report, considers options, actions, next steps and communicates with town residents at meetings and hearings prior to any vote that may be required.

In order to keep the public educated and informed, the Committee created a webpage on the town website (<https://www.chesterct.org/home/governance-study-committee>) where all meeting agendas and minutes, the final report, source documents, and references are available for review both prior to and after presentation to the Board of Selectmen.



## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

This section of the report includes the results of the research conducted by each of the three subcommittees. The work of the subcommittees focused on gathering information from various reports, interviews, and state and Chester specific data.

The Key Governance and Management Issues Subcommittee examined governance issues and challenges regarding appointed and elected boards and commissions positions and attendance at town meetings that Chester is and has been experiencing in recent years.

The Alternative Forms of Municipal Government Subcommittee provided a description of the characteristics, common issues, and considerations of the various statutorily allowable forms of local government in use in Connecticut.

The Municipal Interview Subcommittee interviewed municipal and regional government leaders to gather and assess information regarding their perspectives on the issues, concerns they are experiencing and changes, if any, they have made or are considering meeting the current challenges of municipal governance and management.

### **Key Governance and Management Issues Subcommittee Report**

#### **VACANCIES ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS AND TOWN MEETING & REFERENDUM PARTICIPATION**

The focus of the research conducted involved examining boards and commissions vacancies and town meeting attendance trends. Discussion with town leadership, boards and commissions members, and residents regarding their observations on vacancies and low attendance at town meetings resulted in an examination of these issues.

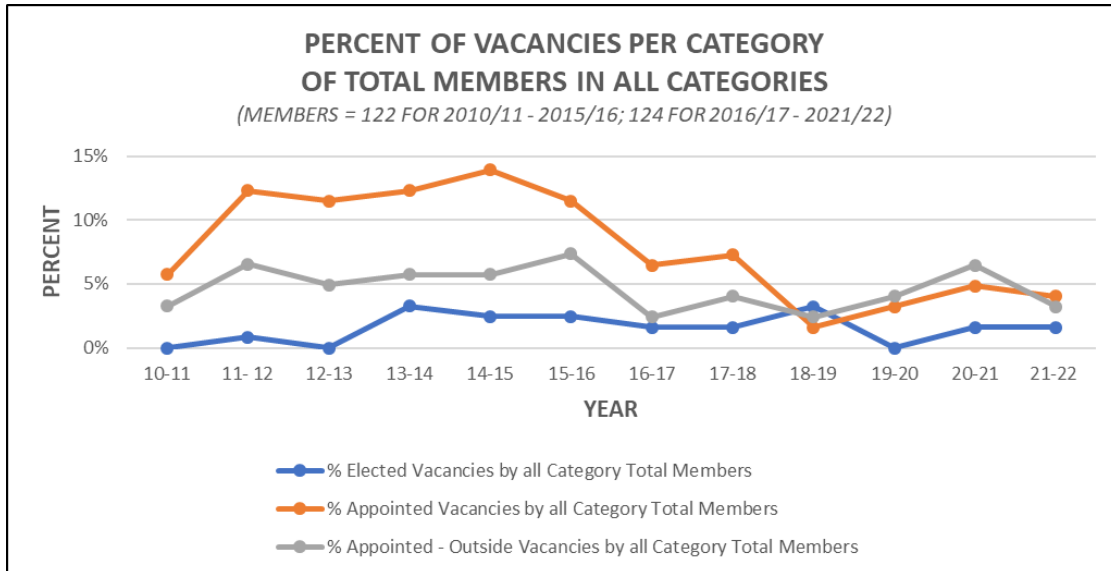
The history of Chester boards and commissions vacancies, attendance at Town Meetings, participation in referenda, and a sample of special and regular Board of Selectmen meetings was researched to determine resident participation from 2011 – 2022. Data sources included town annual reports, the Chester Town Acts Binder, Volume 5, Regional School District #4 Town Referendum records, and as needed, communications with the Town Clerk, First Selectwoman and First Selectwoman's Administrative Assistant for clarification. Also, the Subcommittee researched Board of Selectmen meeting minutes on the town website were researched for relevant participation information at Board of Selectmen meetings.

Over the past several years, residents have commented on the public's lack of awareness of vacancies on boards and commissions. Openings are now published in the weekly town-wide email newsletter, and the Town Clerk provides the information included in the link to "Vacancies on Elected and Appointed Boards and Commissions." Also, in the town-wide email newsletter, the Town Clerk recently added a new link to "Boards, Commissions and Committees Descriptions". However, the information published requires updating as discussed in "Considerations and Potential Next Steps".

Of note, most boards and commissions function independently, without centralized coordination, yet have an integral role in the town's governance responsibilities. Therefore, it is important that appointed and elected positions be filled to assure to the extent possible that boards and commissions can achieve meeting quorums continually to effectively fulfill their responsibilities and services in a timely manner.

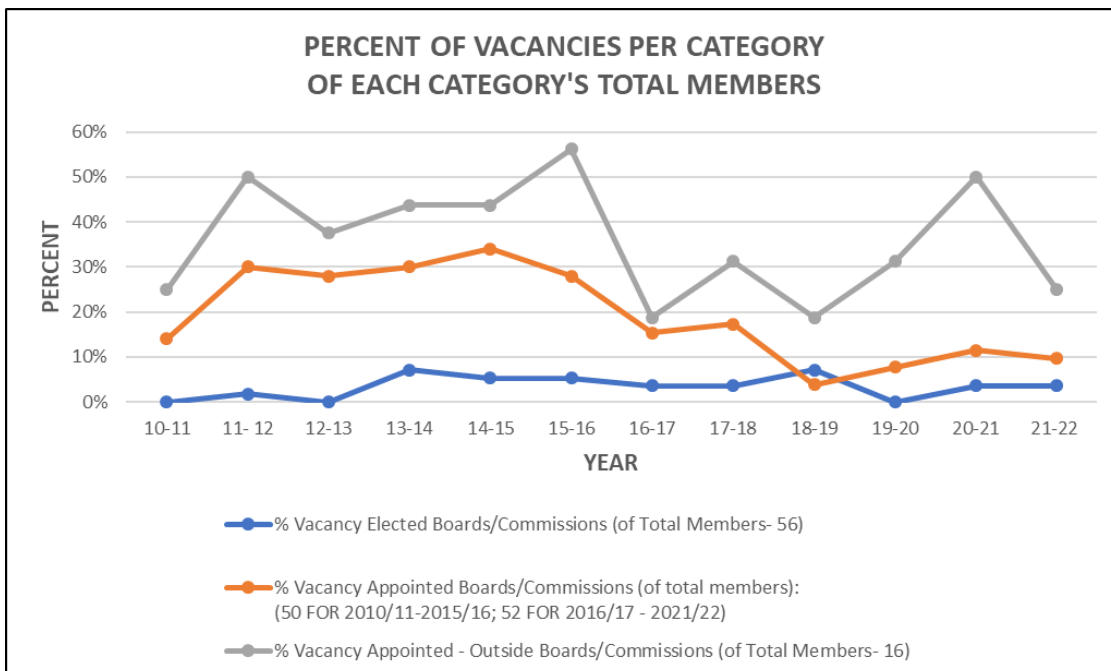
## Analysis of Vacancies on Boards and Commissions

The research results show differences in vacancy rates between elected as compared with appointed boards and commissions, including appointed outside (regional) positions. Vacancies were documented annually to determine general vacancy trends over the identified time period. (See Appendix A: Board and Commission Vacancy Analysis Table). A summary of the vacancy rate trends for the period of 2011 – 2022 is as follows:



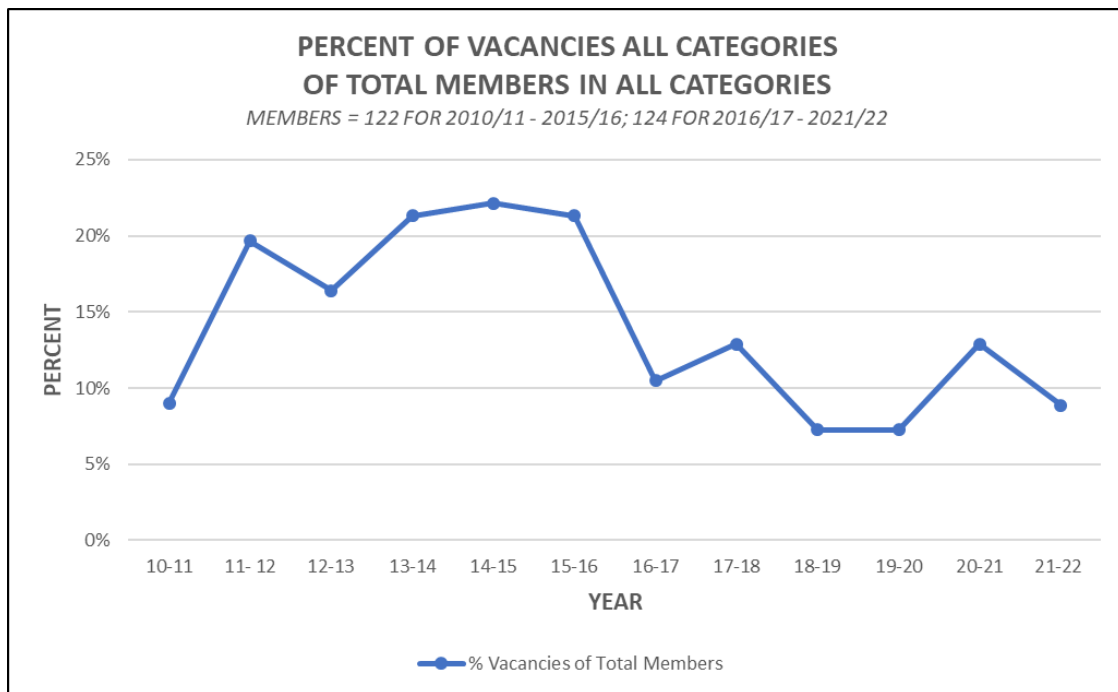
This table shows the percent of vacancies in a category of the total members in all categories:

- % of Elected Vacancies by All Category Total Members (BLUE) ranged from 0% - 3%.
- % of Appointed Vacancies by All Category Total Members (RED) ranged from 2% - 14%.
- % of Appointed Outside Vacancies by All Category Total Members (GREY) ranged from 2% - 7%.



This table shows the percent of vacancies in a category of the total members in the same category:

- % Vacancy Elected Boards/Commissions of the Total Members in this Category - 56 (BLUE) ranged from 0% - 7%.
- % Vacancy Appointed Boards/Commissions of the Total Members in this Category - (50 for 2010/11-2015/16; 52 for 2016/17 - 2021/22) (RED) ranged from 4% - 34%.
- % Vacancy Elected Boards/Commissions of the Total Members in this Category - 16 (GRAY) ranged from 19% - 56%.



This table shows the percent of the total number of vacancies in all categories of the total members in all categories:

- % Vacancies of the Total Members in all Categories (*Members = 122 for 2010/11 - 2015/16; 124 for 2016/17 - 2021/22*) (BLUE) ranged from 7% - 22%, and is currently (end of 2022) at 9%.

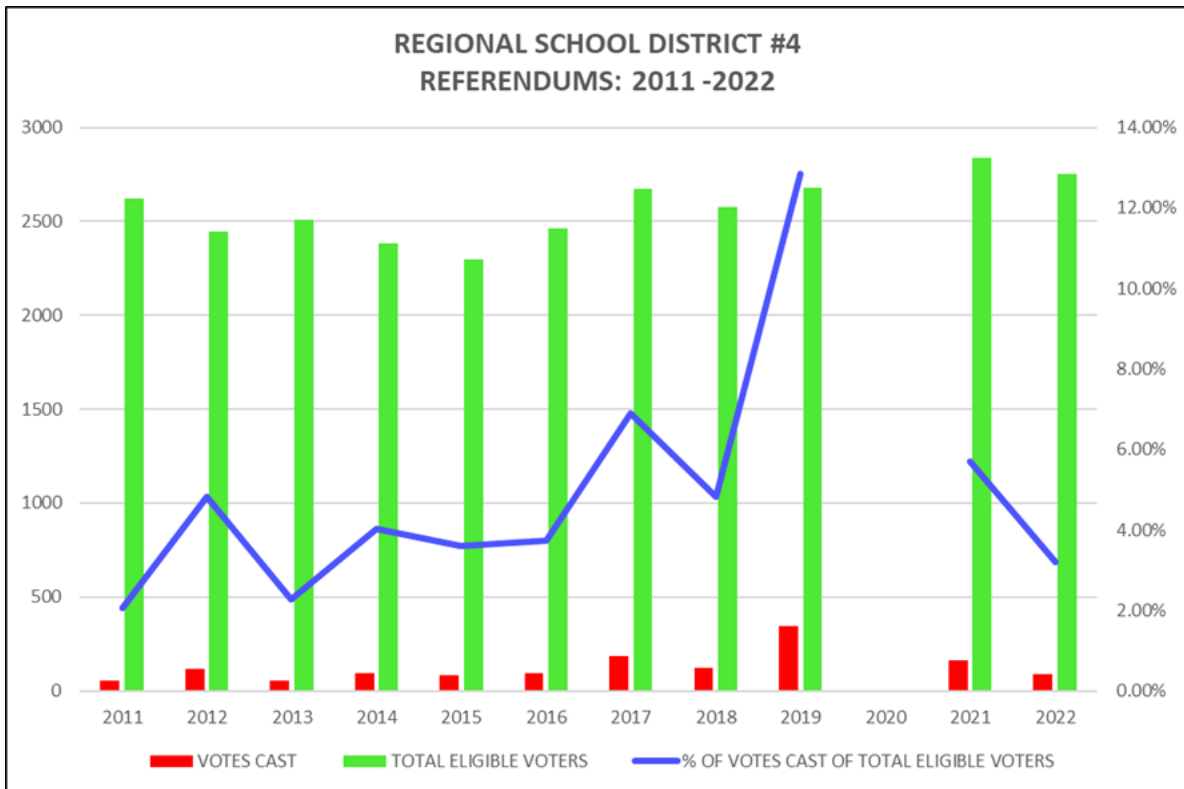
### **Town Meeting, Special Town Meeting, Referendum, and Board of Selectmen Meeting Participation**

In accordance with state statutes, towns without a charter are required to use the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government. These municipalities, including Chester, operate under the town’s adopted ordinances and the state statutes, with the Town Meeting serving as Chester’s town’s legislative body. Most major decisions including adoption of ordinances, approval of the annual town budget and major expenditures are made at town meetings by vote of the town’s eligible voters. Town meetings provide an opportunity for direct citizen involvement and broad participation in town governance and decision-making.

The following is an overview of the results of the research for the period of 2011 - 2022 regarding participation of Chester residents in Region 4 education referendums, special town meetings, and a sample of regular and special Board of Selectmen meetings. A summary of observed participation in these types of meetings is as follows. Additional tables are available on the study committee’s website:

<https://www.chesterct.org/home/governance-study-committee>.

- Region 4 Education Referendums:** A referendum meeting is officially called with a published agenda for a general vote by the electorate (eligible voters) on a single question that has been referred to them for a direct decision. Annually in Chester, Deep River and Essex a referendum is called to approve the Region 4 education budget.



During the referenced 12-year period, 11 referendums were held (*no referendum was held in 2020 due to Covid 19*). A summary of voter participation is as follows:

- During this period an average of 127 votes were cast with an average of 2,567 eligible voters resulting in an average participation rate of 5%.
- Votes cast ranged from 57 - 344; eligible voters ranged from 2297 – 2840, and the % of votes cast of total eligible voters ranged from 2% - 13%.
- Special Town Meetings:** A special town meeting is officially called with a published agenda, and held whenever necessary, usually to act on financial or other pertinent issues that develop between annual meetings. All registered voters of the town and all persons owning \$1,000 of taxable property are eligible to participate in and vote at town meetings. Voter attendance and the number of votes cast at special town meetings were generally not officially counted and documented, and continue to generally not be counted and documented. However, anecdotally, over the years town meeting participation has been low except when an issue is of high interest, controversial, or for a costly expenditure.
- Regular and Special Board of Selectmen Meetings:** A sample of regular and special Board of Selectmen meetings (2012-2022) held were selected to observe meeting participation. The number of the audience of citizens attending these meetings was often counted or estimated. The results of the research conducted from the data reviewed showed that the overall participation in these types of meetings was low.

## CONSIDERATIONS AND POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

Given the observations and issues identified, several considerations and potential next steps were developed. These may be implemented administratively at any time, and may be useful for the effective functioning of all boards and commissions:

- o Consider conducting joint meetings with the boards and commissions Chairs to promote communication and collaboration.
- o To assist the Town Clerk in tracking appointed and elected position terms and vacancies, consider evaluating and obtaining a software program to proactively alert leadership for follow-through regarding expiring terms and vacancies.
- o Consider filling appointments to outside (regional) organizations with members of town-related boards, commissions and organizations that have similar responsibilities, interests, and expertise. For example, the Planning and Zoning Commission assigns a member to the River COG Regional Planning Committee (RPC).
- o Update Published Information for Boards and Commissions
  - Update names and descriptions of boards and commissions, as needed. Consider including respective meeting schedules and contact information.
  - Update the “Handbook for Elected and Appointed Officials and Volunteers, Town of Chester, Connecticut, December 19, 2019.” Once updated, this document could be added to the town’s website.
  - Update the “Chester “Join a Town Committee” Chester Needs You!” brochure (circa 2019).
  - On the town’s website, change the link title to “Boards and Commissions” (from only “Boards”).
- o Consider recognizing individuals appointed and elected to boards and commissions in town communications to create awareness that positions are being filled in an effort to create public interest and engagement.
- o Consider examining why residents do and do not participate in town government and investigate ways to engage them for volunteer service. This would be a valuable initiative for the town to undertake to promote opportunity awareness, promote inclusiveness of the town’s population, ensure equity of understanding, all potentially generating more interest in serving on boards and commissions.

# Alternative Forms of Municipal Government Subcommittee Report

## INTRODUCTION

From time-to-time town government leaders and/or town residents ask the question: Is there a more effective way to govern and provide services to and for the community, making it a better place to live, work and recreate?

Whatever the impetus for undertaking an examination of how a town's government operates, it is important that the reasons and concerns for considering changes be clearly articulated, understood, and communicated with residents, employees, and other town officials. The starting point in considering changes to a town's current form of government or to a different form of government is to: have knowledge about and an understanding of the implications of use of the various allowable forms of local government; and to engage in a deliberative process to determine and implement changes, if any, best suited to achieve the desired results for identified issues and concerns.

This section of the report includes an overview of the options, characteristics, and considerations of alternative forms of government available for use in Connecticut. It serves as a framework for analysis to determine opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of local government operations, responsibilities, and the delivery of services to residents and businesses. The information presented is based on a review of the Connecticut General Statutes and relevant literature.

Municipalities in Connecticut are required to operate in accordance with provisions as specified in the state's general statutes using the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government (the form of government used by Chester), unless they adopt a charter. A charter adopted by a municipality becomes its governing law. A charter specifies how the municipality will operate, providing the opportunity to customize its structure and operations to meet its needs.

The report identifies and describes Connecticut's most common forms of local government including Selectmen-Town Meeting that is used by municipalities with and without a charter, and municipalities with charters - Mayor-Council and Council-Town Manager. Additionally, variations of the Selectmen form of government are described. Appendix C provides a comparison of the characteristics of the common forms of local government in use in Connecticut.

Also provided is a sampling of common issues explored by municipalities to determine the need for change and the form of government that will best meet their needs; and considerations for analyzing the benefits and challenges of Connecticut's common forms of local government. Appendix D provides a summary of considerations for analyzing the Selectmen-Town Meeting and Council-Town Manager forms of government categorized by charter status, professional management, legislative body, executive authority, fiscal authority, and an overall summary.

## OVERVIEW

The Connecticut constitution ("Article Tenth. Of Home Rule") sets forth the delegation of municipal authorities and powers, and the forms of government available to municipalities:

*SEC. 1. The general assembly shall by general law delegate such legislative authority as from time to time it deems appropriate to towns, cities, and boroughs relative to the powers, organization, and form of government of such political subdivisions. The general assembly shall from time to time by general law determine the maximum terms of office of the various town, city, and borough elective offices. After July 1, 1969, the general assembly shall enact no special legislation relative to the powers, organization, terms of elective offices or form of government of any single town, city or borough, except as to (a) borrowing power, (b) validating acts, and (c) formation, consolidation*

*or dissolution of any town, city or borough, unless in the delegation of legislative authority by general law the general assembly shall have failed to prescribe the powers necessary to effect the purpose of such special legislation.*

*SEC. 2. The general assembly may prescribe the methods by which towns, cities and boroughs may establish regional governments and the methods by which towns, cities, boroughs, and regional governments may enter into compacts. The general assembly shall prescribe the powers, organization, form, and method of dissolution of any government so established.*

In general, the purpose of local governments is to deliver services; provide responsible fiscal management; be responsive to citizen's problems and issues; work with federal and state government; and provide education, police, fire, building-safety inspections, record keeping, recreation, public works, and public health services.

Municipalities (also referred to as "towns") can determine their form of government in accordance with provisions of the state's general statutes.

- There are 169 cities and towns ("municipalities") in Connecticut.
- **Non-Charter Municipalities:** (56 [33%] of the state's municipalities): A municipality that does not adopt its own charter is required to operate under the state's home-rule statutes (applicable sections of the state's general statutes). Municipalities that do not have a charter are required to use the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government. Title 7 – Municipalities: Chapter 91: Selectmen specifies the duties of selectmen; and town meeting requirements are shown in Title 7 – Municipalities: Chapter 90: Town and Other Community Meetings.
- **Charter Municipalities:** (113 [67%] of the state's municipalities): The state allows a municipality to adopt a charter. The charter is the municipality's constitution and becomes its governing law. Charter adoption is by a simple majority vote by eligible residents at a regular municipal election; or by referendum with a majority of a minimum of at least 15% of eligible residents voting. Title 7 – Municipalities: Chapter 99: Municipal Charters and Special Acts provides the process and requirements for adopting, amending, or repealing a charter. The charter specifies how the municipality will operate, providing the opportunity to customize its structure and operations to meet its needs (Sec. 7-193).
- Municipal powers are provided in Title 7 – Municipalities: Chapter 98: Municipal Powers.

The form of government selected by a municipality must include:

- **Legislative Body**
  - For non-charter municipalities, the legislative body is the town meeting.
  - For charter municipalities some or all the legislative functions may be performed by a smaller legislative body, such as a town council, representative town meeting, board of alderman, or a town meeting.
- **Executive Authority**
  - For non-charter municipalities - the executive branch is the board of selectmen comprising three members. The first selectman serves as the chief executive officer, who has the authority to make day-to-day operating decisions. Non-charter municipalities may appoint a town manager serve as the chief executive officer instead of the first selectman in accordance with provisions provided under the general statutes.
  - For charter municipalities - the charter identifies who is the chief executive officer (*mayor, first selectman, town manager*). Municipalities with a town manager may also have a ceremonial mayor who serves as the presiding officer of the legislative body – but not in the capacity of chief executive officer.

- Some municipalities employ an administrative officer (*not the same position as a town manager*) with limited authority to assist the mayor or first selectman.

Additionally, fiscal authority options for financial management and control for non-charter and charter municipalities are provided by state statute.

- **Fiscal Authority**

- For non-charter municipalities, the fiscal authority is the board of finance; if the municipality does not have a board of finance nor any other such bodies or committees, then the board of selectmen serves in this capacity.
- For charter municipalities, the fiscal authority is established by charter provisions enabling the municipality the opportunity to design a financial policy and administration structure to meet its needs.

## **PROFESSIONAL MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT**

Professional local government management is intended to enable the municipality's elected governing bodies to better fulfill their legislative and policy-making roles while maintaining overall oversight and control of service delivery by delegating day-to-day management to an appointed professional administrator. The appointed professional administrator may serve as the municipality's chief executive officer as provided for by state statute or charter (such as town or city manager) or as an administrator working on behalf of the chief executive officer and/or board with delegated responsibilities (chief administrative officer, administrative officer).

In general, the professional administrator serves as the governing body's chief advisor by providing objective information and performance metrics regarding municipal operations, offers assessments of long-term consequences of decisions, makes policy recommendations, and seeks to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness in government operations.

## **THE TOWN MEETING**

Since colonial times, town meetings have been a key component of local town governance, principally found in the New England states. The history of the Town Meeting dates to New England settlements in the 1600s. The town meeting is characterized as direct and deliberative democracy that features public participation in local governance by providing a forum to debate, discuss, and make decisions on matters impacting the town and its residents. The frequency of town meetings has evolved over time. Attendance in the early days in many towns was mandatory, with fines issued to those that did not attend. Today, the town meeting continues to be used, and is almost exclusively unique to the New England states. Towns with a Board of Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government utilize a town meeting as their legislative body for approving annual budgets, ordinances, certain types of expenditures and other matters as required by statute or charter. In Connecticut, towns with other local forms of government designate other bodies, such as a town council or board of aldermen as their legislative body as specified by charter. Many of these cities and towns have preserved the town meeting for certain actions as specified by charter. However, these legislative bodies such as councils or alder boards typically meet regularly and assume legislative responsibilities for all matters not requiring town meeting approval.

The value in the town meeting serving as a town's legislative body is having a reasonably high and direct level of public participation in the decision-making process on matters that require legislative approval so that decisions that are made are relatively representative of the community at large. However, today, it is not uncommon to have low participation at town meetings unless the issue being addressed is controversial and/or requires a large expenditure of funds. Without a reasonably high level of public engagement and participation, the value and effectiveness of the town meeting serving as a town's legislative body is questionable. The challenge now



and for the future is that for the town meeting to remain relevant as an effective local governance legislative tool it is necessary to identify ways to increase the public’s awareness and knowledge of local issues with a goal of achieving a reasonably high level of attendance in the decision-making process at town meetings.

## MUNICIPAL OFFICERS

The positions of tax collector, town clerk, and treasurer are established functions by statute. The statutes provide municipalities (by ordinance or charter) with options for carrying out the responsibilities and functions for each of these positions. A summary of an analysis of how these positions are filled by Connecticut municipalities follows. (See Appendix B – Analysis of Municipal Officer Election/Appointment & Terms)

- Town Clerk: 68% are elected; 24% are appointed with no term (as staff); and a total of 49% have 4-year terms (elected or appointed)
- Tax Collector: 44% are elected; 42% are appointed with no term (as staff); and a total of 29% have 2-year terms and 27% have 4-year terms (elected or appointed)
- Treasurer: 53% are elected; 36% are appointed with no term as staff) – 47% of which have finance officers designated as the town’s treasurer; and a total of 51% have 2-year terms (elected or appointed)

## DATA SUMMARY

The following provides an overview of the forms of government used by Connecticut municipalities by population range and a perspective and relationship regarding the population of a municipality and its form of government. The population ranges shown are

- **Rows:** Municipal forms of government used in Connecticut
- **Columns:**
  - Population Range (PR): shows the population range for each form of government
  - PR: 781 – 27,522 (population range for municipalities using the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government) and PR: 27,523 – 148,333 (population range for municipalities using all other forms of Government): shows the number of municipalities and the % of the form of government for each of the two population ranges shown
- **Totals:** shows the total number of municipalities using each form of government; and the % of the number of municipalities using each form of government compared to the total number of municipalities (169)

CONNECTICUT FORMS OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT	POPULATION RANGE (PR)	PR: 781 - 27,522		PR: 27,523 - 148,333		TOTALS	
		#	% OF FORM BY PR	#	% OF FORM BY PR	#	% OF # OF MUNICIPALITIES BY FORM TO TOTAL # OF MUNICIPALITIES
SELECTMEN/TOWN MEETING	781 - 27,522	98	100%	0	0%	98	58%
MAYOR/COUNCIL	9,334 - 148,333	6	20%	24	80%	30	18%
COUNCIL/TOWN MANAGER	12,205 - 67,973	18	62%	11	38%	29	17%
SELECTMEN/ REP TOWN MEETING	19,553 - 63,514	3	50%	3	50%	6	4%
SELECTMEN/TOWN MANAGER/TOWN MEETING	9,066 - 10,953	3	100%	0	0%	3	2%
SELECTMEN/COUNCIL	20,732 - 36,950	1	50%	1	50%	2	1%
SELECTMEN/TOWN MANAGER	24,807	1	100%	0	0%	1	1%
DATA: 11/2022; US CENSUS BUREAU (2020)	TOTALS	130	77%	39	23%	169	100%

## U.S. MUNICIPALITY FORM OF GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) conducted a survey (2018-2019) of the forms of government in use by U.S. municipalities with populations 2,500 or greater provides a perspective with the forms of government used by Connecticut municipalities. The survey shows that of those surveyed 78% use either the Council-Manager (40%) or the Mayor-Council (38%) forms of municipal government. Also, the Town Meeting (like the Connecticut Selectmen-Town Meeting) form of government is used by 9.6% of the municipalities; this compares with 58% of Connecticut municipalities that use the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government.

INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION U.S. MUNICIPALITY FORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SURVEY (2018-2019)	NUMBER	%
COUNCIL/MANAGER	4,386	40.0%
MAYOR/COUNCIL	4,166	38.0%
COMMISSION	1,302	11.9%
TOWN MEETING	1,056	9.6%
REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING	59	0.5%
TOTAL	10,969	100%
<i>Data: ICMA - Survey Research: Municipal Form of Government (2018-2019); includes municipalities with at least 2,500 residents (2018 U.S. Census estimate); Form of government classified by ICMA as of 9/2019</i>		
<i>Note: The "Commission" form of government is defined as a board of elected commissioners that serve as heads of specific departments, while also collectively serving as the legislative body - this form is the only one shown that is not in use in Connecticut</i>		

## FORMS OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

### Most Common

The most common forms of municipal government in use in Connecticut are Selectmen-Town Meeting (non-charter and charter municipalities), and Mayor-Council and Council-Manager (charter municipalities).

- **Selectmen -Town Meeting**
  - Oldest form of local government in the US; found exclusively in the New England states.
  - Towns without a charter: required to use the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government in accordance with the state's general statutes. These municipalities operate under the state statutes and town ordinances.
  - Charter Towns: Some municipalities with charters have a Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government.
  - Executive Authority: Board of Selectmen; elected by the voters, typically for 2-year terms, or for a 4-year term (Sec. 9-187(a)); 3-member board for municipalities with a population less than 10,000 (Sec. 9-188).
  - Chief Executive Officer: First Selectman serves as the town's chief executive officer; responsible for the day-to-day operations typically for all municipal government functions including authority to appoint and remove department managers. Additionally, for non-charter municipalities using the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government, the state statutes allow for the appointment of a professional town manager to serve as the chief executive officer using a statutory specified hiring process. However, currently no towns have done this.

- Town Officers (Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector): typically elected, but appointment is possible by ordinance for municipalities without a charter, or by municipalities with charters (Sec. 9-185, Sec. 9-189 & Sec. 189(a)).
- Legislative Body: consists of all eligible voters in the municipality; most major decisions made via town meeting.
- Features diffused authority shared between multiple elected and appointed boards, and commissions. Boards function relatively independently from one another.
- State statutes (Sec. 7-98 and Sec. 7-100) provide that municipalities with a board of finance may establish a town manager as their chief executive through a process that requires town meeting approval. If approved, the board of selectmen selects a candidate from a list submitted to them by the board of finance. The town manager’s term of office is three years per state statute (Sec. 7-98).
- Some municipalities hire an administrative officer, responsible to the board of selectmen, to assist the first selectman in managing the day-to-day operations of the government. However, the first selectman continues to serve as the chief executive officer.
- 98 (58%) of the state’s municipalities have a Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government; 56 (57%) of these are non-charter municipalities and 42 (43%) are charter municipalities. The following Table describes the non-charter and charter municipalities using the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government by population. The population range for these municipalities is 781 – 27,522.

SELECTMEN/TOWN MEETING					
POPULATION RANGE (781 - 27,522)	TOTAL	STATE STATUTE		CHARTER	
781 - 5,000	39	35	90%	4	10%
5,001 - 10,000	31	18	58%	13	42%
10,001 - 20,000	23	3	13%	20	87%
20,001 - 27,522	5	0	0%	5	100%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>43%</b>

- **Mayor – Council**

- Executive Authority: Mayor; elected by the voters; term typically two or four years per charter.
- Chief Executive Officer: The mayor serves as the municipality’s chief executive officer; a mayor’s responsibilities are per charter.
- Powers of a mayor vary from providing policy leadership and executive management and day-to-day administrative responsibilities to those that limit a mayor’s authority by giving more power to the council for approval of actions and sharing other executive functions.
- Legislative Body: consists of an elected council or board of aldermen; term per charter.
- Town Officers (Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector): elected or appointed per charter
- Some municipalities hire a chief administrative officer to assist the mayor in managing the day-to-day tasks of the government.
- Mayor-Board of Representatives: The City of Stamford’s form of government, Mayor- Board of Representatives is similar to the Mayor-Council form of government. The mayor is the executive authority serving as the chief executive officer and the legislative body is an elected 40-member board of representatives. Stamford is the only municipality in Connecticut with a legislative body called a

board of representatives instead of a council – but both provide legislative functions in accordance with provisions of the municipal charter.

- 30 (18%) of the state’s municipalities have a Mayor-Council (*includes Stamford with a Board of Representatives*) form of government; 24 (80%) of these municipalities have a population greater than 27,522 (*population of the largest municipality with a Selectmen – Town Meeting form of government*). The population range for Mayor - Council municipalities is 9,344 – 148,333.

<b>MAYOR - COUNCIL</b>		
<b>POPULATION RANGE</b> <i>(27,523 - 148,333)</i>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
9,334 - 27,522	7	23%
27,523 - 50,000	9	30%
50,001 - 100,000	9	30%
100,001 - 148,333	5	17%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

- **Council – Town Manager**

- Executive Authority: Town Manager; appointed by and reports to the council; employment terms and conditions determined by the council in accordance with charter provisions. Preliminary review of the general statutes (Sec. 7-193) appears to allow a charter to establish the length of a term for a town manager unless the statutes prescribe such. This compares with a 3-year term for a town manager appointed, under the general statutes, by a municipality with a board of finance by a board of selectmen (Sec. 7-98).
- Chief Executive Officer: Town manager; serves as the municipality’s chief executive officer; Duties are all statutorily defined powers and duties including those specified in the charter; responsible for the day-to-day administration of the government and implements policies of the council.
- Town Manager: typically has prior experience in local government positions; may have an advanced degree in public administration, business administration, public policy, or related fields; selected based on education, experience, skills, and abilities and not on political allegiances; does not have to be a resident of the municipality, but charter would specify any residency requirement; provides stability and continuity for administration of the government as council members change.
- Legislative Body: consists of an elected council. Council members appoint or voters elect a presiding officer (chair, ceremonial mayor, president).
- Residents: elect council members, the legislative body; serve on boards and commissions; participate in visioning and strategic planning forums (*plan of development*) and local community-based local government services.
- Town Officers (Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector): elected or appointed per charter
- 29 (17%) of the state’s municipalities have a Town Manager-Council form of government; 11 (38%) of these municipalities have a population greater than 27,522 (*population of the largest municipality with a Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government*). The population range for Mayor-Council municipalities is 12,205 – 63,973.

<b>COUNCIL - TOWN MANAGER</b>		
<b>POPULATION RANGE</b> <i>(12,205 - 148,333)</i>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
12,205 - 27,522	18	62%
27,523 - 50,000	8	28%
50,001 - 100,000	3	10%
100,001 - 148,333	0	0%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>

Appendix C provides a comparison of the characteristics of the common forms of local government in use in Connecticut.

### **Other Charter Forms of Selectmen Government**

Twelve (8%) of the 169 municipalities in the state use variations of the Selectmen form of government.

- **Selectmen-Representative Town Meeting**

- Six municipalities (Branford, Darien, Fairfield, Greenwich, Waterford, and Westport) use the selectmen – representative town meeting form of government; population range is 19,553 – 63,514.
- Executive Authority: Board of Selectmen; elected by the voters; term and number of members are specified by the municipality’s charter. Currently in use are terms of two or four years, with a board of three or five members.
- Chief Executive Officer: First Selectman; responsible for the day-to-day operations typically for all municipal government functions including authority to appoint and remove department managers.
- Some municipalities currently using this form of government employ an administrative officer to assist in the management of day-to-day operations.
- Town Officers (Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector): elected or appointed per charter
- Legislative Body: Representative Town Meeting (RTM). Members are elected for terms as specified by charter; RTM’s in use by municipalities currently vary in size from 25 – 230 members. The Chair of an RTM is typically appointed by the members. The RTM may be organized in committees to focus on various functions of the government. Only members (“representatives” of the RTM vote at town meetings as compared with all eligible voters at open town meetings conducted in a “Town Meeting” form of government.
- The following provides an overview of the municipalities that use this form of government.

<b>SELECTMEN - REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING</b>					
<b>MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>POPULATION RANGE</b> <i>(19,553 - 63,514)</i>	<b>BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEMBERS</b>	<b>LEGISLATIVE BODY: REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING</b>		
			<b>REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING MEMBERS</b>	<b>REPRESENTATIVES AS % OF POPULATION</b>	<b>POPULATION PER REPRESENTATIVE</b>
Waterford	19,553	3	25	0.1%	782
Darien	21,500	5	100	0.5%	215
Westport	27,279	5	36	0.1%	758
Branford	28,176	3	30	0.1%	939
Fairfield	61,949	3	40	0.1%	1549
Greenwich	63,514	3	230	0.4%	276

- **Selectmen-Town Manager-Town Meeting**

- Three municipalities (Granby, Hebron, and Winchester) use the Selectmen-Town Manager-Town Meeting form of government; Populations range from 9,066 – 10,953.
- Executive Authority: Town Manager; appointed by and reports to the board of selectmen; employment terms and conditions determined by the board in accordance with charter provisions. Term is as provided by charter.
- Board of Selectmen; elected by the voters; term and number of members are specified by the municipality's charter. Currently for those using this form of government terms are two or four years comprising five or seven members. The board of selectmen serves as the legislative body along with the town meeting. Additionally, the board of selectmen may share executive responsibility with the town manager as specified by charter.
- First Selectman: elected by voters, or a board member appointed by the board; may hold a ceremonial title of mayor.
- Chief Executive Officer: Town manager; serves as the municipality's chief executive officer; Duties are all statutorily defined powers and duties including those specified in the charter; responsible for the day-to-day administration of the government and implements policies of the board of selectmen.
- Town Manager: typically has prior experience in local government positions; may have an advanced degree in public administration, business administration, public policy, or related fields; selected based on education, experience, skills, and abilities and not on political allegiances; does not have to be a resident of the municipality, but the charter would specify any residency requirement; provides stability and continuity for administration of the government as board of selectmen members change.
- Town Officers (Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector): elected or appointed per charter.
- Legislative Body: consists of all eligible voters in the municipality; most major decisions made via town meeting; the board of selectmen may also hold some legislative authority as specified by charter.

- **Selectmen-Council**

- Two municipalities (New Canaan and Trumbull) use the selectmen-council form of government with populations of 20,732 and 36,950.
- Executive Authority: For the two municipalities currently using this form of government, the executive authority as specified by charter is the board of selectmen with three members for New Canaan, and the first selectman for Trumbull (Trumbull does not have a board of selectmen); elected by the voters; term is two years.
- Chief Executive Officer: First Selectman; responsible for the day-to-day operations typically for all municipal government functions including authority to appoint and remove department managers.
- Both municipalities currently using this form of government employ an administrative officer to assist in the management of day-to-day operations.
- Town Officers (Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector): elected or appointed per charter
- Legislative Body: Council. New Canaan has a 12-member council with 4-year terms and Trumbull has a 21-member council with 2-year terms elected by voters; council members elected a chair and other officers; the council may use committees to focus on various functions of the government. The council replaces the town meeting by serving as the municipality's legislative body. However, the charter may require town meetings for approval on certain matters.

- **Selectmen-Town Manager**

- One municipality, Simsbury, with a population of 24,807 uses the Selectmen-Town Manager form of government.
- Executive Authority: Town Manager; appointed by and reports to the board of selectmen; employment terms and conditions determined by the board in accordance with charter provisions. Term is as provided by charter.
- Board of Selectmen; elected by the voters; term and number of members are specified by the municipality's charter. Simsbury has a six-member board with 2-year terms; uses sub-committees to facilitate its responsibilities as the legislative body.
- Chief Executive Officer: Town manager; serves as the municipality's chief executive officer; Duties are all statutorily defined powers and duties including those specified in the charter; responsible for the day-to-day administration of the government and implements policies of the board of selectmen.
- Town Manager: typically has prior experience in local government positions; may have an advanced degree in public administration, business administration, public policy, or related fields; selected based on education, experience, skills, and abilities and not on political allegiances; does not have to be a resident of the municipality, but the charter would specify any residency requirement; provides stability and continuity.
- Town Officers (Treasurer, Town Clerk, Tax Collector): elected or appointed per charter.
- Legislative Body: Board of Selectmen serves as the legislative body. However, the charter may require town meetings for approval on certain matters.
- 

## **COMMON ISSUES**

The following is a sampling of common issues that can be used to compare a municipality's current form of government with others to determine the form of government that will best meet its needs.

- The Municipal Research and Service Center of Washington (MRSC) serves as a resource for Washington State cities and towns. Their research provides information that is relative to Connecticut municipalities. Their "City and Town Forms of Government" webpage states "In general, choosing the form of government is not a matter of *how much* legislative and/or administrative authority the city or town will have, but rather the distribution of authority between the legislative and executive officials".

MRSC identified the most common issues that municipalities explore when considering changing their form of government involve:

- assessing the form of government that will be most responsive and accountable;
- determining the form of government to achieve the most efficient and effective management/administration;
- considering incorporating professional management in selecting the form of government to achieve the best quality management/administration;
- examining the appropriate role of politics in administration functions, including determining if politics should be removed from administration; and
- seeking to achieve greater political harmony and less divisiveness in the selection of the form of government.

(Resource: Municipal Research and Service Center of Washington; <https://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Forms-of-Government-and-Organization/City-and-Town-Forms-of-Government.aspx>)

- The town of Wilton operates under a town charter with a Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government. Recently, in September 2022, Wilton hired a town administrator with responsibilities for day-to-day oversight of many of the town’s administrative functions. The first selectman remains as the town’s chief executive officer and continues to be involved in management and decision making. However, hiring a town administrator enabled her focus to shift to areas cited by the board of selectmen in making this change in their executive branch structure. The reasons cited are similar to those municipalities that are considering changes in their form of government:
  - ensure continuity of government, even when there is a change in the elected first selectman;
  - ensure ongoing professional management of government;
  - address the increased complexity of municipal government and the associated increased responsibilities of the first selectman;
  - expand the first selectman’s ability to focus on long-term strategic planning, improvements, and investments and advocacy on both a regional and state basis; and
  - expand the pool of residents able/interested to serve as first selectman in the future.

*(Resource: The Town of Wilton, Connecticut “September 2022 – First Selectwoman’s Update” 9/28/22; <https://www.wiltonct.org/home/news/september-2022-first-selectwoman%E2%80%99s-update>)*

- An article published in the Municipal Advocate, a publication of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, cited that while there may be many reasons why a municipality decide to examine its local government structure, some of the catalysts include
  - retirement of key personnel;
  - an inability to attract candidates to serve in either elected or appointive office;
  - a perception that municipal departments are not communicating or coordinating functions as they should;
  - an increase in population and the resultant increase in service demands;
  - poor town meeting attendance; and
  - a need for greater oversight of financial matters and service delivery.

*(Resource: Several Options Exist for Changing Local Government Structure, Municipal Advocate, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2005), Marilyn Contreas, Senior Program and Policy Analyst, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development; [https://northamptonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1132/change\\_localgov\\_structure?bidId=](https://northamptonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1132/change_localgov_structure?bidId=))*

## **CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

- **Selectmen-Town Meeting**
  - Municipalities that do not have charters have very limited opportunities to change the way in which they govern to better meet their needs, as compared with those who have charters that use this form of government.
  - Charter revision/amendment requires establishing a charter commission and process per state statute. Time and effort need to be planned for to complete this process when needed.
  - For municipalities without a charter, the process for hiring a town manager to serve as chief executive officer including the term of appointment of three years is mandated by statute; for charter municipalities – the council establishes the process for hiring and employment conditions.



- For municipalities with a board of selectmen and an appointed administrative officer with delegated responsibilities, such as a town administrator, having shared executive authority between the elected board of selectmen and the appointed administrator can obscure responsibilities.
  - Not being able to fill vacancies on boards and commissions may make it difficult to meet quorum requirements for meetings and provide service and make decisions on a responsive and timely basis.
  - The town meeting provides an opportunity for and a goal of direct citizen involvement and broad participation in its capacity as the municipality's decision-making legislative body. If, however, attendance at such meetings is low, its purpose and goals would not necessarily be achieved.
  - 2-year terms for the board of selectmen can result in a loss of continuity and experience needed to effectively administer town affairs; however, municipalities by ordinance or charter have flexibility to establish selectmen terms of either two or four years. Of the 98 towns with a Selectmen – Town Meeting form of government, 90% have 2-year terms and 10% have 4-year terms for the first selectman. Additionally, of those with 4-year terms, 70% are towns with a charter.
- **Council-Town Manager**
    - A charter is required to use the Council-Town Manager form of government in Connecticut; involves a state-mandated adoption process that can take up to 16-months. Once adopted, a state-mandated charter revision process is required for any changes. Charter revision enables a municipality to continually adapt its charter provisions to meet changing needs and goals.
    - A qualified professional manager serves as the chief executive officer for the administrative functions of the government.
    - The town manager's management of day-to-day administration enables the council to focus on policy-making functions, strategic planning and establishing priorities and goals.
    - The town council, serving as the municipality's elected legislative body, provides for informed consideration and decisions on town issues. Charter provisions can provide flexibility for having some town matters referred to a town meeting or referendum.
    - Political leadership is vested in the council as compared to the chief executive officer.
    - The town manager is appointed by the town's council based on skills and experience. Residency is typically not required, thus increasing the pool of candidates.
    - The town manager is an employee serving at the pleasure of the council, as compared with an elected chief executive officer serving by term. Performance accountability of a town manager is overseen by the council, as compared with a first selectman who is directly accountable to voters by election.
    - A town manager, as an employee of the town, can provide continuity for government operations as compared with elected officials serving on a term basis.
    - Town managers of smaller municipalities may view the position as a steppingstone for future opportunities.
    - Cost for employing a town manager will likely be higher compared to funding a first selectman and board of selectmen. It may be possible that a professional manager will be able to operate the municipality more efficiently and effectively, thus reducing the expenditure of having a town manager.
    - To assure a smooth transition, if changing to a council-town manager form of government, the responsibilities of the council and town manager will need to be defined and clearly communicated to residents so that they understand who to contact for dealing with day-to-day issues and problems.

- **Mayor-Council**

- A charter is required in Connecticut to use the mayor-council form of government in Connecticut.
- In Connecticut the mayor-council form of government is used by the larger municipalities in the state. For municipalities with populations of 40,000 or greater, 55% of the 31 municipalities use the mayor-council form of government, and 21% of the 28 municipalities use the council-town manager form of government.
- Typically, a mayor, elected separately from the council, provides political leadership, and has significant administrative authority. A professional manager (chief administrative officer, or staff with similar titles) may be employed to assist in managing government functions and provide for continuity in operations when mayors change. Larger cities typically use this variation of the mayor-council form of government.
- A charter establishes the relationship between the mayor and the council - for example some mayors have authority to veto council actions, whereas some councils have the authority to reject mayoral appointments.

Appendix D provides a summary of considerations for analyzing the Selectmen-Town Meeting and Council-Town Manager forms of government categorized by charter status, professional management, legislative body, executive authority, fiscal authority, and an overall summary.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Special Act 22-4: An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Title 7 of the General Statutes:** Title 7 – Municipalities includes statutes that provide for a municipality’s: obligations and duties; powers; roles and duties of municipal boards and commissions; forms of local government; process for adopting ordinances and charters; and others (see References for links to Title 7). This Act establishes a task force to: review Title 7 and make legislative recommendations to revise the title for clarity and streamline municipal processes; and report its findings and recommendations to the Planning and Development Committee of the General Assembly by January 1, 2024. Actions taken based on the findings and recommendations of the task force may result in opportunities and changes in the way in which local governments operate and function in the performance of their duties and responsibilities. (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2022/ACT/SA/PDF/2022SA-00004-R00SB-00324-SA.PDF>)
- **Regional Performance Incentive Program:** This program was established “to encourage municipalities to participate in voluntary inter-municipal or regional shared services projects that have the potential to produce measurable ‘economies of scale’, provide desired or required public services, and lower the costs and tax burdens associated with the provision of such services”. The program is managed by the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM). Grants are awarded through a competitive process to regional councils of governments for towns to collaborate to develop and implement shared service projects. In December 2022, OPM announced a \$1.3 million grant to fund effort to regionalize services across municipalities in the greater Hartford area. (<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/IGPP/Grants/Regional-Performance-Incentive-Program/Regional-Performance-Incentive-Program>)

## **SUMMARY**

In summary, any of the statutory allowable forms of local government can achieve a high level of government effectiveness and efficiency. The goal is to match an executive authority with a legislative body that meets the needs of a community and its culture. The operating relationship between the executive authority and the legislative body forms the foundation for effective government service and performance - to a degree, it is about how the individuals in their respective positions interact, communicate, and collaborate.

The effectiveness of a town's legislative body is dependent on participation and informed decision-making. Towns without a charter rely solely on the Town Meeting for adopting ordinances and the annual town budget. Towns with charters, such as those with the Council-Town Manager form of government typically have their Council and a Town Meeting with shared legislative authority.

The entity designated as the fiscal authority of a municipality plays a major role in determining the initiatives, projects, and overall delivery of services provided. Ultimately, regardless of the authority vested in the specific boards, leaders, and staff, the ability for a community to operate efficiently and effectively in the delivery of services to its residents is reliant on collaboration, communication, and agreement of those involved in the financial policy, administration, and budgeting process.

# The Municipal Interview Subcommittee Report

## SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The scope of the Interview Subcommittee was to assess and gather information on how other relevant Connecticut municipalities have adapted to meet the current challenges of municipal governance and management. The goal was to speak with 12-15 municipalities to “ground truth” the assumptions and common issues identified by the Committee through discussions with Chester leadership and a literature review of experiences of other municipalities.

The Subcommittee developed a set of criteria to determine the towns to interview. Given the 60-day limited timeframe and holiday period, it was agreed that a total of 12-15 interviews was reasonable and achievable.

The selection criteria included:

- At least one town for each form of government for towns similar in demographics
- Only small and medium-sized towns (most towns are less than 10,000 and no greater than 30,000 in population)
- Exclude towns with Mayor-Council forms of government since these are usually large cities, more complex municipalities
- Include towns in the Lower Connecticut River Valley region

A comprehensive list of possible towns to interview was developed after informal conversations with other Committee members, municipal leaders, and regional Councils of Government. The original list included 24 municipalities. The Subcommittee was able to reduce the list to the targeted amount (12-15 total) using a simple ranking method (1=highest priority, 3=lowest priority). The Subcommittee members were nearly unanimous in their rankings.

The initial interviews were with representatives from three of the state’s nine regional Councils of Government (COG) to obtain their feedback on the process and resources available. The COGs had excellent suggestions on towns to consider for interviews. The following COGs were represented:

- Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) – Chester is one of the 17 municipal members
- Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) – Represents 38 Metro Hartford area municipalities
- South Central Region Council of Governments – Represents 15 municipalities in the Meriden/Wallingford area

The second round of interviews included municipalities in the Lower Connecticut River Valley/shoreline region. While these towns are not currently considering a change in their form of government, it was helpful to hear similar concerns and a variety of perspectives from neighboring communities. These towns include Deep River, Essex, Old Lyme, and Old Saybrook. Old Saybrook is the only town in this group that operates under a town charter.

The remaining interviews included municipalities who have a form of government different from Chester. These towns include Clinton, Columbia, Hebron, Marlborough, Portland, South Windsor, East Hampton, and Wilton. These towns operate with a town charter.

## FINAL LIST OF MUNICIPALITIES INTERVIEWED

The final list of towns and individuals interviewed can be found below. A total of 14 individuals were interviewed, representing their experience in 17 Connecticut municipalities and three regional Councils of Government.\*

Town	Interview Date	Population <i>(Source: CT DPH, estimates as of 7/21)</i>	Current Form of Government	Charter or Statute	Key Contact
Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)	11/18/22 , Conference Call	Represents 38 municipalities	N/A	N/A	Matt Hart, Executive Director <i>(former West Hartford and Mansfield Town Manager)</i>
Clinton	1/5/23, 1 pm, Chester Town Hall	13,400	Town Manager - Council	Charter	Christine Goupil, final First Selectman
Columbia	12/13/22, 2 pm, Columbia Town Hall	5,246	Selectmen - Town Meeting <i>(with Town Administrator)</i>	Charter	Mark Walter, Town Administrator <i>(former East Haddam First Selectman)</i>
Deep River	12/12/22, 10 am, Deep River Town Hall	4,462	Selectmen -Town Meeting	Statute	Angus McDonald, First Selectman
South Central Region Council of Governments (SCRCOG) &	12/8/22, 12:30 pm, Conference Call	Represents 15 municipalities	N/A	N/A	Laura Francis, Deputy Director SCRCOG <i>(former Durham First Selectman)</i>
Durham		7,231	Selectmen - Town Meeting	Charter	
Essex	12/19/22, 4:30 pm, Centerbrook	6,759	Selectmen - Town Meeting	Statute	Norm Needleman, First Selectman
Hebron	1/4/23, 1 pm, Hebron Town Hall	9,066	Town Manager - Selectmen - Town Meeting	Charter	Andy Tierney, Town Manager
Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG)	12/1/22, 2 pm, Essex	Represents 17 municipalities <i>(including Chester)</i>	N/A	N/A	Sam Gold, Executive Director
Marlborough	12/13/22, 3:30 pm, Marlborough Town Hall	6,093	Town Manager - Selectmen	Charter	Amy Traversa, Interim Town Manager <i>(former First Selectman)</i>
Old Lyme	1/3/23, 10 am, Old Lyme Town Hall	7,577	Selectmen - Town Meeting	Statute	Tim Griswold, First Selectman
Old Saybrook	12/16/22, 2 pm, Old Saybrook Town Hall	10,563	Selectmen - Town Meeting	Charter	Carl Fortuna, First Selectman
Portland	1/5/23, 3 pm, Portland Library	9,462	Selectmen - Town Meeting <i>(no Board of Finance)</i>	Charter	Susan Bransfield, former First Selectman
South Windsor &	1/3/23, 2 pm, Zoom	26,767	Town Manager - Council	Charter	Mike Maniscalco, Town Manager & former East Hampton Town Manager
East Hampton		12,874	Town Manager - Council	Charter	
Wilton &	1/19/23, 10 am, Zoom	18,460	Selectmen - Town Meeting <i>(with Town Administrator)</i>	Charter	Matt Knickerbocker, Wilton Town Administrator & former Bethel First Selectman
Bethel		20,537	Selectmen - Town Meeting	Charter	

\*Councils of Government in Connecticut are organizations that bring together the chief elected officials and/or professional managers from member municipalities. The bodies are meant to aid coordination and collaboration among neighboring cities and towns, and between the towns and the state government, on issues including land use, zoning, and transportation.

## **INTERVIEW CONTENT**

The Subcommittee used a common list of questions categorized around three topic areas: Structure, Complexity and Continuity. See below for examples of areas that were explored for each of these topic areas.

### **Structure**

- Charter vs state statute
- Professional appointed manager or elected CEO
- Professional appointed or elected town officers (town clerk, tax collector, treasurer)
- Direct or representative legislative body (town meeting or council)
- Fiscal authority (board of finance or board of selectmen/council)

### **Complexity**

- Role of municipal CEO over the years and how it has changed
- Current state of politics, changing cultural norms and how this affects running/serving for political office
- Constituency that demands more information, transparency in government
- Increased state regulatory and other demands that impact local government
- Use of technology to aid in governance

### **Continuity**

- Succession plans if key individuals leave due to retirement, death, relocation, etc.
- Staff positions to assist the CEO (e.g., town administrator, executive assistant, chief of staff) who can provide continuity across different administrations
- Length of terms, term limits, staggered terms
- Recruiting quality individuals to serve in elected or appointed positions
- Decreasing rates of volunteerism and attendance at public meetings
- Current state of public employee labor pool, especially in New England (e.g., finance directors, planners, building officials)

Each interview was unique and focused on different areas depending on the status of the town (e.g., whether they operate with a charter or by statute, whether or not they are considering a change in their form of government, etc.)

A summary of the key findings for each interview can be found in Appendix E: Interview Results Summary Table.

## **EXECUTION OF INTERVIEWS**

When possible, face-to-face meetings were preferred over phone or virtual meetings. Each meeting was approximately one hour long, and at least two Committee members were present to ask questions, ensure a consistent understanding, and to help document the response. Detailed notes were prepared for each interview. These notes are extensive including dates, attendees, and key findings, and are available online on the study committee's website at <https://www.chesterct.org/home/governance-study-committee>.

## KEY OBSERVATIONS OF THE INTERVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

Based upon the interviews conducted, some observations and viewpoints emerged that summarize the issues faced by municipalities today and paint a picture for where and how Chester could move in the future. Among the significant themes heard during the interview process:

- A challenge with the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government is that authority is diffused among the first selectman serving as CEO, the board of selectmen and multiple elected and appointed boards and commissions, and town officers that operate relatively independent from one another. This can make it more difficult to achieve town objectives thoroughly and in a timely fashion. There may be duplicate roles and responsibilities or conflicting objectives between boards and commissions.
- There is a consensus that the complexity of managing municipal government operations, programs, and services has increased over the past 20 years. Long-time first selectmen and professional managers interviewed noted that it is not the same job as when they started. They stated that the complexity is due to an increase in state mandates affecting local government; a more polarized political/cultural environment, often fueled by social media; and an increasingly litigious society (increased risk). Several stated that COVID was a “game changer,” requiring extensive professional management skills.
- The board of selectmen set policy and initiate programs. The First Selectman, serving as chief executive officer and chief administrative officer, is tasked to execute policy and manage programs, as well as to perform the duties of the office and oversee the daily operations of the town. This can be challenging for one individual given the increased complexity and 24/7 nature of local government.
- Of the interviewed towns with experience in this area, most stated that a town benefits by having a professional manager trained in public sector management. It is generally accepted that a professional manager can help provide continuity and is less political. The downside is that there can be added cost, but this is usually offset by value added through improved public service, efficiencies, and by pursuing grant opportunities.
- The towns interviewed with larger boards of selectmen/councils (typically, 5-7 members) stated that a larger board is more effective than a smaller board (3 members). This is due to a greater diversity of skill sets, more robust dialogue, and less alignment by political party. Terms can be staggered with larger boards that aids continuity.
- Most interviewed stated that a 2-year term is not long enough for a first-time or one-term First Selectman. *“The first year is learning the job, then 6 months to accomplish objectives, then 6 months getting ready for another election.”* More time is needed for the First Selectman to accomplish long-term objectives or follow through on projects, and there is no certainty that they will be re-elected in two years.
- The specialization of certain jobs such as town clerks and tax Collectors require ongoing training and certification. Towns benefit from having an experienced, knowledgeable person in each of these roles. For those reasons of expertise in the complexities of the jobs and continuity regardless of election outcomes, some towns have opted for appointing these officers rather than electing them.
- Many towns remarked that an experienced, reputable finance director is one of the most essential positions in local government. With this position, there is increased credibility, confidence, and trust that a town’s financial affairs are being managed properly. Most municipal CEOs rely heavily on this individual for budget development, financial management, and continuity across town departments. In several towns, the finance director performs the treasurer’s duties eliminating the need for a separate treasurer position.
- Most interviewed noted that it can be difficult to attract and hire public sector professional managers and staff, especially in New England. Some of the most challenging positions to fill are building officials, zoning officers, assessors, and town planners.

- Most stated that town meeting participation in their towns is typically low, except when a proposed expenditure is of great interest and costly as a whole or is controversial.
- Most towns interviewed confirmed that finding volunteers to run for office or serve on a board or commission can be challenging. They stated it's difficult to find individuals who are willing to give up their time or who have the capacity to serve on a public board or commission. Leaders' opinions varied as to whether the vacancies negatively affect government effectiveness.
- Most of those interviewed that stated opinions on different forms of government agreed that the primary advantage of a charter is that it provides more flexibility for citizens to determine the form and administrative organization of their local government. It describes roles and responsibilities and specifies the rules of how local government operates.



## Conclusions and Potential Next Steps

The Committee has taken the charge from the Board of Selectmen and conducted the research, considered significant identified common governance issues experienced by municipalities statewide, and developed next steps and opportunities for the Town to consider.

The next steps were derived from the research and represent a consensus of the Committee. The Committee acknowledges that while the identification of and prioritization of the issues, challenges and opportunities are subjective, the suggested next steps address key issues facing Chester including: the complexity of municipal government; concern about continuity among elected, appointed and volunteer officials; and the challenges of retaining and attracting employees.

The Committee learned that there are actions Chester can take by administrative action, by ordinance in accordance with state statutes, and those that can be better or only addressed by adopting a town charter. The options and opportunities for the Town to consider are summarized below and detailed within this report and its appendices.

### POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

The following next steps are suggested within the context of options and opportunities to address complexity of government, leadership continuity and town-wide engagement.

#### Potential Next Steps to Address the Complexity of Government

Key factors regarding complexity issues include the need to simultaneously focus on policy and planning while managing the day-to-day functions of government and the budget needed to address current and new state mandates; the reality of shortages of qualified full-time and part-time officials; major emergencies (i.e., COVID, flooding, etc.), and in general the 24/7 nature of operating a municipality.

- **Actions to address complexity within the existing governance structure by ordinance and/or administrative action**

Consider hiring a professional administrator by administrative action, with responsibilities delegated by the Board of Selectmen, to manage the day-to-day operations of the town. Benefits and risks associated with shared executive authority vested in both the First Selectman as the chief executive officer and the professional manager include:

- Enables the First Selectman and Board of Selectmen to devote time to policy, planning, partnership building and overall goals versus managing the day-to-day affairs of the town, as well as overseeing and monitoring the performance of the professional manager on a regular basis. The professional manager position is a qualification and performance-based position with defined education, skills and experience needed for successfully administering quality service to the public effectively and efficiently.
- Since the professional manager is an appointed position by elected officials rather than elected by voters, this removes direct accountability to the voters, direct connection of the manager to residents and residents to the manager.
- The pool of qualified managers may be limited and service in a small municipality may be viewed as a career steppingstone rather than commitment and dedication to the community served.
- The Board of Selectmen must be actively involved and work collaboratively on an ongoing basis to fully benefit from the investment in having a professional manager.

- The cost of employing a professional manager will increase the budget, but at the same time, provides opportunities for reducing expenditures through efficiencies and by seeking funding opportunities. Savings may be realized by reducing compensation for the First Selectman for the portion of compensation that relates to the transferred duties to professional management position.
- A risk of this action is that conveying authority without responsibility can cause a perception of diffused management accountability. An improvement over this solution is available through a charter (see below) where a town manager serving as the town's chief executive officer would be accountable to a board of selectmen, an expanded board of selectmen or a town council.

- **Potential actions to address complexity with an alternative governance structure with a town charter**

Consider hiring a professional town manager as the town's chief executive officer, or similar to towns without a charter as an administrator with delegated responsibilities (as shown above) reporting to an expanded board of selectmen or town council.

- A benefit of a town manager serving as chief executive officer is that the executive authority is clearly established as compared with shared executive authority as discussed above.
- In this model of governance, the board of selectmen serves as the town's legislative body, along with the town meeting as defined by charter.
- The first selectman and board of selectmen focus on policy and planning and overseeing the performance of the town manager. As the legislative body, it would have the authority to assume some of the responsibilities delegated to a town meeting in towns without a charter, with other issues requiring adoption by a town meeting.
- The town manager or administrator would be hired by and report to the legislative body – a board of selectmen, expanded board of selectmen or town council.
- Another benefit is that a professional municipal manager would be focused on execution and being responsible and accountable for results, while also providing advice to the board of selectmen on policy and planning, enabling the town to benefit from the manager's professional expertise.
- A risk is that the position can be a career steppingstone to a town manager in a larger town.

### **Potential Next Steps to Address Leadership Continuity**

Leadership continuity issues include adequate planning for the likely retirement of the town's three current Selectmen, succession planning, appointing and/or electing municipal officers and evaluating terms of office, filling vacancies on boards and commissions and ensuring adequate town government staffing.

- **Actions to address leadership continuity within existing governance structure or by charter**

- Consider increasing elected term for Selectmen from 2 years to 4 years.
- Consider changing by ordinance the Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Treasurer from elected to appointed positions with term options per statute.
  - Additionally, if the Treasurer is no longer elected, consider assigning the Treasurer's duties to the Finance Manager.
  - Note: Towns with charters have more flexibility for appointments of the town clerk, tax collector and treasurer by enabling these positions to serve indefinitely without a specific term.
- Maximize use of available citizens to appointed boards and commissions by limiting elected boards and commissions to only those required by statute.

- Consider engaging a grant writer by contract or having existing or additional staff to be responsible for seeking state, federal, and other types of funding.
- Perform an assessment of town departments to ensure they are properly staffed and operating in the most effective, efficient manner. Identify any gaps, the steps necessary to remedy those gaps, and associated costs.
- Explore multiple job-sharing responsibilities and cross-training opportunities for employees as a way to retain and enrich town staff positions.
- Along with a salary survey, review town staff job descriptions to plan and budget employee costs and benefits, and to anticipate future operating budget expenses.
- In conjunction with RiverCOG and/or adjacent towns, explore creating regional pools of administrative professional employees (building inspectors, zoning officers, assessors, planners), that can be shared by multiple towns (similar to a health district) to improve service and possibly reduce costs. The expense and the quality of service provided would need to be compared to any existing individual town service or any inter-municipal agreement.

### **Potential Next Steps to Address Town-Wide Engagement**

Engagement issues relate to low attendance at non-controversial town meetings and a shortage of volunteers interested in serving as appointed or elected members on commissions and boards. The suggested actions provide an opportunity to improve the way in which the government operates.

- **Actions to address town-wide engagement within existing governance structure**

The next steps and considerations to address town-wide engagement are included in the Key Governance and Management Issues Subcommittee section of this report and summarized below:

- Consider conducting joint meetings with the board and commission chairs to promote communication and collaboration.
- Assign the Town Clerk to track the terms and vacancies of appointed and elected positions to alert leadership to address expiring terms and vacancies.
- Consider filling appointments to outside (regional) organizations with members of town related boards, commissions and organizations that have similar responsibilities, interests and expertise. For example, the Planning and Zoning Commission assigns a member to the River COG Regional Planning Committee.
- Update board and commission listings with descriptions that clearly define roles and responsibilities, openings and a contact for additional information in order to promote communication and access that might spark interest in volunteering.
- Consider recognizing individuals appointed and elected to boards and commissions to create awareness that positions are being filled and public interest and engagement.
- Consider examining why residents do and don't participate in town government and investigate ways to engage them for volunteer service. This would be a valuable initiative for the town to undertake to promote opportunity awareness, promote inclusiveness of the town's population, ensure equity of understanding, all potentially generating more interest in serving on boards and commissions.

## Summation

Depending on one's view of Chester's governance issues, their priority, and the amount of time necessary to address them, it is important to note that changes requiring an alternative form of government will also require an investment in dedicated time, effort and expense. State statutes specify the requirements for establishing a charter commission and the process for the commission to develop and propose a charter for adoption to the Board of Selectmen. If the Board of Selectmen decides to propose a charter for adoption, a town vote by referendum will be required. A Charter Commission is mandated by state statute to complete its work within 16 months.

Given that no current selectman has announced a decision to be re-elected; that party caucuses will be held in June 2023 for the November election; that the next fiscal year's budget is currently under development; and that July 1 will be the start of the new budget year, it is incumbent for Chester leadership and residents to understand the importance of initiating further action and to follow-up expeditiously.

Therefore, if any of the major initiatives are deemed important enough to require a charter, consideration should be given to simultaneously exploring changes that can be made immediately or near-term within the state statutory framework, while also appointing a charter commission to recommend the best course of action for meeting the needs of the town and its residents well into the future.

We recognize that change can be perceived as disruptive while providing a pathway for progress. Our hope is that this study's well-researched information will be meaningful and helpful to all in determining a course of action that will benefit and sustain Chester's residents now and into the future.

**APPENDIX A: BOARD AND COMMISSION VACANCY ANALYSIS**

SOURCES: Town Annual Report: (AR); Town Clerk (TC) & First Selectwoman's Admin. Assistant (AA): (TC/AA); (TC\*\* 21-22: as of 12/28/22)

DATED: 01/23/23	YEAR	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
	SOURCE	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	TC/AA	TC/AA	AR	AR	AR	TC **
<b>ELECTED</b>	<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>VACANCIES</b>											
Board of Assessment Appeals	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Board of Finance	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Board of Finance - Alternates	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Chester Board of Education	9	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency	7	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning & Zoning Commission	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning & Zoning Commission - Alternates	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Regional School District #4 Board of Education	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Pollution Control Authority	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Zoning Board of Appeals	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zoning Board of Appeals - Alternates	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	0	1	0
<b>ANNUAL TOTALS</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>% Vacancy Elected Boards/Commissions (of Total Members- 56)</b>		<b>0%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>% Elected Vacancies by all Category Vacancies</b>		<b>0%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>% Elected Vacancies by all Category Total Members</b>		<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>APPOINTED</b>	<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>VACANCIES</b>											
Cedar Lake Watershed Commission (See Note 1)	7	0	5	5	5	5	4	0	1	0	0	1	0
Cemetery Association	4	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Citation Hearing Officers	5	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	0	1	1	0
Conservation Commission	7	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Economic Development Commission	5	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
Emergency Management	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Fields &) Grounds & Buildings Maintenance & Oversight Committee Region #4	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Harbor Management Commission	5	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Harbor Management Commission - Alternates	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	1	1	0	0
Parks & Recreation Commission	7	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Retirement Board	5	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	1
<b>ANNUAL TOTALS</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>% Vacancy Appointed Boards/Commissions (of total members): 50 FOR 2010/11-2015/16; 52 FOR 2016/17 - 2021/22)</b>		<b>14%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>% Appointed Vacancies by all Category Vacancies</b>		<b>64%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>% Appointed Vacancies by all Category Total Members</b>		<b>6%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>

**APPENDIX A: BOARD AND COMMISSION VACANCY ANALYSIS**

SOURCES: Town Annual Report: (AR); Town Clerk (TC) & First Selectwoman's Admin. Assistant (AA): (TC/AA); (TC\*\* 21-22: as of 12/28/22)

DATED: 01/23/23	YEAR	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
SOURCE	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	TC/AA	TC/AA	AR	AR	AR	TC **
<b>APPOINTED - OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>VACANCIES</b>											
Cable TV Advisory Council - Town & School ( <i>Participation under review</i> )	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Central Regional Tourism District/ Tourism Liaison	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Connecticut Yankee Fuel Storage Advisory Committee (See Note 2)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency/ Transit District	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Connecticut River Gateway Commission	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments	2	0	0	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
Middlesex County Revitalization Commission	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Alliance for Prevention & Wellness -DMHAS Region #2 (APW) (beginning 2017-2018: See Note 3)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
South Central CT Emergency Medical Services Council, Inc.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Tri-town Youth Services Bureau (TTYSB) Board of Directors (minimum of 1 member per town - Source: TTYSB)	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Valley Shore Emergency Communications Board of Directors	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
<b>ANNUAL TOTALS</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>% Vacancy Appointed - Outside Boards/Commissions (of Total Members- 16)</b>		25%	50%	38%	44%	44%	56%	19%	31%	19%	31%	50%	25%
<b>% Appointed - Outside Vacancies by all Category Vacancies</b>		36%	33%	30%	27%	26%	35%	23%	31%	33%	56%	50%	36%
<b>% Appointed - Outside Vacancies by all Category Total Members</b>		3%	7%	5%	6%	6%	7%	2%	4%	2%	4%	6%	3%
<b>TOTALS</b>													
<b>Totals - Members all Categories</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>% Vacancies of Total Members</b>		9%	20%	16%	21%	22%	21%	10%	13%	7%	7%	13%	9%
<b>NOT INCLUDED IN THE ANALYSIS</b>													
Staff Positions: Assistant Assessor; Tree Warden													
Justices of the Peace													
Chester Housing Partnership ( <i>under review-committee activity not found</i> )	6	0	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<p>Note 1: Cedar Lake Watershed Commission: The Cedar Lake Advisory Committee (2010-2011 thru 2015-2016) was reconstituted as the Cedar Lake Watershed Commission in 2016-2017. In 2016-2017 the membership of the commission was increased from 5 to 7 members. The total of 52 appointed members shown is for the period of 2016-2017 through 2021-2022. An adjustment of -2 members is included in the percentage calculations show for the period of 2010 - 2011 thru 2015-2016.</p>													
<p>Note 2: In Jan. 2007, the Connecticut Yankee Fuel Storage Advisory Committee was established after the CT Yankee nuclear powerplant was decommissioned. This organization replaced the Community Decommissioning Advisory Committee that existed during the decommissioning period. Chester has had the same (1) representative serve on these bodies from 1998 to the present. Meetings are annual.</p>													
<p>Note 3: The APW is Region 2's Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization (formerly the Regional Mental Health Board). TTYSB serves as Chester's representative and provider of services since February 2018. (Source: TTYSB, Executive Director)</p>													

APPENDIX B						
ANALYSIS OF MUNICIPAL OFFICER ELECTION/APPOINTMENT & TERMS						
ELECTION/APPOINTMENT						
TOWN CLERK			TAX COLLECTOR		TREASURER	
Elected/Appointed	#	%	#	%	#	%
ELECTED						
Elected (2 Years)	42	25%	40	24%	71	42%
Elected (3 Years)	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Elected (4 Years)	72	43%	32	19%	17	10%
Elected (6 Years)	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%
<b>ELECTED TOTALS</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>53%</b>
APPOINTED						
Appointed (2 Years)	3	2%	9	5%	16	9%
Appointed (3 Years)	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Appointed (4 Years)	10	6%	13	8%	3	2%
Appointed (5 Years)	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%
Appointed (No Term)	41	24%	70	42%	32	19%
Appointed (No Term - Finance Officer)					28	17%
<b>APPOINTED TOTALS</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTALS</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>100%</b>
TERM LENGTH						
TERM YEARS	TOWN CLERK		TAX COLLECTOR		TREASURER	
2 Years	45	27%	49	29%	87	51%
3 Years	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%
4 Years	82	49%	45	27%	20	12%
5 Years	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%
6 Years	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%
Appointed (No Term)	41	24%	70	42%	32	19%
Appointed (No Term - Finance Officer)					28	17%
	169	100%	168	100%	169	100%
SOURCES: CT Secretary of State Election Data: <a href="https://electionhistory.ct.gov/eng/">https://electionhistory.ct.gov/eng/</a> ; and Town Charters and Ordinances; Date: 01/28/23						
NOTE: Tax Collector - Scotland does not have a Tax Collector. They contract with Windham for Tax Collector services. Therefore total towns is 168 for calculations						

**APPENDIX C**

**COMPARISON OF COMMON FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

<b>DATE: 01/24/23</b>	<b>NO CHARTER</b>		<b>CHARTER</b>	
<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting (No Charter)</b>	<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting (Charter)</b>	<b>Council - Town Manager</b>	<b>Mayor - Council (See Note 1)</b>
Municipal Population	Number of Towns: 58 Population Range: 781 - 13,545 Average Population: 4,423	Number of Towns: 42 Population Range: 3,133 - 27,522 Average Population: 12,827	Number of Towns: 28 Population Range: 12,205 - 63,973 Average Population: 28,482	Number of Towns: 31 (See Note 2) Population Range: 9,344 - 148,333 Average Population: 54,133
Legislative Authority	<b>Town Meeting</b>	<b>Town Meeting</b>	<b>Elected Council; chair serves in administrative and ceremonial capacity with various titles (Mayor, President, Presiding Officer, Chair)</b>	<b>Council (Elected)</b>
Tenure of Council (Term)	n/a	n/a	Set by Charter: 2 or 4 years	Set by Charter: 2 or 4 years
Council Responsibilities	n/a	n/a	Set by Charter: such as Meets regularly; Oversees Town Manager; develops town vision and policies; appoints members to boards and commissions; votes on town issues	If any, set by Charter: such as (1) Vote on annual budget; or (2) Option for Town Meeting or Referendum petitioned by the public on certain issues
Town Meeting Responsibilities	Votes on annual budget and major expenditures and ordinances	Votes on annual budget and major expenditures and ordinances	If any, set by Charter: such as (1) Vote on annual budget; or (2) Option for Town Meeting or Referendum petitioned by the public on certain issues	If any, set by Charter



**APPENDIX C**

**COMPARISON OF COMMON FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

DATE: 01/24/23	NO CHARTER	CHARTER		
Characteristics	Selectmen - Town Meeting (No Charter)	Selectmen - Town Meeting (Charter)	Council - Town Manager	Mayor - Council (See Note 1)
<b>Executive Authority</b>	<b>Board of Selectmen (Elected) &amp; First Selectman (Elected); or an appointed Town Manager (CEO) - Board of Selectmen &amp; Town Manager share Executive Authority</b>	<b>Determined by Charter; Board of Selectmen (Elected) &amp; First Selectman (Elected); or An appointed Town Manager (CEO) - Board of Selectmen &amp; Town Manager share Executive Authority</b>	<b>Town Manager (Appointed)</b>	<b>Mayor (Elected)</b>
Chief Executive Officer Selection (CEO)	First Selectman(Elected); or Town Manager (Appointed)	First Selectman(Elected); or Town Manager (Appointed)	Town Manager (Appointed)	Mayor (Elected)
CEO requirement to reside in town?	First Selectman: Yes; or Town Manager: No	First Selectman (Yes); or Town Manager (typically "No", unless required by Charter)	Typically "No", unless required by Charter	Typically "No", unless required by Charter
Removal of CEO	First Selectman: By election; or Town Manager: By Board of Selectmen	First Selectman: By election; or Town Manager: By Board of Selectmen	By Council	By Election
Tenure of Executive Authority (Term)	First Selectmen (CEO): 2 years by Statute or 4 years by Ordinance; or Town Manager (CEO): 3 years by Statute	Set by Charter First Selectmen (CEO): 2 or 4 years; or Town Manager (CEO): at-will or by term	Set by Charter At-will or by term	Set by Charter: Term: 2 or 4 years
Tenure of Board of Selectmen (Term)	2 or 4 years by Ordinance	Set by Charter; or 4 years	n/a	n/a

**APPENDIX C**

**COMPARISON OF COMMON FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

DATE: 01/24/23		COMPARISON OF COMMON FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT		
Characteristics	NO CHARTER	CHARTER		
	Selectmen - Town Meeting (No Charter)	Selectmen - Town Meeting (Charter)	Council - Town Manager	Mayor - Council (See Note 1)
Tenure - Municipal Officers: Tax Collector, Town Clerk, Treasurer (Term)	Elected: 2 years by Statute; or by Ordinance: (1) Elected: Tax Collector & Town Clerk : 2-6 years; Treasurer 2 or 4 years); or (2) Appointed: term to be specified by Ordinance	Set by Charter Elected or Appointed with terms established by Charter provisions	Set by Charter Elected or Appointed with terms established by Charter provisions	Set by Charter Elected or Appointed with terms established by Charter provisions
Appointment of Department Heads	First Selectman; or Town Manager	First Selectman; or Town Manager	Town Manager (per Charter may require council confirmation)	Mayor (per Charter may require council confirmation)
Removal of Department Heads	First Selectman; or Town Manager	First Selectman; or Town Manager	Town Manager	Mayor
Appointment of Board/Commission Members	Board of Selectmen	Board of Selectmen	Council	Set by Charter
Policy Development	Board of Selectmen	Board of Selectmen	Council; Town Manager advises	Mayor proposes
Policy Implementation	CEO: First Selectman or Town Manager	CEO: First Selectman or Town Manager	Town Manager	Mayor
Fiscal Authority	Typically, Board of Finance; Financial management and control responsibilities are specified by statute; Budget adoption by Town Meeting or Referendum	Set by Charter; Typically, Board of Finance; Financial management and control responsibilities are specified by Charter; Budget adoption by Town Meeting or Referendum	Set by Charter: Financial management and control responsibilities are specified by Charter; Budget adoption by Council, Town Meeting, or Referendum	Set by Charter: Office of the Mayor; budget adoption by Council, Board of Aldermen, Town Meeting, or Referendum; Financial management and control responsibilities are specified by Charter
Underlying Principles	Diffused authority shared between multiple elected and appointed boards, & commissions. Boards function relatively independently from one another.	Diffused authority shared between multiple elected and appointed boards, & commissions. Boards function relatively independently from one another.	Promotes effectiveness, efficiency, economy, service delivery through professional management; Strong central executive; Elected representative legislative body.	Separation of Powers; Strong central executive; Political Leadership; Elected representative legislative body.

Note 1: Mayor - Council form of government data indicates it is used by the larger cities and towns in Connecticut and least likely of the alternative forms of government for use in Chester; Therefore, further review of this form of government was scoped out of analysis to focus on the primary options.

Note 2: Mayor - Council Population information includes Stamford which has a Mayor - Board of Representatives form of government

**APPENDIX D**

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR ANALYZING COMMON FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**DATE: 1/24/23**

**PAGE 1**

**MUNICIPAL CHARTER**

<b>NO CHARTER</b>	<b>CHARTER</b>	
<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Council - Town Manager</b>
Flexibility to change term lengths for key positions such as selectmen, treasurer, town clerk, tax collector and change key positions from elected to appointed positions, such as treasurer, town clerk, tax collector.		
Limited opportunity to customize government structure to meet needs; can only use Selectmen - Town Meeting form of government; ordinances used for changes with town meeting approval; enables addressing specific issues without undertaking a complex revision/amendment process required for charters.	Able to customize government structure and operations to meet community needs; enables selection of alternative government executive authority and legislative body alternatives; charter revision process enables local control of changes; charter adoption and revision processes require resource commitment and time, and a charter revision process opens all charter provisions for review and debate.	

**PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT**

*(Town Manager, Chief Administrative Officer, Administrative Officer)*

<b>NO CHARTER</b>	<b>CHARTER</b>	
<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Council - Town Manager</b>
Qualification and performance-based position with education, skills and experience for successfully administering quality service to the public effectively and efficiently; enables town leaders serving on the municipality's board of selectmen or council to focus on policy development, strategic planning, and overseeing and monitoring the performance of the professional manager on a regular basis; an appointed position by elected officials rather than elected by voters removes direct accountability to the voters and direct connection of the manager to residents and residents to the manager; pool of qualified managers may be limited and service in a small municipality may be viewed as a career stepping stone rather than commitment and dedication to the community served; overseeing body (board of selectmen or council) needs to be actively involved and work collaboratively on an ongoing basis to fully benefit from the investment in having a professional manager; cost of employing a professional manager will increase the budget, but also provides opportunity for expenditure reductions by operating more efficiently.		
Process for hiring and terminating a town manager (CEO) mandated by state statute - with board of finance involved, but supervised by first selectman and board of selectmen, and 3-year term required; alternatively hiring an administrative officer (not CEO) for day-to-day operation support with responsibilities delegated by the board of selectmen is possible to achieve some benefits of professional management.	Charter provisions provide process for hiring, termination, and supervision of the town manager/chief administrative officer. Employment conditions determined by charter, not statute, such as term of service (if any), and town residency or not.	

**APPENDIX D**

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR ANALYZING COMMON FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

DATE: 1/24/23

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**LEGISLATIVE BODY  
(Town Meeting or Council)**

**NO CHARTER**

**CHARTER**

**Selectmen - Town Meeting**

**Selectmen - Town Meeting**

**Council - Town Manager**

The effectiveness of a town's legislative body is dependent on participation and informed decision-making. Towns without a charter rely solely on the Town Meeting for adopting ordinances and the annual town budget. Towns with charters, such as those with the Council-Town Manager form of government typically have their Council and a Town Meeting with shared legislative authority.

**TOWN MEETING**

Provides broad access for direct public participation in consideration of ordinance and major budget decisions. However, if there is minimum voter turnout then major decisions are made by a few people, but not necessarily representative of the constituents; Town Meeting is only in session as legislative body when a meeting is called for a public hearing or vote.

**TOWN MEETING**

Similar to Selectmen-Town Meeting (no charter); however, charter establishes the matters that require a town meeting, and that in all other matters the board of selectmen shall be deemed the legislative body of the town; Town meeting is only in session as legislative body when a meeting is called for a public hearing or vote.

**COUNCIL**

Actively involved on a continuous basis for informed decision making and provides for connectivity as elected officials with constituents; votes on matters as specified in charter; town meeting or referendum may be required on certain matters per charter; oversight and monitoring of the Town manager performance and decision making is an important check and balance responsibility.

**EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY**

**NO CHARTER**

**CHARTER**

**Selectmen - Town Meeting**

**Selectmen - Town Meeting**

**Council - Town Manager**

Any of the statutory allowable forms of local government can achieve a high level of government effectiveness and efficiency. The goal is to match an executive authority with a legislative body that meets the needs of a community and its culture. The operating relationship between the executive authority and the legislative body forms the foundation for effective government service and performance - to a degree, it is about how the individuals in their respective positions interact, communicate and collaborate.

First selectman and board of selectmen are directly accountable to voters, are town residents, and typically knowledgeable about the community's issues and culture; positions are open to any candidate who can legally hold office; executive authority vested in a Board - not an individual; typical 2-year term election cycle enables a voter check on performance; however, 2-year, may be too short to: attract candidates for election; provide continuity in leadership and time to implement and achieve results of initiatives; municipalities have the flexibility by ordinance to set selectmen terms at 4 years to address the shorter 2-year term issues, while considering the opportunities and risks associated with a longer term.

Same as Selectmen-Town Meeting (no charter); however, charter provisions can be used to customize organizational structure to operate more effectively and efficiently; provides opportunity to structure shared executive authority by delegating responsibilities between the first selectman and board of selectmen and an administrative officer through charter provisions.

Town managers typically have professional qualifications including degree(s) in a related field and experience and familiarity with best practices to achieve goals and results; appointed a political position expected to work with all regardless of political affiliation; can be valued advisor for the council for policy development and strategic planning; potentially removed from community and the community removed from the town manager since not elected and may not be resident at time of hiring nor required to be a resident during appointment; may not be familiar with culture and customs of the community; pool of qualified town manager candidates may be limited; serving as a town manager in a small municipality may be a stepping stone resulting in more frequent than desired turnover; charter should provide for transition strategy and plan for town manager search and replacement.

**APPENDIX D**

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR ANALYZING COMMON FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**DATE: 1/24/23**

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**FISCAL AUTHORITY**

The entity designated as the fiscal authority of a municipality plays a major role in determining the initiatives, projects, and overall delivery of services provided. Ultimately, regardless of the authority vested in the specific boards, leaders, and staff, the ability for a community to operate efficiently and effectively in the delivery of services to its residents is reliant on collaboration, communication, and agreement of those involved in the financial policy, administration, and budgeting process.

<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Council - Town Manager</b>
<p>Under the Selectmen-Town Meeting (no charter) form of government the state statutes provide for the Board of Finance to have a major role in the fiscal affairs of the municipality. A significant aspect of the work of a Board of Finance involves the annual budget process that also involves working with the first selectman and board of selectmen, financial office staff, and other boards and commissions. In many municipalities it is the first selectman and board of selectmen that develop the budget for consideration of the board of finance. Maintaining a balance between the authority of the board of finance and the executive authority of the first selectman and board of selectman is an ongoing process for meeting the needs and priorities of the municipality.</p>	<p>For the Selectman-Town Meeting form of government with a charter, the fiscal authority may be similar to those municipalities operating with this form government without a charter. However, charter provisions provide the municipality the flexibility to structure the fiscal authority and memorialize the budget process, and financial operations and control responsibilities.</p>	<p>For the Council-Town Manager form of government with a charter, the municipality has the flexibility to structure the fiscal authority by charter. The nature of the relationship between the town manager (executive authority) and the council (legislative authority) is more clearly defined than in the Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government between the independent board of finance and first selectman/board of selectmen. Having the council set fiscal policy and the town manager responsible for implementation establishes a fundamental framework for accountability and performance.</p>

**SUMMARY**

From time to time town government leaders and/or town residents ask the question: *Is there a more effective way to govern and provide services to and for the community – making it a better place to live, work and recreate?*

Whatever the impetus for undertaking an examination of how a town’s government operates, it is important that the reasons and concerns for considering changes be clearly articulated, understood and communicated with residents, employees, and other town officials. The starting point in considering changes to a town’s current form of government or to a different form of government is to: have knowledge about and an understanding of the implications of use of the various allowable forms of local government; and to engage in a deliberative process to determine and implement changes, if any, best suited to achieve the desired results for identified issues and concerns.

**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY TABLE**

<b>Town</b>	<b>Population</b> (Source: CT DPH, Estimated as of 7/1/21)	<b>Current Form of Government</b>	<b>Charter or Statute</b>	<b>Key Contact</b>
Chester	3,752	Selectmen - Town Meeting	Statute	
<b>Capitol Region Council of Governments (CROG)</b>	Represents 38 municipalities	Not Applicable		<b>Matt Hart, Executive Director</b> (former Town Manager in West Hartford & Mansfield)
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
				Noted that pipeline for TM is thin due to eliminating Asst TMs in many towns; not as many coming up the ranks. Recommended several resources -- Frank Connelly books, CT Town and City Management Association (CTCMA) and International City/County Management Association (ICCMA).
Clinton	13,400	Town Manager - Council	Charter	Christine Goupil, final First Selectman
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
	Be careful how you write your charter; include effective date. Do not have 2 charter questions on the ballot that ask the same thing different ways; confusing for voters. Plan to have a 2nd charter revision on the heels of any major change to use for "tweaking." Charter change effective Nov 2019 has a TM and 7-member Council, no BOF. Old structure was FS, 5-member BOS, BOF. Council Chair is ceremonial head of town; TM oversees day-to-day operations. Town Council assumed BOF responsibilities. Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Assessor are hired by TM following recommendation by a search committee appointed by Town Council.			The TM serves as a buffer between town staff and the public; less turnover; happier employees since TM. Have issue finding volunteers to run for office or serve on B&C. Changing to TM did not reduce the number of volunteers needed. Since getting a TM, all annual budgets have passed on first vote, something that hasn't happened in years. Less contention and more trust in budget process. Used a headhunter firm to hire TM; did not feel they got the value they were expecting. Do not include requirement for TM to have MPA/MBA; puts more restrictions on an already limited pool in our area. Need to have a short and nimble TM hiring process; they lost some good candidates because the hiring process and decision making took too long.  A lot of communication and support from the public for change to TM; people had lost trust in their government. Best communication methods were FB page and "Community Conversations" where they brought in TMs from other towns across the state to speak with their residents.

**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY TABLE**

Town	Population (Source: CT DPH, Estimated as of 7/1/21)	Current Form of Government	Charter or Statute	Key Contact
Columbia	5,246	Selectmen - Town Meeting (with Town Administrator)	Charter	Mark Walter, Town Administrator (former East Haddam First Selectman)
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>Believes a larger board/council (5-person BOS in Columbia) works better than smaller board (3-person). Larger board makes it less political and they can have more robust discussion and decision-making (less "group think"). TA's role is to recommend policy and execute it, not make policy. FS is political figurehead and legal CEO; paid a small salary. Salary for FS is reduced when you pay higher salary for TM or TA. Hiring a TA w/o a charter will be more difficult due to uncertainty/risk of not having charter. Town Clerk and Tax Collector are appointed; noted these are critical jobs that require years of training and certifications. Finance Director serves as Town Treasurer. BOF is called FIPAC.</p>		<p>Difficult to make a career in public administration if you are elected. Believes muni CEO job today is much more complex.</p>		<p>Finds it difficult to attract and hire qualified public employees. Cautions against hiring unproven and fresh from school manager or administrator; will not have human relations experience that is so critical. Finding less people volunteering to serve in local government (both in Columbia and East Haddam). Favors 4-year term for FS. Suggests networking first when trying to hire. Noted CT muni government is very different than other parts of the country, so there can be a big learning curve for out-of-state managers.</p>
Deep River	4,462	Selectman - Town Meeting	Statute	Angus McDonald, First Selectman
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>Believes town meetings are purest form of democracy and work well.</p>		<p>Noted FS job is very different from when he started and when Dick [Smith] ran the town. Today, more outside influences. COVID has been a game-changer.</p>		<p>Agrees 4-year term for FS would be a positive change. Has same issue as many towns in finding volunteers to run for office or serve on boards &amp; commissions. Doesn't have an issue with attendance at town meetings.</p>

**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY TABLE**

Town	Population (Source: CT DPH, Estimated as of 7/1/21)	Current Form of Government	Charter or Statute	Key Contact
South Central Region Council of Governments (SCRCOG) & Durham	SCRCOG: Represents 15 municipalities Durham: 7,231	SCRCOG: N/A Durham: Selectmen - Town Meeting	SCRCOG: N/A Durham: Charter	Laura Francis, Deputy Director of SCRCOG former Durham First Selectman
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>Charter revision can be a costly, time-consuming process; need to keep scope of revisions narrow; one bad/controversial issue can bring down whole charter revisions process. "It's time to professionalize town hall."</p> <p>Advice to Chester: 1.) Hire a professional administrator, 2.) Adopt 4-year terms for FS and other town officers, 3) Enact change in interim steps, not all at once.</p>		<p>In her many years in local government, it has gotten increasingly complex. "Being a FS today is very different than when I originally ran 16 years ago." Town Meetings have taken on a new level of complexity with virtual options; managing public comment and voting can be difficult.</p>		<p>Firm believer in 4-year terms. Would not have run for FS if not this. 4-year terms are needed to complete long-term, multi-year projects, e.g., Durham's Main Street Water Project. Easier to recruit staff, perform long-term projects, pursue grants when there is not a constant turnover in leadership. Finding Assessors, Building Inspectors, Planners, Tax Collectors, Finance Managers has become increasingly difficult. People do not want to come out in the evenings for Town Meetings, unless its an issue that affects them directly. She has heard many people say they do not want to run for public office because of the nastiness, criticism. "Today, you not only need to convince the candidate, but also their family." Recommended UCONN's intern program. Successfully used interns in Durham. Can hire paid intern for 25-30 hrs/week. CCM has a recruiting arm that can assist with hiring. Workforce Alliance (Bill Villano) is actively developing a pipeline for public administrators.</p>
Essex	6,759	Selectmen - Town Meeting	Statute	Norm Needleman, First Selectman
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>The statutory Selectmen-Town Meeting form of government features diffused (decentralized) authority shared between multiple elected and appointed boards, commissions and offices that function relatively independently from one another. Having a diffused government structure can be problematic in being able to govern effectively, achieve town objectives and to deliver town services (need a smaller group to accomplish anything). "Chester elects too many people." Limit elected positions to only those required by statute. Having a knowledgeable and effective finance director is very important. Builds confidence that the financial affairs of the town are in order. BOF should be more of a fiduciary, oversight board; most volunteers who serve on BOFs do not have experience or knowledge of local government operations.</p>				<p>Has issue filling vacancies on B&amp;Cs. Relies on department heads and their staff for day-to-day operations; FS is the visionary. Exec Asst executes many of the duties and responsibilities of the FS. Very few residents attend Town Meetings, but not an issue for FS. Adopt 4-year terms for Selectmen. Appointments by BOS for town offices, B&amp;Cs creates a stronger executive authority rather than having independent elected officials.</p> <p>Recommends gradual, incremental change to limit controversy and get more accomplished in the long run.</p>



**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY TABLE**

<b>Town</b>	<b>Population</b> (Source: CT DPH, Estimated as of 7/1/21)	<b>Current Form of Government</b>	<b>Charter or Statute</b>	<b>Key Contact</b>
<b>Hebron</b>	<b>9,066</b>	<b>Town Manager - Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Charter</b>	<b>Andy Tierney, Town Manager</b>
<i><b>STRUCTURE</b></i>		<i><b>COMPLEXITY/MISC</b></i>		<i><b>CONTINUITY</b></i>
<p>TM is statutory CEO and is responsible for day-to-day town operations. He signs contracts, initiates budget, seeks and submits grants. All town employees report to TM.</p> <p>Town has 5-member BOS that oversees policy and is the primary legislative body (some decisions reserved for Town Meeting/Referendum).</p> <p>Town Clerk is elected; Tax Collector and Assessor are appointed.</p> <p>Finance Director serves as Treasurer and assists the TM in the budget process.</p> <p>Higher salary for TM is offset by efficiencies, grants received.</p> <p>Advice to Chester is to start with an Administrator or some non-elected position that is directed by the Selectmen. Then we can decide whether or not we need a charter to change other aspects of our government beyond the state statutes.</p>		<p>"Keyboard Cowboys" on social media are ruthless and drive misinformation and complaints.</p>		<p>Believes 2 year term for Selectmen/Council members is not enough. It's been difficult to hire Building Officials, Zoning Officers.</p> <p>Finds it difficult to engage people to run for office, fill B&amp;Cs.</p> <p>"Cannot get angry at the uninformed public." Must communicate/educate public regularly and continually.</p> <p>TM provides continuity, is non-political, and does what's best for all residents.</p>
<b>Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG)</b>	<b>Represents 17 municipalities (including Chester)</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>		<b>Sam Gold, Executive Director</b>
<i><b>STRUCTURE</b></i>		<i><b>COMPLEXITY/MISC</b></i>		<i><b>CONTINUITY</b></i>
				<p>Favors 4-year terms. "Gives officials time to do something."</p> <p>Shared difficulties in finding qualified municipal staff. Advocates creating pool of municipal positions (e.g., Land Use, Assessors, etc) that can be shared among towns similar to a health district.</p> <p>Believes that town employees tend to stick around when there is a stable, professional town manager.</p> <p>Sees value in having staggered terms for all elected positions.</p> <p>Suggested contacting Steve Mednick, an attorney they use who specializes in municipal charters.</p>

**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY TABLE**

<b>Town</b>	<b>Population</b> (Source: CT DPH, Estimated as of 7/1/21)	<b>Current Form of Government</b>	<b>Charter or Statute</b>	<b>Key Contact</b>
<b>Marlborough</b>	<b>6,093</b>	<b>Town Manager - Selectmen</b>	<b>Charter</b>	<b>Amy Traversa, Interim Town Manager (former First Selectman)</b>
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>Town recently changed from Selectmen - Town Meeting to Town Manager - Selectmen form of government. Change was initiated by former FS (an attorney) and his supporters but it backfired when the Town didn't use an outside legal counsel to draft the charter. The opposing party now has the majority on the BOS and controls the hiring of the TM. Went from a 3-person to 5-person BOS. Believes TA is fine for most small towns rather than a TM.</p>				<p>Favors 4-year terms for most elected positions and term limits. In the process of hiring a full-time TM. Process has been difficult and expensive using a search firm. Most small towns do not need a full-blown executive search. Some firms offer "assistance packages" (more limited) for these situations.</p>
<b>Old Lyme</b>	<b>7,577</b>	<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Statute</b>	<b>Tim Griswold, First Selectman</b>
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>First Selectman has served a one time (total of 16 years); this is his 2nd time serving as First Selectman. Structure is typical statute organization; well staffed. Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Treasurer are elected for 4-year terms. Most important position is a good Finance Director and a BOF who works closely with and in alignment with the BOS.</p>		<p>FS job has dramatically changed over the decades that he's been doing the job.</p>		<p>Just hired a new Exec Asst dedicated to FS office; performs higher-level administrative tasks. Town has discussed 4-year terms for Selectmen, but no action taken. Most town meetings are not well attended but FS has no issue with this.  Uses the "On Board" program to manage terms and vacancies on B&amp;Cs.</p>
<b>Old Saybrook</b>	<b>10,563</b>	<b>Selectmen - Town Meeting</b>	<b>Charter</b>	<b>Carl Fortuna, First Selectman</b>
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>Even though town has a charter, it has retained most of the statutory structure, e.g., 2-year terms, elected positions, 3-member BOS. Does think Town Clerk, Tax Collector should be appointed, but has not taken any steps to change this. Town is well-staffed and relies on department heads to carry out day-to-day operations. A 7-member, elected BOF is more of an oversight board; responsible for appropriations and setting the mil rate. Annual budget is prepared by Finance Director and reviewed by BOS before going to BOF. The FD also presents the budget at the annual budget meeting which gives it credibility.</p>				<p>It's easier for CEO to manage a 3-person BOS rather than a larger board. BOS should be a 2-year rather than 4-year term. A lot of staff turnover in recent years, but has success hiring. Attributes this to Old Saybrook being a desirable community to work and live. Stressed the importance of a strong Finance Director who can perform many of the FS tasks, prepares and manages the budget. Town meetings are generally not well attended; FS may have to call out to get attendees. There are vacancies on B&amp;Cs, but FS doesn't think it's as bad as other towns. Town committees have become more active and Old Saybrook has a larger population to draw from.</p>

**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY TABLE**

Town	Population (Source: CT DPH, Estimated as of 7/1/21)	Current Form of Government	Charter or Statute	Key Contact
Portland	9,462	Selectmen - Town Meeting (no Board of Finance)	Charter	Susan Bransfield, former First Selectman
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>Portland has a unique form of government established in the early 1980's by someone with a comprehensive understanding of local government. It works for them, but only because they've had good First Selectmen. Have a FS and 6 Selectmen (7-member BOS) elected for 2-year terms; no BOF. The FS is the statutory CEO, the BOS is the legislative board with a lot of responsibilities.</p> <p>Town has a very strong and involved Finance Director. He is the primary fiscal authority and also serves as Treasurer. Besides the annual budget, the FD is responsible for employee salaries and benefits, program expenses, municipal infrastructure and equipment replacement, employee pensions, investment management and grant applications.</p> <p>While BOS is legislative authority, some decisions require Town Meeting - bonding/debt, leases, real estate purchases.</p> <p>Town Clerk is elected to 4-year term; Tax Collector and Assessor are appointed.</p>		<p>Believes a municipal CEO is a full-time + and you can't work another job at the same time.</p> <p>First Selectman is more of an organizer/facilitator than a ruler.</p> <p>State government requirements have significantly impacted local government.</p> <p>Current federal/state politics have changed the landscape and there is a decrease in civility in local politics.</p>		<p>Because there is no BOF, it's easier to find people to run for BOS since there are less elected positions overall.</p> <p>Mixed on 2-year vs 4-year terms for FS. 4-year would assist with continuity, but could create issue if FS isn't performing to standard.</p> <p>Town Meeting attendance depends on the issue.</p> <p>Occasional vacancies on B&amp;Cs; hardest vacancies to fill are those that don't frequently meet.</p> <p>Believes key positions that keep the town running are: Finance Director, Town Planner, and Public Works Director.</p> <p>You do not want a "revolving door government." Continuity helps attract good staff, to obtain grants, establish long-term working relationships with state officials.</p>
South Windsor & East Hampton	26,767 12,874	Town Manager - Council	Charter	Mike Maniscalco, Town Manager (former East Hampton Town Manager)
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY/MISC</i>		<i>CONTINUITY</i>
<p>Working in a municipality with centralized authority is much more efficient than working with multiple boards.</p> <p>Believes budget process is better without a town meeting/referendum since the government-knowledgable Council members better understand the process and the need for funding.</p> <p><u>East Hampton:</u> As TM, he was the statutory CEO. Council Chair is the political figurehead and sets agenda/runs Council meetings.</p> <p>7-member Town Council and BOF; has a budget Referendum.</p> <p>Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Assessor are appointed by TM.</p> <p>Even though they had a charter, never revised it; instead used BOS resolutions to make changes.</p> <p><u>South Windsor:</u> As TM, he is the CEO and Chief Administrative Officer. Mayor is the political figurehead.</p> <p>9-member Town Council; Council is fiscal authority, no BOF.</p> <p>Elected Treasurer is not involved in fiscal planning, only in bonding/debt process. No Referendum requirement, except when bonding.</p> <p>Town Clerk is elected; Tax Collector and Assessor are appointed by TM.</p>		<p>Mike noted the increased complexity of managing municipal government over the years. "Trifecta" issues that increase complexity – 1) polarized politics, including common incidences of aggressive behavior at meetings, etc.; 2) increased mandates handed down from state government to municipalities; and 3) increased legal system/ risk management, e.g. lawsuits, liability. "Can be overpowering for someone not trained to work in this arena."</p> <p>The position has dramatically changed in the over 10 years he's been doing the job. Social media is a game changer -- "It's become a blood sport."</p> <p>CT is viewed as an anomaly – no counties, small divisions, town meetings – there is a big learning curve for managers moving to CT since it's so different from the rest of the country.</p> <p>Recommends ICMA website as an excellent resource for public sector managers, different forms of government.</p>		<p>2-year terms are difficult for Selectmen. Need 6 months to learn the job, have one year to achieve goals, then running for re-election.</p> <p>If Council members run every 2 years, recommends staggering terms since political elections can change priorities. This is only possible if you have a larger board (5 or more members); also requires annual elections.</p> <p>Generally, does not recommend hiring a private sector manager. "It's not about making widgets. It's about helping people and providing services." Towns can attract better caliber of staff if they have a professional manager.</p> <p>Public administration labor pool is challenging. Most likely, will need to do a national search for a TM or TA.</p> <p>TA is perceived as a step down from a TM. Would most likely attract Asst TMs, department heads looking to move up. State of MA uses a lot of TAs. Both towns have issues with vacancies on B&amp;Cs. "Pool is very shallow."</p> <p>"If a manager is political, they won't be there very long. They need to work across all parties because they will outlast the elected officials."</p>

**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW RESULTS SUMMARY TABLE**

Town	Population (Source: CT DPH, Estimated as of 7/1/21)	Current Form of Government	Charter or Statute	Key Contact
Wilton & Bethel	18,460 20,537	Selectmen - Town Meeting (Wilton has a Town Administrator)	Charter	Matt Knickerboker, Town Administrator (former Bethel First Selectman)
<i>STRUCTURE</i>		<i>COMPLEXITY</i>		<i>CONTINUITY/MISC</i>
<p>Wilton added a new TA position in Sept 2022. Did not need to change their charter; position was created by the BOS and budget approved by BOF. \$10-15k reduction in FS salary to adjust for reduction in FS operational duties. The new position allows the FS to be out in the community more and to focus on strategy/policy.</p> <p>Equates FS as CEO of a company, focused on policy. TM or TA is COO, focused on day-to-day operations.</p> <p>Town Administrators are still rare but are becoming more popular. Operating under statutes is ok but charter allows a town to design government the way they want it.</p> <p>FS is expected to handle both day-to-day operations and policy; this is too much for one role.</p> <p><u>Bethel</u>: 3-member BOS with 2-year terms; 7-member elected BOF with 4-year terms. Elected Treasurer who is figurehead only; signs off on bonding, annual report. Also, an appointed controller (has CPA). Town Clerk is elected; Tax Collector is appointed, both for 4-year terms.</p> <p><u>Wilton</u>: 5-member BOS with 4-year staggered terms. CFO who also serves as Treasurer. Does not see a conflict with financial manager serving as Treasurer. 6-member BOF elected for 4-year term. Town Clerk and Tax Collector are appointed for 4-year terms.</p> <p>Prefers larger board with longer terms. Provides more diversity of opinions. Automatic super-majority with 3-members. Can also use subcommittee structure with a larger board.</p>		<p>Since COVID, towns are finding that they have an increased need for professional management skills.</p> <p>Public sector job is very different from private section. Management skills are not easily transferable. Need to have training and education specifically for public sector management.</p> <p>Most public managers are trying to maximize the limited resources they are given; usually are resource constrained.</p>		<p>"Title matters" -- Prefers to be called "Town Administrator." Executive Assistant, Chief of Staff are viewed as lesser positions and political jobs. TA is viewed as non-partisan. (In West Hartford, TM is actually a TA and not the statutory CEO.) Also, cannot join ICMA if you are an elected position. It's important to maintain political neutrality.</p> <p>It's difficult to find public sector managers and employees. More universities are offering Public Administration programs, but pipeline is still thin. Careers in public service are not popular or sexy; don't promote these in schools.</p> <p>In both towns, finds it increasingly difficult to find volunteers to run for office or serve on a board or commission. It's difficult to find people who are willing to give the time or who have the skills to run meetings (Roberts Rules of Order) or to conduct them properly (with civility, decorum).</p> <p>Town Meetings: Bethel has a lot of town meetings since their spending thresholds are so low. Usually, 20 people or less attend, depending on issue. In Wilton, very few town meetings. Annual town budget meeting is well attended, usually 500 people.</p> <p>New England lags the rest of the country in modernizing local government; over 60% of the country uses Town Manager-Council form of government. "New England is the last historical holdout." Recommended charter attorney Steve Mednick.</p>

## **APPENDIX F: Board of Selectmen Charge**

### **Chester Governance Study**

Chester Town Governance- Study Committee

Charge, Deliverables and Timeframe per the Board of Selectmen on 8/17/22

#### **Charge:**

Identify and analyze alternative governance structures for the purpose of improving the Town's ability to proactively plan and manage its affairs.

#### **Current Situation:**

Chester faces significant challenges associated with leadership continuity, town wide engagement/stewardship, succession, and shortages of elected and appointed officials/volunteers to operate key functions, departments and resources needed to implement town-wide initiatives.

#### **Deliverables:**

Define the various forms of town government organization and structure that may achieve a more effective governance structure relevant now and in the future.

Recommend the next steps to achieve these prospective improvements, as indicated by the findings and conclusion.

#### **Timeframe:**

60-day "study period", beginning on the date of the said Committee's first meeting. The Committee will provide a report to the BOS at the end of the 60-day period (the 60-day timeline may be extended if necessary).

#### **Termination:**

This Study Committee shall terminate upon acceptance or rejection of its final report to the Board of Selectmen.

#### **Composition:**

Briana Jewczyn, Cindy Lignar, Ed Meehan, Jon Joslow, Michael Sanders, Pat Bandzes,  
Richard Strauss

#### **Considerations:**

Set up a logical process of discovery to assess how other comparable Connecticut towns and municipalities have adapted to meet the current challenges of municipal governance and management.

Develop an understanding of benefits and risks associated with alternative forms of governance available to the Town of Chester.

Identify options aimed at improving the organization's accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, continuity and responsiveness as outlined in "the charge."

## APPENDIX G: REFERENCES

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## CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES

### **TITLE 7: MUNICIPALITIES - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/title\\_07.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/title_07.htm)**

- Chapter 90: Town and Other Community Meetings - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_090.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_090.htm)
- Chapter 91: Selectmen - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_091.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_091.htm)
- Chapter 92: Town Clerks - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_092.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_092.htm)
- Chapter 94: Town Treasurers - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_094.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_094.htm)
- Chapter 95: Constables - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_095.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_095.htm)
- Chapter 96: Town Manager - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_096.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_096.htm)
- Chapter 96a: Assessors - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_096a.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_096a.htm)
- Chapter 97: Municipalities: General Provisions - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_097.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_097.htm)
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- Chapter 104: Municipal Police and Fire Protection - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_104.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_104.htm)
- Chapter 106: Town Boards of Finance - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_106.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_106.htm)
- Chapter 111: Municipal Auditing Act - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_111.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_111.htm)
- Chapter 112: Municipal Finance - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_112.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_112.htm)
- Chapter 116b: Local Capital Improvement Fund - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_116b.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_116b.htm)

**TITLE 9: ELECTIONS - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/title\\_09.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/title_09.htm)**

- Chapter 146: Elections - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_146.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_146.htm)
- Sec. 9-185: Municipal Officers - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_146.htm#sec\\_9-185](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_146.htm#sec_9-185)
- Sec. 9-186: Electoral Status of Municipal Officers and Justices of the Peace - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_146.htm#sec\\_9-186](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_146.htm#sec_9-186)
- Sec. 9-187: Terms - [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_146.htm#sec\\_9-187](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_146.htm#sec_9-187)
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