

WARRANT FOR

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Monday, September 18, 2023

7:00 P.M.

CENTER SCHOOL

403 GREAT ROAD, STOW, MA



SPECIAL TOWN ELECTION

Saturday, September 23, 2023

Polls Open 10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

CENTER SCHOOL

403 GREAT ROAD, STOW, MA

**PLEASE BRING TO TOWN MEETING
THIS IS YOUR ONLY COPY**

Anyone with a disability requiring special arrangements for Town Meeting should contact Town Clerk Linda Hathaway at (978) 897-5034 by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, September 13, 2023.

On May 9, 2023, the Stow Select Board voted to set the date of the Special Town Meeting to Monday, September 18, 2023.

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WARRANT FOR 2023 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

To either of the Constables of the Town of Stow, or the Stow Town Clerk, in the County of Middlesex,
GREETINGS:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Stow, qualified to vote in Elections and Town Affairs, to assemble in

CENTER SCHOOL
403 GREAT ROAD, STOW, MA
In said Town on
MONDAY, THE EIGHTEENTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2023
AT 7:00 P.M.

Then and there to act on the following Articles, namely:

ARTICLE 1. Nashoba Regional High School Building Project

To see if the Town will approve the \$241,714,926 borrowing authorized by the Nashoba Regional School District, for the purpose of paying costs of a new Nashoba Regional High School, 12 Green Road, Bolton, MA 01740 including site work and athletic fields, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the “Project”), which school facility shall have an anticipated useful life as an educational facility for the instruction of school children of at least 50 years, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended at the direction of the Nashoba Regional School District’s Project School Building Committee. The MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities. Any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) fifty-five and 09/100 percent (55.09%) of eligible, approved Project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a vote of 3-0-1. Capital Planning will make a recommendation on this article at Town Meeting.

Nashoba Regional High School opened its doors to students in 1961. It has served the communities of Bolton, Lancaster, and Stow for over sixty years and it has outlived its useful life. In 2018 The Nashoba Regional School District submitted a statement of interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority to conduct a feasibility study to determine if the building should be repaired, improved with an addition/renovation, or replaced with a newly constructed school. In 2019, the MSBA invited NRSD into the process to investigate solutions with our aging building. At the conclusion of the feasibility study, it was determined that new construction is the best solution to provide an outstanding educational program for students and address the mechanical and structural issues with the current building.

The Nashoba Regional School District has been approved for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the construction of a new Nashoba Regional High School. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$241,741,926 with the MSBA providing \$64,811,362 in grant support. The total estimated support needed from the taxpayers of Bolton, Lancaster, and Stow is \$176,903,564. Based on the terms of the Nashoba Regional Agreement using enrollment data for the fiscal year 2024, each town’s share for the project is as follows.

- *Bolton Share: 31.87% (\$56,379,165)*
- *Lancaster Share: 32.97% (\$58,325,105)*
- *Stow Share: 35.16% (\$62,199,293)*

ARTICLE 2. Additional Funds for the Renovations to the Randall Library

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow the sum of Two Million, Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,500,000) to add to the library renovation project consisting of the design, construction and equipping of renovations to the Randall Library, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto;

And, to meet said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount for said project, as authorized under General Laws Chapter 44 or any other general or special law or other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor;

And further, to authorize the Select Board, or its designee, to apply for, accept and expend any funds that may be received from donations or fundraising, or any other funding sources, for the purpose of funding the said Randall Library Renovation project; provided that the total amount voted to be borrowed for the Randall Library project shall be reduced by the sums received by transfers or by donations and fundraising or any other funding source prior to the issue of bonds or notes under such votes; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3's affirmative vote**
(Town Administrator)

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. Capital Planning will make a recommendation on this article at Town Meeting.

The costs for the library renovation project have increased since the vote was taken in May 2022. This would authorize additional spending, but will not require additional taxation, as the funds will come from the Town Administrator's General Fund Budget and within the Proposition 2 ½ tax levy. The maximum amount the taxpayers will pay through a debt exclusion remains at \$6,706,500.

ARTICLE 3. Vest Authorities for Cemeteries and Streets in Director of Public Works

To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaw by amending the following sections of Articles 5, 6, and 7 of the General Bylaws; or to take any other action relative thereto.
(Town Administrator)

SECTION 1

That the Town make the following revisions to its General Bylaws:

General Bylaws

ARTICLE 5. ACCEPTANCE AND REPAIRS OF PRIVATE ROADS

[No changes to Section 1].

SECTION 2. All streets to be accepted by the Town must be petitioned for not later than January 15 previous to the annual town meeting in May. No streets shall be accepted by the Town unless constructed in compliance with the foregoing specifications. No streets built or hereinafter to be built shall be accepted by the Town unless constructed in compliance with the following:

Any petition or proposal for an article of acceptance of any street or way to be voted on at any town meeting shall be accompanied by complete roadway plans and layouts drawn to the scale of one inch to forty feet by a registered civil engineer which shall show the dimensions of the roadway, including the traveled way, the location of all utilities and all easements and the boundaries and dimensions of any properties to be taken by said acceptance, the ownership of abutting properties according to the latest assessors list of January 1 of the instant year, and the plans shall be suitable for recording in Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds. The same engineer shall also, by a separate certificate to the Select Board, certify that roadway proposed for acceptance meets all the construction requirements and complies with the Bylaws of the Town of Stow, Article 5, Sections 1 and 2. (amended 5/20/74)

The Select Board may waive the requirements of the engineer's certificate, and compliance with any of the specifications set forth in Section 1, upon the recommendation of the Planning Board and the ~~Superintendent of Streets~~Director of Public Works. (this paragraph added 5/4/83)

SECTION 3. Private Ways

(a) The Town may, in addition to whatever other powers it shall have over the control and repairs of private ways, appropriate money at the annual town meeting for the purpose of making repairs to private ways, to be used in the discretion of the Select Board upon recommendation by the ~~Superintendent of Streets~~Director of Public Works, when such repairs are required by public use, and the Select Board specifically vote that such repairs are required by public necessity and convenience, upon the following conditions:

[No changes to the remainder of Subsection (a)].

[No changes to Subsections (b) or (c)].

ARTICLE 6. POLICE REGULATIONS

[No changes to Sections 1 through 5, inclusive].

SECTION 6. Public Ways

(a) No person shall surface, resurface, break or dig up the ground in any street for any purpose whatever or set or place any fence, post, tree or edgestone, or alter or change the position or direction of any fence, post or edgestone, or swing any door or gate in, upon or over, or change the grade or width of any public way without a written permit of the Select Board, which shall prescribe the limitations or restrictions of such permit. Such permit may be obtained on payment of a fee as determined from a schedule established by the Select Board. It shall be required of the person obtaining the permit as part of the permit that the ~~Superintendent of Streets~~Director of Public Works be notified in writing at least forty-eight (48) hours before the work is to be commenced. No permits shall be issued for projects which will not be completed by November 15, except in an emergency situation. (amended 3/4/69, 5/20/74, 5/6/81) When any stone walls or other markers or monuments, which are highway boundaries, are removed in a manner which destroys the boundary of the highway, they shall be replaced with bounds and to the specifications contained in the manual of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Works Standards for Highways and Bridges, Section 710. (added 3/3/70; amended 3/7/73)

(b) When meeting the edge of the present traveled way of a street with driveways, walks, etc., the construction of the same shall be as prescribed by the ~~Superintendent of Streets~~Director of Public Works.

[No changes to Subsections (c) through (f), inclusive].

(g) The Select Board, upon written report of the ~~Highway Superintendent~~Director of Public Works, may, in the interests of public safety and without further authority, establish a speed limit of 25 miles per hour on any roadway inside a thickly settled or business district, as defined in MGL c.90 § 1, in the city or town on any way that is not a state highway. (added 7/10/2017)

(h) The Select Board, upon written report of the ~~Highway Superintendent~~Director of Public Works, and after a duly noticed Public Hearing, may, in the interests of public safety and without further authority, establish 20 mph Safety Zones in areas where vulnerable road users are likely to be present, including but not limited to ways in the vicinity of the following land uses:

[No changes to the remainder of Subsection (h)].

ARTICLE 7. CEMETERIES

[No changes to Sections 1 or 2].

SECTION 3. ~~The Director of Public Works shall serve as the Town's Cemetery Commissioners, pursuant to Section 5-5(a) of the Charter~~re shall be a board of cemetery trustees consisting of three members appointed by the Select Board for terms of three years each, so arranged that the term of one member shall expire each year. Said ~~board~~Director, with the Treasurer-Collector, shall have the management of the cemetery perpetual-care fund. (amended 1/28/87, 5/5/92)

[No changes to Section 4].

SECTION 5. The income on all deposits made under the provision of Section 1 shall be computed annually on the thirtieth day of June and the amount due thereon shall be entered to its credit in the book provided for in Section 2 of this article, and annually on the first day of April the treasurer shall return to the ~~secretary of the cemetery trustees~~Director of Public Works a statement of the amount of income to the credit of each deposit, with the name of the depositor, the name of the cemetery, and the number of the lot therein. The provisions of this section shall not apply to deposits made prior to the adoption of this bylaw. (amended 5/20/74)

SECTION 6. The Treasurer-Collector shall be the custodian of said funds, and shall deposit and invest the same as directed by the ~~board of trustees~~Director of Public Works. He shall make all transfers of securities, execute all papers necessary therefor when duly authorized by ~~vote of the trustees~~Director of Public Works, and collect, receive and enforce the payment of all debts and obligations due to it and upon payment therefor shall acquit and discharge the same, and surrender, discharge, or assign all security held therefor. (amended 1/28/87)

SECTION 7. The ~~cemetery trustees~~Director of Public Works shall attend to the care and preservation of the lots for which deposits have thus been made and said ~~trustees~~Director shall include in their annual report to the Town a statement of the amount expended on each of said lots.

The Treasurer-Collector shall pay such bills as may be thus incurred and approved by ~~the said cemetery trustees~~ Director to an amount not exceeding the interest to the credit of said deposits, and charge to the same. (amended 1/28/87)

SECTION 8. The Treasurer-Collector shall also pay to the authorities having control of private cemeteries, for the care of which moneys have been received by the Town of Stow, the income on all sums so deposited for the care of the lots for which deposit was made, and the ~~cemetery trustees~~ Director of Public Works shall include in their annual report to the Town a statement of such payments. (amended 1/28/87)

SECTION 2

That these amendments shall take effect only upon approval of Charter amendment proposal Article 14 by the voters at a Town election.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote.

Over the last three years we have been working towards a consolidated public works department combining the highway and cemetery department under one roof. The staff are all in one building now, answer to one direct supervisor, they share resources and equipment, and this is the final piece to formally make the change. As of July 1st we no longer have an active Cemetery Committee, but before they went inactive, the two final members supported this plan and the consolidation.

ARTICLE 4. Charter Change - Moderator

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article II titled “LEGISLATIVE BRANCH” and article III entitled “ELECTED OFFICIALS”, as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in be underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~striketrough~~; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3's affirmative vote**

(Charter Review Committee)

Section 2-2: Presiding Officer

The town moderator shall preside at all sessions of the town meeting. ~~At the first session of the annual meeting, the moderator may appoint a voter to serve as deputy moderator to assist the moderator. The appointment of a deputy moderator shall be subject to ratification by the town meeting.~~

In the absence of the moderator, the duly ratified deputy moderator shall preside. In the absence of the moderator and ~~the duly ratified deputy at any session of the town meeting,~~ the town clerk shall open the meeting and preside over the election of a temporary moderator. In the absence of a moderator and the town clerk, the presiding officer ~~of the first session of the town meeting~~ shall be determined in accordance with the General Laws.

Section 2-10: Rules of Procedure

The town meeting may, by bylaw, establish and from time to time amend, revise, or repeal rules to govern the conduct of all town meetings. The moderator may from time to time establish procedural rules for the conduct of town meetings that do not conflict with any such bylaws, this charter, or with the General Laws.

Section 3-5: Town Moderator

(a) Term of Office There shall be a town moderator elected for a term of three years.

(b) Powers and Duties The town moderator shall be the presiding officer of the town meeting, shall regulate its proceedings, decide all questions of order and shall have such other powers and duties as may be provided for that office by the General Laws, by this charter, by bylaw, or by other town meeting vote. Rulings of the moderator regarding procedure and other matters of conduct of town meeting shall be final.

(c) Deputy – The town moderator may nominate a deputy moderator, subject to ratification by town meeting. The term shall be until a deputy moderator is ratified at the following annual town meeting, or such meeting is dissolved, whichever is first. The deputy shall have the authority to act as moderator if the town moderator is unable to act; if the moderator is absent; or for any other duties as assigned by the town moderator, or bylaw.

Notwithstanding section 3-1 (f)(1) “filling of Vacancies” or any other provision, if the office of moderator becomes vacant the deputy moderator nominated and ratified under 3-5(c) shall serve as moderator until the next election.

(d) Appointments - the town moderator shall appoint

- a Finance Committee and other committees as defined in section 2-4
- a regional vocational school committee representative, as defined in section 3-1
- a Charter Review Committee, as defined in section 7-7
- members of a town administrator search committee, as defined by section 4-6
- any other appointments authorized by law.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed changes provide a clear process to select a Deputy Moderator and clarify the Town Moderator’s appointments.

ARTICLE 5. Charter Change – Investigations

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article III entitled “ELECTED OFFICIALS”, as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~striketrough~~; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3’s affirmative vote**

(Charter Review Committee)

Section 3-2 ~~Select Board~~ Board of Selectmen

(e) Investigations - ~~The board of selectmen may make investigations and may authorize the town administrator to investigate the affairs of the town and the conduct of any town agency including any claims against the town. The report of the results of such investigation and any actions resulting there from shall be placed on file in the office of the town clerk separate from the minutes of the meetings of the board of selectmen. A report summarizing the results of such investigation shall be printed in the next annual town report.~~ The select board may make investigations and may authorize the town administrator to investigate the affairs of the town and the conduct of any town agency including any claims against the town. The select board or town administrator may use outside counsel, or an independent investigator based on the nature of the claim.

The Finance Committee does NOT recommend approval of this article on a vote of 1-3-0. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed change updates and modernizes the investigation process.

ARTICLE 6. Charter Change – Town Administrator

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article IV entitled “Town Administrator”, as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in striketrough; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3’s affirmative vote**

(Charter Review Committee)

Section 4-1: Appointment, Qualifications, Term

The select board ~~of selectmen~~ shall appoint a town administrator from a list prepared by the screening committee established by Section 4-6 of this charter. The select board ~~of selectmen~~ shall appoint the town administrator to serve for ~~an indefinite~~ a term established by contract with the select board, and shall fix the compensation for such person, annually, within the amount appropriated by the town. The town administrator shall be appointed on the basis of demonstrated executive and administrative qualifications and especially fitted by education, training and previous

experience to perform the duties of the office. A town administrator need not be a resident of the town or of the Commonwealth at the time of appointment, nor at any time during the period of such service. The town administrator shall not have served in an elective office in the town for at least twelve months prior to appointment. The town may from time to time establish, by bylaw, such additional qualifications as seem necessary and appropriate.

[Proposed amendments to 1st paragraph of Section 4-1. No changes proposed to 2nd or 3rd paragraphs]

Section 4-2(h):

Powers and Duties

- (h) To recommend to the select board ~~proposals~~ policies for the rental and use of all town facilities and property except school property and property under the control of the conservation commission. The town administrator shall be responsible for the maintenance and repair of all town buildings and facilities placed under the town administrator's control by the select board, including school property if so voted by the local school committee.

Section 4-4:

Acting Town Administrator

- (a) Temporary Absence. By letter filed with the select board, the town administrator may designate a qualified town administrative officer or employee to exercise the powers and perform the duties of the town administrator during a temporary absence. During a temporary absence the select board may revoke such designation whereupon it may appoint another qualified town administrative officer or employee to serve until the town administrator returns.
- (b) Vacancy. Any vacancy in the office of town administrator caused by absences greater than thirty days, suspension, removal, resignation, or death shall be filled as soon as possible by the select board in accordance with the procedures of Section 4-6 of this charter, but, pending such regular appointment, the select board shall appoint a town employee or other person to perform the duties of the office on an acting basis. Any temporary appointment shall be for a period not exceeding 90 days and may be renewed for such additional periods, each up to 90 days, as may be determined necessary by the select board ~~an additional period not exceeding ninety days~~. Compensation for such person shall be set by the select board.
- (c) Powers and Duties. The powers of the temporary or acting town administrator, under (a) and (b) above, shall be limited to matters not admitting of delay.

Section 4-6: Selecting a Town Administrator

Immediately upon notification of a vacancy or pending vacancy in the office of town administrator, the process of establishing a screening committee for the purpose of soliciting, receiving, and evaluating applications for the position of town administrator shall commence.

The screening committee shall consist of five voters, two of whom shall be appointed by the select board and three by the town moderator. Such voters, at the time of appointment, shall not be serving in any elective office or as a member of any multiple member board.

Not more than 30 ~~thirty~~ days following the appointment of the committee ~~notification of a vacancy or pending vacancy in the office of town administrator~~, the appointed members of the committee shall meet to initiate the process of selecting the new town administrator.

The screening committee shall review all applications received by it, screen all qualified applicants by checking and verifying work records and other credentials, and provide for interviews to be conducted with such number of candidates as it deems to be necessary.

As soon as ~~it~~ feasible, the committee shall submit to the select board the names of not less than three nor more than five persons whom it believes to be available and suited to perform the duties of the office of town administrator.

The select board, in an expedient manner, shall choose by majority vote one of the said nominees to serve as town administrator or reject all nominees.

The entire selection process, beginning with the announcement of a vacancy or pending vacancy in the office of the town administrator, shall be completed within a period of 180 days in agreement with the provisions of Section 4-4(b) of this charter, or such longer period as approved by the select board.

Upon the appointment of a town administrator, the screening committee established hereunder shall be considered discharged.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed change to the first paragraph of Section 4-1 clarifies that the select board may appoint a town administrator for a particular term. The proposed change to Section 4-2(h) updates and clarifies the operational roles of the town administrator and select board. The proposed changes to Section 4-4 grant the select board increased flexibility in the designation of an acting town administrator. The proposed changes to Section 4-6 update the town administrator selection process by establishing more practical time limits and procedures.

ARTICLE 7. Charter Change – Elected Officials, Town Administrator, General Provisions

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10, and §§7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter Article III entitled “Elected Officials”, Article IV entitled “Town Administrator”, and Article VII entitled “General Provisions”, as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in strikethrough; provided however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, these proposed amendments shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3's affirmative vote**
(Charter Review Committee)

Section 3-2: Select Board

- (b) Powers and Duties - The executive powers of the town shall be vested in the select board which shall be deemed to be the chief executive officer of the town. The select board shall have all of the executive powers it is possible for a select board to have and to exercise. The select board shall serve as the chief policy making agency of the town.

The select board shall be responsible for:

- (1) the formulation and promulgation of policy directives and guidelines to be followed by all town agencies serving under it; and
- (2) in conjunction with other elected town officers and multiple member bodies, the development and promulgation of policy guidelines designed to bring all town agencies into harmony; ~~and~~
- (3) ~~the maintenance and revision of any master plan developed in accordance with Section 7-7(c).~~

Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any member of the select board, nor a majority of such members, to become involved in the day-to-day administration of any town agency. It is the intention of this provision that the select board shall act only through the adoption of broad policy guidelines which are to be implemented by officers and employees serving under it.

Section 3-6: Planning Board

- (b) Powers and Duties - The planning board shall make careful studies of the resources, possibilities, and needs of the town and shall make plans for the development of the town consistent with any master plan developed in accordance with ~~Section 7-7(e)~~ Section 81D of Chapter 41 of the General Laws and this charter. ~~The board shall have the power to regulate the subdivision of land within the town by the adoption of rules and regulations.~~ The planning board shall make recommendations to the town meeting on all proposed warrant articles which affect land use and development, including, but not limited to, proposals to amend the zoning bylaw and zoning map. ~~The planning board shall make an annual report, giving information regarding the condition of the town, any plans or proposals for its development (including estimates of their costs), and indicating adherence to or deviations from any master plan.~~ The planning board shall have all of the other powers and duties which are given to planning boards under the constitution and general laws of the Commonwealth, and such additional powers and duties as may be authorized by General Law; by this charter, by bylaw, or by other town meeting vote.

Section 4-2: Powers and Duties

The town administrator shall be the chief administrative officer of the town, directly responsible to the select board. The powers and duties of the town administrator shall include, but are not intended to be limited to, the following:

(s) To coordinate the efforts of all town agencies in adhering to the intent of, and effectuating the implementation of, any master plan developed in accordance with the provisions of Section 81D of Chapter 41 of the General Laws and Section 7-7(c) of this charter and to recommend to the board of selectmen modifications and improvements to any such master plan.

Section 7-7: Periodic Review of Charter and ByLaws

(c) Master Plan Committee: The Master Plan shall be reviewed at the direction of the ~~P~~planning Bboard every five years, and updated in whole, or in part, in accordance with the general laws. When revisions are needed to the Plan, the planning board shall specify the desired composition of a master plan committee of at least five (5) members to oversee the plan revisions, which committee shall be composed of representatives of relevant boards, committees, and departments and at least one resident at large. Multiple member bodies shall select their own representatives, and any resident at large shall be jointly appointed by majority vote of the Select board and planning board, and a Master Plan Committee shall be appointed two years before the next update is due. ~~The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a special committee of seven members comprised of a member of the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, the Board of Health, the Conservation Commission, and the Finance Committee and two Stow voters at large, who are not members of the above named boards. The committee shall serve until the plan has been presented to and accepted by the planning board.~~

~~The appointed committee shall present a final report to the Planning Board and said report shall include a Master Plan or updates to any existing Master Plan as required by Chapter 41 of the General Laws. The committee shall be discharged six months after the Master Plan or Master Plan updates have been presented to the Planning Board.~~

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed changes clarify that the Master Plan is primarily the responsibility of the Planning Board as provided in Mass General Laws and revise the membership of and process for appointing the Master Plan Committee. It also simplifies the description of the duties of the Planning Board.

ARTICLE 8. Charter Change – Removal and Suspensions

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article V entitled “ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION”, Section 5-4 “Removals and Suspensions” as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~strike through~~; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3's affirmative vote**
(Charter Review Committee)

Section 5-4: Removals and Suspensions

Any appointed officer, appointed member of a multiple member body, or employee of the town not subject to the provisions of the state civil service law, or covered by the terms of a collective bargaining agreement which provides a different method, and whether appointed for a fixed or indefinite term, may be suspended or removed from office by the appointing authority for good cause. The term "cause" shall include, but not be limited to incapacity (other than temporary illness), inefficiency, insubordination, and conduct unbecoming the office.

Any appointed officer, appointed member of a multiple member body, or employee of the town may be suspended from office by the appointing authority if such action is deemed by the appointing authority to be necessary to protect the interests of the town. However, no suspension shall be for more than fifteen days. Suspension may be coterminous with removal and shall not interfere with the rights of the officer or employee under the removal procedure given below.

The appointing authority when removing any such officer, appointed member of a multiple member body, or employee of the town shall act in accordance with the following procedure:

- (a) A written notice of the intent to remove and a statement of the cause or causes therefore shall be delivered by hand or by certified mail to the last known address of the person sought to be removed; and
- (b) When acting under this section 5-4, the appointing authority shall comply with applicable law.
- ~~(b) Within five days after the delivery by hand or date of mailing of such notice, the officer, member of a multiple member body or employee of the town may request a public hearing from the appointing authority at which such person may be represented by counsel, shall be entitled to present evidence, call witnesses and to question any witness appearing at the hearing;~~
- ~~(c) Between one and ten days after the public hearing is adjourned, or if the officer, member of multiple member body or employee of the town fails to request a public hearing, between six and fifteen days after delivery of the notice of intent to remove, the appointing authority shall take final action, either removing the officer, member of a multiple member body or employee of the town or notifying such person that the notice is rescinded. Failure of the appointing authority to take any action within the time period as stated in this section shall be deemed to be a rescission of the original notice and the officer, member of a multiple member body or employee of the town shall, forthwith, be reinstated.~~

~~Such officer, member of a multiple member body or employee of the town shall continue to receive salary and benefits until the effective date of removal.~~

Nothing in this section shall be construed as granting any rights to a right to such a hearing when a person who has been appointed for a fixed term and is not reappointed when the term expires.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed changes add the word “appointed” before members of multiple member bodies to clarify that this provision is not relevant to elected officials. Language was added that the Notice of Intent can be sent certified mail to the appointee’s last known address. Further the town will comply with applicable law relative to the removal and/or suspension. Language regarding public hearings was removed. A person who is not reappointed to a fixed term is not granted any rights under this provision.

ARTICLE 9. Charter Change – Select Board Appointments

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article V titled “ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION”, as set forth below, with text to be underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~strike through~~; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3’s affirmative vote**

(Charter Review Committee)

Section 5-5: Town Administrative Organization

Until such time as a different form of organization shall be provided, in accordance with the provisions of Section 5-1 of this charter, the following outline of organization shall be operative:

The select board ~~of selectmen~~ shall appoint:

- a town administrator and assistant town administrator ~~to serve for an indefinite;~~
- ~~an administrative assistant to the board of selectmen and town administrator whose duties shall be determined by said board;~~
- a conservation commission;
- an open space committee;
- a board of registrars of voters ~~in the manner provided by general law;~~
- a zoning board of appeals;
- a council on aging ~~as provided by bylaw;~~
- a development and industrial commission, ~~as provided by bylaw;~~
- ~~an industrial development finance commission in the manner provided by general law~~
- a cable television advisory committee;
- ~~a public, education and government committee;~~
- a cultural council ~~as provided by general law;~~
- a board of cemetery trustees;
- constables;
- an emergency management officer and related personnel;
- an historical commission;
- a superintendent of streets ~~and employees of said department;~~
- a police chief and other police officers;
- a fire chief and other full time fire fighting personnel or a board of fire engineers;
- a forest fire warden;
- a town collector and treasurer;

a town accountant;
 an inspector of buildings;
 a zoning enforcement officer;
 a wire inspector, a plumbing inspector and a gas inspector;
 a sealer of weights and measures;
 a recreation commission;
~~at least two~~ members of the Lake Boon Commission as provided by law;
 town counsel;
 the Randall Relief Fund Trustees;
 the Randall Town Fund Trustees;
 the Hale School Fund Trustees;
 a surveyor of wood and lumber;
 a fence viewer;
~~a field driver~~;
 a tree warden;
~~a pest control officer~~;
 a veterans' ~~agent~~-service officer; ~~and~~
 a veterans' graves committee,
a municipal affordable housing trust,

and such other offices, employees, and committees as defined by law; or section 3-2(d) and any other relevant sections of this charter.

Consistent with applicable laws and any trust provisions, the town may regulate by bylaw the number, composition, term, and duties of any committee listed in this section; and any committee listed herein may be discontinued in the same manner as it was established.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed changes update the list of Select Board appointments. Should Article 3 pass, this article will be tabled and action will be taken under Article 14.

ARTICLE 10. Charter Change – General Provisions

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10, and §§7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter Article VII entitled “General Provisions,” as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~striketrough~~; provided however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, these proposed amendments shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3’s affirmative vote**
 (Charter Review Committee)

Section 7-8: Procedures Governing Multiple Member Bodies

- (a) Meetings - All multiple member bodies shall meet ~~regularly~~ at such times ~~and places within the town~~ as they may by their own rules prescribe. Posting of notices, agendas

and conduct of meetings shall be as required by applicable law. Except in cases of emergency, special meetings of any multiple member body shall be held on the call of the respective chair or by one third of the members thereof. Each member shall be notified of the date and time of such meeting not less than the same public notice period established by law. by notice to each member at least forty-eight hours in advance of the time set, of the respective chair or by one third of the members thereof. A copy of said notice shall also be posted on the town bulletin board. Special meetings of any multiple member body shall also be called within ten days after the date of the filing with the town clerk of a petition signed by at least fifty voters and which states the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is to be called. ~~Except as authorized by law, all meetings of all multiple member bodies shall be open and public.~~

- (b) Agendas - ~~At least one business day b~~Before any meeting of a multiple member body is to be held, an agenda containing all items which are scheduled to come before the multiple member body at the meeting shall be posted on the town bulletin board in compliance with applicable law. ~~No action taken on a matter not included in the posted agenda shall be effective unless the multiple member body first adopts by a separate vote a resolution declaring that an emergency exists and that the particular matter must be acted upon at that meeting for the immediate preservation of the peace, health, safety or convenience of the town.~~
- (c) Rules and Minutes - Each multiple member body shall determine its own rules and order of business unless otherwise provided by applicable law, ~~this charter or by bylaw~~ and shall provide for the keeping of minutes of their proceedings. ~~These rules and minutes shall be public records, and c~~Copies of approved rules and minutes shall be delivered to, and kept available in, the office of the town clerk for the convenience and review of the public.
- (d) ~~Reserved. Voting—Except on procedural matters all votes of all multiple member bodies shall be taken by a call of the roll and the ayes and nays shall be recorded by name in the minutes provided, however, if the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded.~~
- (e) ~~Reserved. Quorum—A majority of the full multiple member body shall constitute a quorum, but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time and may compel the attendance of absent members in the manner and subject to the penalties prescribed by the rules of the multiple member body. No other action of the multiple member body shall be valid or binding unless ratified by the affirmative vote of the majority of the full multiple member body.~~
- (f) Filling of Vacancies - Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the membership of an appointed multiple member body, the remaining members shall forthwith give written notice of such vacancy to the appointing authority. If at the expiration of forty-five days following the delivery of such notice to the appointing authority said appointing authority has not appointed some person to fill the vacancy, the remaining members of the multiple member body may fill such vacancy for the remainder of any unexpired term by majority vote of the remaining members.

- (g) Composition of Multiple Member Bodies - All multiple member bodies when established shall be composed of an odd number of members.
- (h) Associate Members – Except as otherwise provided by applicable law, All multiple member bodies may establish, and select one or more positions of non-voting associate member to assist in the work of the multiple member body subject to such rules as may be adopted in accordance with this section.
- (i) Subcommittees - Except as otherwise provided by applicable law, all multiple member bodies may establish, appoint, and oversee or one or more subcommittees as they deem necessary for the purpose of carrying out their duties.
- (j) Organization of Multiple Member Bodies - All multiple member bodies shall annually elect from among its members a Chair, Vice Chair and, as needed, a Clerk.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed changes 1) remove language that conflicts with the current open meeting law with regard to the posting of agendas; 2) simplify the charter with references to existing law rather than restating those laws; 3) remove the requirement for votes to be affirmative votes of the majority of the committee, rather than a majority of those present; 4) clarify that boards can appoint associate members and subcommittees; and 5) require an annual reorganization of every board.

ARTICLE 11. Charter Change – Elected Officials

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article III entitled “Elected Officials”, as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~strike through~~; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3’s affirmative vote** (Charter Review Committee)

Section 3-1: General Provisions

- (g) Recall of Elected Officers
 - (1) Who Can Be Recalled - Any holder of an elective office, as defined in Section 3-1(a), who has served at least six months of, and has at least six months remaining of, the term for which elected, may be recalled therefrom by the voters as herein provided.
 - (2) Recall Petition - Any two hundred or more voters may file with the town clerk an affidavit containing the name of the officer sought to be recalled, the

position held, and a statement of the grounds for recall. If the affidavit shall be found and certified by the registrars of voters to be sufficient, the town clerk shall within ~~two~~ five business days notify the primary petitioner, who shall be the voter first named on such affidavit, that copies of such petition blanks are available at the office of the town clerk during normal business hours. ~~deliver to the first ten voters named on such affidavit, copies of petition blanks demanding such recall.~~ The petition blanks when issued shall be signed by the town clerk and shall have the official town seal attached ~~thereto and may be completed by hand or by typewriting.~~ The petition blanks shall be dated, addressed to the select board and contain the names of the ten voters first named ~~all persons to whom they are issued,~~ the name of the person whose recall is sought, the grounds for recall as stated in the affidavit and shall demand the election of a successor in the said office. A copy of the petition shall be entered in a record book to be kept in the office of the town clerk. The recall petition shall be returned and filed with the town clerk within thirty days after the date the clerk notifies the primary petitioner of the availability of the petition, or the next business day if the thirtieth day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday. The clerk shall notify the primary petitioner of the final date and hour for filing. The recall petition shall be signed by not less than ~~delivery of the petition blanks to the petitioners and shall have been signed by at least fifteen~~ 15 percent of the voters as of the last annual town election and every signature shall include the place of residence of the signer with ~~who shall add to their signatures the street and number, if any, of their residence.~~

The town clerk shall, prior to 5:00 p.m. within the next two business days following the receipt of an affidavit or petition under this section, submit the affidavit or petition to the registrars of voters in the town, and the registrars shall forthwith certify thereon the number of signatures which are names of voters.

- (3) Select Board's Action Upon Receiving Petition - If the petition shall be found and certified by the registrars of voters to be sufficient, the town clerk shall submit the same with a certificate so stating to the select board without delay. The select board shall forthwith give written notice of the receipt of the certificate to the officer sought to be recalled and shall, if the officer does not resign within five business days thereafter, order an election to be held on a date fixed by the select board not less than thirty five days nor more than sixty days after the date of the town clerk's certificate that a sufficient petition has been filed. However, if any other town election is to occur within ninety days after the date of the certificate, the select board shall postpone the holding of the recall election to the date of such other election. If a vacancy occurs in said office after a recall election has been ordered, the election shall nevertheless proceed as provided in this section.
- (4) Nomination of Candidates - An officer whose recall is sought may not be a candidate to succeed to the office in the event the vote on the recall is in the affirmative. The nomination of candidates, the publication of the warrant for

the recall election, and the conduct of the same shall all be in accordance with the provisions of law relating to elections, unless otherwise provided in this section.

- (5) Incumbent Holds Office Until Election - The incumbent shall continue to perform the duties of the office until the recall election. If not recalled, the incumbent shall continue in office for the remainder of the unexpired term. If recalled, such person shall be deemed removed upon the qualification of the successor, who shall hold office for the remainder of the unexpired term. If the successor fails to qualify within five business days after receiving notification of election, the incumbent shall thereupon be deemed removed and the office vacant.
- (6) Propositions on Ballot - Ballots used in a recall election shall submit the following propositions in the order indicated:

For the recall of (name of officer) [office held]
Against the recall of (name of officer) [office held]

Immediately to the right of each proposition there shall be a square space in which the voter, ~~by making a cross mark (X)~~, may vote for either of the said propositions. Just above the space, there shall appear the direction "Vote for 1". Under the propositions shall appear the word "candidates" and the direction "Vote for 1", the directions to voters required by Section 42 of Chapter 54 of the General Laws, and beneath this the names of candidates nominated as hereinbefore provided. The proposition for the recall shall fail unless greater than twenty five percent of the voters cast ballots at the election. If at least two-thirds of the votes cast upon the question of recall is in the affirmative, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. If less than two-thirds of the votes cast is in the affirmative, the ballots for candidates need not be counted.

- (7) Repeat of Recall Petition - No recall petition shall be filed against an officer subjected to a recall election and not recalled thereby during the remainder of such officer's then current term of office.
- (8) Appointment of Person Recalled - No person who has been recalled from an office, or who has resigned from office while recall proceedings were pending against such person, shall be appointed to any town office within two years after such recall or such resignation.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed changes to Section 3-1(g) modernize and clarify the procedures to be used in the event of a petition to recall an elected official.

ARTICLE 12. Charter Change – General Provisions

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article VII entitled “General Provisions”, as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~striketrough~~; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3’s affirmative vote**

(Charter Review Committee)

Section 7-5: Definitions

(g) Town Bulletin Board - The place designated by the ~~town clerk~~ select board for posting notices required by bylaw, charter, constitution or general law and any other location designated by the select board from time to time. May also be referred to as the “official bulletin board.”

~~(a)(h)~~ Voter – The word “voter” shall mean a registered voter of the town.

(i) Master Plan – the plan developed in accordance with chapter 41, Section 81D of the General Laws, and other applicable law. May also be referred to as “comprehensive plan”.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

The proposed changes to Section 7-5(g) clarify the definition of the “town bulletin board”. The proposed change to Section 7-5(h) corrects a typographical error. The proposed changes to Section 7-5(i) clarify the definition of “master plan” and provide for the alternative use of the term “comprehensive plan”.

ARTICLE 13. Charter Change – Administrative

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §10, and §§7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter Article V entitled “Administrative Organization,” and Article VI entitled “Finance and Fiscal Procedures,” as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~striketrough~~; provided however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, these proposed amendments shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3’s affirmative vote**

(Charter Review Committee)

Section 5-1: Organization of Town Agencies

(b) Administrative Code - Subject only to express prohibitions in the General Laws or this charter, the town administrator, after consultation with the select board, may from time to time prepare and submit to the town meeting a plan of organization or reorganization to consolidate, abolish, or reorganize any town agency, in whole or in part, establish such

new town agencies as is deemed necessary to the same extent as is provided in Section 5-1(a) for bylaws, and for such purpose transfer the duties and powers and, so far as is consistent with the use for which the funds were voted by the town, transfer the appropriation of one town agency to another, provided, however, that no function assigned by this charter to a particular town agency may be discontinued or, unless this charter specifically so provides, assigned to any other.

Whenever the town administrator prepares such a plan, the select board shall hold one or more public hearings on the proposal giving notice by publication on the town bulletin board ~~in a newspaper of general circulation in the town~~, which notice shall describe the scope of the proposal and the time and place at which the hearing will be held not less than seven ~~nor more than fourteen~~ days following said publication. Following such public hearing, the proposal, which may have been amended subsequent to the public hearing, shall be submitted to the town meeting by an appropriate warrant article.

An organization or reorganization plan shall become effective at the expiration of 60 ~~sixty~~ days following the date of the town meeting at which the proposal is approved by a majority vote. The town meeting may vote only to approve or disapprove the plan and may not vote to amend or alter the plan in any substantive manner.

Section 6-2: Submission of Budget and Budget Message

- (a) At least 30 ~~sixty~~ days prior to the date scheduled for town meeting in accordance with the bylaws, the town administrator, after consultation with the select board, shall submit to the finance committee a proposed operating budget for the ensuing fiscal year with an accompanying budget message and supporting documents. The town administrator shall simultaneously provide for the publication, ~~in a newspaper of general circulation in the town~~ on the town bulletin board and/or website (if different), of a general summary of the proposed budget. The summary shall specifically indicate any major variations from the operating budget for the current fiscal year and the reason for such changes. The notice shall further indicate the times and places at which complete copies of the proposed operating budget are available for examination by the public.

Section 6-5: Action on the Budget

- (a) Public Hearing - Forthwith upon its receipt of the proposed operating budget, the finance committee shall provide for the publication on the town bulletin board ~~in a newspaper of general circulation in the town~~ of a notice stating the time and place, not less than seven ~~nor more than fourteen~~ days following such publication, at which it will hold a public hearing on the proposed operating budget as submitted.

Section 6-6: School Committee Budget

- (a) Public Hearing: The local school committee shall conduct a public hearing on its proposed annual budget not less than seven days prior to the meeting at which it is scheduled to vote on such budget. Notice of the public hearing shall be published on the town bulletin board ~~in a newspaper of general circulation in the town~~ not less than seven days prior to the hearing. The notice shall contain a general summary of its proposed budget and shall specifically indicate any major variations from the budget for the then current fiscal year and the reasons for such changes. It shall further indicate the times and places at which complete copies of its proposed budget are available for examination by the public.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

Communities are increasingly challenged by this newspaper requirement as they no longer have newspapers of general circulation in the community.

The proposed changes to section 5-1(b) removes the requirement for newspaper posting of notices, allowing them to be posted on the designated bulletin board for the town. Increasingly communities are challenged by this newspaper requirement as they no longer have newspapers of general circulation in the community.

The proposed change to section 6-2 and section 6-5 decreases the time for the budget to be made public from 60 to 30 days before town meeting and provides that the summary of the budget be made available to the public on the town bulletin board.

ARTICLE 14. Charter Change – Select Board Appointments and to Vest Authorities for Cemeteries and Streets in Director of Public Works

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws c. 43B, §§10 and 11 and §§ 7-1 and 7-7(a) of the Stow Home Rule Charter, to amend the Charter, Article V titled “ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION”, as set forth below, with text to be inserted shown in underline (excluding section numbers and headings) and text to be deleted shown in ~~strike through~~; provided, however, that in accordance with G.L. c. 43B, §10, this proposed amendment shall not take effect until approval by the voters of the Town at the 2024 Annual Town Election; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3's affirmative vote**

(Charter Review Committee)

Section 5-5: Town Administrative Organization

Until such time as a different form of organization shall be provided, in accordance with the provisions of Section 5-1 of this charter, the following outline of organization shall be operative:

- (a) The select board of selectmen shall appoint:
a town administrator and assistant town administrator ~~to serve for an indefinite~~;

~~an administrative assistant to the board of selectmen and town administrator whose duties shall be determined by said board;~~
 a conservation commission;
 an open space committee;
 a board of registrars of voters ~~in the manner provided by general law;~~
 a zoning board of appeals;
 a council on aging, ~~as provided by bylaw;~~
 a development and industrial commission, ~~as provided by bylaw;~~
~~an industrial development finance commission in the manner provided by general law~~
 a cable television advisory committee;
~~a public, education and government committee;~~
 a cultural council ~~as provided by general law;~~
~~a board of cemetery trustees;~~
 constables;
 an emergency management officer and related personnel;
 an historical commission;
~~a superintendent of streets and employees of said department;~~
a director of public works, who shall be vested with the powers of cemetery commissioners and superintendents of streets in the General Laws;
 a police chief and other police officers;
 a fire chief and other full time fire fighting personnel or a board of fire engineers;
 a forest fire warden;
 a town collector and treasurer;
 a town accountant;
 an inspector of buildings;
 a zoning enforcement officer;
 a wire inspector, a plumbing inspector and a gas inspector;
 a sealer of weights and measures;
 a recreation commission;
~~at least two members of the Lake Boon Commission~~ as provided by law;
 town counsel;
 the Randall Relief Fund Trustees;
 the Randall Town Fund Trustees;
 the Hale School Fund Trustees;
 a surveyor of wood and lumber;
 a fence viewer;
~~a field driver;~~
 a tree warden;
~~a pest control officer;~~
 a veterans' agent-service officer; ~~and~~
 a veterans' graves committee,
a municipal affordable housing trust,

and such other offices, employees, and committees as defined by law; or section 3-2(d) and any other relevant sections of this charter.

Consistent with applicable laws and any trust provisions, the town may regulate by bylaw the number, composition, term, and duties of any committee listed in this section; and any committee listed herein may be discontinued in the same manner as it was established.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote. See Appendix A for article language with changes incorporated.

This article incorporates the changes the Charter Review Committee are recommending and makes the final changes needed to consolidate the Highway and Cemetery Departments into a Department of Public Works. Should Article 3 not pass – this article will be tabled.

ARTICLE 15. Acceptance of a Portion of Box Mill Road as a Town Way

To see if the Town will vote to accept as a public way a portion of the roadway known as Box Mill Road as heretofore laid out by the Select Board and shown on a plan of land entitled “Layout Plan of Land, Box Mill Road Over Elizabeth Brook, Stow, Massachusetts”, dated June 26, 2023, prepared by Green International Affiliates, Inc., and on file with the Town Clerk, and authorize the Select Board to acquire, by gift, purchase, and/or eminent domain, the fee to and/or easements in a portion of Box Mill Road for all purposes for which public ways are used in the Town of Stow and any drainage, access, utility and/or other easements related thereto; or take any other action relative thereto. **Requires 2/3's affirmative vote**

(Town Administrator)

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote.

This project has been in the works for many years and MassDOT is ready to advertise the project to begin construction in the Spring. Town Meeting has previously authorized the easements and now we are requesting Town Meeting accept the portion of Box Mill Road, on the South side of the bridge, to be a public way, so the work can take place.

ARTICLE 16. Amend General Bylaw Article 4, Section 9

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town Bylaw Article 4, Section 9 adopted pursuant to MGL Chapter 40, Section 57, which statute allows municipalities to deny licenses and permits, among other things, when the applicant or owner of the property to which the license or permit relates owes municipal taxes or fees, to bring such bylaw into accord with the law as revised by the Municipal Modernization Act, with the text to be inserted set forth underlined and the text to be deleted shown in strikethrough; or take any other action relative thereto:

(Town Administrator)

(a) The Treasurer-Collector or other municipal official responsible for records of all municipal taxes, assessments, betterments and other municipal charges, hereinafter referred to as the Treasurer-Collector, shall annually, and may periodically, furnish to each department, board, commission or division, hereinafter referred to as the Licensing Authority, that issues licenses or permits including renewals and transfers, a list of any person, corporation or business enterprises, hereinafter referred to as the Party, that has neglected or refused to pay any local taxes, fees, assessments, betterments or other municipal charges ~~for not less than a twelve-month period~~, and

that such Party has not filed in good faith a pending application for an abatement of such tax or a pending petition before the appellate tax board.

The Finance Committee recommends APPROVAL of this article on a unanimous vote.

Under MGL Chapter 40 Section 57, a town may enact a bylaw that allows the Town to refuse to issue or renew, or to revoke, certain licenses and permits if applicable local taxes, fees and assessments are not currently paid by the owner. The cost to the town, in time and expense, to collect unpaid accounts can be considerable; the right to withhold benefits of ownership to delinquent owners may provide the town with effective leverage to obtain payment.

ARTICLE 17. Citizen's Petition

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Stow Zoning Bylaw by adding a section title ***"Firearms Business Zoning"*** with details pertaining to such as developed with/by the Planning Department/Planning Board and approved through required town processes.

(Citizen's Petition)

The Finance Committee will make a recommendation on this article at Town Meeting. The Planning Board will make a report on this article at Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 18. Special Election

To vote by ballot on Saturday, September 23, 2023, at the Center School, 403 Great Road, in said Town of Stow on the following question. The polls are open from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Shall the Town of Stow be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts required to pay the Town of Stow's allocable share of the bond issued by the Nashoba Regional School District for the purpose of paying costs of a new Nashoba Regional High School, 12 Green Road, Bolton, MA 01740 including site work and athletic fields, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto?

YES _____ NO _____

APPENDIX A

These will be the amended sections of the Charter going forward to the ballot in 2024, should the articles be voted on favorably.

ARTICLE 4. Charter Change – Moderator

Section 2-2: **Presiding Officer**

The town moderator shall preside at all sessions of the town meeting.

In the absence of the moderator, the duly ratified deputy moderator shall preside. In the absence of the moderator and deputy, the town clerk shall open the meeting and preside over the election of a temporary moderator. In the absence of a moderator and the town clerk, the presiding officer shall be determined in accordance with the General Laws.

Section 2-10: **Rules of Procedure**

The town meeting may, by bylaw, establish and from time to time amend, revise, or repeal rules to govern the conduct of all town meetings. The moderator may from time to time establish procedural rules for the conduct of town meetings that do not conflict with any such bylaws, this charter, or with the General Laws.

Section 3-5: **Town Moderator**

(a) Term of Office There shall be a town moderator elected for a term of three years.

(b) Powers and Duties The town moderator shall be the presiding officer of the town meeting, shall regulate its proceedings, decide all questions of order and shall have such other powers and duties as may be provided for that office by the General Laws, by this charter, by bylaw, or by other town meeting vote. Rulings of the moderator regarding procedure and other matters of conduct of town meeting shall be final.

(c) Deputy – The town moderator may nominate a deputy moderator, subject to ratification by town meeting. The term shall be until a deputy moderator is ratified at the following annual town meeting, or such meeting is dissolved, whichever is first. The deputy shall have the authority to act as moderator if the town moderator is unable to act; if the moderator is absent; or for any other duties as assigned by the town moderator, or bylaw.

Notwithstanding section 3-1 (f)(1) “filling of Vacancies” or any other provision, if the office of moderator becomes vacant the deputy moderator nominated and ratified under 3-5(c) shall serve as moderator until the next election.

(d) Appointments - the town moderator shall appoint

- a Finance Committee and other committees as defined in section 2-4
- a regional vocational school committee representative, as defined in section 3-1
- a Charter Review Committee, as defined in section 7-7
- members of a town administrator search committee, as defined by section 4-6
- any other appointments authorized by law.

ARTICLE 5. Charter Change – Investigations

Section 3-2 Select Board

(e) Investigations - The select board may make investigations and may authorize the town administrator to investigate the affairs of the town and the conduct of any town agency including any claims against the town. The select board or town administrator may use outside counsel, or an independent investigator based on the nature of the claim.

ARTICLE 6. Charter Change – Town Administrator

Section 4-1: Appointment, Qualifications, Term

The select board shall appoint a town administrator from a list prepared by the screening committee established by Section 4-6 of this charter. The select board shall appoint the town administrator to serve for a term established by contract with the select board and shall fix the compensation for such person, annually, within the amount appropriated by the town. The town administrator shall be appointed on the basis of demonstrated executive and administrative qualifications and especially fitted by education, training and previous experience to perform the duties of the office. A town administrator need not be a resident of the town or of the Commonwealth at the time of appointment, nor at any time during the period of such service. The town administrator shall not have served in an elective office in the town for at least twelve months prior to appointment. The town may from time to time establish, by bylaw, such additional qualifications as seem necessary and appropriate.

Section 4-2(h): Powers and Duties

(h) To recommend to the select board policies for the rental and use of all town facilities and property except school property and property under the control of the conservation commission. The town administrator shall be responsible for the maintenance and repair of all town buildings and facilities placed under the town administrator's control by the select board, including school property if so voted by the local school committee.

Section 4-4: Acting Town Administrator

(a) Temporary Absence. By letter filed with the select board, the town administrator may designate a qualified town administrative officer or employee to exercise the powers and perform the duties of the town administrator during a temporary absence. During a temporary absence the select board may revoke such designation whereupon it may appoint another qualified town administrative officer or employee to serve until the town administrator returns.

(b) Vacancy. Any vacancy in the office of town administrator caused by absences greater than thirty days, suspension, removal, resignation, or death shall be filled as soon as possible by the select board in accordance with the procedures of Section 4-6 of this charter, but, pending such regular appointment, the select board shall appoint a town employee or other person to perform the duties of the office on an acting basis. Any temporary appointment shall be for a period not exceeding 90 days and may be renewed for such additional periods, each up to 90 days, as may be determined necessary by the select board. Compensation for such person shall be set by the select board.

(c) Powers and Duties. The powers of the temporary or acting town administrator, under (a) and (b) above, shall be limited to matters not admitting of delay.

Section 4-6: Selecting a Town Administrator

Immediately upon notification of a vacancy or pending vacancy in the office of town administrator, the process of establishing a screening committee for the purpose of soliciting, receiving, and evaluating applications for the position of town administrator shall commence.

The screening committee shall consist of five voters, two of whom shall be appointed by the select board and three by the town moderator. Such voters, at the time of appointment, shall not be serving in any elective office or as a member of any multiple member board.

Not more than 30 days following the appointment of the committee, the appointed members of the committee shall meet to initiate the process of selecting the new town administrator.

The screening committee shall review all applications received by it, screen all qualified applicants by checking and verifying work records and other credentials, and provide for interviews to be conducted with such number of candidates as it deems to be necessary.

As soon as feasible, the committee shall submit to the select board the names of not less than three nor more than five persons whom it believes to be available and suited to perform the duties of the office of town administrator.

The select board, in an expedient manner, shall choose by majority vote one of the said nominees to serve as town administrator or reject all nominees.

The entire selection process, beginning with the announcement of a vacancy or pending vacancy in the office of the town administrator, shall be completed within a period of 180 days in agreement with the provisions of Section 4-4(b) of this charter, or such longer period as approved by the select board.

Upon the appointment of a town administrator, the screening committee established hereunder shall be considered discharged.

Article 7. Charter Change – Elected Officials, Town Administrator, General Provisions

Section 3-2: Select Board

(b) Powers and Duties - The executive powers of the town shall be vested in the select board which shall be deemed to be the chief executive officer of the town. The select board shall have all of the executive powers it is possible for a select board to have and to exercise. The select board shall serve as the chief policy making agency of the town.

The select board shall be responsible for:

(1) the formulation and promulgation of policy directives and guidelines to be followed by all town agencies serving under it; and

(2) in conjunction with other elected town officers and multiple member bodies, the development and promulgation of policy guidelines designed to bring all town agencies into harmony.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any member of the select board, nor a majority of such members, to become involved in the day-to-day administration of any town agency. It is the intention of this provision that the select board shall act only through the adoption of broad policy guidelines which are to be implemented by officers and employees serving under it.

Section 3-6: Planning Board

(b) Powers and Duties - The planning board shall make careful studies of the resources, possibilities, and needs of the town and shall make plans for the development of the town consistent with any master plan developed in accordance with Section 81D of Chapter 41 of the General Laws and this charter. The planning board shall make recommendations to the town meeting on all proposed warrant articles which affect land use and development, including, but not limited to, proposals to amend the zoning bylaw and zoning map. The planning board shall have all of the other powers and duties which are given to planning boards under the constitution and general laws of the Commonwealth, and such additional powers and duties as may be authorized, by this charter, by bylaw, or by other town meeting vote.

Section 4-2: Powers and Duties

The town administrator shall be the chief administrative officer of the town, directly responsible to the select board. The powers and duties of the town administrator shall include, but are not intended to be limited to, the following:

(s) To coordinate the efforts of all town agencies in adhering to the intent of, and effectuating the implementation of, any master plan developed in accordance with the provisions of Section 81D of Chapter 41 of the General Laws and Section 7-7(c) of this charter and to recommend modifications and improvements to any such master plan.

Section 7-7: Periodic Review of Charter and ByLaws

(c) Master Plan Committee: The Master Plan shall be reviewed at the direction of the planning board every five years, and updated in whole, or in part, in accordance with the general laws. When revisions are needed to the Plan, the planning board shall specify the desired composition of a master plan committee of at least five (5) members to oversee the plan revisions, which committee shall be composed of representatives of relevant boards, committees, and departments and at least one resident at large. Multiple member bodies shall select their own representatives, and any resident at large shall be jointly appointed by majority vote of the elect board and planning board. The committee shall serve until the plan has been presented to and accepted by the planning board.

ARTICLE 8. Charter Change – Removal and Suspensions

Section 5-4: Removals and Suspensions

Any appointed officer, appointed member of a multiple member body, or employee of the town not subject to the provisions of the state civil service law, or covered by the terms of a collective bargaining agreement which provides a different method, and whether appointed for a fixed or indefinite term, may be suspended or removed from office by the appointing authority for good cause. The term "cause" shall include, but not be limited to incapacity (other than temporary illness), inefficiency, insubordination, and conduct unbecoming the office.

Any appointed officer, appointed member of a multiple member body, or employee of the town may be suspended from office by the appointing authority if such action is deemed by the appointing authority to be necessary to protect the interests of the town. However, no suspension shall be for more than fifteen days. Suspension may be coterminous with removal and shall not interfere with the rights of the officer or employee under the removal procedure given below.

The appointing authority when removing any such officer, appointed member of a multiple member body, or employee of the town shall act in accordance with the following procedure:

- (c) A written notice of the intent to remove and a statement of the cause or causes therefore shall be delivered by hand or by certified mail to the last known address of the person sought to be removed; and
- (d) When acting under this section 5-4, the appointing authority shall comply with applicable law.

Nothing in this section shall be construed as granting any rights to a hearing when a person who has been appointed for a fixed term and is not reappointed when the term expires.

ARTICLE 9. Charter Change – Select Board Appointments

Section 5-5: Town Administrative Organization

Until such time as a different form of organization shall be provided, in accordance with the provisions of Section 5-1 of this charter, the following outline of organization shall be operative:

- (a) The select board shall appoint:
 - a town administrator and assistant town administrator;
 - a conservation commission;
 - an open space committee;
 - a board of registrars of voters;
 - a zoning board of appeals;
 - a council on aging;
 - a development and industrial commission;
 - a cable television advisory committee;
 - a cultural council;

a board of cemetery trustees;
 constables;
 an emergency management officer and related personnel;
 an historical commission;
 a superintendent of streets
 a police chief and other police officers;
 a fire chief and other full time fire fighting personnel or a board of fire engineers;
 a forest fire warden;
 a town collector and treasurer;
 a town accountant;
 an inspector of buildings;
 a zoning enforcement officer;
 a wire inspector, a plumbing inspector and a gas inspector;
 a sealer of weights and measures;
 a recreation commission;
 members of the Lake Boon Commission as provided by law;
 town counsel;
 the Randall Relief Fund Trustees;
 the Randall Town Fund Trustees;
 the Hale School Fund Trustees;
 a surveyor of wood and lumber;
 a fence viewer;
 a tree warden;
 a veterans' service officer;
 a veterans' graves committee,
 a municipal affordable housing trust,
 and such other offices, employees, and committees as defined by law; or section 3-2(d) and any other relevant sections of this charter.

Consistent with applicable laws and any trust provisions, the town may regulate by bylaw the number, composition, term, and duties of any committee listed in this section; and any committee listed herein may be discontinued in the same manner as it was established.

ARTICLE 10. Charter Change – General Provisions

Section 7-8: Procedures Governing Multiple Member Bodies

(a) Meetings - All multiple member bodies shall meet at such times as they may by their own rules prescribe. Posting of notices, agendas and conduct of meetings shall be as required by applicable law. Except in cases of emergency, special meetings of any multiple member body shall be held on the call of the respective chair or by one third of the members thereof. Each member shall be notified of the date and time of such meeting not less than the same public notice period established by law. Special meetings of any multiple member body shall also be called within ten days after the date of the filing with the town clerk of a petition signed by at least fifty voters and which states the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is to be called.

- (b) Agendas - Before any meeting of a multiple member body is to be held, an agenda containing all items which are scheduled to come before the multiple member body at the meeting shall be posted on the town bulletin board in compliance with applicable law.
- (c) Rules and Minutes - Each multiple member body shall determine its own rules and order of business unless otherwise provided by applicable law, and shall provide for the keeping of minutes of their proceedings. Copies of approved rules and minutes shall be delivered to, and kept available in, the office of the town clerk for the convenience and review of the public.
- (d) Reserved.
- (e) Reserved.
- (f) Filling of Vacancies - Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the membership of an appointed multiple member body, the remaining members shall forthwith give written notice of such vacancy to the appointing authority. If at the expiration of forty-five days following the delivery of such notice to the appointing authority said appointing authority has not appointed some person to fill the vacancy, the remaining members of the multiple member body may fill such vacancy for the remainder of any unexpired term by majority vote of the remaining members.
- (g) Composition of Multiple Member Bodies - All multiple member bodies when established shall be composed of an odd number of members.
- (h) Associate Members – Except as otherwise provided by applicable law, all multiple member bodies may establish, and select one or more positions of non-voting associate member to assist in the work of the multiple member body subject to such rules as may be adopted in accordance with this section.
- (i) Subcommittees - Except as otherwise provided by applicable law, all multiple member bodies may establish, appoint, and oversee one or more subcommittees as they deem necessary for the purpose of carrying out their duties.
- (j) Organization of Multiple Member Bodies - All multiple member bodies shall annually elect from among its members a Chair, Vice Chair and, as needed, a Clerk.

ARTICLE 11. Charter Change – Elected Officials

Section 3-1: General Provisions

(g) Recall of Elected Officers

(1) Who Can Be Recalled - Any holder of an elective office, as defined in Section 3-1(a), who has served at least six months of, and has at least six months remaining of, the term for which elected, may be recalled therefrom by the voters as herein provided.

(2) Recall Petition - Any two hundred or more voters may file with the town clerk an affidavit containing the name of the officer sought to be recalled, the position held, and a statement of the

grounds for recall. If the affidavit shall be found and certified by the registrars of voters to be sufficient, the town clerk shall within five business days notify the primary petitioner, who shall be the voter first named on such affidavit, that copies of such petition blanks are available at the office of the town clerk during normal business hours. The petition blanks when issued shall be signed by the town clerk and shall have the official town seal attached. The petition blanks shall be dated, addressed to the select board and contain the names of the ten voters first named, the name of the person whose recall is sought, the grounds for recall as stated in the affidavit and shall demand the election of a successor in the said office. A copy of the petition shall be entered in a record book to be kept in the office of the town clerk. The recall petition shall be returned and filed with the town clerk within thirty days after the date the clerk notifies the primary petitioner of the availability of the petition, or the next business day if the thirtieth day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday. The clerk shall notify the primary petitioner of the final date and hour for filing. The recall petition shall be signed by not less than 15 percent of the voters as of the last annual town election and every signature shall include the place of residence of the signer with the street and number, if any, of their residence.

The town clerk shall, prior to 5:00 p.m. within the next two business days following the receipt of an affidavit or petition under this section, submit the affidavit or petition to the registrars of voters in the town, and the registrars shall forthwith certify thereon the number of signatures which are names of voters.

(3) Select Board's Action Upon Receiving Petition - If the petition shall be found and certified by the registrars of voters to be sufficient, the town clerk shall submit the same with a certificate so stating to the select board without delay. The select board shall forthwith give written notice of the receipt of the certificate to the officer sought to be recalled and shall, if the officer does not resign within five business days thereafter, order an election to be held on a date fixed by the select board not less than thirty five days nor more than sixty days after the date of the town clerk's certificate that a sufficient petition has been filed. However, if any other town election is to occur within ninety days after the date of the certificate, the select board shall postpone the holding of the recall election to the date of such other election. If a vacancy occurs in said office after a recall election has been ordered, the election shall nevertheless proceed as provided in this section.

(4) Nomination of Candidates - An officer whose recall is sought may not be a candidate to succeed to the office in the event the vote on the recall is in the affirmative. The nomination of candidates, the publication of the warrant for the recall election, and the conduct of the same shall all be in accordance with the provisions of law relating to elections, unless otherwise provided in this section.

(5) Incumbent Holds Office Until Election - The incumbent shall continue to perform the duties of the office until the recall election. If not recalled, the incumbent shall continue in office for the remainder of the unexpired term. If recalled, such person shall be deemed removed upon the qualification of the successor, who shall hold office for the remainder of the unexpired term. If the successor fails to qualify within five business days after receiving notification of election, the incumbent shall thereupon be deemed removed and the office vacant.

(6) Propositions on Ballot - Ballots used in a recall election shall submit the following propositions in the order indicated:

For the recall of (name of officer) [office held]
Against the recall of (name of officer) [office held]

Immediately to the right of each proposition there shall be a space in which the voter may vote for either of the said propositions. Just above the space, there shall appear the direction "Vote for 1". Under the propositions shall appear the word "candidates" and the direction "Vote for 1", the directions to voters required by Section 42 of Chapter 54 of the General Laws, and beneath this the names of candidates nominated as hereinbefore provided. The proposition for the recall shall fail unless greater than twenty five percent of the voters cast ballots at the election. If at least two-thirds of the votes cast upon the question of recall is in the affirmative, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. If less than two-thirds of the votes cast is in the affirmative, the ballots for candidates need not be counted.

(7) Repeat of Recall Petition - No recall petition shall be filed against an officer subjected to a recall election and not recalled thereby during the remainder of such officer's then current term of office.

(8) Appointment of Person Recalled - No person who has been recalled from an office, or who has resigned from office while recall proceedings were pending against such person, shall be appointed to any town office within two years after such recall or such resignation.

ARTICLE 12. Charter Change – General Provisions

Section 7-5: Definitions

(g) Town Bulletin Board - The place designated by the select board for posting notices required by bylaw, charter, constitution or general law and any other location designated by the select board from time to time. May also be referred to as the "official bulletin board."

(a)(h) Voter – The word "voter" shall mean a registered voter of the town.

(i) Master Plan – the plan developed in accordance with chapter 41, Section 81D of the General Laws, and other applicable law. May also be referred to as "comprehensive plan".

ARTICLE 13. Charter Change – Administrative

Section 5-1: Organization of Town Agencies

(b) Administrative Code - Subject only to express prohibitions in the General Laws or this charter, the town administrator, after consultation with the select board, may from time to time prepare and submit to the town meeting a plan of organization or reorganization to consolidate, abolish, or reorganize any town agency, in whole or in part, establish such new town agencies as is deemed necessary to the same extent as is provided in Section 5-1(a) for bylaws, and for such purpose transfer the duties and powers and, so far as is consistent with the use for which the funds were voted by the town, transfer the appropriation of one town agency to another, provided, however, that no function

assigned by this charter to a particular town agency may be discontinued or, unless this charter specifically so provides, assigned to any other.

Whenever the town administrator prepares such a plan, the select board shall hold one or more public hearings on the proposal giving notice by publication on the town bulletin board, which notice shall describe the scope of the proposal and the time and place at which the hearing will be held not less than seven days following said publication. Following such public hearing, the proposal, which may have been amended subsequent to the public hearing, shall be submitted to the town meeting by an appropriate warrant article.

An organization or reorganization plan shall become effective at the expiration of 60 days following the date of the town meeting at which the proposal is approved by a majority vote. The town meeting may vote only to approve or disapprove the plan and may not vote to amend or alter the plan in any substantive manner.

Section 6-2: Submission of Budget and Budget Message

(a) At least 30 days prior to the date scheduled for town meeting in accordance with the bylaws, the town administrator, after consultation with the select board, shall submit to the finance committee a proposed operating budget for the ensuing fiscal year with an accompanying budget message and supporting documents. The town administrator shall simultaneously provide for the publication, on the town bulletin board and/or website (if different), of a general summary of the proposed budget. The summary shall specifically indicate any major variations from the operating budget for the current fiscal year and the reason for such changes. The notice shall further indicate the times and places at which complete copies of the proposed operating budget are available for examination by the public.

Section 6-5: Action on the Budget

(a) Public Hearing - Forthwith upon its receipt of the proposed operating budget, the finance committee shall provide for the publication on the town bulletin board of a notice stating the time and place, not less than seven days following such publication, at which it will hold a public hearing on the proposed operating budget as submitted.

Section 6-6: School Committee Budget

(a) Public Hearing: The local school committee shall conduct a public hearing on its proposed annual budget not less than seven days prior to the meeting at which it is scheduled to vote on such budget. Notice of the public hearing shall be published on the town bulletin board not less than seven days prior to the hearing. The notice shall contain a general summary of its proposed budget and shall specifically indicate any major variations from the budget for the then current fiscal year and the reasons for such changes. It shall further indicate the times and places at which complete copies of its proposed budget are available for examination by the public.

ARTICLE 14. Charter Change - Select Board Appointments and to Vest Authorities for Cemeteries and Streets in Director of Public Works

Section 5-5: Town Administrative Organization

Until such time as a different form of organization shall be provided, in accordance with the provisions of Section 5-1 of this charter, the following outline of organization shall be operative:

- (a) The select board shall appoint:
- a town administrator and assistant town administrator;
 - a conservation commission;
 - an open space committee;
 - a board of registrars of voters;
 - a zoning board of appeals;
 - a council on aging;
 - a development and industrial commission;
 - a cable television advisory committee;
 - a cultural council;
 - constables;
 - an emergency management officer and related personnel;
 - an historical commission;
 - a director of public works, who shall be vested with the powers of cemetery commissioners and superintendents of streets in the General Laws;
 - a police chief and other police officers;
 - a fire chief and other full time fire fighting personnel or a board of fire engineers;
 - a forest fire warden;
 - a town collector and treasurer;
 - a town accountant;
 - an inspector of buildings;
 - a zoning enforcement officer;
 - a wire inspector, a plumbing inspector and a gas inspector;
 - a sealer of weights and measures;
 - a recreation commission;
 - members of the Lake Boon Commission as provided by law;
 - town counsel;
 - the Randall Relief Fund Trustees;
 - the Randall Town Fund Trustees;
 - the Hale School Fund Trustees;
 - a surveyor of wood and lumber;
 - a fence viewer;
 - a tree warden;
 - a veterans' service officer;
 - a veterans' graves committee,
 - a municipal affordable housing trust,
- and such other offices, employees, and committees as defined by law; or section 3-2(d) and any other relevant sections of this charter.

Consistent with applicable laws and any trust provisions, the town may regulate by bylaw the number, composition, term, and duties of any committee listed in this section; and any committee listed herein may be discontinued in the same manner as it was established.

Committee Volunteer Opportunities

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION – 1 member to fill the remainder of 3-year term expiring June 30, 2024, 1 member to fill the remainder of 3-year term expiring June 30, 2025, and 1 member to fill the remainder of a 3-year term expiring June 30, 2026

The Stow Agricultural Commission was created by the December 2005 Special Town Meeting to help reserve the rural character of Stow by helping to preserve agriculture. The Commission will help keep Stow farms viable by promoting agriculture through educational literature, events, and articles. The Commission can act as a voice for agriculture in Town government, helping to ensure that the various boards understand the impact of their actions on agriculture. The Commission consists of five members appointed by the Select Board. – Meets approximately once per year

COMPLETE STREETS- 1 member-at-large for a 1-year term expiring June 30, 2024

The Complete Streets Committee serves to advise the Select Board, as well as the Highway and Planning Departments as appropriate, in applying Complete Streets principles to Stow's roadway network on an ongoing basis. Utilizing information from public outreach and Town Planning documents, including the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan as amended, the Complete Streets Committee will provide informed judgement regarding the desirability and feasibility of applying said principles, make recommendations for the purpose of complying with the Town of Stow Complete Streets Policy, and guide the Town's efforts in developing and implementing traffic safety policies and interventions throughout Stow. – Meets as needed – typically 7 or 8 times per year

CONSTABLE – One position for a term expiring June 30, 2026

Post annual and special Town Meeting warrants and other required documents for the Town Clerk. Post in various town locations, meeting required deadlines. Occasional – as needed by the Town Clerk.

CULTURAL COUNCIL – 2 members for 3-year terms expiring June 30, 2026

The Stow Cultural Council (SCC) defines its mission as follows: to create a closer-knit community in Stow by sponsoring and supporting activities and events that bring the diverse elements of our community together for enjoyment and cultural enrichment. The SCC is seeking to fund projects that will bring together parts of the community that do not often interact in their day-to-day life. We feel that a wide variety of cultural events can be used to foster understanding between the various groups in town through experiencing events together, working together on projects, and sharing stories about Stow's history. Meets approximately 4 or 5 times per year

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION – 7 members to reestablish the commission, with staggered terms

As an advisory committee, the Stow Economic Development and Industrial Commission (EDIC) shall support new and existing businesses and identify needs and action steps to further business opportunities in the Stow community. The EDIC shall work with Stow Boards and Commissions,

Stow businesses, and residents to balance Stow's small town character with business development within the town. To achieve these goals the EDIC shall develop baseline business information and studies on Stow's evolving economic condition as well as provide liaison and/or advocacy between the town of Stow government and business interests within the community. Meets as needed.

HALE HIGH SCHOOL FUND TRUSTEES – 1 member for life tenure

The Trustees continue to annually provide funding for the Hale Reference Room for the Library Director to purchase the needed reference materials or provide the necessary room maintenance. This includes purchasing online databases, reference room computer & monitor, replacing lighting and shades. Meets as needed – typically 4 or 5 times per year

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE- 1 member for a three-year term expiring June 30, 2026

Advise the Select Board, and other public and private stakeholders, on the protection of the Town's open space priorities. Prioritize and evaluate Chapter 61 and other parcels for their significant conservation and open space values. Lead in the implementation and updating of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Meets monthly

SPRINGFEST –2 members for 2-year terms expiring June 30, 2024 and 2 members for 2-year terms expiring June 30, 2025

The Springfest Committee plans, organizes, and runs the annual Springfest Day. Meets regularly from February through May for planning purposes.

VETERANS GRAVES COMMITTEE – 2 members for 1-year terms expiring June 30, 2024

The Stow Veterans Graves Committee is comprised of 3 volunteer citizens of Stow. Primary responsibility is to ensure the proper marking and identification of veteran graves in the town cemeteries. This includes annual replacement of all flags, usually accomplished the Saturday before Memorial Day. The Committee also coordinates all Memorial Day Parade activities and guest speakers. Meets as needed – typically 3 or 4 times per year

*** For more information, or to volunteer for any of the above vacancies, please visit the Town's website at www.stow-ma.gov and click on Board & Committee Vacancies on the left menu bar.**

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**TOWN OF STOW
MASSACHUSETTS
2023-2024**

SELECT BOARD

Cortni Frecha, Chair
Megan Birch-McMichael, Clerk
Hector Constantzos
Ingeborg Hegemann Clark
John “JT” Toole

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Denise M. Dembkoski

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Christopher Buck
Kevin Gross
Brian Patuto
Evgenia Petrova