

TOWN CHARTER OXFORD, CONNECTICUT

PROPOSED

2015

CHARTER REVISION



Effective January 1, 2016

COMMISSION MEMBERS

**Mark Gross, Chairman; Margaret West, Secretary
Ed Roman Keith O'Hara, Brett Olbrys, Maureen Stachowicz**

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meetings for each subsequent calendar year shall be filed with the Town Clerk in accordance with Section 2-5(B) of this Charter. Boards who wish to maintain their annual schedule of meetings without the necessity of posting Special Meetings during the thirty (30) day interim may file this schedule any time prior to the first (1st) of December.

(C) The compensation of all paid Town officials shall be as recommended by the Board of Selectmen, and shall be subject to the same budgeting procedure described in Section 3-5(B) of this Charter. Compensation line items may not be increased by the Board of Finance unless a request for an increase has been made by the Board of Selectmen. Officials serving without pay shall receive reimbursement for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, subject to the limits of appropriations available for such purposes.

(D) The First Selectman or his designated agent shall provide each person appointed to a board or commission with a copy of the ordinance or other source which defines the duties of the office.

Section 2-5: Posting and Filing Requirements under the Freedom of Information Act

(A) All meetings of every board, committee and commission shall be open to the public in accordance with the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act (Section 1-225 of the General Statutes, hereinafter FOIA), except for executive sessions as defined in subsection (6) of Section 1-200 of the General Statutes. All meeting notices, agendas, votes and minutes must be filed with the Town Clerk within the time limits prescribed for such actions by FOIA and which are specified in the following paragraphs. with the exception of the Board of Education which shall file all meeting notices, agendas, votes and minutes at the Board of Education Central office, within the time limits prescribed for such actions by FOIA and which are specified in the following paragraphs.

(B) Not later than January 31 of each year, the Chairman or Secretary of all boards shall file a schedule of regular meetings for the ensuing calendar year in the office of the Town Clerk. No regular meeting shall be scheduled within thirty (30) days of such filing, but boards may convene special meetings during that time upon twenty-four (24) hours notice.

(C) The Clerk or Secretary of each board shall prepare, keep and maintain a record of the proceedings of all regular, special and emergency meetings. Minutes shall include the roll of those present, a description of the items of business discussed or transacted, a reference to all correspondence received, and the recorded vote of each member on all issues. In addition, the vote of each member upon any issue before a board must be reduced to writing and made available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's office within forty-eight (48) hours.

(D) Minutes of regular meetings must be filed in the office of the Town Clerk and on the Town's municipal website within seven (7) calendar days. Minutes of special meetings must be filed within seven (7) business days. Minutes of emergency meetings must state the reason for the emergency and must be filed within seventy-two (72) hours after the meeting.

(E) Agendas for regular meetings of the Board of Selectmen shall be filed in the office of the Town Clerk not less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to each meeting. Agendas for regular meetings of all other boards must be filed not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to each meeting and shall be made available to the public and posted on the Town's municipal website within said time. Agendas for special meetings of all boards, including the Board of Selectmen, shall include the business to be conducted, the time and place of the meeting, and shall be filed in the Town Clerk's office not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to each meeting.

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Charter. Emergency appropriations shall be restricted to those emergencies arising from natural disasters and other unforeseen events, and any delay in making such appropriation would further jeopardize the lives, health or property of citizens or property of the Town.

(B) The total amount of any such appropriation shall not exceed two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) in any one fiscal year. Written notification of such appropriations shall be given to the Board of Finance within forty eight (48) hours and a copy shall be filed in the office of the Town Clerk as required by Section 2-5 of this Charter.

(C) In the absence of sufficient general fund resources to meet such emergency appropriations, additional means of financing shall be provided in such manner, consistent with the provisions of the General Statutes and of this Charter, as may be determined by the Board of Selectmen with the advice of the Board of Finance.

Section 6-9: Transfers, Additional Appropriations and Special Appropriations

(A) Requests for Transfers of Appropriations:

(1) Transfers of appropriations are transfers of funds from one budgeted line item to another within an approved departmental budget.

(2) All departmental requests for transfers of appropriations shall be made in writing to the Board of Selectmen. Within fifteen (15) business days, the Board of Selectmen shall act upon such requests and shall forward them, along with comments and their recommendations, to the Board of Finance for action. Such requests, along with Selectmen's recommendations, shall be detailed in the minutes of the Board of Selectmen's meeting and filed with the Town Clerk. The Board of Finance shall act upon such requests not later than 60 days after the Board of Selectmen approval. If action is not taken within 60 days after the Board of Selectmen approval, the request shall be considered approved. For the purpose of this section action means to approve or disapprove. All requests for transfers of appropriations may be approved by the Board of Finance after a favorable recommendation by the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Finance shall require notice of its action, together with the reasons for its action, to be detailed in the minutes of its meeting. As provided in Section 2-5 of this Charter, results of their votes shall be filed in the office of the Town Clerk within forty-eight (48) hours.

(B) Requests for Additional Appropriations:

(1) Additional appropriations are departmental requests to increase an existing budgeted line item with supplemental funds from outside the approved departmental budget, and may be funded from available funds within the approved town budget or from the general fund surplus balance.

(2) All departmental requests for additional appropriations shall be made in writing to the Board of Selectmen, and shall be approved in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph (D). Within fifteen (15) business days, the Board of Selectmen shall act upon such requests, and shall forward them, along with comments and their recommendations, to the Board of Finance for action. Such requests, along with Selectmen's recommendations, shall be detailed in the minutes of the Board of Selectmen's meeting and filed with the Town Clerk. The Board of Finance shall act upon such requests not later than 60 days after the Board of Selectmen approval. If action is not taken within 60 days after the Board of Selectmen approval, the request shall be considered approved. For the purpose of this section action means to approve or disapprove. The Board of Finance shall require notice of its action, together with the reasons for its action, to be detailed in the minutes of its meeting.

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As provided in Section 2-5 of this Charter, results of their votes shall be filed in the office of the Town Clerk within forty-eight (48) hours.

(C) Requests for Special Appropriations:

(1) A special appropriation is a request for funding for any item that was not included in the approved town budget, and may be funded from the general fund surplus balance or from available funds within the approved town budget.

(2) All departmental requests for special appropriations shall be made in writing to the Board of Selectmen, and shall be acted upon in the same manner as requests for additional appropriations as provided in Paragraph (B)(2) above.

(D) Limitations on Special Appropriations and Additional Appropriations:

Special appropriations and additional appropriations shall be limited as follows:

(1) Requests for special appropriations or additional appropriations in any amount that will be funded from the general fund surplus balance shall be approved by action of a duly warned Town Meeting after favorable recommendation from both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance.

(2) Requests for special appropriations, or additional appropriations of less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000), cumulatively, per department, per fiscal year, that will be funded from within the approved budget shall be approved by the Board of Finance after a favorable recommendation from the Board of Selectmen.

(3) Requests for additional appropriations of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or more, cumulatively, per department, per fiscal year, that will be funded from within the approved town budget shall be approved by action of a duly warned Town Meeting after a favorable recommendation from both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance.

Section 6-10: Requests for Appropriations in Excess of \$500,000

(A) Any request for an appropriation in excess of five hundred thousand (\$500,000), or any request for an appropriation for a capital project that would require any form of indebtedness to be authorized or issued by the Town, shall be made in writing to the Board of Selectmen.

(B) Within thirty (30) days of receipt of said request, the Board of Selectmen shall call a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance for review and consideration of the request. At the joint session, the requesting authority shall present an explanation of the funds requested and a detailed overview of the capital project being proposed, and shall be prepared to answer any questions posed by members of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance. After this presentation, the joint session shall consider and discuss any proposed funding sources for the project before adjourning for independent action by each Board.

(C) Within fifteen (15) days from the date of the joint meeting, the Board of Selectmen shall meet and determine whether or not it can act favorably upon such request. If the action is favorable, Selectmen shall forward the request, along with their comments and recommendations, to the Board of Finance for action.

(D) When the request for an appropriation does not require borrowing, the Board of Finance shall have fifteen (15) days from receipt of notice from the Board of Selectmen to meet and act upon the request. For any request that does require any form of borrowing, the Board of Finance shall have thirty (30) days to meet and hold a public hearing on the funding of the project before it acts upon the request. Within forty-eight (48) hours of either such meeting, the Board of Finance shall provide written notification of the results of its action to the Board of Selectmen.

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thereon, provided that at least fifteen percent (15%) of the persons eligible to vote at a general or special election in the Town of Oxford shall have voted in said referendum.

(D) The Town may, by resolution, borrow in anticipation of taxes an amount not to exceed such taxes, upon approval by the Board of Finance and adoption by a majority vote of qualified voters present and voting at a duly warned Town Meeting. Any amount borrowed in anticipation of taxes shall be repaid within the fiscal year such indebtedness is incurred, or within the following fiscal year.

Section 6-12: Accounting and Expenditures

(A) **Method of Accounting:** A modified accrual system of accounting shall be used in maintaining the Town financial records, including those of the Board of Education, except where mandated otherwise by state statute. This system shall be operational on or before July 1, 1993 and shall conform to regulations formulated by the Board of Finance.

(B) **Regulations:** All regulations established in accordance with Section 6-12 shall be consistent with this Charter and with the statutory powers and duties of other Town agencies, and all Town agencies shall comply with them. All such regulations shall be filed with the Town Clerk.

(C) **Contracts and Over-expenditure of Appropriations:** No officer or agency of the Town shall enter into any contract that would obligate the Town to expend any amount that exceeds an approved appropriation. Any officer, who, without authority from this Charter, enters into any contract which would obligate the Town to expend any amount that exceeds an approved appropriation except in payment of final judgments rendered against the Town, shall be liable in a civil action in the name of the Town, as provided in Section 7-349 of the General Statutes.

(D) **Purchasing and Bidding Procedures:** Purchases by any office or agency of the Town, including the Board of Education, for supplies, materials, services, equipment and other budgeted purchases that are to become the property of the Town, shall be made under such rules and regulations as shall be established by the Board of Selectmen with the advice of the Board of Finance. The Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education shall review and update said rules and regulations on a periodic basis to ensure they adequately reflect current economic conditions. All purchases referred to herein, including those made by the Board of Education except where mandated otherwise by state statute, and costing in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) shall be made on the basis of at least three sealed bids according to section 6-12 E of this charter. The Board of Selectmen, or where appropriate, the Board of Education, may: (1) reject any or all bids which the deem not to be in the best interest of the Town and, if necessary, request new bids or (2) negotiate with anyone making a bid for terms and conditions deemed to be in the best interest of the Town. The Town Meeting may, by ordinance, adopt such other rules and regulations governing the purchasing procedures and bidding requirements of the Town as may be deemed appropriate.

E) All bids in excess of \$10,000 must be sealed in envelopes addressed to the appropriate town office or agency. Bid envelopes must clearly indicate the name and address of the bidder in the left hand corner of the envelope. Bids shall be typewritten, or handwritten in ink. bids submitted in pencil shall be rejected.

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Telephone, facsimile or email transmitted bids shall not be accepted. Bids received after the specified time and date of the bid opening shall not be considered.

Section 6-13: Review and Approval of Town Contracts

No officer, employee, board, agency, commission or committee of the Town shall enter into any contract by which the Town may become liable for any sum in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) unless and until said contract has been prepared, or reviewed and approved as to form, by the Board of Selectmen, utilizing the services of Town Counsel as needed. Nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to usurp the power and authority of any board of the Town conferred by the Connecticut General Statutes, ordinance, or this Charter.

ARTICLE 7 - ELECTIONS AND ELECTIVE OFFICERS

Section 7-1: Voting Districts

(A) As provided by ordinance, there shall continue to be the one voting district that existed on the effective date of this Charter.

(B) The Town Meeting may change, by ordinance, the number of voting districts and/or their boundaries as it may determine to be in the best interests of the Town. Any such ordinance shall be adopted in the manner prescribed herein: (1) the proposed ordinance shall first be presented at a Public Hearing called to consider such voting district change(s) and the proposed date such change would become effective; (2) it shall be acted upon at the Town Meeting in the manner prescribed by Section 3-1(C) of this Charter; and (3) said ordinance, as recommended by the Town Meeting, shall become effective upon approval by a majority of the Town electors voting thereon at a 'regular election' as defined in Section 1-4 (D) of this Charter.

Section 7-2: State and Federal Elections

Nominations and election of state and federal officers, Judge of Probate, and Registrars of Voters shall be conducted as prescribed in the Constitution and the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut.

Section 7-3: Municipal Elections

(A) A meeting of the electors of the Town of Oxford, hereafter called "the regular Town election", shall take place on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November of 1991, and biennially thereafter. Special Town elections may be called from time to time in accordance with the General Statutes.

(B) All elective offices of the Town of Oxford shall be 'at-large'. Except as otherwise provided in this Charter, all elective Town Officers shall take office on the second Tuesday after the day of the regular town election at which they were elected, and they shall continue in office until their successors have been chosen and qualified. The Town Clerk shall take office on the first Monday of January following his election. Registrars of Voters shall take office on the Wednesday following the first Monday of the January next succeeding their election, or as otherwise specified by State Statute.

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Section 8-10: Fire Commissioners

(A) *Until such time as the Town Meeting enacts an ordinance establishing a Fire Commission and specifies the exact duties and responsibilities of the commission, the number of members and terms of office, as well as organizational structure of the Oxford Fire Department, the Board of Selectmen shall be the Fire Commission*

(B) The Board of Selectmen shall appoint the Chief from each company of the Oxford Fire Department to the Board of Chiefs as provided by ordinance. They shall appoint the Fire Police, and the Town Fire Marshal and Deputy Fire Marshal(s) who shall serve in accordance with Section 29-297 of the General Statutes.

Section 8-11: Housing Authority

The Board of Selectmen shall appoint five (5) members serving overlapping terms of five (5) years each to serve as Commissioners of the Oxford Housing Authority. These individuals shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 128, Section 8-41, and shall have the duties and responsibilities conferred upon housing authorities by Chapters 128 and 130 of the General Statutes and by duly enacted ordinance.

Section 8-12: Library Board of Directors

The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a Library Board of Directors who shall be responsible for the oversight and management of the Oxford Public Library. The Town Treasurer, or his designee, shall serve as ex-officio member of the board as prescribed by ordinance. The number of directors, their terms and their powers and duties shall be prescribed by ordinance and Chapter 190 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 8-13: Parks & Recreation Commission

The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a Parks & Recreation Commission responsible for the oversight of all Town parks and recreational facilities, and for providing all citizens with access to a program of athletic and other recreational activities. The Commission shall employ the services of a Director and other employees necessary to accomplish this objective. The number of members, their terms and their powers and duties shall be prescribed by ordinance and any special or general laws of the State of Connecticut.

Section 8-14: Planning & Zoning Commission Alternates and Zoning Board of Appeals Alternates

The Board of Selectmen shall appoint Planning & Zoning Commission Alternates and Zoning Board of Appeals Alternates for those terms specified by ordinance. Their powers and duties shall be prescribed by ordinance and Chapters 124 and 126 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 8-15: Police Commission and Chief of Police

(A) Until such time as the Town Meeting enacts an ordinance establishing a Police Commission, the Board of Selectmen shall be the Police Commission and the First Selectman shall be the Chief of Police. The Board of

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Selectmen may utilize the services of Resident State Troopers per Section 29-5 of the General Statutes and/or they may organize a local Police Department by ordinance. Within the funds provided in the budget, the Board of Selectmen shall appoint qualified Constables and/or Special Constables in accordance with Town ordinance and state statutes.

(B) Upon enactment of any such ordinance, the Police Commission shall be the policy making unit for the department and shall establish operational policies and directives to be executed by the Chief of Police. Such ordinance shall specify the Commission's duties and responsibilities, number of members and terms of office and any other powers prescribed by Chapter 104, Sections 7-274 et al, of the General Statutes.

Section 8-16: Water Pollution Control Authority

The Board of Selectmen shall appoint a Water Pollution Control Authority responsible for implementing and supervising the management, control, operation and maintenance of the town's sewerage system or wastewater management system. The Authority's number of members, their terms and their powers and duties shall be prescribed by ordinance and Chapter 103, Section 7-246 of the General Statutes.

Section 8-17: Website Committee

(A) The Board of Selectmen may appoint a Website Committee which shall be responsible for the continuous maintenance and updating of the Town of Oxford's municipal website located at <http://www.oxford-ct.gov>.

ARTICLE 9 - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Section 9-1: General

The Board of Selectmen shall have the power to hire, establish the working conditions of, promote, discipline, suspend and dismiss any persons employed by the Town, either full or part time, except as otherwise specified in this Charter, or provided by law. Where policies and rules are adopted in accordance with Section 9-9 of this Charter, said policies and rules shall be followed by the Board in the exercise of this power. The Board may delegate this power entirely or partially to the First Selectman.

Section 9-2: Officials Covered by Connecticut General Statutes

(A) In accordance with Section 9-1 of this Charter, the Board of Selectmen shall hire or appoint qualified persons to all positions required by the General Statutes to serve at the pleasure of the Selectmen, unless otherwise specified in the rules, regulations or ordinances of the Town of Oxford. Their powers and duties shall be as prescribed in the State Statutes and the ordinances of the Town.

(B) Except as otherwise prescribed by law, the terms of those Administrative Officials and other Town officers appointed under Article 9 shall begin on the second Tuesday following the regular Town election and shall expire on the termination date of the term of the Board of Selectmen appointing such officers.

Section 9-3: Other Officers and Employees

Section 10-5: Effective Date

(A) The effective date of this Charter shall be at noon on January 1, 1991. The effective date of any subsequent revisions shall be at noon on the January first immediately following their adoption.

(B) Copies of all previous Charters are on file in the Office of the Oxford Town Clerk and in the Office of the Secretary of the State of Connecticut.

First Revision approved November 1993, effective January 1, 1994

Second Revision approved November 1998, effective January 1, 1999

Third Revision approved November 2004, effective January 1, 2005

Fourth Revision approved November 2007, effective January 1, 2008

Fifth Revision approved November 2011, effective January 1, 2012

Sixth Revision approved November 2015, effective January 1, 2016

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TOWN CLERK
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT
Michael A. West