

SENATE No. 2953

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

SENATE, February 5, 2026.

The committee on Senate Bills in the Third Reading to whom was referred the House Bill to amend the town of Natick home rule charter (House, No. 3898); reports, recommending that the same be amended as follows, and that, when so amended, it will be correctly drawn:-- by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in place thereof the text contained in Senate document numbered 2953.

For the committee,
Sal N. DiDomenico

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1 SECTION 1. Subsection (c) of section 2-6 of article 2 of the charter of the town of
2 Natick, which is on file with the archivist of the commonwealth, as provided in section 12 of
3 chapter 43B of the General Laws, is hereby amended by adding the following 2 sentences:- The
4 lists so prepared and maintained shall at all times be subject to the review and approval of the
5 town moderator or their designee. The Town Moderator may prepare and maintain such lists in
6 the event of failure of the town clerk to prepare and maintain the list required by this subsection
7 on a timely basis.

8 SECTION 2. Said section 2-6 of said article 2 of said charter is hereby further amended
9 by striking out subsection (d) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

10 (d) Filling of Vacancies - If a vacancy has been declared to exist either by a letter of
11 resignation filed with the town clerk, by the issuance of a certificate from the town clerk that
12 such person has died or has removed from the town or has failed to take the oath of office or by a
13 failure to elect a town meeting member, such vacancy shall be filled until the next town election
14 from the list of persons eligible to fill vacancies in the precinct. The town moderator shall make
15 appointments in accordance with the descending order of votes received on the lists; provided,
16 however, that, if necessary to resolve ties, the town moderator shall appoint a town meeting

member to fill a vacancy by a lottery among those tied. Any such lottery shall be conducted at a time and place open to the public.

In the event of a failure to appoint a person to fill a vacancy in a position of town meeting member or the failure of a person so appointed to qualify, the town moderator shall schedule a caucus among the then current town meeting members in the precinct in question for the purpose of selecting a person to fill the vacant town meeting member position. Any such caucus shall be conducted at a time and place open to the public. The town moderator shall provide written notice of the date, time and location of such caucus to the then current town meeting members in the precinct in question; provided, however, that notice shall be not less than 48 hours prior to such caucus, except where 48 hours' notice is not possible due to town meeting scheduling requirements.

Notice of such caucus shall be posted on the town bulletin board and shall be posted on the town of Natick website, in each event, not less than 48 hours prior to such caucus, except where 48 hours' notice is not possible due to town meeting scheduling requirements.

The town moderator or their designee shall preside over such caucus. The eligible candidate who resides in the precinct in question and who receives the highest number of votes at such caucus shall serve as a town meeting member until the next annual town election.

SECTION 3. Section 2-10 of said article 2 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out subsection (a) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(a) Representatives of Town Agencies – The town moderator may require and schedule designated representatives of each town agency to attend any specific or all sessions of the representative town meeting for the purpose of providing the town meeting members with

information pertinent to warrant articles concerning such town agencies. The town moderator may require such attendance to be in the same manner as attendance by town meeting members. If any such representative is deterred by illness or other reasonable cause from attending, such representative or the town moderator shall designate a deputy to attend in their place. The town moderator may establish procedures and requirements concerning remote accessibility of, contact for or participation by representatives from any town agency for the purposes of providing pertinent information to town meeting members. All representatives of town agencies, including any who may not be town residents, shall, during the consideration of articles affecting said agencies, have the same right to speak as a town meeting member but shall have no right to make motions or to vote. Nothing in this section shall prevent the select board, the school committee, other elected multiple-member body, the town manager or the school superintendent from directing persons under their supervision or appointive authority to attend any session of representative town meeting.

SECTION 4. Section 2-11 of said article 2 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out subsection (b) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(b) Initiation of Articles - The select board shall insert in the warrant all petitions which are addressed to and received by it, which request the submission of particular subject matter to the representative town meeting and are filed by: (i) any elected town officer; (ii) any eligible multiple-member body, acting by a majority of its members; (iii) any 10 or more registered voters of the town for any annual town meeting and any 100 or more registered voters of the town for any special town meeting as detailed in section 10 of chapter 39 of the General Laws; or (iv) such other persons or agencies as may be authorized by law or by by-law.

61 All such requests for submission of matters shall be in writing but shall not be required to
62 conform to any particular style or form. The select board shall not less than 14 after days of
63 receipt of a proposed zoning by-law amendment submit the same to the planning board for
64 review.

65 SECTION 5. Paragraph (8) of subsection (d) of section 3-1 of article 3 of said charter is
66 hereby amended by adding the following sentence:- The foregoing procedures on preliminary
67 elections shall not apply whenever the laws of the commonwealth regarding ranked choice
68 voting in local elections shall be effective in the town.

69 SECTION 6. Said Section 3-1 of said article 3 of said charter is hereby further amended
70 by striking out subsection (f) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

71 (f) Coordination - Notwithstanding their election by the voters, the town officers named
72 in this section, excluding the town moderator, shall be subject to the call of the select board or
73 the town manager, at all reasonable times, for consultation, conference and discussion on any
74 matter relating to: (i) their respective offices; and (ii) joint or overlapping areas of administrative
75 activity or policy for the purpose of furthering coordinated administration of fiscal, prudential or
76 municipal affairs of the executive branch of the town. Persons appointed by the town moderator
77 are not subject to the call of the select board or town manager.

78 Notwithstanding this subsection, the select board or town manager may request
79 consultation, conference or discussion with any multiple-member body or town agency on any
80 matter concerning the administration referenced in this subsection.

SECTION 7. Said charter is hereby further amended by striking out the words “town administrator”, each time they appear, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance, the following words:- town manager.

SECTION 8. Section 3-2 of article 3 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out subsections (b) and (c) and inserting in place thereof the following 2 subsections:-

(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 office in 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 town agency and shall be responsible for issuing policy directives and guidelines to be followed by all town agencies serving under it and, in conjunction with other elected town officers, developing and promulgating policy guidelines designed to bring all agencies of the town into harmony; provided, however, that nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any member of the select board, nor a majority of them, 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 to be implemented by officers and employees appointed by or under its authority.

The select board shall cause a record of all its official acts to be kept. To aid it to perform its duties, the select board shall appoint a town manager as provided in article 4.

(c) Appointment Powers - The select board shall, by a majority vote , appoint: (i) a town manager for a term of not more than 3 years; provided, however, that the select board may, by a 2/3 vote, appoint a town manager for a longer term not to exceed 5 years; (ii) 3 registrars of voters for terms of 3 years each, so arranged that 1 such term of office shall expire each year;

(iii) a board of appeals to consist of 5 members appointed for terms of 3 years each, so arranged that as nearly an equal number of such terms as is possible shall expire each year, and 3 associate members appointed for terms of 3 years each, so-arranged that one such term of office shall expire each year; and (iv) a conservation commission to consist of 7 members appointed for terms of 3 years each, so arranged that as nearly an equal number of such terms as is possible shall expire each year. The select board shall either appoint or, by affirmative vote, approve the appointment of such other town agencies or officers as provided and specified in article 6.

The select board shall also appoint such other members of multiple-member bodies as may be provided by town meeting vote or by vote of the select board for the purpose of conducting various studies.

SECTION 9. Section 3-10 of said article 3 of said charter is hereby amended by adding the following subsection:-

(c) Appointment Powers - The town moderator shall appoint a deputy town moderator to preside temporarily over representative town meeting in the temporary absence of the town moderator. The town moderator may also direct the deputy town moderator to assist the town moderator in performing the town moderator's duties and responsibilities. The deputy town moderator shall be appointed for a term not to exceed the remaining term of the town moderator. The town moderator, but not the deputy moderator, shall have such other appointment power as provided by statute, charter or by-laws or vote of town meeting.

SECTION 10. Subsection (b) of section 3-12 of said article 3 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the third sentence and inserting in place thereof the following 2 sentences:- The recreation and parks commission shall also advise the select board on policies

and practices for parks and recreation in the town. If the position of director of recreation and parks department shall become vacant, the commission shall serve as a screening committee for the filling of such vacancy and shall submit not less than 2 names to the town manager from whom the appointment shall be made.

SECTION 11. Section 4-1 of article 4 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out subsections (a) to (c), inclusive, and inserting in place thereof the following 3 subsections:-

(a) Appointment, Term of Office - The select board shall, by a majority vote, appoint a town manager to serve for a term of not more than 3 years and may, by a 2/3 vote, appoint a town manager for a longer term not to exceed 5 years; provided, however, that the first 6 months of any individual's first appointment as town manager shall be considered a probationary period. The select board shall make the appointment of a town manager from a list prepared by a screening committee in accordance with procedures and qualifications established by by-law.

The town manager shall be appointed solely on the basis of executive and administrative qualifications and shall be a person especially fitted by education, training and previous experience in business or public administration to perform the duties of the office of town manager.

(b) Performance Review - The select board shall annually provide for a review of the job performance of the town manager which shall, at least in summary form, be a public record.

(c) Restriction on Other Activities - The town manager shall devote their full time to the duties of the office and shall not hold any other public office, elective or appointive, nor shall the town manager engage in any other business, occupation or profession during their term unless such action is approved in writing, in advance, by the select board.

SECTION 12. Said article 4 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out sections 4-2 and 4-3 and inserting in place thereof the following 2 sections:-

Section 4-2 Powers and Duties

The town manager shall be the chief administrative officer of the town and shall be responsible to the select board for the proper administration of all town affairs placed under the town manager's charge by or under the charter and by-laws. The powers and duties of the town manager shall include, but are not limited to, those listed in this section. Specifically, the town manager:

(1) shall supervise, direct and be responsible for the efficient administration of all functions placed under the town manager's control by the charter, by-law, town meeting vote, vote of the select board or otherwise, including all officers appointed by the town manager and their respective departments;

(2) shall coordinate the activities of all town agencies under the town manager's control with those under the control of officers and multiple-member bodies who are elected directly by the voters of the town;

(3) shall appoint, and may remove, subject to the civil service law and any collective bargaining agreements as may be applicable, all department heads, officers, subordinates and employees for whom no other method of selection is provided by the charter or by-laws, except persons serving under officers and multiple-member bodies directly elected by the voters of the town; provided, however, that copies of all proposed appointments of the town manager shall be posted forthwith on the town bulletin board; and provided further, that except as provided elsewhere in this charter or a by-law concerning appointments requiring affirmative vote

169 approval of the select board, appointments made by the town manager shall become effective on
170 the fifteenth day following the day on which notice of the proposed appointment is filed with the
171 select board, unless the select board shall, within such period, by a majority vote, vote to reject
172 such appointment or has sooner voted to affirm it;

173 (4) shall be entrusted with the administration of a town personnel system, including, but
174 not limited to, personnel policies and practices, rules and regulations, including provisions for an
175 annual employee performance review, and amendments to the personnel by-law as warranted;
176 provided, however, that the town manager shall prepare, maintain and keep current a plan
177 establishing the personnel staffing requirements of each town agency, except those under the
178 jurisdiction of the school committee; and provided further, that the town manager may be
179 advised in connection with the administration of the town personnel system by a personnel board
180 established by by-law;

181 (5) shall attend all regular and special meetings of the select board, unless excused at the
182 town manager's request, and shall have a voice, but not a vote, in all of its proceedings;

183 (6) shall attend all sessions of the representative town meeting and answer all questions
184 addressed to the town manager related to warrant articles and matters under the town manager's
185 general supervision;

186 (7) shall assure that all provisions of state law, this charter, by-laws, votes of the town
187 meeting and votes of the select board and of other town agencies, which require enforcement
188 either by the town manager or by officers or employees subject to the town manager's general
189 supervision and direction, are faithfully carried out, performed and enforced;

(8) shall prepare and submit, in the manner provided in article 5, the fiscal documents pertaining to the annual operating budget and proposed capital outlay program for the town;

(9) shall keep the select board fully informed as to the fiscal condition and needs of the town and make such recommendations to the select board and to other elected and appointive officers as the town manager may deem to be necessary or desirable;

(10) shall assure that full and complete records of the financial and administrative activities of the town are kept and render full reports to the select board at the end of each fiscal year and at such other periods as the select board may reasonably require;

(11) shall have full jurisdiction over the rental and use of all town facilities, except those under the jurisdiction of the school committee; provided, however, that the town manager shall be responsible for the maintenance and repair of all town facilities, including, if authorized by a town meeting vote, those under the jurisdiction of the school committee;

(12) may, at any time, inquire into the conduct of the office or performance of duty of any town officer, town employee or town agency under the town manager's general supervision;

(13) shall assure that a full and complete inventory of all town-owned property, both real and personal, is kept, including all property under the jurisdiction of the school committee and other elected town officers or multiple-member bodies; provided, however, that immaterial or de minimis items shall not be subject to this inventory requirement;

(14) shall be responsible for the negotiation of all contracts and collective bargaining agreements with town employees over wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment, except those under the jurisdiction of the school committee;

(15) shall be responsible for the purchase of all supplies, materials and equipment and award all contracts for supplies, materials and equipment for all departments and activities of the town, except for the school department; provided, however, that the town manager shall examine and inspect, or cause to be examined and inspected, the quality and the condition of all supplies, materials and equipment delivered to or received by any town department, except the school department and shall, in addition, be responsible for the disposal of all surplus supplies, materials and equipment for all departments and activities of the town, except for the school department;

(16) may, in the manner provided in article 6, reorganize, consolidate or abolish town agencies serving under the town manager's general supervision, in whole or in part, provide for new town agencies and, when incidental to any such organization, with the approval of the finance committee, transfer all or a portion of the appropriation made for one town agency to another;

(17) shall be in charge of all machines and software other than machines and software used for educational or classroom purposes and allocate the use thereof among the several town agencies;

(18) may authorize any subordinate officer or employee to exercise any power or duty that the town manager is authorized to perform; provided, however, that all acts which are performed under any such delegation shall be deemed to be the town manager's acts; and

(19) shall perform such other duties as may be required by this charter, by-law, town meeting vote, vote of the select board or otherwise.

Section 4-3 Acting Town Manager

(a) Temporary Absence - The town manager shall, by letter filed with the select board and a copy filed with the town clerk, designate a qualified town officer or employee to exercise the powers and perform the duties of the office of town manager during the town manager's temporary absence. During the temporary absence of the town manager, the select board may not revoke such designation until not less than 10 working days have elapsed, whereupon the select board may designate another qualified town officer or employee to serve as acting town manager until the town manager shall return and assume the town manager's duties.

(b) Vacancy - Any vacancy in the office of town manager shall be filled as soon as possible by the select board; provided, however, that pending such appointment, the select board shall designate a qualified town officer or employee or other qualified individual to perform the duties of the town manager on an acting basis. The appointment of an acting town manager shall be for a term not to exceed 3 months; provided, however, that renewals not to exceed 3 months each and not to exceed a total of an additional 9 months may be provided.

(c) Powers and Duties - The powers of a temporary or acting town manager, under subsection (a) or (b), shall be limited to matters not admitting of delay and shall include authority to make appointments or designations to town office or employment, except that, for positions reporting directly to the town manager, only an acting appointment or designation may be made unless a permanent appointment is authorized in advance by the select board and the appointee is subsequently approved by the select board.

SECTION 13. Said article 4 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out section 4-4 and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 4-4 Removal and Suspension

(a) The select board may, by a majority vote taken with the prior notice to all select board members such that all select board members have a reasonable opportunity to be present, remove the town manager from such office.

(1) During the town manager's probationary period, the town manager may be removed with notice in writing of such removal.

(2) After the town manager's probationary period, the town manager shall not be removed except for inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming the office, insubordination or other good cause. Not less than 30 days prior to the meeting at which the vote to remove the town manager is to be taken, the town manager shall have been notified of such intended vote and, if the town manager so requests in writing, the town manager shall be furnished by the select board with a written statement of the reason or cause for which such removal is proposed. If the town manager so requests in writing, the town manager shall be given a hearing before the select board, which may be either public or private at the option of the town manager, at which the town manager may be represented by counsel, present evidence and call witnesses to testify on the town manager's behalf and examine them.

(b) Notwithstanding anything contained in this section to the contrary, the nonrenewal of the term of the town manager shall not be considered a removal and the provisions of this section shall not apply to any such nonrenewal.

(c) The town manager may be suspended from office by a procedure following the same steps outlined in this section for removal.

(d) The town manager shall continue to receive their full salary until 30 days following the date a final vote of removal has become effective.

(e) Notwithstanding any provision of this charter to the contrary, no performance review of the town manager by the select board and no defect or omission by the select board in the performance review of the town manager, or failure of the select board to conduct a performance review of the town manager, shall constitute an impediment or barrier to removal or suspension under this section.

SECTION 14. Subsection (a) of section 5-2 of article 5 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out the word “him” and inserting in place thereof the following words: the town manager.

SECTION 15. Said subsection (a) of said section 5-2 of said article 5 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out the word “he” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- , which the town manager

SECTION 16. Said article 5 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out sections 5-3 to 5-6, inclusive, and inserting in place thereof the following 4 sections:-

Section 5-3 Submission of Preliminary Budget

Within a time fixed by by-law, before the date on which the representative town meeting is to meet in its spring session, the town manager shall submit to the finance committee a preliminary budget for the ensuing year, with an accompanying budget message and supporting documents. The town manager shall, simultaneously, provide for the publication of a general summary of the preliminary budget in a local newspaper, which shall also indicate the times and places at which complete copies of the preliminary budget and supporting documents are available for examination by the public.

297 Section 5-4 Budget Message

298 The budget message submitted by the town manager shall, at a minimum:

299 (i) provide a comprehensive overview of the proposed budget;

300 (ii) explain the town's fiscal condition, including noteworthy changes in various revenue
301 and expense categories as well as reserves;

302 (iii) outline proposed financial policies of the town for the ensuing fiscal year;

303 (iv) indicate any major variations from the current financial policies together with the
304 reasons for such changes;

305 (v) identify changed priorities and the reasons for such changes;

306 (vi) summarize the town's debt position;

307 (vii) provide an analysis of significant trends and fiscal challenges and the
308 administration's proposed responses thereto;

309 (viii) describe and summarize significant changes, if any, in town services and staffing
310 levels and the reasons for such changes;

311 (ix) include such additional information as the town manager deems desirable or the
312 select board may require; and

313 (x) provide certain information on assets and liabilities of the town as may be required by
314 the representative town meeting by by-law.

315 Section 5-5 The Preliminary Budget

The preliminary budget, in conjunction with the town manager's budget message, shall provide a complete financial plan of all town funds, including the superintendent of schools' proposed budget as submitted under section 5-2 and shall explain differences, if any, between that proposal and the town manager's recommended appropriation for the school department. The preliminary budget must clearly identify any variances between the total recommended appropriations and projected available revenues and identify at least 1 scenario for addressing such variances. Except as may otherwise be required by law or this charter, the financial plan shall be in the form the town manager deems desirable, or as the select board may require. In the presentation of the preliminary budget, the town manager shall use modern concepts of fiscal presentation so as to furnish a maximum amount of information and the best financial controls. Any and all submitted budgets shall be arranged to show the actual and estimated revenues and expenditures for the previous, current and ensuing fiscal years and shall indicate, in separate sections the following:

(i) proposed expenditures for current operations during the ensuing fiscal year, detailed by town agency, function and work programs, and the proposed methods of financing such expenditures;

(ii) proposed capital expenditures during the ensuing fiscal year, detailed by town agency, and the proposed methods of financing such expenditures; and

(iii) estimated surplus revenue and free cash at the end of the current fiscal year, including estimated balances in any special accounts established for specific purposes.

Section 5-6 Action on the Town Manager's Preliminary Budget

(a) Public Hearing - The finance committee shall forthwith, upon receipt of the preliminary budget, provide for the publication of a notice in a local newspaper stating the initial date, time and place, not less than 7 nor more than 14 days following such publication, when the first of at least 1 public hearing will be held by the finance committee on the preliminary budget.

(b) Review - The finance committee shall consider, in open public meetings, the detailed expenditures proposed by each town agency and may confer with representatives of any town agency in connection with its review and consideration. The finance committee may require the town manager, or any other town agency, to furnish it with such additional information as it may deem necessary to assist it in its review of any submitted budget.

(c) Presentation to the Representative Town Meeting - The finance committee shall file a report containing its recommendations for actions on the proposed budget, which shall be available not less than 7 days prior to the date on which the town meeting acts on the proposed budget. When the proposed budget is before the town meeting for action it shall first be subject to amendment, if any, by the finance committee.

SECTION 17. Said charter is hereby further amended by striking out the words “town administrator’s”, each time they appear, and inserting in place thereof, in each instance, the following words:- town manager’s.

SECTION 18. Said article 5 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out section 5-8 and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 5-8 Capital Improvement Program

The town manager shall submit a capital improvement program to the select board and to the finance committee not less than 30 days prior to the date fixed by by-law for the submission of the proposed operating budget. The capital improvement program shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

- (i) a clear, concise and general summary of its contents;
- (ii) a listing of all capital expenditures proposed to be made, by years, during the next ensuing5 fiscal years, with supporting information as to the need for each such expenditure;
- (iii) cost estimates, methods of financing and recommended time schedules; and
- (iv) the estimated annual cost of operating and of maintaining any new facility or piece of major equipment involved.

The information included in the capital improvement plan shall be annually revised with regard to all items still pending or in the process of being acquired, improved or constructed.

SECTION 19. Subsection (a) of section 6-1 of article 6 of said charter is hereby amended by adding the following sentence:- The charter and by-laws shall take precedence over any other organization, reorganization or modification under this section.

SECTION 20. Subsection (b) of said section 6-1 of said article 6 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the second and third paragraphs and inserting in place thereof the following 2 paragraphs:-

Whenever the town manager prepares such a plan, the town manager shall, in conjunction with the select board, hold at least 1 public hearing on such proposal, giving notice by

publication in a local newspaper of the date, time and place of the public hearing and the scope of the proposal.

The town manager shall, following such hearing, provide for the submission of the proposed organizational plan, which may be amended or revised as a result of information developed at the public hearing, to the next session of the representative town meeting. The authority of the representative town meeting concerning the proposed organizational plan shall be limited to the approval or the rejection of it, and the representative town meeting shall not vote to amend or alter the proposed plan. No proposed plan under this subsection shall contradict the provisions of any by-law.

SECTION 21. Said article 6 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out sections 6-3 to 6-5, inclusive, and inserting in place thereof the following 2 sections:-

Section 6-3 Additional Appointments by the Select Board

(a) Appointments - In addition to appointments provided for in statute, by-law or this charter, the select board shall appoint a town comptroller as provided for in by-law for a term of up to 5 years, a director of veterans' services for a term of up to 5 years, a police chief for a term of up to 5 years, a fire chief for a term of up to 5 years and town counsel as provided for in by-law. Subject to by-law, the town comptroller appointed by the select board under this subsection may appoint assistants subject to the approval of the select board.

(b) Approval of Appointments Made by the Town Manager - The appointments made by the town manager for treasurer-collector, assistant treasurer collector and town clerk shall each separately be subject to the affirmative vote approval of the select board. Failure of the select board to act regarding the approval or disapproval of any such appointee of the town manager

399 within 30 days of notice to the select board shall constitute an affirmative approval by the select
400 board. To empower the approval by the select board under this subsection, the town manager
401 shall forthwith notify the select board of any vacancy or resignation from the positions identified
402 in this subsection. In the event of any failure of the town manager to appoint or to promote on a
403 timely basis, such appointments and promotions may be made by the select board following the
404 same requirements referenced in the following section. The provisions of this subsection shall
405 apply to reappointments.

406 Section 6-4 Additional Appointments by the Town Manager

407 (a) Additional Appointments - In addition to other appointments as may be required or
408 provided for in this charter or the town's by-laws, the town manager shall, notwithstanding any
409 general or special law to the contrary, appoint, subject to the provisions of section 6-3, the
410 positions identified in this section as provided below. The town meeting may, by by-law and not
411 inconsistent with any general or special law, establish minimum qualifications, education,
412 experience duties and responsibilities for the positions identified in this section. The town
413 meeting may, by by-law, and the select board may, by vote, require the town manager to use
414 assessment centers, similar techniques, screening committees or other evaluation processes for
415 candidates for the positions identified in this section. Any person appointed under this section
416 may be removed or suspended by the town manager accordance with section 7-11. The
417 provisions of this section shall apply to reappointments.

418 (b) Treasurer Collector and Assistant Treasurer Collector - There shall be a treasurer-
419 collector appointed by the town manager for a term of up to 5 years and an assistant treasurer-
420 collector appointed by the town manager for a term of up to 5 years.

(c) Town Clerk - There shall be a town clerk appointed by the town manager for a term of 3 years.

SECTION 22. Section 7-5 of article 7 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the words “words importing the masculine gender shall include the feminine gender” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- words, if any, importing a particular gender shall include all genders.

SECTION 23. Section 7-7 of said article 7 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out subsection (e) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(e) Local Newspaper – Unless otherwise required by general law, the words “local newspaper” shall, for the purposes of this charter and the town’s by-laws, mean a newspaper of general circulation in the town of Natick, the town’s website, public temporary signage, social media or other communication means that alone or in any combination are reasonably capable of reaching and informing the residents of the town based on a good faith determination made, from time to time, by the select board at a public hearing.

SECTION 24. Said section 7-7 of said article 7 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out subsection (g) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(g) Multiple-Member Body - The words “multiple-member body” shall mean any town body consisting of not less than 2 persons, whether elected, appointed or otherwise constituted, but not to include the representative town meeting; provided, however, that an “eligible multiple-member body” is any existing multiple-member body that has been created by and given a charge of powers, duties or responsibilities in statute, charter, by-law or vote of town meeting.

SECTION 25. Said article 7 of said charter is hereby further amended by striking out section 7-10 and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 7-10 Notice of Vacancies

(a) If a vacancy occurs in any town agency, or in town employment, or when by reason of retirement or the expiration of a fixed term, a vacancy can be anticipated, the select board, or other appointing authority, shall forthwith cause public notice of the vacancy or impending vacancy to be posted for not less than 10 days. Such notice shall contain a description of the duties of the office or position and a listing of necessary or desirable qualifications for the position. No permanent appointment to fill a position shall be effective until not less than 14 days have elapsed following such posting to permit reasonable consideration of all applicants. This section shall not apply to positions covered by the civil service law and rules or if in conflict with the requirements provided under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement.

(b) When the term of any non-compensated appointed position is due to expire, the position shall be advertised, even if a vacancy is not anticipated.

(c) The above requirements do not apply to the expiration of appointments for compensated positions where a vacancy does not exist or is not anticipated.

SECTION 26. Section 21 shall take effect upon passage by the town of a by-law effectuating the provisions of said section 21; provided, however, that the qualifications, powers and duties of the comptroller, assistant comptroller, treasurer collector, assistant treasurer collector and town clerk of the town of Natick in existing sections 6-3, 6-4 and 6-5 of the charter of the town of Natick shall remain in effect until passage of said by-law.

463 SECTION 27. The town of Natick shall place a question on the ballot at the next regular
464 municipal or state election, or earlier special election, if so called, which shall read:

465 “Shall ‘An Act amending the charter of the town of Natick’ be accepted?”

466 Yes _____ No _____”

467 The town counsel shall prepare a summary of the proposed charter amendments in the
468 special act, which shall appear on the ballot along with the question provided in this section. If
469 the number of “Yes” votes exceed the number of “No” votes at such election, the amendments to
470 the charter of the town of Natick under this act shall take immediate effect, otherwise these
471 amendments shall not take effect.

472 SECTION 28. This act shall take effect upon its passage.