

**Massachusetts House of Representatives  
Bill Summary**

**Bill #:** H.3913 / S.20

**Title:** An Act amending the charter of the town of Seekonk

**Sponsor:** Rep. Steven Howitt, Sen. Kelly Dooner

**Committee:** Municipalities and Regional Government

**Hearing Date:** 5/13/25

**Similar Matter:** S.20 is identical

**Current Law:** The current town charter was adopted in 1995 and last amended in 2018. The text of the charter addresses the following subjects:

- Article 1. Powers of the town
- Article 2. Legislative branch
- Article 3. Elections
- Article 4. Elected town boards and officers
- Article 5. Executive branch
- Article 6. Town Administrator
- Article 7. Financial provisions and procedures
- Article 8. General provisions
- Article 9. Transitional provisions

The town has a five-member board of selectmen and a town administrator. Gendered language is used throughout the text of the current charter.

**Summary:** This special legislation makes the language of the charter gender-neutral.

Sections 1 through 29, 31 through 33, 39 through 45, 48, 50 through 62, 64 and 65 of the bill all change the words "Board of Selectmen" to "Select Board" in each instance.

Sections 30, 34 through 38, 46, 47, and 49 amend provisions relating to the town administrator so that the language is gender-neutral, referencing the "town administrator" rather than "he, him, his" etc.

Sections 63 and 66 also change provisions in the charter relating to members of town boards or commissions and employees of the town so that the language is gender neutral.

No other substantive changes to the charter are being made.

**Notes:** The special legislation was approved at the November 18, 2024 Fall Town Meeting as Article 8 by a vote of 213 Yes, 92 No with 2 Abstaining.