

Massachusetts House of Representatives Bill Summary

Bill #:	H.5654
Title:	An Act relative to the governance of the municipal light plant in the town of Hull
Sponsor:	Rep. Joan Meschino and Sen. Patrick O'Connor
Committee:	Municipalities and Regional Government
Hearing Date:	9/21/26 to 9/28/26 written testimony only
Prior history:	Similar to H.4739 (study order 1/21/26) but with additional language.
Current Law:	Paragraph 14A of Chapter 8 of the Acts of 1989, as amended by Chapter 93 of the Acts of 1993, established the current form of government for the town of Hull. The special act authorized the Hull town manager to: - supervise the operation of the municipal light plant, - hire, suspend or remove personnel, negotiate personnel contracts and all other contracts, - be responsible for the day-to-day functioning and operation of the light plant in accordance with Ch. 164 of the MGL. The 1993 special act also defined the light board's duties as setting rates and advising the town manager on general policy. The town manager presents the light plant's annual budget to the finance committee and board of selectmen. The municipal light plant is governed by a 5-member elected board of light commissioners. Chapter 164 of the General Laws regulates the manufacture and sale of gas and electricity. Section 55 provides for the election of a municipal light board. Section 56 governs the management of light plants and the appointment of a light plant manager.
Summary:	Section 1 of the bill strikes paragraph 14A from the 1989 special act, as amended. The town manager would no longer have oversight over the functions of the Hull Municipal Light Plant as specified in the act.

Section 2 provides for the elected Municipal Light Plant Board to assume all of the powers, duties and responsibilities for operating, managing and controlling the light plant, pursuant to Chapter 164 of the General Laws and any other applicable law. It also states that the Board shall have authority to make policy, employ and remove the Municipal Light Plant Manager, subject to applicable collective bargaining agreements, civil service requirements and other law.

Section 3 preserves existing lawful contracts, obligations and collective bargaining agreements relative to the Hull Municipal Light Plant.

Section 4 states that this act shall take effect immediately.

Notes: Language adopted as Article 40 at the May 5, 2026 Annual Town Meeting by a vote of 236 in favor and 82 opposed.