

**Proposed Changes in the Charter**

**November 2025 Election**

*City of Framingham*

*Office of the City Solicitor*

**Language Changes:**

The proposed changes in this section are changes to the language that are meant to reform, modify, and/or clarify the language currently used in the Charter.

**Article 1.7:** Shall the definition of the word “measure” be modified to include language that a measure “shall not include non-binding resolutions adopted by the council or school committee”?

**Article 2.c:** Shall the section on Council Chair appointments be amended to include specifically named committees rather referencing them generally, including adding “temporary”, “appointments subcommittee, and rules/ordinance subcommittee”?

**Article 2.6.d.v.:** Shall this section on rules of procedure be amended to include the following technical clarification to its provisions: “Consistent with the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, General Laws c. 30A, §22 and regulations related thereto,”?

**Article 3.3.b.:** Shall this section be amended to: 1) delete the list of boards, committees and commissions included in the original charter; 2) delete language stating that “The Mayor’s appointments shall include, but not be limited to the following”; 3) delete the list of “committees, boards, commissions” included in the mayor’s appointments; and 4) delete reference to “committees, boards, commissions” and replace with “multiple-member bodies”?

**Article 3.4(b)** Shall this section be amended to incorporate language specifying other municipal employees “appointed by the Mayor?”

**Article 3.7:** Shall this section be amended to strike reference to “order, ordinance, resolution or vote” and replace with “measure” and add language clarifying that “non-binding” resolutions of the council are excepted?

**Article 3.11.b.i.:** Shall this section on long range strategic plan be amended to strike reference to “plan” and replace with “blueprint”?

**Article 4.1.c.:** Shall the process for filling school committee vacancy be amended to clarify that vacancy occurs if the elected school committee member moves from the municipality “or their

district” during the term for which they are elected, and sets forth a new process for filling vacancies in the manner provided in “Article IV, subsection 1, I below”?

**Article 4.1.g.:** Shall this section be amended by striking the word “special” and replacing with “temporary”?

**Article 4.2.f.ii-iv.:** Shall these sections be amended to: strike from library department the word “department” and replace it with library “division”; strike from library director the word “director” and replace it with library “division head”?

**Article 5.1:** Shall this section be amended to strike the word “operating” and replace with “municipal”?

**Article 7:** Shall the heading of this section be amended to: “1. Elections: Regular, Preliminary”?

**Article 9.1.:** Shall this section be amended to add “including but not limited to MGL Ch. 43b, section 10a”?

**Article 3.6a:** Shall this section be amended to strike reference to “boards, committees, and commissions” and replace with “multiple-member bodies”; and to strike the word “fully”?

**Article 5.1:** Shall this section be amended to strike the word “operating” and replace with “municipal”; strike the term “in the local newspaper”; strike the word “publication “ and replace with “notice”?

**Article 5.6.b:** Shall this section be amended to: include authority on vehicular traffic, “including bicycles”; remove “and parking”?

**Article 6:** Preamble: shall this section be amended to strike language and replace with The residents of Framingham deserve a “highly transparent” government “that” shall keep this commitment “to transparency”?

**Article 6.1.a.:** Shall this section be amended and referred to as “1. Fiscal Year and Annual Budget Planning”?

**Article 7:** Shall the heading of this section be amended to: “1. Elections: Regular, Preliminary”?

**Article 8.2:** Shall this section be amended to replace “clerk” of the school committee be with “executive assistant”?

**Article 9.1.:** Shall this section be amended to add “including but not limited to MGL Ch. 43b, section 10a”?

### **Changes in Executive Branch Authority and Responsibilities**

<p>The changes proposed in this section affect the authority and the responsibilities granted to the Executive Branch of the City of Framingham.</p>
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**Article 2.10.a.:** Shall this section on Council review of certain appointments be amended to: 1) require the mayor to submit the mayor’s appointment of the city solicitor to the Council, and 2)

clarify that the “appointments subcommittee” of the council may investigate each candidate for appointment?

**Article 2.10.b.:** Shall this section be amended by striking existing charter language and replacing with: “Effective Date for Certain Appointments: Appointments made by the mayor for division heads, the city solicitor, or the citizen participation officer shall become effective on the earlier to occur of (i) council’s approval or (ii) the thirtieth (30<sup>th</sup>) day after the date on which notice of the proposed appointment as filed with the secretary of the council without the council taking action. An appointment under this section may be rejected upon a two third (2/3) vote of the full council prior to the end of the thirty (30) day period. The question of approval or rejection of any appointment made by the mayor shall not be subject to the procedures provided or in Article VIII.”

**Article 2.10.c.:** Shall this section be amended by striking existing charter language and replacing with: “Approval of Multiple-Member Body Appointments: Appointments made by the mayor for multiple-member body members shall be submitted to the council for its approval, provided that said appointments shall become effective upon the earlier to occur of (i) council’s approval or (ii) the thirtieth (30<sup>th</sup>) day after the date on which notice of the proposed appointment was filed with the secretary of the council without the council taking action. An appointment under this section may be rejected upon a majority vote of the 13 full council prior to the end of the thirty (30) day period. The question on approval or rejection of any appointment made by the mayor shall not be subject to the procedures provided for in Article VIII.”?

**Article 3.1.f.:** Shall this section be amended to state: “f) Term limit: No person shall be elected to the office of mayor for more than three consecutive terms.”?

**Article 3.3.c.:** Shall this section be amended to strike the requirement that “The citizen participation officer shall maintain the municipal notification list.”?

**Article 3.3.e.:** Shall this section be amended to add the following: “The appointment of the city solicitor will be subject to review of the council as described by Article II, Section 10.a of this charter.”?

**Article 3.8.a:** Shall this section be amended to include clarification of the temporary absence of the mayor for periods “up to and including ten (10) successive” days?

**Article 3.9:** Shall this section on mayor’s delegation of authority be amended to include the following: “Such authorization or recessions of such authority shall be made in writing.” Strike “but all acts” and replace with “Any power or function”?

**Article 3.11.b.i** Shall this section be amended by striking existing language and replace with the following: “i. Content: The Mayor shall prepare a long-range strategic blueprint every ten (10) years in the year ending in “0.” This plan shall be prepared in consultation with the Strategic Initiative and Financial Oversight Committee (SIFOC) as established in Article VI, division and department heads, multiple-member bodies of the municipality, the council, school committee and residents. Said blueprint shall be subject to an interim assessment every 5 years, to include the same bodies as the original blueprint. The goal of the blueprint is improving the quality of life for all residents in the city, and assuring the city’s financial condition remains strong. As such, it shall address the longer-term issues and concerns facing the city which may include, but

are not limited to the financial, human service, and infrastructure needs of the municipality; 26 The blueprint shall include, but not be limited to topics such as arts, culture, recreation, public education, commerce, open space, housing, climate impact and resilience. It may also include issues of regional concern affecting the city and surrounding municipalities if such examination or finding included in the blueprint aligns with the master plan. The overall blueprint shall be coordinated with the findings and recommendations of any master plan then in effect.

**Article 3.11.b.ii-vi.:** Shall these sections be amended by striking current Charter language and replacing with the following:

“ii. The long range strategic blueprint process. SIFOC shall hold two or more public informational hearings on the needs, possibilities and resources of the city and its future and provide a 30-day comment period to obtain citizen input and to respond to comments and questions before draft blueprint is published.; iii. Notice of hearings shall be posted publicly and published for two consecutive weeks on the municipal bulletin board preceding a hearing; iv. Said draft blueprint shall be submitted to the mayor for the mayors review by October 1 upon completion of the strategic blueprint and the 5 year interim assessment; v. The mayor shall update and present the blueprint and the 5 year interim assessment to the council, school committee, and SIFOC meeting in a joint session within sixty (60) days of receipt of the draft blueprint and the 5 year interim assessment from SIFOC; and, vi. The council shall deliberate and vote on the mayor’s blueprint no later than the last scheduled meeting of December in that year. Any long-term plans regarding the school district must be approved by the School Committee by the last scheduled meeting in that year.”

**Article 3.6a** Shall this section be amended to add “As required in Article IX, section 14, the annual report should also include an analysis of overall compliance with the provisions of this charter.”;

### **Chief Climate and Sustainability Officer**

These proposed changes create a Chief Climate Sustainability Officer and include the element of climate impacts, community resiliency, environmental justice, and equity to the strategic master plan.
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**Article 3.3.:** Shall this section be amended to add the position of Chief Climate and Sustainability Officer, with the following language: “f) Chief Climate and Sustainability Officer - The mayor shall appoint a chief climate and sustainability officer to work with municipal departments and multiple-member bodies to develop and implement strategies to address climate mitigation and resiliency. The chief climate and sustainability officer will set strategic goals for climate response, report on progress towards those goals, and prioritize and coordinate climate and sustainability in municipal planning, budgeting and procurement.”

**Article 3.11.a.i.:** Shall this section on strategic master plan be amended to incorporate language that adds the element of “climate impacts, community resiliency, environmental justice, and equity” to the content of the master plan?

## Prohibitions on Powers

The proposed changes in this section affect the Charter by limiting councilors, school committee members, library trustees, and cemetery trustees from holding any other elected position while in office.

**Article 2.3.a.:** Shall this section be amended to prevent councilors from holding any other elected position at the same time as the council position, by adding the following: “No councilor shall hold another elected position at the same time as the council position.”?

**Article 4.1.d.:** Shall this section be amended to prevent school committee members from holding any other elected position at the same time as the school committee position, by adding the following: “No member of the school committee shall hold another elected position at the same time as the school committee position.”?

**Article 4.2.d.:** Shall this section be amended to prevent library trustees from holding any other elected position at the same time as the library trustee position, by adding the following: “No member of the board of library trustees shall hold another elected position at the same time as the library trustee position.”?

**Article 4.3.d.:** Shall this section be amended to prevent cemetery trustees from holding any other elected position at the same time as the cemetery board position, by adding the following: “No member of the board of cemetery trustees shall hold another elected position at the same time as the cemetery trustee position.”?

## Changing Dates/Deadlines/Timeframes

The changes in this section affect timelines and deadlines within the Charter.

**Article 3.6.a.** Shall this section be amended to make the following changes: 1) state that “no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> of each year” the mayor shall submit the annual report?

**Article 3.7** Shall this section be amended to incorporate language that the mayor’s reasons for disapproval shall be transmitted to the council “within ten (10) business days of the date said measure has been transmitted in writing to the mayor by the secretary of the council” and strike language and replace with “The council shall enter the objections of the mayor on its records not later than thirty (30) days after the date of its return to the council”?

**Article 3.8.a.:** Shall this section be amended to include clarification of the temporary absence of the mayor for periods “up to and including ten (10) successive” days?

**Article 3.11.a.iv.:** Shall this section on preparing a new master plan every twenty years be stricken and replaced with the following: “A new master plan shall be prepared every ten (10) years in the year ending in five(5).”?

**Article 6.6.d.:** Shall this section be amended to state that the mayor shall submit to the council the inventory and the 5 year capital improvement program no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year?

**Article 8.2b and d:** Shall this section be amended by replacing “sixty (60) days” with “ninety (90) days in section b and replacing “thirty (30)” days with sixty (60) days in section d?; Shall this section be amended to change the language that the measure will be considered as “accepted” rather than “rejected” on the “sixtieth” day after it is presented to the council?

This question also proposes that inaction by the school committee or council will accept a measure rather than reject it on the sixtieth day.

**Article 9.2** After a public hearing, the committee shall file its report and recommendations with the secretary of the council fifteen (15) months after the committee’s first meeting or by the last day of June in the year following the year the committee is appointed, whichever is later. The council shall have the power to accept, reject, or take any other action not contrary to state law on the individual recommendations of the charter review committee. The council shall take action on the recommendations by the first meeting in September of the council; after that date, no other business shall be in order until the report has been acted upon, by roll call vote.”?

### **School Committee and Library Trustee Authority**

The proposed changes in this section give the school committee the authority to conduct performance reviews of the superintendent, to adopt and oversee administration of capital budgets for the school department, and to allow the library trustees to conduct periodic reviews of the library division head for the Mayor’s consideration.

**Article 4.1.h.ii.:** Shall this section be amended to incorporate authority for the school committee to conduct performance reviews of the superintendent of schools?

**Article 4.1.h.iv.:** Shall this section be amended to authorize the school committee to add the authority to the school committee to adopt and oversee administration of “capital budgets” for the school department? and incorporate the following additional power and duty of the library trustees: “iv. To conduct periodic reviews of the library division head’s performance to be submitted to the mayor for the mayor’s consideration”?

### **Changes to General Requirements and Organization of City**

The proposed changes in this section amend general requirements and procedures within the Charter, such as: requiring written notice by the council of any request to appear before them, allowing that written delivery to be by email, requiring the Mayor to submit reorganizing plans that impact the school district to the school committee prior to submitting to the council, create a requirement to include an organization chart for the municipality to be maintained on the website, and requiring the City of Framingham to set aside “appropriate funds” the year prior to a Charter review “adequate to provide for professional assistance, public engagement, and community education for the committee's review.”

**Article 2.7.d.:** Shall this section on notice procedures be amended to include the requirement for notice to be “written” and for notice delivery options to also include delivery “by the clerk of the council via the municipal email system”?

**Article 5.1.:** Shall this section be amended to: include that an organization chart for the municipality shall be posted online on the city website and updated regularly to maintain its accuracy; incorporate the following paragraph: “Whenever the mayor proposes such a plan which impacts the school district, prior to submitting the plan to the council, they mayor shall submit the plan to the school committee, which shall give notice as permitted or required by law and hold one (1) or more public hearings on the proposal. The notice shall describe the scope of the proposal and the time and place at which the public hearing will be held, said hearing to be not less than seven (7) nor more than fourteen (14) days after the notice. The school committee must vote to approve a plan which impacts the school district for it to take effect, per MGL Chapter 71, Section 37M.”

**Article 9.5.:** Shall this section be amended by striking the periodic charter review process and replacing with: “All appointees shall be voters but shall not be elected officials or employees of the municipality, including school employees, provided however that volunteer, unpaid members of multiple-member bodies are eligible to serve on the charter review committee. In the fiscal year prior to the charter review, the municipality shall plan to appropriate funds adequate to provide for professional assistance, public engagement, and community education for the committee's review. The mayor, council, and school committee each shall designate a liaison to the committee to provide information and input to the committee throughout the charter review process. The city clerk or the citizen participation officer or their designee shall convene the first meeting no later than April 1st or as soon as practical after a quorum of the committee has been appointed, whichever is later. The committee shall organize by electing from among their number a person to serve as the chair, a person to serve as vice-chair, and a person to serve as clerk.

### **Changes to Traffic Commission**

The proposed changes in this section will change the number of members in the Traffic Commission, changing the voting threshold, and incorporating an additional section into the Charter.

**Article 5.6.a.:** Shall this section be amended to increase the number of residents on the Traffic Commission from four to five members, three of whom shall be residents-at-large?

**Article 5.6.b:** Shall this section be amended by striking the voting threshold of the majority of the full membership on the traffic and parking commission and replacing it with the majority of “the members present” and incorporation into the section the heading “c) Citizen Petitions”?

### **Finance and Fiscal Procedures**

The proposed changes in this section affect submission of the annual budget, creating an emergency exception for submission, eliminating the finance subcommittee’s requirement to have a public hearing on the annual budget, requiring a public hearing by the Mayor, changing the requirements that are to be included in the budget, and making the school committee the active stewards of Framingham’s school property.

**Article 6.1.a.:** Shall this section be amended to add the following section: “b) At least 180 days before the beginning of the fiscal year, the mayor shall request a joint meeting be held of the council and school committee, to also include the superintendent of schools, and the Strategic Initiative and Financial Oversight Committee, to review the financial condition of the city, 39 revenue and expenditure forecasts and other relevant information prepared by the mayor to develop a coordinated budget. At this meeting, the public shall be provided time to share their thoughts on potential budget priorities during the budget development process.”?

**Article 6.2.b.:** Shall this section be amended to incorporate the following language: “Except in the case of an emergency as determined by the council in consultation with the school committee and the mayor” in the first sentence?

**Article 6.3:** Shall this section be amended by modifying and striking “sixty” and “60”, and incorporating the following language: “b) Except in the case of an emergency, as determined by the council in consultation with the mayor, not later than one hundred twenty (120) days”?

**Article 6.3:** Shall this section be amended to: 1) incorporate the following section: “a) Public Hearing: The Mayor shall hold a public hearing on the proposed operating budget before it is sent to the city council.”

**Article 6.4.a.:** Shall this section be amended to add that the budget message shall “describe how the proposed budget aligns with the long-range strategic blueprint”?

**Article 6.5.a.:** Shall this section be amended by striking language and revised to state that: Before adopting the final operating budget, the council shall hold a public hearing on the proposed operating budget, providing no less than ten (10) days’ notice of such hearing?

**Article 6.5.b.:** Shall the beginning of this section be amended by striking language and revising to state that the council shall refer the proposed budget to the council’s finance subcommittee. The finance subcommittee will thoroughly review the budget, making a presentation and recommendation to the full council within twenty-eight (28) days?

**Article 6.5.e.-f.:** Shall these sections be revised to state: “e) Availability of the Budget and related materials: In addition to any other posting requirements under law, immediately after the submission of the proposed operating budget to the council , the mayor shall cause the entire budget document to be posted on the city's website. Said proposed budget document shall be prominently labeled “Proposed Budget FY \_\_” and shall remain posted during the council review process contained in this article. After the enactment of the operating budget, the complete budget (capital and operating) as adopted shall be posted on the city's website and labeled as “Final FY \_\_ Budget” and shall remain there throughout at least the fiscal year for which it is in effect. Said budget document shall reflect any amendments made by the council and approved by the mayor and shall indicate that it is the final budget of the city. f. Classification and pay schedules for municipal employees as well as copies of all voted collective bargaining contracts should also be online on the municipal website for the public to see and updated for accuracy as needed.”

**Article 6.6.:** Shall this section be amended to state that the full council and not the finance subcommittee shall hold a public hearing concerning supplementary budgets and other appropriations?

**Article 6.8.a.** Shall this section be amended to read that the mayor and council, together with the school committee as to school property, shall be active stewards of Framingham’s physical assets?

### Filling Vacancies

The proposed changes in this section affect how the Charter fills vacancies for a City councilor-at-large, a district councilor, and on the school committee; particularly, it affects the time periods in which a special election will be held to replace a vacancy.

**Article 2.11.a.:** Shall this section be amended by striking existing charter language and replacing with: “a) Councilor-at-Large:

- i. Vacancy within nine months of the next municipal election: A vacancy shall be deemed to occur in the office of councilor at large if the councilor-at-large removes from the municipality. If a vacancy shall occur in the office of councilor-at-large less than or equal to nine (9) months before the next municipal election, the vacancy shall be filled at the next regular municipal election and the candidate elected shall serve for the remainder of the present term.
- ii. If a vacancy shall occur in the office of councilor-at-large more than nine (9) months prior to the next municipal election, a preliminary election will be held within sixty (60) days following the vacancy, and the special election shall be held 35 days following the preliminary. The candidate elected shall be qualified by the council and shall serve for the balance of the present term.”?

**Article 2.11.b.:** Shall this section be amended by striking existing charter language and replacing with: “b) District Councilor:

- i. If, in the first fifteen (15) months of the term, a district counselor removes from the municipality or removes to another district in Framingham, their seat shall be considered vacant, and the balance of the unexpired term shall be filled by a special election. A preliminary election will be held within sixty (60) days following the vacancy, and the special election shall be held thirty five (35) days following the preliminary.
- ii. Any vacancy occurring after the fifteenth (15th) month of the term shall be filled at the next regular municipal election. The candidate so elected shall take office immediately and serve for the remainder of the present term as well as for the term to which elected.”?

**Article 4.1.i.:** Shall this section be added to the Charter to amend the current process for filling vacancies on the school committee by replacing with the following: “If, in the first fifteen (15) months of the term, a school committee member removes from the municipality or removes to

another district in Framingham, their seat shall be considered vacant and the balance of the unexpired term shall be filled by a special election. A preliminary election will be held within sixty (60) days following the vacancy, and the special election shall be held thirty five (35) days following the preliminary. Any vacancy occurring after the fifteenth (15th) month of the term shall be filled at the next regular municipal election. The candidate so elected shall take office immediately, and serve for the remainder of the present term as well as for the term to which elected.”