

CHARTER AND BY-LAW REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday August 13, 2009
VERSION 3

The Charter and By-Law Review Committee (CBRC) held a duly posted meeting on August 13, 2009, in the Edward Dlott meeting room in Town Hall. The Chair, Ms. Gloff called the meeting to order at 7:18 AM.

Members present: Mrs. Barbara Chinetti, Ms. Karen Adelman Foster, Ms. Carol Gloff (Chair) and Mr. Robert Healey.

Members absent: Mr. Jay Ball, Mr. Anthony Lista and Mr. Richard Sidney.

Others present: Ms. Martha White [Town Administrator], Mr. James Sheridan [Fire Chief], Mr. Rocco Francois [Fire Protection Officer], Mr. Maurice Pilette [Fire Protection Consultant] and Ms. Kerry Norris [Fire Protection Officer].

Attachments: Consolidated comment documents (Documents in which previous CBRC comments and questions have been consolidated by Ms. Gloff):

Charter Article 2-11d and By-Law 1-4, comments by Mr. Ball
By-Law Article 60 Fire Department Draft dated August 4, 2009.
Charter Article 5, comments from Mr. Peter Sanchioni,
Superintendent of Schools (see last page of attachments) and Ms.
Martha White, Town Administrator.
Emails from Mr. Sidney (2 emails) and Mr. Lista (1 email).

DISCUSSION OF BY-LAWS

[Note: the chair in consolidated comment documents compiled comments and questions from previous CBRC meetings. These documents (listed above as attachments) were used in the meeting, as were emails from town counsel to the chair (also listed above as attachments). Specific comments on the consolidated comment documents are enumerated as CG1, CG2, etc., and referred to in this way in these minutes. Specific comments on the emails from town counsel are enumerated as 1, 2, 3, etc., and are here referenced as JF1, JF2, JF3, etc.]

[Note: where a CBRC motion or vote reads, "to change," the committee is aware that we are voting only to propose a change to Town Meeting.]

BY-LAW 1-4 [Town Meeting] and CHARTER 2-11(d) [Legislative Branch]

(See attachment authored by Mr. Ball)

Ms. Adelman Foster asked if Town Counsel, Mr. Flynn has reviewed Mr. Ball's comments. The chair reminded the committee that Mr. Flynn is currently on vacation and had not had time to review Mr. Ball's comments.

Ms White indicated past difficulties [posting of warrants] centered on Bond Counsel interpretation of five (5) days. Does the Charter require five business days or five calendar days? Bond Counsel required five days for a time now is inclined to five business days. Questions arose during previous meetings regarding "attested copy" and the potential use of 'draft or preliminary' copies.

Mrs. Chinetti referenced the original Charter (1980), where the term "preliminary copy" is used. The history of Charter changes notes that in a Town Meeting action (Article 37), April 1988 changed Charter Article 2 to its current form. No committee members recalled the reasoning for Town Meeting's action to remove the word "preliminary" before 'copy.'

The committee discussed Mr. Ball's comments in further detail. Mrs. Chinetti suggested deleting the existing (since 1988) Charter 2-11(d) section and revert the language to its original form as follows:

(d) Publication – Within five days following the date the warrant for any town meeting shall close the board of selectman shall cause preliminary copies of said preliminary warrant articles to be mailed to the town moderator, the chairman of the finance committee, and to such other persons as may be designated by By-Law. Additional copies of the preliminary warrant articles shall be made available for general distribution in the office of the town clerk. When the official warrant has been completed copies shall be distributed in the same manner and in such additional manner as may be provided by By-Law.

NOTE: The original version spelling of finance was "finince" and "by-law" was used as a lower case term. The motion in-place by Mrs. Chinetti corrects the spelling of finance and uses By-Law in upper case format, consistent with recommendations of this committee's previous actions and motions.

Mrs. Chinetti moved, seconded by Mr. Healey to revise Charter 2-11(d) as aforementioned, the motion was approved by a 4-0-0 vote. The committee agreed to forward this recommendation to the three members not present for comment.

The committee will ask Mr. Flynn to review the vote and to reflect or comment on any necessary changes to By-Law 1-4 and appropriate MGL requirements, by this action.

BY-LAW 60
FIRE REGULATIONS

Based on the committee's previous discussion, request for amplification, clarification and suggestions to correct deficiencies with the current By-Law, the fire department responded with a Draft Article 60 (dated August 4, 2009) attached.

Upon detailed review the chief and the department discovered the current By-Law is a series of cut and paste sections of Chapter 148 and 527 CMR, much of which is outdated, misquoted or been revised. The current Article 60 in the By-Law does not reflect current practice, law or codes and the fire department after extensive work offered the attached Draft Version for consideration by the committee.

The committee entered into detailed discussion with the fire department staff present. The gist of the discussion resulted in the fire department to make draft revisions, to include some minor clarifications and editing.

Ms. Gloff, anticipating Town Meeting debate, requested the chief to prepare a document noting where in the proposed By-Law the "old" Sections are covered. For example, existing Section 6a Fire Lanes appears covered under proposed Section 2-B, etc. The chief indicated that task doable.

The committee was informed that a copy of the draft By-Law had been sent to Town Counsel for review. The committee also requested that the Police Chief be asked to comment on Section 6, regarding radio communication.

Section 1, the committee strongly recommended deleting the word "response" from the end of the paragraph. Mrs. Adelman Foster suggested some editing suggestions.

The committee further requested the inclusion of a section or subsection, to inform the general public where the "Orders, Rules Investigations and Inspections" may be found on the Web, in a hard copy format in fire department lobby, etc. Ms. Adelman Foster indicated she would provide a draft term or phrases to perform this task.

Mr. Sidney after review emailed the chair indicating "I have no specific comments on Article 60." See attachment.

During continued discussion the chief indicated the department might introduce to the selectmen soon a By-Law or addition to Article 60 regarding the "Night Club Safety Act" newly signed into law.

The Chair and the committee at the conclusion of the discussion with the fire department thanked the department for the extra effort in drafting this By-Law change on such short notice and understood the considerable undertaking and the effort required.

CHARTER ARTICLE 5
FISCAL PROCEDURES

The committee received comments from the school superintendent and town administrator regarding proposed changes to Charter Article 5 (attached).

Dr. Sanchioni offered a proposed budget process in brief with timelines for consideration.

Ms. Adelman Foster stated that the distinction between the budget as proposed by the Superintendent and the budget as voted by the School Committee should be reflected in this Article.

Ms. White offered proposed revisions to section 5-4 and section 5-5 for consideration. Ms. White noted upon review to combine some bullet points in the proposed 5-4 revisions for clarification.

Ms. Gloff suggested in section 5-5 line one, to insert after the word budget, "in conjunction with the town administrator's budget message", before the word shall. Other committee members offered various edits, suggestions and revisions. The general consensus being tweaking of Charter five is needed and further review warranted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

NO ACTION TAKEN.

OTHER DISCUSSIONS

Ms. White to review and comment on Article 20 for next meeting.

The next scheduled and posted meeting is Wednesday evening August 19, 2009 at 5:30 PM at the Board of Selectmen meeting room second floor Town Hall. A second meeting is scheduled for Friday August 21, 2009, at 10:00 AM, in the Retirement Board Meeting Room, third floor Town Hall.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Gloff and seconded by Mrs. Chinetti.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Healey, CBRC member.

Minutes approved on December 14, 2009 by a vote of 3-0-1.

From: Jay Ball [JayHBall@alum.mit.edu]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2009 12:05 PM
To: Charter.&By-Law.Review.Committee@alum.mit.edu
Cc: omaloney@natickma.org; Martha White
Subject: By-Law Article 1-4 and Charter Article 2-11d

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

The problems:

1) The warrant copies posted 5 days after the warrant closes (as required by C2-11d) (60 days minimum before Spring ATM, per C2-11c) are unlikely to have been debated, let alone signed, at that time by the Selectmen; hence they are not *attested* copies, and should be marked as 'DRAFT' when posted and sent to the Moderator, FinComm, etc.

2) Only the *attested* (signed) warrant is required (by B1-4 and MGL) to be published in the newspaper, but it has been traditional to publish the draft as well. This doubles the cost, and for no apparent reason other than "that's the way we've always done it".

The proposed solution:

- a) Mark the warrant copies posted 5 days after the warrant closes (as required by C2-11d) with the word DRAFT
- b) Do NOT publish this draft warrant in the newspaper
- c) Ensure that the Selectmen sign the warrant in time for attested copies to be posted a minimum of 14 days before the Town Election (as required by B1-4)

The short of it: **NO CHANGES ARE REQUIRED to By-Law Article 1 Section 4 or to Charter Article 2 Section 11d.**

The long of it: The timing of the local preliminary election (if required), the local election, closing of the warrant, posting(s) of the warrant, the Selectmen's attestation (signing) of the warrant, and the Annual and Special Town Meetings, are a complex dance to the music of:

By-Law Article 1 Section 2
By-Law Article 1 Section 4
Charter Article 2 Section 11c
Charter Article 2 Section 11d
Charter Article 3 Section 1d(2)
Charter Article 3 Section 1d(4)
Town Clerk's office 'tradition'

Although there will still be multiple postings (of the draft and attested copies) by a constable, the proposed solution (see (a)-(c) above) will remove the considerable cost of *publishing* the warrant twice.

Jay

Article 60
Fire and Life Safety Regulations
DRAFT - August 4, 2009

Section 1 Orders, Rules, Investigations and Inspections

The Chief of the fire department or person or persons the Chief may delegate the authority to, may enter at any reasonable hour any building, structure or premises to make investigation and inspection and or make rules or orders not inconsistent, authorized and set forth in Article 60 Town By-Laws, M.G.L Chapter 148 "Fire Prevention Laws", 527CMR "Fire Protection Regulations" and where authorized by 780CMR "State Building Code", for the purpose of ensuring compliance, reasonable safety of the public and firefighter's response.

Section 2 Regulatory Policies

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Chief may promulgate regulatory policies for the purpose of clarifying the intent of any sections of these bylaws, M.G.L, regulations and codes stipulated in Section 1. Regulatory policies and promulgations under this section shall be approved by the Board of Selectman. Regulatory policies in general but not limited to may include:

- A. Obstruction or blockage of a public or private way to prevent access by fire apparatus or equipment to any building.
- B. Fire lanes, markings, posting and maintenance.
- C. Fire department vehicle access to new private roadways.
- D. Method of supervision (fire department notification) of fire protection and life safety systems within all buildings by means of auxiliary fire alarm systems, (municipal master-boxes), central station systems, remote station or combination of both including testing, maintenance and maintaining operational readiness.
- E. Fire protection and life safety systems functions, equipment and component locations.
- F. Fire hydrant location and placement, public and private.
- G. Inspection, testing and maintenance of fire protection systems.
- H. Impairments effecting fire protection life safety system's function and fire department notification.
- I. Conditions, if permitted for the use of open flames in or around buildings or structures.

Section 3 Definitions

Fire Protection Systems

Systems, devices, and equipment used to detect a fire and its by products, actuate an alarm, or suppress or control a fire and its by-products, or any combination thereof.

Life Safety Systems

Systems that enhance or facilitate evacuation of smoke, devices and alarms that detect and notify the presence of carbon monoxide

Auxiliary Fire Alarm Systems, (municipal master-boxes), Central Station and Remote Stations

As defined by the latest edition of the National Fire Alarm Code, NFPA-72 as published by the National Fire Protection Association, Quincy MA.

Section 4

Appeals

Whoever is aggrieved by the Chief of the Department's interpretation, order, requirement, direction or failure to act under the provisions of this by-law, notwithstanding any general law or special law to the contrary may within ten (10) days of such action, file an appeal in writing with the Board of Selectman (the Board). Once the appeal is filed with the Board, there is a stay of all proceedings until a decision is reached. The Board shall notify the appellant and the chief of the department in writing at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing date. The board shall render a decision within thirty (30) days following the hearing. The appellant, if aggrieved by the decision of the Board, may seek further review by a court of appropriate jurisdiction.

Section 5

Adoption of Local Option Law

The Chief of the Fire Department or any person the Chief may delegate the authority to enforce the following local options M.G.L's adopted by the town.

M.G.L. 148, 26C "Certain Public Accommodations": automatic smoke or heat detectors.
Date of adoption: ATM 4.12.88, Art. 42.

M.G.L. 148, 26G "Non-residential Buildings or Additions": automatic suppressant or sprinkler systems. Date of adoption: ATM 4.12.88, Art. 43.

M.G.L. 148, 26H "Lodging or Boarding Houses": Automatic sprinkler systems.
Date of adoption: ATM: 4.12.88, Art. 44.

M.G.L. 148, 26I "Multiple Dwelling Units": New construction: Automatic Sprinkler Systems. Date of adoption: ATM.....,

Section 6

Fire Department Radio Communication

The Chief may require the installation of two-way in building radio communication systems (bi-directional antenna) within any new or existing building to enhance communication between fire department personnel. Two-way building radio communication systems shall comply with fire department specifications and installation requirements.

Section 7

Fire Department Building Access

The Chief may require the installation of specialized secured lock-boxes on any building or structure to permit emergency access during non-occupied or normal business hours. Specialized secured loc-boxes shall comply with fire department specifications and installation requirements.

Section 8

Fees

The Chief of the department may recommend to the Board of Selectman on a yearly basis reasonable fees be collected for the issuance or renewal of licenses, permits, supervision methods of auxiliary fire alarm systems (municipal master-box) and the temporary impairments of auxiliary fire alarm systems (municipal master-box) effected by installation, testing, inspection, maintenance of fire protection and life safety systems.

Comments from Martha White

ARTICLE 5

FISCAL PROCEDURES

Section 5-1 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the town shall begin on the first day of July and shall end on the thirtieth day of June, unless another provision is made by general law.

Section 5-2 School Department Budget

(a) **Submission to Town Administrator** - The proposed budget for the School Department shall be submitted to the town administrator in sufficient time to enable him to consider its effect on the total town budget he is required to submit under this article.

(b) **Public Hearing** - At least seven days before the meeting at which the school committee is to vote on its final budget request, the school committee shall cause to be published in a local newspaper a general summary of its proposed budget. This notice shall also indicate the times and places at which copies of the complete draft budget are available for public examination, and the date, time and place, not less than seven days following such publication, when a public hearing will be held by the school committee on the proposed budget.

Section 5-3 Submission of Proposed 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 administrator shall submit to the finance committee a **proposed budget** for the ensuing year, with an accompanying budget message and supporting documents. He shall, simultaneously, provide for the publication, as specified by by-law of a general summary of the proposed budget. This notice shall also indicate the times and places at which complete copies of the proposed budget and accompanying materials are available for examination by the public.

Comment [m1]: Does this imply "balanced" budget?

Section 5-4 Budget Message

The budget message submitted by the town administrator shall:

- Provide a comprehensive overview of the proposed budget
- Explain the Town's fiscal condition including noteworthy changes in various revenue and expense categories as well as reserves
- Outline proposed financial policies of the town for the ensuing fiscal year
- Describe important features of the proposed budget
- Indicate any major variations from the current financial policies together with the reasons for such changes
- Identify changed priorities and the reasons for such changes
- Summarize the town's debt position

- Provide an analysis of significant trends and fiscal challenges and the administration's proposed responses thereto
- Include such additional information as the town administrator deems desirable or the board of selectmen may reasonably require.

Section 5-5 The Proposed Budget

The proposed budget shall provide a complete financial plan of all town funds; the proposed budget shall include the proposed budget for the school department as submitted under Section 5-2 and shall explain differences, if any, between that proposal and the town administrator's recommended appropriation for the school department. The proposed budget must clearly identify and variances between the total recommended appropriations and projected available revenues and the means for addressing such variances. Except as may otherwise be required by general law, or by the charter, the financial plan shall be in the form the town administrator deems desirable, or as the board of selectmen may require. In his presentation of the proposed budget, the town administrator shall make use of modern concepts of fiscal presentation so as to furnish a maximum amount of information and the best financial controls. The budget 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:

- (a) 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.
- (b) Proposed capital expenditures during the ensuing fiscal year, detailed by town agency, and the proposed methods of financing such expenditures.
- (c) 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 Proposed Budget

- (a) **Public Hearing** - The finance committee shall forthwith, upon receipt of the proposed budget, provide for the publication in a local newspaper of a notice stating the date, time and place, not less than seven nor more than fourteen days following such publication, when a public hearing will be held by the finance committee on the proposed 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 administrator, or any other town agency, to furnish it with such additional information as it may deem necessary to assist it in its review of the proposed 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 at least seven 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 5-7 Capital Improvement Program

The town administrator shall submit a capital improvement program to the board of selectmen and to the finance committee at least thirty 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:

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

The information is to be annually revised with regard to all items still pending, or in the process of being acquired, improved or constructed.

Further Comments from Martha White on Article 5

Section 5-4 Budget Message

Existing:

The budget message submitted by the town administrator shall explain the proposed budget for all town agencies, both in fiscal terms and in terms of work programs. It shall outline proposed financial policies of the town for the ensuing fiscal year; describe important features of the proposed budget; indicate any major variations from the current budget in financial policies, expenditures and revenues, together with the reasons for such changes; summarize the town's debt position; and it shall include such additional information as the town administrator deems desirable or the board of selectmen may reasonably require.

Proposed:

The budget message submitted by the town administrator shall:

- Provide a comprehensive overview of the proposed budget
- Explain the Town's fiscal condition including noteworthy changes in various revenue and expense categories as well as reserves
- Outline proposed financial policies of the town for the ensuing fiscal year
- Describe important features of the proposed budget
- Indicate any major variations from the current financial policies together with the reasons for such changes
- Identify changed priorities and the reasons for such changes
- Summarize the town's debt position
- Provide an analysis of significant trends and fiscal challenges and the administration's proposed responses thereto
- Include such additional information as the town administrator deems desirable or the board of selectmen may reasonably require.

Section 5-5 The Proposed Budget

Existing:

The proposed budget shall provide a complete financial plan of all town funds and activities, including the budget as requested by the school committee. Except as may otherwise be required by general law, or by the charter, the financial plan shall be in the form the town administrator deems desirable, or as the board of selectmen may require. In his presentation of the proposed budget, the town administrator shall make use of modern concepts of fiscal presentation so as to furnish a maximum amount of information and the best financial controls. The budget shall be arranged to show the actual and estimated income and expenditures for the previous, current, and ensuing fiscal years and shall indicate, in separate sections:

Proposed:

The proposed budget shall provide a complete financial plan of all town funds; the proposed budget shall include the proposed budget for the school department as submitted under Section 5-2 and shall explain differences, if any, between that proposal and the town administrator's recommended appropriation for the school department. The proposed budget must clearly

identify and variances between the total recommended appropriations and projected available revenues and the means for addressing such variances. Except as may otherwise be required by general law, or by the charter, the financial plan shall be in the form the town administrator deems desirable, or as the board of selectmen may require. In his presentation of the proposed budget, the town administrator shall make use of modern concepts of fiscal presentation so as to furnish a maximum amount of information and the best financial controls. The budget 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:

From: richsidney@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2009 7:55 PM
To: Carol Gloff
Subject: Re: FW: Natick Article 60 Town-By Law.

I have no specific comments on Article 60.

Rich

On Aug 12, 2009 10:23am, Carol Gloff <cagloff@comcast.net> wrote:

Please see the email below and the attachment from Chief Sheridan. I would like to begin discussing this at our CBRC meeting tomorrow morning. The meeting begins at 7 AM.

Call me on my cell phone today (508-494-4895) if you have any questions; I will be at a client's offices but will call you back if I can't answer.

Carol

From: Sheridan, James [mailto:jsheridan@natickma.org]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2009 9:13 AM
To: Carol Gloff; John P. Flynn
Cc: Firecode13@aol.com; Franciose, Rocky
Subject: Natick Article 60 Town-By Law.

Carol,

Please have a look at this. This is a complete rewrite of Art.60. Maurice Pillette spent considerable time with this. That and several back and forths with Capt. Franciose and myself. I believe it is a much more appropriate document than the existing one. Might it be easier to pass an entire new document by TM than to cut and paste here and there.

Respectfully Submitted,
James A. Sheridan
Natick Fire Department
Chief of Department

From: richsidney@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2009 7:53 PM
To: Carol Gloff; White, Martha
Subject: Re: FW: Fiscal Procedures
Carol --

Here are some comments on Charter Art 5 for the committee to consider.

1. In Sec 5-2 (b), I am concerned about the wording around the required public hearing. I could be read that the public hearing must be held 7 days after the publication, rather than the schedule for the public hearing must be published within 7 days of the proposed budget.

2. In Sec 5-3, word "proposed" is part of what led to this year's confusion. Some people indicated they felt that this budget must be balanced. I would very much like to see if some different language could be found ("preliminary"?) so that the proposal need not be final, if we find ourselves in similar straits as last year.

3. In Sec 5-3, I would like the budget delivered to the FinCom to continue to indicate "major variations ... and the reasons for such changes" If the FinCom can focus on differences and their reasoning (which is, in my opinion, reasonable), we can stay away from stuff that isn't our business. It may be that that is handled in Sec 5-4.

4. In the event someone asks, I do NOT believe that section 5-5 should allow the FinCom to dictate presentation format. I believe a) that Sec 5-6 (b) provides for whatever the FinCom might need and b) that the FinCom and the administrations should be working cooperatively, leading to the appropriate information being shared with the FinCom.

Hope you see this and can take it to the meeting with you. I am copying Martha for the sole purpose of delivering this message to you, should you not see it before the meeting, and to improve the chance of this message reaching you.

Thanks,

Rich

From: Tony Lista [tonylista@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2009 10:11 PM
To: cagloff@comcast.net
Subject: Re: FW: Fiscal Procedures

Carol

As you know I am on vacation and will not be able to attend. My comments are twofold

1) I have great issue with the following in section 5-4 and in section; "...Include such additional information as the town administrator deems desirable or the board of selectmen may reasonably require"

and

Section 5-5 " in the form the town administrator deems desirable, or as the board of selectmen may require"

I would like to propose the following

- > The BOS should be able to request anything. Strike the word reasonably.
- > Move the order of the actors and edit as follows -"as the BOS require and in the absense of specific instruction as the TA deems desirable"

2) Section 5-4 proposed add the following

- Describe and summarize changes in town service levels
- Describe and summarize changes in staff levels

Tony Lista
Phone: 508.951.2641
Email: TonyLista@aol.com

Call me when you are ready

August 11, 2009

Re Proposed changes to Charter Article 5

Proposed process in brief

1. December: The SoS submits proposed budget and proposed appropriation request first to the SC, and then to the TA. No approval or vote from the SC.
2. January: TA submits proposed town-wide budget (which need not adopt the SoS's request), supporting documents, the SoS's proposed budget and proposed appropriation request, and budget message to Fin Com. TA's budget message must explain any difference between the SoS's proposed appropriation request and the TA's proposed appropriation for the NPS.
3. Budget season: The SC meets and discusses the school budget, adjusting as needed for changing requirements and fiscal realities. The Fin Com follows this discussion and meets as it sees fit, understanding that the budget and appropriation request as proposed by the SoS may differ from the budget and request ultimately adopted by the SC.
4. SC budget vote: SC holds a properly noticed public hearing and votes on two separate items: a final budget appropriation request and a school budget.
5. TM: The TA delivers proposed town-wide budget and budget message to TM. Recall that the budget message will include the Supt's original proposed appropriation request and explanation of any difference between the numbers. The SoS (per MGL) addresses TM on the budget as voted by SC.

My notes

- The SoS submits proposed budget and proposed appropriation request first to the SC, and then to the TA. No approval or vote from the SC.

The present language requires the SC to submit a voted budget to the TA in December. In practice, the SoS submits preliminary information to TA by this time.

The proposed change is in line with past practice but makes explicit that there are potentially several "bottom lines" that need to be reconciled by the process. This allows the town to understand fiscal realities and also NPS's actual needs, as well as how these come together.

Nothing in the charter would specify or be understood to specify any particular method of increasing or decreasing the budget (level service, level funding, percentage increase or decrease, increase or decrease as suggested by the TA, etc). That would be left to the discretion of the Supt.