

bers of the Board. These amounts have been in place since 1996. Approval of this question would increase the amounts to \$4,500 per year for the Chairman, \$3,500 per year for the Deputy Chairman and Secretary, and \$3,000 per year for the remaining members of the Board.

Referendum Question #8

“Shall the Town of Manchester amend the Town Charter to make certain technical and administrative changes?” Yes___ No___

Explanation: Approval of this question would make the following amendments to the Town Charter: Section 2-1 would be amended to eliminate references to Justices of the Peace and a new Section 2-14 would be added to specify that Justices of the Peace shall be selected and their offices administered in accordance with state statute. Section 5-8 would be amended to eliminate the requirement for a public hearing for additional appropriations of \$500 or less. The current Charter requires a public hearing for all additional appropriations regardless of the amount. Section 5-22 would be amended to change the threshold for required competitive bidding from a flat amount of \$10,000 to an amount indexed to 0.000003 of the General Fund Taxable Grand List. Section 5-2(a) would be amended to alter the timing of the joint budget meeting of the Board of Directors and Board of Education. The mandatory meeting would occur prior to budget adoption by the Board of Directors rather than prior to submittal of the General Manager’s recommended budget. Section 16-1 would be amended to eliminate the General Manager’s ex officio membership on the Library Board. The management of

the Library was transferred to the General Manager in the 2003 Charter Revision, making the ex officio seat unnecessary. Section 18-1 would be amended to increase the Town Attorney’s authority to settle claims from \$1,500 to \$7,000 without General Manager’s approval, up to \$15,000 with the General Manager’s approval, and over \$15,000 with the Board of Directors approval.

This explanatory text has been prepared by the Town Clerk pursuant to Sec. 9-369b(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes and is intended to not advocate either the approval or disapproval of the referendum questions.

Additional information on the Charter Revision questions can be found:

- on the Town of Manchester’s website at www.ci.manchester.ct.us
- at the Customer Service and Information Center at Town Hall. **Call (860) 647-5235.**

On November 4, polls open at 6:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. For information on your voting location, call the Registrar of Voters at **(860) 647-3025.**

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Town of Manchester

(Town Seal will be placed here)

Explanatory Text for Election Day Referendum Questions on Amendments to the Manchester Town Charter

Tuesday, November 4, 2008

On the November 4, 2008 election ballot, there will be six referendum questions regarding the Manchester Town Charter. The Town Charter defines the form of government for the town and sets out the roles and responsibilities of most elected and appointed town officials. The Charter also codifies the basic framework for how government is conducted, such as the processes for adopting ordinances, the town budget and the identification and operation of the various departments of the town government. Periodically, communities update their charters to reflect changes in the way the business of government is conducted, to reassign roles and responsibilities or to clarify certain provisions. This process is called Charter Revision and may result in minor technical and administrative changes as well as substantive changes to the structure of the local government.

In May 2007, the Manchester Board of Directors adopted a resolution establishing a Charter Revision Commission. Over the course of more than a year, the Charter Revision Commission reviewed numerous proposed amendments to the Town Charter. On August 12, 2008, the Board of Directors approved the Final Report of the Charter Revision Commission and the six charter revision questions which will appear on the November 4, 2008 ballot. Questions 1 and 2 on the ballot involve statewide constitutional issues and are not related to the Manchester Town Charter. The six questions regarding the Manchester Town Charter will be numbered 3 through 8 on the ballot.

The following is an explanation of each of the six Manchester Town Charter questions:

Referendum Question #3:

“Shall the Town of Manchester amend section 3-4 of the Town Charter to provide that the top vote-getter be elected Chairman of the Board of Directors?” Yes___ No___

Explanation: Under the current Charter provisions, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, commonly referred to as the Mayor, is selected following each election by a vote of the members of the Board of Directors. Approval of this question would make the candidate receiving the highest number of votes in the general election the Chairman of the Board of Directors (Mayor).

Referendum Question #4:

“Shall the Town of Manchester amend section 2-4 of the Town Charter to remove the Standards of Official Conduct from the Charter and enable a supermajority of the Board of Directors to adopt Standards of Official Conduct by ordinance, and thereafter amend them as may be required?” Yes___ No___

Explanation: Approval of this question would remove the Standards of Official Conduct from the Charter and enable the Board of Directors to adopt Standards of Official Conduct by ordinance. The adoption of an ordinance on Standards of Official Conduct would require the vote of seven members, a supermajority, of the Board of Directors. Amendments to the ordinance would also require a supermajority vote of the Board of Directors. The Ethics Commission would remain in place as a Charter-mandated commission. Opinions reached by the Ethics Commission would be incorporated into the Standards of Official Conduct by reference.

Referendum Question #5:

“Shall the Town of Manchester amend chapter 5 of the Town Charter to provide for a petition for budget referendum?” Yes___ No___

Explanation: According to the existing Charter, the Board of Directors adopts a budget which automatically becomes effective on July 1 of each year. Approval of this question would enable citizens to petition for a budget referendum to approve or reject the budget adopted by the Board of Directors. The proposed budget referendum provision would require that the petition be signed by at least 7% of registered voters (approximately 2,100 signatures) and submitted to the Town Clerk no more than ten days after adoption of the budget by the Board of Directors. If a successful petition forces a budget referendum, the ballot question will read “Shall the annual budget adopted by the Board of Directors on [here insert date of adoption] take effect as adopted?” Voters will choose one of the three following responses to the ballot question:

- 1) Yes
- 2) No; the adopted budget is too high
- 3) No; the adopted budget is too low

If the majority of votes cast in the referendum are “Yes”, or if the total number of votes cast is less than 15% of the number of electors (approximately 4,500 votes cast), the adopted budget will take effect. If the combined “No” votes exceed the “Yes” votes,

and at least 15% of the electors cast a vote in the referendum, then the budget adopted by the Board of Directors is rejected. If the adopted budget is rejected, then the Board of Directors must adopt a revised budget. The proposed provision allows for only one budget referendum in any year.

Referendum Question #6

“Shall the Town of Manchester amend sections 5-13 and 5-14 of the Town Charter to eliminate the positions of Town Treasurer and Assistant Town Treasurer?” Yes___ No___

Explanation: Since a 1991 reorganization of the Finance Department and Treasurer’s Office, the duties and responsibilities of the Town Treasurer have been transferred to the Director of Finance by written agreement. Approval of this question will permanently eliminate the positions of Town Treasurer and Assistant Town Treasurer, and transfer their duties and responsibilities to the Director of Finance.

Referendum Question #7

“Shall the Town of Manchester amend section 3-3 of the Town Charter to increase compensation of the members of the Board of Directors to \$4,500 annually for the Chairman, \$3,500 annually for the Deputy Chairman and Secretary, and \$3,000 annually for the other board members?” Yes___ No___

Explanation: Compensation to the Board of Directors is currently \$3,000 per year for the Chairman, \$2,400 per year for the Deputy Chairman and Secretary, and \$2,000 per year for the remaining mem-