



TOWN OF WARREN

RHODE ISLAND

June 1994

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With Amendments adopted

11-3-1998

11-13-1999

06-06-2000

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11-04-2008

11-X-2016

ARTICLE III. TOWN COUNCIL

Section 3.01 Composition

There shall be a Town Council that shall exercise the legislative powers of the Town of Warren.

Section 3.02 Number, Election and Term

The Town Council shall consist of five (5) members who shall be elected at large at the regular biennial elections *as follows:

In 2018, the three (3) candidates who, among the five (5) winning candidates, receive the most votes, shall be elected to serve terms of four (4) years, and the two (2) candidates who, among the five (5) winning candidates, receive the fewest votes, shall be elected to serve for terms of two (2) years;

In 2020, and every fourth year thereafter, two (2) members shall be elected to serve terms of four (4) years (and thereafter until their successors are elected and qualified), and

In 2022, and every fourth year thereafter, three (3) members shall be elected to serve four (4) year terms (and thereafter until their successors are elected and qualified).

Section 3.03 Term Limit

As of December 2018, members of the Town Council shall serve no more than eight (8) consecutive years.

Section 3.04 Eligibility

Only qualified voters who, at all times during their term of office, shall be and remain residents of the Town of Warren, shall be eligible to hold the office of Town Council member.

Section 3.05 Qualifications

A. A member of the Town Council shall hold no other public town office or full time employment in the service of the Town of Warren. A member of the Town Council shall not be eligible for appointment to any office in the Town of Warren during the term for which s/he was elected to the Town Council or for one (1) year thereafter.

B. Only residents of Warren are eligible to be members of the Warren Town Council. A person shall be a resident of Warren if Warren is his or her fixed and established domicile. The determinant of one's domicile is that person's factual physical presence in the Town of Warren on a regular basis incorporating an intention to reside in Warren for an indefinite

period. Warren is the place to which, upon temporary absence, he or she has the intention of returning. A determination of whether an individual is a resident of Warren will be made with reference to the factors set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws 17-1.3-1, Residence for voting purposes.

C. A determination of whether an individual is a resident of Warren is to be made by the Warren Town Council, except that if the Warren residency of a particular Town Councilor is in question, then that person whose residency is challenged will not participate in any deliberation or vote regarding her or his residency.

D. Except as otherwise stated in this Charter, all members of any Board or Commission appointed by the Warren Town Council shall be subject to the same residency requirements as members of the Warren Town Council.

Section 3.06 Commencement of Term

The term of a Town Council member shall begin at the first *December meeting of the Town Council to be held after the issuance of a certificate of election.

Section 3.07 Regular Meetings

The Town Council shall meet regularly at least once a month on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM in a public building in the Town of Warren. The Town Clerk shall post all meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Laws of the State of Rhode Island.

Section 3.10 Presiding Officer

The Town Council shall annually in *December elect from among its members a President and Vice President, each of whom will serve at the pleasure of the Town Council. The President shall preside at meetings of the Town Council and rule on matters of procedure. The President shall have the right to speak and vote as any other member. The Vice President shall act as President during the absence or temporary disability of the President. The Town Council President shall be recognized as head of the Town government for all ceremonial purposes and by the Governor for purposes of military law, but shall have no administrative duties except as otherwise authorized by law.

Section 3.12 General Powers and Duties

Except as otherwise provided by law or by the Charter, all powers of the Town of Warren shall be vested in the Town Council which shall provide for their exercise and for the performance of all duties and obligations imposed on the Town of Warren by law. The powers and duties of the Town Council shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (1) To hire the Town Manager and negotiate the terms of his/her employment contract;
- (2) To declare a vacancy of office;
- (3) To ratify the hiring of Department Heads by the Town Manager;

- (4) To appoint Boards and Commissions;
- (5) To negotiate, together with the Town Manager, and to ratify all contracts that involve matters subject to collective bargaining or interests in real property;
- (6) To assume financial responsibility for the operation of the Town;
- (7) To ensure a procedure to review all invoices is established and followed so that Town expenditures are made in accordance with *the approved budget;
- (8) To review on a monthly basis requests for non-budgeted or over-budget expenditures;
- (9) To approve, by majority vote, any expenditures that exceed the approved budget or line item accounts within the approved budget; expenditures in excess of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) that are subject to competitive bidding; matching grant contributions in excess of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000), and capital expenditures in excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000);
- (10) To serve as Licensing Board and as such to grant, suspend or revoke licenses and permits in accordance with the law; and
- (11) To investigate the affairs of the Town of Warren or any department or division thereof and hear complaints in relation to matters concerning the administration of the government of the Town of Warren.

Section 3.14 Compensation

The Town Council may from time to time fix the annual salary of each Town Council member and of the President of the Town Council, subject to *final budget approval, provided however, that no such ordinance changing the salary of the Town Council members or the President of the Town Council shall become effective during the current term of any Town Council member. No action changing the salary of the Town Council shall be taken within the thirty (30) days preceding an election.

ARTICLE IV. TOWN MANAGER

Section 4.02 Appointment, Qualifications, Terms of Office

The Town Council shall appoint a Town Manager by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Town Council ~~not simply a majority of a quorum~~. Since the Town Council bears ultimate responsibility for the management of the Town, the Town Manager will serve at the pleasure of the Council. The Town Manager shall be chosen mainly on the basis of his/her executive and administrative qualifications. The Town Manager shall:

- (1) Be a citizen of the United States; and shall not have been convicted of any crime which would constitute a felony in any jurisdiction;
- (2) Hold a Bachelor's or Master's degree in Public Administration or related field from an accredited college or university;
- (3) Have a minimum of three (3) years' experience as a City or Town Manager, or Assistant City or Town Manager, Acting Town Manager or have at least five (5) years successful managerial experience which would qualify him/her to perform the duties listed in Section 4.04;
- (4) At all times follow Section 19.04 of this Charter and abide by the principles of the code of conduct of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA); *Replaces "Subscribe to the following goals and principles..." (a-m)
- (5) Be able to perform the duties described in this charter.

The Town Manager hired by the Town Council shall be given an initial employment contract not to exceed three years, renewable at the Town Council's discretion for terms not to exceed three (3) years.

The Town Manager shall devote his/her entire time and attention to his/her duties as Town Manager and shall not, during his/her appointment, be actively engaged in any employment, or business, or in the practice of any profession, or hold any elected or appointed public office other than the office of Town Manager of the Town of Warren.

The Town Manager need not be a resident of the Town of Warren or the State of Rhode Island at the time of appointment but shall establish residence in the Town of Warren **or within a fifteen (15) mile radius of the Town** within six (6) months following appointment.

Section 4.04 Powers and Duties

The Town Manager shall be responsible to the Town Council for the proper day-to-day operation of the Town of Warren's affairs for which the Town Manager is given

responsibility under this Charter. The powers, duties and responsibilities of the Town Manager shall include but are not intended to be limited to the following:

- (1) Ease the administrative burden of the Town Council;
- (2) Propose to the Town Council for adoption rules and regulations establishing a personnel system. The personnel system shall make use of modern concepts of personnel management and may include, but not be limited to, the following elements: a method of administration, personnel policies indicating the rights, obligations, job descriptions and benefits of employees; a compensation plan for non-union employees subject to *final budget approval; a method of recruiting and selecting employees based upon merit principles; a centralized record keeping system; a performance evaluation system; disciplinary procedures; and other elements that are determined necessary. All Town of Warren agencies and positions shall be subject to the rules and regulations adopted under this section;
- (3) Supervise, direct and be responsible for the efficient administration of all officers appointed by the Town Manager and their respective departments and of all functions for which the Town Manager is given responsibility, authority or control by this Charter, by ordinance, or by vote of the Town Council;
- (4) Administer either directly or through a person or persons supervised by the Town Manager, in accordance with this Charter, all provisions of general or special laws applicable to the Town of Warren, all ordinances, and all regulations established by the Town Council;
- (5) Comply with the Code of Ethics of the State of Rhode Island as well as with the code of ethics as stipulated in this Charter;
- (6) Coordinate all activities of Town departments, offices, commissions, committees, councils, boards, agencies and authorities;
- (7) Attend all regular and special meetings of the Town Council, unless excused by a vote of the Town Council, and to answer all questions addressed to the Town Manager, which are related to matters under the general supervision of the Town Manager;
- (8) Keep the Town Council fully informed on a monthly basis as to the needs and financial condition of the Town of Warren, and to recommend to the Town Council for adoption such measures requiring action by them as the Town Manager deems necessary or expedient;
- (9) Ensure that complete and full records of the financial and administrative activity of the Town of Warren are maintained and to render reports, including budget overruns, to the Town Council as shall be required;

- (10) Be responsible for the rental, use, maintenance and repair of all facilities of the Town of Warren;
- (11) Negotiate all contracts on behalf of the Town of Warren subject to budgetary controls, ratification by the Town Council, and signature by the Town Council President, **in accordance with Section 3.11(5) and (9)**;
- (12) Maintain a full and complete inventory of all property owned by the Town of Warren and oversee the disposal and sale of surplus equipment;
- (13) Administer personnel policies, practices, rules and regulations, as well as any compensation plan, collective bargaining agreements, and any related matters for all employees of the Town of Warren;
- (14) Prepare and submit an annual budget, a **5-year** capital improvement program **which shall be updated each year based on priorities and changing conditions** and a long term financial forecast as provided in this Charter;
- (15) Delegate, authorize or direct, in writing, any subordinate or employee of the Town of Warren to exercise any power, duty or responsibility which the office of Town Manager is authorized to exercise provided that all acts that are performed under such delegation shall be considered to be the acts of the Town Manager;
- (16) Prepare and deliver by January 31, an annual State of the Town report to the Town Council at a public meeting;
- (17) Maintain a **unified** purchasing system, make purchasing rules and regulations, and act as Purchasing Agent for the Town of Warren, subject to State law and the provisions of this Charter;
- (18) Review all findings of the annual audit management letter, report to the Town Council all actions necessary to correct any cited deficiencies, and implement corrective action whenever possible;
- (19) Authorize all ***requisitions** for payment after proper review by and signature of the appropriate Department Head or Board Chairperson and the Town Treasurer;
- (20) Perform such other duties as necessary or as may be assigned by this Charter, by ordinance, or by vote of the Town Council.

Section 4.06 Competitive Bidding

Before the Town of Warren makes any purchase of, or contracts for, supplies, materials, equipment and professional services or work to be performed in excess of ***the amount specified in RIGL 45-55-9**, opportunity shall be given for competitive bidding, after public notice, under such rules and regulations, and with such exceptions as the Town Council

may prescribe. No such transaction, which is essentially a unit, shall be divided into a series of orders for the purpose of circumventing the requirement of this Charter for competitive bidding.

All such purchases, or such contracts, for more than *the amount specified in RIGL 45-55-9 shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, except that the purchasing authority may be directed by the Town Council to reject any and all bids, and then to re-advertise for bids. Bids, specifications and all factors being equal, preference shall be given to the bidder whose place of business is located in the Town of Warren. The Town Council President and/or the Town Manager shall be permitted to waive the competitive bidding requirements for emergency expenditures. Such action is to be ratified by the Town Council at the first Town Council meeting following such action by the Town Council President or Town Manager. A written determination of the basis for the emergency, and for the selection of the particular contractor, shall be included in the contract file.

In the alternative, any State Master Price Agreement may be used if beneficial to the Town.

ARTICLE V. DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Section 5.04 Duties

The Treasurer/Tax Collector shall have all powers and duties prescribed by the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island.

A. In his/her capacity as Treasurer, the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector shall:

- (1) Pre-audit all bills, invoices, payrolls or other evidence of claims or charges against the Town of Warren, and see that budget appropriations are not exceeded by any disbursements in any department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency, or authority of the Town of Warren. Should any expenditure exceed budget, the Town Manager and the Town Council shall be notified prior to payment of any invoices. Over-expenditures shall not be incurred without the approval of the Town Council;
- (2) Establish and maintain a unified accounting system for the Town of Warren with accounts, procedures, controls and forms to be used by all departments, offices, commissions, committees, councils, boards, agencies and authorities of the Town of Warren that are subject to this Charter, and ensure accurate and transparent documentation of the amounts of all appropriations, the amounts paid from each, the person or entity to whom and the purpose for which the payments were made, the unpaid obligations against each appropriation, and the encumbered balance;
- (3) Prepare a monthly statement of all receipts and disbursements, in sufficient detail to show the financial condition of the Town of Warren, for submission to the Town Manager, the Town Council, and the Department Heads prior to the monthly Town council meeting;
- (4) Prepare as soon as possible after, and as of the end of each fiscal year, a complete financial statement and report in accordance with State law for submission to the Town Manager, the Town Council and the electors of the Town of Warren. A copy thereof shall be filed in the Town Clerk's office and shall become a public record;
- (5) Cooperate with the Town Manager and the Town Council in compiling the expenditure and revenue estimates for the budget;
- (6) Receive all license fees, rents, funds, money receivable by the Town of Warren from the State or Federal Government, the courts, and any department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency, or authority of the Town of Warren except as provided by law;

- (7) Have custody of all public funds belonging to or under the control of the Town of Warren or of any department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency or authority of the Town of Warren including the School District; and deposit all funds coming into his/her hands in such depositories as may be designated by the Town Council; or, if no such designation shall be made, in such depositories as he/she may choose as provided by the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, provided however, that such depositories are insured or registered by an agency of the United States. All interest received on deposits shall be the property of the Town of Warren and shall be accounted for and credited to the proper accounts;
- (8) Have custody of all investments and invested funds of the Town of Warren or in the possession of the Town of Warren in a fiduciary capacity;
- (9) Pay out funds by check, such payments being made only after proper review by and signature of department head, board chairperson, etc. and authorization by Town Manager;
- (10) To participate with the Grant Administrator in preparation of all grant financial reports.

B. In his/her capacity as Tax Collector, the Town of Warren Treasurer/Tax Collector shall collect all taxes and special assessments for the collection of which the Town of Warren is responsible.

Section 5.05 Bond

~~The Town of Warren Treasurer/Tax Collector, within fifteen (15) days of the time of being sworn into office, shall give a bond to the Town of Warren in such sum and with such sureties as the Town Council shall prescribe for faithful performance of his/her duties, the cost of such bond to be paid by the Town of Warren.~~

Section 5.06 Disbursement of Funds

There shall be **four (4)** persons authorized to sign checks. The primary signature on expenditures below Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) shall be that of the Treasurer/Tax Collector. For expenditures equal to or over Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), two (2) signatures shall be required. Any two of the following **four (4)** are authorized to sign jointly: 1) Treasurer/Tax Collector, 2) Town Manager, 3) President of the Town Council, **and (4) Town Clerk**. No funds shall be disbursed, either by check or by any other means, for expenditures equal to or over Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) without the written ~~authorization of any two of the following three individuals: the Town Manager, the Treasurer/Tax Collector and/or the Town Council President.~~

ARTICLE VI. OFFICE OF TAX ASSESSMENT

Created as separate Department - Moved from under Finance Department

Section 6.01 Tax Assessor

There shall be an Office of Tax Assessment the head of which shall be the Tax Assessor, who shall be hired by the Town Manager.

Section 6.02 Qualifications

The Tax Assessor shall have an Associate's or Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and shall have prior experience with valuation and taxation of real and personal property. He or she shall either hold a certificate from the Rhode Island Association of Assessing Officers or the equivalent thereof, or acquire such a certificate within three (3) years of being appointed. The Tax Assessor shall hold no other public office, appointment or employment with the Town of Warren.

Section 6.03 Powers and Duties

The Tax Assessor shall have and perform all the powers and duties which are now or may hereafter be vested in Tax Assessors of towns by the General laws of the State of Rhode Island. The Tax Assessor shall be responsible for fixing an assessed valuation of all taxable, real and personal property in the Town of Warren, and for preparing an assessment and tax roll on the basis of such valuation, in the manner provided by law and ordinance.

ARTICLE VII. TOWN CLERK

Section 7.01 Town Clerk

There shall be a Town Clerk who shall be hired by the Town Manager.

Section 7.02 Qualifications

The Town Clerk shall have a *business school diploma or an Associate's degree in a business related field. He or she shall have at least two (2) years' experience as an assistant or deputy town clerk and five (5) years' experience in office management or as an administrative assistant or executive secretary. Experience with legislative and legal procedures is preferred. The Town Clerk must attain certification as Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) within four (4) years following appointment and continue to maintain certification annually.

Section 7.03 Powers and Duties

The Town Clerk shall be the Clerk of the Financial Town Meeting, Clerk of the Town Council, Clerk of the Probate Court, Clerk of the Board of Canvassers, and Recorder of Deeds. It shall be the duty of the Town Clerk to:

- (1) Make a permanent record of all proceedings and certify by signature all actions of the aforesaid bodies;
- (2) Be custodian of the Seal of the Town of Warren and of the official documents and records of the Town of Warren;
- (3) Direct and supervise the recordings of deeds, mortgages, vital statistics, licenses and permits and such other records as shall by ordinance and law be required to be kept by the Town Clerk;
- (4) Issue birth certificates, marriage licenses, burial permits, and such other licenses and permits as are required by ordinance and law to be issued by the Town Clerk;
- (5) Prepare and post the agenda for the Town Council meetings;
- (6) Be responsible for the proper care and storage of Town records of historic significance;
- (7) Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by this Charter or by law pertaining to town clerks and such other duties appropriate to the office as the Town Manager and Town Council may require;

(7) Be responsible for the advertising, issuing, accepting, opening and recording of all job applications and bid applications before delivering them to other department(s) in town government;

(8) Co-sign checks for payments of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) or more when necessary.

Section 7.04 Deputy Town Clerk

There shall be a Deputy Town Clerk, hired by the Town Manager, with qualifications equivalent to those for the Town Clerk, **except that prior experience as assistant or deputy town clerk shall not be required.** When the Town Clerk is not available, the Deputy Town Clerk shall have the powers to perform all the duties of the office of the Town Clerk and such other duties as may be required.

~~Section 6.05 Bond~~

~~The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk shall, respectively, within fifteen (15) days of the time of being sworn into office, give bond to the Town Treasurer with sufficient surety, in such sum as the Town Council shall prescribe for the faithful performance of said office. The cost of such bonds to be paid by the Town of Warren.~~

ARTICLE VIII. PROBATE COURT

Section 8.03 Qualifications

The Judge of Probate shall be an attorney-at-law in good standing who has been admitted to the practice of law in the State of Rhode Island and has five (5) years' experience as a practicing attorney. **Probate experience is preferred.** He or she need not be a resident of the Town of Warren.

ARTICLE X. DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Section 10.01 Appointment

There shall be a *Director of Planning and Community Development who shall be hired by the Town Manager.

Section 10.02 Qualifications

The Director of Planning and Community Development shall have a Master's degree in Urban Planning or a related field and at least two (2) years of professional planning experience, or an equivalent combination of education and professional planning experience. Membership in the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is preferred. Professional experience must include professional training in planning, urban design, urban planning, community development, as well as a proven record of success in seeking and administering grants.

Section 10.03 Duties

The duties and responsibilities of the Director of Planning and Community Development shall include but not be limited to the following:

Oversight of the Planning and Community Development Office;

- (1) overseeing, and serving as point of contact for, programs and projects relating to land use, community development, economic development and management of cultural and natural resources;
- (2) providing technical planning information to the Town Council, Town Manager, Planning Board, and other town departments;
- (3) overseeing the preparation and administration of grants;
- (4) assisting with the development, maintenance and improvement of tools to enhance public awareness and access to public information; and coordination with other town boards, commissions and community organizations, and with Federal and State agencies as necessary.

ARTICLE XI. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Section 11.01 Organization

There shall be a Department of Public Works, the head of which shall be the Director of Public Works. The Town Manager may further organize the Department into separate divisions or offices with the approval of the Town Council.

Section 11.02 Director of Public Works

The Director of Public Works shall be hired by the Town Manager and shall be responsible for the efficient operation of all aspects of the Department of Public Works.

Section 11.03 Qualifications

The Director of Public Works shall have a Bachelor's Degree and a minimum of (3) years' successful experience as a manager or supervisor in municipal public works or in a related, public or private sector, position; or an equivalent combination of education and professional experience. A degree in Civil Engineering is preferred.

The Director of Public Works shall not, during his/her appointment, be actively engaged in any other employment, business or profession, or hold any elected or appointed public office in the Town Of Warren, with the exception of appointments by the Town Council that relate to public safety, emergency management or the tree warden, provided, however, that the Town Manager may grant an exception if s/he determines that the requested exception will not interfere with the Director's ability to perform his or her duties.

Section 11.04 Powers and Duties

The Director of Public Works shall:

- (1) Supervise, operate, and maintain all public works of the Town of Warren, except as otherwise provided herein, including but not limited to: roads and highway structures, storm systems, public buildings and lands, docks, parks and playgrounds, street lighting, sidewalks and historic cemeteries;
- (2) Supervise solid waste disposal and recycling;
- (3) Supervise the performance, or perform the duties of, the Tree Warden;
- (4) Support the operation of the Senior Shuttle;
- (5) Provide engineering assistance for the Town of Warren;
- (6) Perform such other duties as shall be required by this Charter or by law or ordinance;

- (7) Serve as Superintendent of Parks and Recreational Facilities and as such be responsible for the upkeep, repair and maintenance of parks, playgrounds, beaches, and other recreational facilities of the Town of Warren, in coordination with the Director of Parks and Recreation;

Section 11.05 Tree Warden

There shall be a Tree Warden *who shall be appointed by the Town Council at its regular meeting in January each year. The qualifications, functions, and duties of the Tree Warden shall be those as prescribed by the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island. The Director of Public Works may serve as the Tree Warden.

ARTICLE XII. PUBLIC SAFETY

Section 12.03 Qualifications of the Chief of Police

The Chief of Police shall have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement or similar education; and at least five (5) years' experience above the rank of patrolman in any organized police department; and have expertise in the organization, administration, management and direction of police personnel; and shall possess such other qualifications as the Town Council may prescribe by ordinance.

The Chief of Police shall not, during his/her appointment, be actively engaged in any other employment, business or profession, or hold any elected or appointed public office in the Town of Warren, with the exception of appointments by the Town Council that relate to public safety or emergency management, provided, however, that the Town Manager may grant an exception if s/he determines that the requested exception will not interfere with the Police Chief's ability to perform his or her duties.

Section 12.06 Animal Control Division, Officer

There shall be an Animal Control Division within the Police Department, the head of which shall be the Animal Control Officer. The Animal Control Officer shall be hired by the Town Manager and work under the direction of the Chief of Police **or designee**. In addition, there shall be such subordinates as shall from time to time be determined by the Town Manager **in consultation with the Chief of Police**. Both the Animal Control Officer and the subordinates shall have a working knowledge of the laws of the State of Rhode Island and the ordinances of the Town of Warren pertaining to the licensing and control of dogs and the care for other animals.

Section 12.07 Fire **and Rescue** Department

There shall be a Fire **and Rescue** Department, the head of which shall be the Fire Chief.

Section 12.08 Appointment of Fire Chief

The Fire Chief shall be appointed by the Town Manager.

Section 12.09 Qualifications of the Fire Chief

The Fire Chief shall be a member in good standing of the Warren Fire **and Rescue** Department with a minimum of seven (7) years' experience as a line officer; hold an Associate Degree in Fire Sciences or other **fire**-related field; hold a current Rhode Island EMT certification as determined by the level of care provided by the Town of Warren; hold a current certification in the Rhode Island Fire Laws and Rules and Life Safety Code (NFPA 101) as issued by the Rhode Island State Fire Marshall's Office, or acquire such a

certification within one year of being appointed Fire Chief; and, demonstrate comprehensive working knowledge of the Warren Fire **and Rescue** Department.

The Fire Chief shall not, during his/her appointment, be actively engaged in any other employment, business or profession, or hold any elected or appointed office in the Town of Warren, with the exception of appointments by the Town Council that relate to public safety or emergency management, provided, however, that the Town Manager may grant an exception if s/he determines that the requested exception will not interfere with the Fire Chief's ability to perform his or her duties.

Section 12.10 Duties

The Fire Chief shall be the administrative and technical head of the Fire **and Rescue** Department of the Town of Warren and shall have the following duties:

- (1) Control and supervise all activities and operations of the Fire **and Rescue** Department, including but not limited to fire extinguishment, fire prevention, inspection of buildings for compliance with fire codes, and have a working knowledge of hazardous materials;
- (2) Establish, maintain, and enforce Fire **and Rescue** Department operations and procedures;
- (3) Schedule, conduct, and supervise fire drills and fire department training with primary regard for the protection of life and property and the safety of department personnel;
- (4) Supervise the Rescue Squad, ensuring compliance with Rhode Island protocols and the Policies and Procedures of the Warren Fire **and Rescue** Department;
- (5) Participate in training as deemed appropriate by the Town Manager.

Section 12.11 Assistant Fire Chiefs

There shall be one (1) Deputy Fire Chief and a maximum of three (3) Assistant Fire Chiefs to be appointed by the Fire Chief. ~~This group shall be known as the Board of Fire Engineers and shall assist the Fire Chief in carrying out the duties of the Warren Fire Department as necessary. Of these, no more than one (1) shall come from any one (1) individual company within the Fire Department.~~ A Deputy Fire Chief and/or Assistant Fire Chief shall have been a member in good standing of the Warren Fire and Rescue Department for a minimum of ten (10) years, have held the rank of Lieutenant or higher for a minimum of four (4) years, and meet the training requirements of the Warren Fire and Rescue Department. If a Deputy Fire Chief and/or Assistant Fire Chief resigns, the Fire Chief shall ***appoint a successor** from a pool of candidates recommended by each company's membership, excluding the Rescue Squad.

Section 12.12 Board of Fire Engineers

There shall be a Board of Fire Engineers, the head of which shall be the Fire Chief or his/her designee. The Board of Fire Engineers shall consist of the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, Assistant Chiefs and Captains of each company, and shall assist the Fire Chief in carrying out the policies and procedures of the Warren Fire and Rescue Department as necessary. If a member of the Board of Fire Engineers is unable to attend a meeting, his or her company shall appoint an alternate member.

~~There shall be a Rescue Squad, the head of which shall be the Fire Chief.~~

Section 12.14 Powers and Duties

The Director of Emergency Management shall:

- (1) Prepare a comprehensive plan for the utilization of facilities, equipment and personnel of the Town of Warren during an emergency;
- (2) Prepare a plan and protocols for internal and external communications in an emergency, and equip and maintain an emergency communications center;
- (3) Assist the Town Council President in any declared emergency;
- (4) Be the liaison with the State Office of Emergency Management;
- (5) Perform any other duties or functions as the Town Council may direct by ordinance or during any emergency as the Town Council President may direct.

ARTICLE XIV. DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Section 14.01 Organization

There shall be a Department of Parks and Recreation which shall be responsible for overseeing, promoting and regulating public use of the parks and recreational facilities of the Town of Warren. There shall be a Director of Parks and Recreation who shall be the head of the Department and be responsible for programmatic and administrative management. The Director shall work closely with the Director of Public Works who, in his/her capacity as Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, shall be responsible for construction, maintenance and care of recreational facilities. The Directors shall coordinate with the Director of Planning and Community Development for the purpose of developing master planning and project planning, including budgeting and pursuit of supplemental funding for parks and recreational projects. There shall be a Parks and Recreation Board which shall assist the Director in developing and carrying out her duties and the responsibilities of the Department.

14.02 Director of Parks and Recreation

The Director of Parks and Recreation shall be hired by, and work under the supervision of, the Town Manager. The position shall be part-time, provided that the Town Manager may increase the number of hours, up to full-time, during certain times of the year, subject to availability of funds in the approved budget.

14.03 Qualifications

The Director of Parks and Recreation shall have demonstrated organizational, administrative and supervisory experience with recreational programs and projects, interdepartmental coordination and community outreach.

14.04 Duties

The Director of Parks and Recreation, with assistance from the Parks and Recreation Board, shall:

- (1) Develop and implement a comprehensive recreation program for the Town of Warren, as well as a permitting program for public use of the parks and recreational facilities of the Town, in accordance with the provisions of this Charter and all applicable Town policies, ordinances, State laws and regulations, and grant agreements, subject to approval by the Town Council;
- (2) Develop master plans, a capital improvement plan, annual budgets, and pursue technical and financial assistance from public and private sources;

- (3) Establish such administrative policies and and rules as necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the Department, subject to approval by the Town Manager;
- (4) Hire and supervise seasonal program staff as needed, subject to availability of funding in the approved budget;
- (5) Ensure the public has easy and timely access to up to date information about facilities, programs, events and schedules;
- (6) Direct applicants for facility use permits who also need Town Council approval(s) to apply for such approvals, and provide the Town Council with relevant information and recommendations, in a timely manner.

Section 14.05 Parks & Recreation Board

The Parks and Recreation Board shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Town Council for three (3) year terms, staggered so that no more than two (2) terms will expire in any one year. No voting member shall be an elected official or employee of the Town of Warren. Vacancies shall be filled by the Town Council for the remainder of unexpired terms. The Board shall annually elect a chair person, a secretary and such other officers as it deems appropriate. The Town Council shall appoint a member of the school committee and the Director of Public Works as ex-officio members of the board. Ex-officio members shall have no right to vote and shall not be counted in determining a quorum.

The Parks and Recreation Board shall serve the Town Council and Town Manager in an advisory role and shall assist the Director of Parks and Recreation in carrying out his/her duties and responsibilities, as stated above. In addition, the Board shall monitor the condition and usage of facilities and recommend policy changes to enhance the public's ability to use and enjoy facilities and programs, while safeguarding and preserving public property and minimizing risk to public safety.

~~C. There shall be a Recreation Director appointed annually by the Town Council whose duties shall be prescribed by the Parks and Recreation Board, subject to approval by the Town Council, and who shall work under the supervision of the Town Manager. The compensation of the Recreation Director will be approved at the Financial Town Meeting upon recommendation of the Town Council.~~

ARTICLE XV. DEPARTMENT OF WASTE WATER MANAGEMENT

Section 15.01 Management of Sewers, Sewage Treatment, On Site Waste Water Treatment and Storm Water Drainage

- (1) All duties and powers previously vested in the Warren Sewer Commission are currently vested in the Town Council. The Town Council is responsible for the management, maintenance and improvement of the Town's sewer plant, sewers and storm drainage systems.
- (2) The Town Manager is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of the Town's sewer plant, and the construction, maintenance and improvement of the Town's sewer plant, sewers and storm drainage system.
- (3) With the approval of the Town Council, the Town Manager may hire a Superintendent of Sewers. The Town Council may by ordinance prescribe the duties and qualifications of the Superintendent of Sewers.
- (4) The Town Council and Town Manager may organize a Department of Waste Water Management to be responsible for the integrated management of the Town's sewer system, sewage treatment facility, on-site wastewater treatment systems in non-sewered areas, storm water drainage systems, storm water discharge to surface waters and recharge to the ground, and the effects on drinking water and other natural resources, consistent with the Waste Water Management District and Plan of the Town of Warren. Alternatively, the Town Council and Town Manager may organize, in accordance with Section 11.01 of this Charter, a Division of Waste Water Management within the Department of Public Works that shall have the same responsibilities, and the head of which shall be a Director or Assistant Director instead of the Superintendent of Sewers mentioned in the preceding section. The Department or Division shall at least initially rely on existing consulting contracts instead of hiring additional employees, until the Town Manager has submitted, and the Town Council has approved, an organizational plan and budget that shall be based in part on a cost-benefit analysis of implementing an integrated waste water management plan with Town employees, instead of, or in addition to, contracting for needed services.

XVI. OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS

Section 16.03 Harbormaster

The Harbormaster shall be hired by the Town Manager with recommendation from the Harbor Commission. The Harbor Master shall work under the supervision of the Town Manager. The Harbormaster shall obtain and maintain certification in CPR and basic first aid. Compensation for the Harbormaster shall be recommended by the Town Manager, approved by the Town Council and subject to final budget approval. The Harbormaster shall enforce the Warren Harbor Management Plan and applicable Federal, State and local laws, ordinances and regulations; and shall implement policies adopted by the Harbor Management Commission, subject to Town Council approval.

~~Section 13.05 Sealer of Weights and Measures~~

~~There shall be a Sealer of Weights and Measures subject to State law. The powers and procedures of said office shall be as prescribed by State~~

ARTICLE XVII. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

All Boards/Commissions

The Town Council shall appoint members for, and shall fill vacancies on boards and commissions in accordance with this Charter and/or as prescribed by the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island. All appointees shall be residents of the Town of Warren. Elected officials shall not serve as members of any Town board or commission. The Town Council may, however, designate liaisons to boards and commissions, who shall have no voting rights. Each board and commission shall annually elect a chair person and a secretary; shall keep records of meetings and attendance; and shall submit an annual report to the Town Council or, at the Council's discretion, make a presentation, providing an overview of its work over the past year, presenting relevant data, and discussing future goals and priorities.

Section 17.04 Board of Canvassers

There shall be a bipartisan canvassing authority of which the members shall be selected by the Town Council as provided by the Constitution and General Laws of the State of Rhode Island. Said Canvassing Authority shall be known as the "Board of Canvassers and Registration", and shall be vested with all the powers and duties now or hereafter vested by law in such canvassing authority. The Town Council shall fill vacancies on the Board in accordance with applicable State law.

Section 17.05 Harbor Management Commission

The Harbor Management Commission shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Town Council for three (3) year terms, staggered so that no more than three (3) terms expire in any one year. The Board shall serve the Town Council in an advisory capacity with respect to matters relating to the conditions, uses, management, maintenance and improvements of harbor and other water and waterfront infrastructure, facilities, resources and related programs, projects and services; shall assist the Harbor Master in carrying out his duties and responsibilities; and shall make recommendations to the Town Manager as requested or as it deems appropriate.

Section 17.07 Bristol County Water Authority

The Bristol County Water Authority was established by RI Public Law in 1981, Chapter 102, as amended, to provide adequate, clean water to Bristol County. The legislation provides for a nine (9) person Board of Directors comprised of three (3) directors from each town of Bristol, Warren and Barrington.

Directors from each town are appointed for a period of three (3) years, with staggered terms. *The Warren Town Council, therefore, shall appoint one (1) director each year. Appointed directors shall report quarterly to the Warren Town Council or as requested.

Section 14.08 Housing Authority

~~The Town Council shall appoint members of the Housing Authority herein established in accordance with the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, as amended, and all applicable Federal laws.~~

Section 14.10 Sewer Plant, Sewers and Storm Drainage Systems

~~(1) The Town Manager will oversee the day to day operation of the Town's sewer plant, and the construction, maintenance and improvement of the Town's sewer plant, sewers and storm drainage system.~~

~~(2) With the approval of the Town Council, the Town Manager may hire a Superintendent of Sewers. The Town Council may by ordinance prescribe the duties and qualifications of the Superintendent of Sewers.~~

Section 17.08 Tree Commission

There shall be a Tree Commission consisting of five (5) members appointed by the Town Council from among the electors of the Town of Warren for a term of three (3) years. Said terms shall be staggered so that no more than two (2) members' terms expire each calendar year. The Tree Commission is an advisory board to the Town Council and the Technical Review Committee.

The Commission shall:

- (1) advise the Tree Warden on removal of trees and on appropriate trees to be planted on Town property;
- (2) work with the Tree warden to develop and maintain an inventory of the trees of the Town as well as a long term plan for the protection, care, removal, replacement and addition of trees in the Town, taking into account the importance of trees to environmental quality and public health, energy conservation and community character, and the need to carefully coordinate tree planting and management with infrastructure planning, construction and maintenance, and with proposed development;
- (3) develop guidance for the Department of Public Works, the Planning Board and property owners, regarding proper selection, planting and care of trees; implement tree programs and educational activities; and
- (4) review appeals by applicants whose applications for removal of trees have been denied by the Tree Warden, or by persons otherwise aggrieved or affected by the application process.

ARTICLE XVIII. BUDGET

Section 18.01 The Budget

Section 18.03 Unexpended Appropriations and Unanticipated Revenues

Except as hereinafter specifically provided, any unexpended appropriations and/or unanticipated revenues remaining in a budget of any department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency, or authority at the end of the fiscal year shall become part of the general working capital of the Town of Warren, and may not thereafter be expended without approval *by the Town Council. For purposes of this section the term “general working capital” shall mean the aggregate amount of all unappropriated revenue and unspent or unencumbered appropriations not otherwise set aside pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.04 thereof. Amounts contained in the general working capital fund may be expended in anticipation of the receipt of taxes and other revenues; provided, however, that at the end of any fiscal year the balance in the general working capital fund shall be no less than the balance at the close of the preceding fiscal year together with all additions thereto and interest which shall have been earned thereon, reduced by approved appropriations therefrom for such fiscal year.

Section 18.04 Capital Reserve Accounts

Except as may otherwise be specifically provided in the enabling legislation authorizing the borrowing of money by the Town of Warren, the *Town Council may establish special capital reserve accounts for the specific purposes set forth in the resolution to be comprised of the proceeds of any borrowings for construction or acquisition of any facilities or equipment which remain unexpended at the conclusion of such construction or acquisition, or funds from current appropriations. Upon adoption of such resolution, the funds set aside in each such account shall be considered a capital reserve account. To the extent any sums deposited in each such account are from the current year’s appropriations, the amount so deposited within any fiscal year shall be considered an expenditure within that fiscal year. The monies contained in any such capital reserve account may, however, be used as general working capital in anticipation of taxes or other revenues; provided, however, that at the close of any fiscal year the balance in each such account shall be no less than the balance at the close of the preceding fiscal year together with all additions thereto during such fiscal year, and all interest which shall have been earned reduced by all expenditures made therefrom. The Town Council may authorize expenditures from each such capital reserve account for the purposes and on the conditions contained in the resolution establishing such account.

Section 18.05 Expenditures

Line item appropriations shall be adhered to and there shall be no transfer of funds from one line item to another to cover over-expenditures except with *Town Council approval pursuant to Section 3.11 of this Charter.

The Town Council shall not make contributions in excess of one hundred fifty (\$150.00) dollars from any Town account to any private person or entity *except as authorized in the approved budget.

Section 18.06 Allowance for Doubtful Accounts

There shall be a required line item for an allowance for doubtful accounts. This figure shall be based on historical data of uncollected taxes.

Section 18.07 Budget Schedule

- (1) The budget procedure as set forth in this section shall consist of
 - (a) an initial public hearing;
 - (b) preparation of a proposed budget by the Town Manager;
 - (c) presentation to the Town Council;
 - (d) public workshops on the proposed budget;
 - (e) approval of a preliminary budget by the Town Council;
 - (f) petitions to modify the budget, if any;
 - (g) public workshop on the preliminary budget and modifications proposed by petition, if any; and
 - (h) final budget approval by the Town Council.

- (2) **Publication of budget schedule.** Prior to December 31st of each year, a summary of the budget process, together with a tentative schedule of dates of the various hearings shall be prepared for public distribution by the town clerk and the town clerk shall arrange for the publication of a notice thereof in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the town as directed by the town council and post copies in the town hall, on the town web site, and as otherwise directed by the Town Council.

Section 18.08 Notice of public hearings.

Public hearings shall take place no less than ten (10) calendar days following publication of the proposed and preliminary budgets, which publication shall include notice of the time and place of the hearings. The form of notice shall conform to applicable requirements under the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island.

Section 18.09 Initial budget hearing

The Town Council shall schedule a public hearing no later than January 15 for the purpose of discussing and soliciting comments from the residents relating to the general goals and objectives of the budget for the next fiscal year, prior to the preparation and presentation of

a proposed budget by the Town Manager. Matters for discussion and consideration may include, without limitation, any increase or decrease in taxes, proposed new projects, contractual obligations and other items affecting the budget. Notice of the hearing shall be published no less than ten (10) calendar days prior to the hearing.

Section 18.10 Budget requests

The heads of all departments, offices, boards, commissions, councils, authorities and other Town agencies shall submit requests for funding of their respective operations during the next fiscal year to the Town Manager prior to February 1. Said requests shall be accompanied by estimates of revenues and expenditures and such other supporting materials as the Town Manager shall direct.

Section 18.11 Proposed budget

The Town Manager shall submit to the Town Council, no later than March 1, a proposed budget of receipts and expenditures, and an explanatory budget message. The proposed budget shall show receipts and expenditures for both the current and the new fiscal years. In preparing the proposed budget, the Town Manager shall show all anticipated revenues and all proposed expenditures and the total of proposed expenditures shall not be greater than the total of anticipated revenues. For budgeting purposes, anticipated revenues shall include:

- (1) Miscellaneous revenues
- (2) Amount to be raised by property taxes
- (3) Unexpended capital reserve appropriations.

Upon acceptance by the Town Council, the proposed budget shall be made public, posted on the Town web site, and available upon request in the office of the Town Clerk.

Section 18.12 Public budget workshops

The Town Council shall schedule, during the month of March, two public workshops to discuss the proposed budget and any changes thereto. Residents of the Town shall have the opportunity to comment during the workshops.

Section 18.13 Preliminary Budget

The Council shall, *no later than April 1, approve a preliminary budget, which shall show both the recommendations made by the Town Manager and any changes made by the Town Council. If the preliminary budget proposes an increase in the total of expenditures as proposed by the Town Manager, it also shall provide for increasing the total anticipated revenues, and shall indicate the revenues necessary to maintain a balance between revenues and expenditures. No revenue from any source other than the tax levy shall be included in the preliminary budget approved by the Town Council unless the facts clearly warrant the expectation that such amount actually will be realized in cash during the budget year.

Section 18.14 Publication of preliminary budget and tax rate

Upon approval of the preliminary budget, the Town Council shall, in consultation with the Town Manager and in the manner prescribed in the Property Tax and Fiscal Disclosure Act (RIGL 44-35), publish a summary of the preliminary budget, and the "proposed property tax rate" as well as the "adjusted current property tax rate" for the Town. The budget summary shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town, **posted on the Town website**, and available upon request in the office of the Town Clerk.

Section 18.15 Petitions to the Town Council

Following approval of the preliminary budget by the Town Council, any qualified elector of the Town of Warren may circulate a petition requesting the Town Council to increase or decrease any item of expenditure in said budget, or to insert a new item of expenditure, excluding debt service and expenditures governed by contracts the Town has entered into. Such petition shall specify the item and amount thereof, must be approved by the Town Clerk as to form prior to circulation, and must be returned to the Town Clerk no later than ***April 15**. Upon receipt of such petition, the Town Clerk shall cause the signatures thereon to be verified by the Board of Canvassers within four (4) business days; and, if it contains not less than fifty (50) valid signatures of qualified electors of the Town of Warren, shall transmit the same to the Town Council. The Town Council, before final approval and adoption of the budget, shall consider and vote upon each such petition by roll call. A petition shall only pass with the approval of at least three (3) members of the Town Council.

Section 18.16 Public budget workshop

The Town Council shall schedule a public workshop no later than the third Monday in April on the preliminary budget, changes proposed by petition, if any, and the proposed tax rate.

Section 18.17 Final Budget Approval

*Following the public workshop, the Town Council shall, ***no later than May 1**, complete its deliberations on the budget for the next fiscal year, make any final changes in the budget it may deem advisable, and give final approval to said budget by a vote of a majority of all the members of the Town Council. Following such approval, and no later than **May 8**, the Town Clerk shall cause sufficient copies of the budget to be prepared for public distribution, **post the budget on the Town web site**, and arrange for publication of the budget in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Warren. The budget so adopted shall be the Budget for the Town of Warren for the ensuing fiscal year **subject only to change pursuant to Sections 18.18-18.21**.

ARTICLE XVI. FINANCIAL TOWN MEETING
Delete current Article and all references to Financial Town Meeting

Section 18.18 Vote by referendum

Following final budget approval, the Town Council shall schedule a vote by referendum if:

- (1) A bond issue or promissory note exceeding two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) is proposed as part of the budget for the next fiscal year;
- (2) *A petition has been filed and certified in accordance with Section 18.19 to decrease or increase any line item in the final budget by at least fifty-thousand dollars \$50,000, excluding line items pertaining to debt service and/or contracts executed by the Town; or
- (3) Any public land or building is proposed to be sold, donated or destroyed.

Section 18.19 Petition for budget referendum

Within five (5) days following final budget approval by the Town Council, any five (5) qualified electors of the Town of Warren may commence referendum proceedings by filing an affidavit with the Town Clerk identifying the five (5) electors and certifying that they will be responsible for circulating and filing the petition in accordance with the requirements of this section. The petition must be approved as to form by the Town Clerk prior to circulation and shall specify each line item to be reduced, increased, removed or inserted, as well as the amount approved for that line item by the Town Council. For any proposed increase in expenditures the petition shall propose a corresponding increase in revenue, and identify a source of such revenue.

A petition for a budget referendum must be returned to the Town Clerk within 15 days after the form of petition has been approved. Upon receipt of such petition, the Town Clerk shall cause the signatures thereon to be verified by the Board of Canvassers within four (4) business days; and, if it contains not less than three hundred and seventy-five (375) valid signatures of qualified electors of the Town of Warren, shall transmit the same to the Town Council.

Section 18.20 Budget referendum.

The Town Council shall schedule a referendum by ballot to be held during the month of May, and cause public notice to be published not less than ten (10) calendar days prior to the referendum date in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town, and on the Town web site. The notice shall include a summary of proposed reductions or increases in budget line items, as well as the date, time and location of the referendum vote. The Town Clerk shall prepare the ballot to be used at the referendum in such manner as to specify each proposed reduction or increase separately, together with the original, approved amount, for each line item. The qualified electors shall be instructed to vote either for the

original, approved amount or for one (1) of the proposed reductions or increases thereof. In the case of more than one increase or reduction for the same line item, the amount receiving the most votes shall be declared to have been adopted. The polls at such referendum shall be open at 8:00 a.m. and shall remain open until 8:00 p.m.

Section 18.21 Publication of budget

A copy of the budget as finally adopted by the town council, with amendment(s) as determined by a budget referendum, if any, shall be certified by the Town Clerk and filed in the office of the Town Treasurer/Tax Collector. Sufficient copies thereof shall be made available by the Town Clerk for the use of all offices, departments and agencies and for the use of interested persons.

Section 18.22 Failure to Adopt Budget

In the event that no budget shall have been adopted by the end of the fiscal year for the departments, offices, commissions, committees, councils, boards, agencies or authorities, the Town of Warren shall have the authorization to continue making expenditures at the rates authorized in the budget of the previous fiscal year until such time as a new budget shall have been approved.

~~ARTICLE XVII. MODERATOR~~
Delete entire Article and all references to Moderator

ARTICLE XIX. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 19.12 Vacancy for Public Officials

For purposes of a vacancy, a public official shall be defined as any elected or appointed official or any employee of the Town of Warren not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Department heads shall not be union members.

A vacancy shall occur in any office by:

- (1) Death
- (2) No longer resident or elector of Warren
- (3) Resignation
- (4) Neglect or refusal to qualify
- (5) Abandonment of the office, by the holder of the office thereof
- (6) Removal from office in any manner authorized by law

Section 19.14 Absenteeism

Any member of an appointed department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency or authority, or any person who has been appointed who does not attend at least sixty-six and two-thirds (66-2/3%) percent of regularly scheduled meetings, or misses three (3) consecutive meetings actually convened, of said department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency or authority during any one (1) year period from November 1 to October 31), unless a reason for the absence is submitted in writing, prior to the meeting, to the chairperson or secretary, shall be considered removed from such department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency or authority, and their place thereon shall be considered vacant. It shall be the duty of the Chairperson of that department, office, commission, committee, council, board, agency or authority to give prompt written notice of such vacancy to the Town Manager, and to the Town Council.

ARTICLE XX. SUCCESSION IN GOVERNMENT

Section 20.01 Effective Date

This Charter shall become effective upon certification by the Board of Canvassers that the Charter was approved by the electors voting thereon, and ratification by the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island.