

Select Board / Town Manager Special Act
Executive Summary
2/17/2021

What is the goal? The goal of the Select Board / Town Manager Act is to professionalize the structure of Wayland's government; coordinate administrative, operational, and financial functions; provide a consistent approach for efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency across all departments and boards; use resources effectively; improve legal and regulatory compliance; and maintain volunteer opportunities on boards and committees.

Why adopt this change? Wayland's government is a \$95 million diversified organization in a highly regulated and public service environment requiring a stronger centralized management structure. The Town Administrator has 20 direct reports resulting in an extremely flat organization. Some department heads report to elected boards, not to the Town Administrator. Under our current structures, there is no flexibility to group departments as there is in virtually all of our peer communities.

Has this been studied? This is the third effort over the past thirty years to strengthen and streamline the Town's executive and financial management structure. The Town has received consistent recommendations on how to improve its management structure. Today's challenge is summarized by the Collins Center for Public Management after an in-depth study completed in 2018: *Wayland appears increasingly anachronistic among Wayland's peer communities and increasingly unable to handle the accelerating changes Massachusetts municipalities must manage.*

Many of the suggestions from 18 years ago are still relevant today. The Maximus Report from 2002 stated: *All staff in the Town should report to the Town Manager on matters of personnel, finance, service levels, etc. Board and commissions should retain no direct supervisory authority.* The report also recommended that Wayland move toward a Town Manager form of government after utilizing a Town Administrator as an intervening step in that transition. Wayland implemented a Town Administrator form of government in 2004. It is time for the next step.

We have come full circle to 1990. The Charter Commission wrote: *Town government is growing increasingly complex and it is essential that we have a well-qualified person to handle the day to day administration. Having specified powers and responsibilities...will enable the town administrator to be more effective; and we will attract and retain competent people. Very few voters will favor every provision of this charter. We urge that you vote for adoption if you conclude that, on balance, the town will be better managed under the charter than without it.*

What does the Act accomplish? Under the Act, the Town Manager is given clearer authority and responsibility for managing the Town in four areas: administration, finances, personnel, and facilities/property.

- Administration: the Act clarifies the Town Manager's authority and responsibility to ensure compliance with policies, procedures, and federal, state, and local law; as well as set priorities for projects and staff.
- Finance: the Act strengthens the Town Manager's financial authority and responsibility and establishes the Town Manager as the Chief Financial Officer with additional oversight of operating and capital budget development as well as a five-year capital plan.
- Personnel: the Act strengthens the Town Manager's authority and responsibility, as negotiations would be coordinated by the Town Manager rather than the Personnel Board; and it standardizes consistent and compliant hiring practices.
- Facilities/Property: the Act clarifies the Town Manager's responsibility for construction, repair, and maintenance of all Town buildings, property, and information technology.

Does the Act make any other changes?

- Board of Selectmen name changes to Select Board
- Town Administrator position changes to Town Manager
- Town Clerk changes from elected to appointed position
- There is no change to the make up, appointment process, or authority of existing boards/committees/commissions