

Press Release
Wayland Board of Selectmen
April 26, 2021

Select Board / Town Manager Special Act

Under Article 22, voters attending Annual Town Meeting will consider "An Act to Create a Select Board/Town Manager Form of Government in the Town of Wayland". Town Meeting begins on Saturday, May 15 at 12:30 p.m. and continues Sunday, May 16 at 12:30 p.m. at the Wayland High School Football Field. Article 22 is expected to come up on Sunday, May 16. The Board of Selectmen asks for your support on this Article to change our form of government, change our name to Select Board, and appoint, rather than elect, the Town Clerk.

What is the goal? The goal of the Select Board / Town Manager Special 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 structure, there is no flexibility to group departments as there is in virtually all of our peer communities.

What changes?

The passing of the Special Act would mean that:

- All department heads, with the exception of the Superintendent of Schools and the Library Director, will report to the Town Manager, instead of elected boards. This adds five additional department heads reporting to the Town Manager (Health, Assessor, Planner, Youth and Family Services and an appointed Town Clerk).
- The Town Manager will have flexibility to begin grouping departments to reduce the number of direct reports.
- The Board of Selectmen will continue as Chief Executive Officer, with the Town Manager continuing to manage staff as Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Operating Officer; the Town Manager will become Chief Financial Officer.
- Boards and Committees continue to coordinate their responsibilities with Department Heads, as they do currently.
- The Board of Selectmen will be called the Select Board.
- The Town Administrator position changes to Town Manager.
- The Town Clerk changes from an elected to an appointed position.

Town Code will be updated for:

- Board of Selectmen, Chapter 58 (being replaced)
- Town Administrator, Chapter 60 (being replaced)
- Personnel, Chapter 43, section B (3) responsibility for negotiating union contracts changes from Personnel Board to Town Manager (This section of Code will be updated with a vote at a future Town Meeting.)

What does not change?

The Special Act does not change the following:

- Departments continue to make operational decisions and conduct day-to-day operations.

- Boards/committees retain rights under state and federal law and continue to set policies and maintain all permitting and regulatory responsibilities.
- Volunteer spirit continues through over 40 elected and appointed boards/committees.
- All currently elected boards/committees remain elected.
- The number of appointed boards/committees remains the same.
- Town Code is unchanged for
 - Council on Aging, Chapter 12
 - Finances, Chapter 19
 - Planning Board, Chapter 47
 - Treasurer and Collector, Chapter 72
 - Board of Health, Division 2
 - Director of Public Works, Chapter 151
- The Library continues to operate under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78.

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.*

For more information, please visit the Town's website at <https://www.wayland.ma.us/board-selectmen/pages/select-boardtown-manager-act>

Submitted by the Wayland Board of Selectmen
 Cherry Karlson, Chair
 Tom Fay, Vice-chair
 Lea Anderson
 Mary Antes
 Dave Watkins