

The Charter in Laymen's Terms

The charter is a legal document, and because of this, it can be difficult to read if you are not versed in legal-speak. This document changes the wording to everyday language in an effort to allow anyone to understand the changes the charter would make. This is meant to accompany the actual legal version. It is not a replacement. Please also read the official proposed charter as well as this simplified version.

These sections establish the basic structure, powers, and governance rules for the Town of Grand Isle, Vermont.

§ 1 – General Powers:

- The Town has all powers granted to Vermont towns by state law and the state constitution, plus any implied powers needed to exercise those authorities.

§ 2 – Elected Officers:

- Town officers required by Vermont law are elected using Australian ballot unless the charter says otherwise. (No change from current status)
- Elected officials must carry out both state-law and charter responsibilities.
- The **Selectboard** is the Town's legislative body and has the powers and duties assigned to town legislative bodies under Vermont law. (No change from current status)
- The Selectboard elects a Vice Chair, establishes its own procedures, and may create or dissolve boards, commissions, and committees. (No change from current status)
- A Selectboard member who attends less than **70% of meetings over 12 months** or misses **three consecutive meetings without permission** may have their position declared vacant.

§ 3 – Appointed Officers:

- The Selectboard appoints the **Town Treasurer, listers and/or an assessor, and Delinquent Tax Collector**.
- The Selectboard determines how many people serve in these positions.
- With the exception of the Board of Lister (see below), people currently holding elected positions that become appointed may finish their elected terms and then apply for appointment.
- If the lister board falls below a majority, the Selectboard can replace it with a **professionally qualified assessor** who meets state training requirements and does not have to live in Grand Isle.

- Appointees must follow the Town's personnel policies, take the required oath, and may receive compensation or expense reimbursement.
- Appointed boards and commissions remain independent but must cooperate with the Selectboard, provide annual reports, and attend meetings when reasonably requested. (No change from current status)
- Town employees serving on appointed bodies cannot vote on matters directly affecting their employment. (No change from current status)
- The Selectboard can create additional appointed positions when it believes they are in the Town's best interest. (No change from current status)
- Members of the **Planning Commission and Development Review Board must be Town residents**. (No change from current status)
- The Selectboard must establish qualifications and job descriptions when appointed positions become vacant.

§ 4 – Removing Elected Officials:

- An elected officer can be subjected to a removal vote if at least **15% of registered voters** sign a petition.
- The Selectboard must then schedule a special or annual Town meeting to vote on removal by Australian ballot.
- Removal requires both:
 - **A majority of votes cast** to favor removal, and
 - The number of votes cast on removal to be at least as large as the number of votes originally cast to elect the officer.
- If removed, the officer immediately leaves office and the vacancy is filled according to law.
- Only **one removal petition per officer per 12-month period** is allowed.

§ 5 – State Law Applies:

- Vermont municipal laws continue to govern Grand Isle unless the charter, a Town ordinance, or regulation specifically modifies them.
- References to state statutes include later amendments, renumbering, or replacement statutes covering the same subject.
- Listing a particular Town power in the charter does not limit other powers the Town otherwise possesses.

§ 6 – Severability:

- If one provision of the charter is found invalid, the rest of the charter remains in effect.
- Likewise, if a provision is invalid only as applied to certain people or circumstances, it remains valid in other situations.