

**CHARTER**

**OF THE**

**TOWN OF VERNON, CONNECTICUT**

This Charter is a revision of the original Charter for the Town of Vernon, Connecticut adopted October 13, 1964 as revised April 4, 1967, November 3, 1970, November 7, 1978, November 6, 1979, November 4, 1980, November 2, 1982, November 6, 1984 and November 6, 1990.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
<u>CHAPTER I – PREAMBLE</u> .....	1
<u>CHAPTER II - CORPORATE POWERS</u> .....	1
Section 1 - General Grant of Powers .....	1
Section 2 - Specific Grants of Power .....	1
<u>CHAPTER III - ELECTION OF OFFICERS</u> .....	2
Section 1 - Applicability of General Statutes .....	2
Section 2 - State and Federal Officers .....	2
Section 3 - Basis of Elections of the Town Officers.....	2
Section 4 - Nomination of Candidates for Town Offices .....	2
Section 5 - Determination of Sufficiency of Petitions .....	2
Section 6 - Election of Nominees .....	3
Section 7 - Breaking a Tie .....	3
Section 8 - Method of Electing Town Officers.....	3
Section 9 - Filling Vacancies .....	3
Section 10 - Minority Representation .....	4
<u>CHAPTER IV – RECALL, INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM</u> .....	4
Section 1 - Recall of Elective Officers .....	4
Section 2 - Initiative.....	5
Section 3 - Power of Referendum.....	5
<u>CHAPTER V - THE TOWN COUNCIL</u> .....	6
Section 1 - Membership of the Town Council.....	6
Section 2 - Presiding Officer.....	6
Section 3 - Record of Proceedings.....	6
Section 4 - Procedure .....	6
Section 5 - General Powers and Duties.....	7
Section 6 - Public Hearing on and Publication of Ordinances.....	7
Section 7 - Investigations.....	8
Section 8 - Right of Appeal .....	8
<u>CHAPTER VI - THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING</u> .....	8
<u>CHAPTER VII - OTHER ELECTIVE BOARDS AND OFFICERS</u> .....	8
Section 1 - Relation of Board of Education to Town Government.....	8
Section 2 - Registrars of Voters .....	9
<u>CHAPTER VIII - COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND AUTHORITIES</u>	
<u>APPOINTED BY THE MAYOR</u> .....	9
Section 1 - The Planning and Zoning Commission .....	9
Section 2 - Zoning Board of Appeals .....	9
Section 3 - Water Pollution Control Authority .....	10
Section 4 - Building Board of Appeals .....	10
Section 5 - Housing Authority .....	10

Section 6 - Alternate Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Code of Appeals and Inland Regulatory Commission.....	10
Section 7 - Permanent Municipal Building Committee.....	11
Section 8 - Inland Wetlands Regulatory Commission.....	11
Section 9 - Pension Board.....	11
Section 10 - Cemetery Commission .....	11
Section 11 - Removal.....	12
<u>CHAPTER IX - OFFICERS AND BOARDS APPOINTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL.....</u>	<u>12</u>
Section 1 - Town Clerk.....	12
Section 2 - Town Treasurer.....	12
Section 3 - Board of Tax Review.....	12
<u>CHAPTER X - THE MAYOR .....</u>	<u>13</u>
Section 1 - Election and Qualifications .....	13
Section 2 - Powers and Duties .....	13
Section 3 - Appointing Authority .....	13
<u>CHAPTER XI - ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICERS</u>	
<u>RESPONSIBLE TO THE MAYOR.....</u>	<u>13</u>
Section 1 - Administrative Departments.....	13
Section 2 - Administrative Officers .....	14
Section 3 - Qualified Officers Outside the Classified Service.....	14
Section 4 - Qualified Officers Within the Classified Service .....	16
Section 5 - Other Officers.....	16
Section 6 - Town Administrator .....	16
Section 7 - Town Attorney.....	17
Section 8 - Civil Preparedness Director.....	18
Section 9 - Finance Department .....	18
Section 10 - Police Department .....	19
Section 11 - Fire Department.....	19
Section 12 - Public Works Department .....	20
Section 13 - Planning Department.....	20
Section 14 - Environmental Health Department.....	21
Section 15 - Social Services Department.....	21
Section 16 - Parks and Recreation Department .....	22
Section 17 - Engineering Department .....	22
Section 18 - Department of Water Pollution Control .....	23
Section 19 - Data Processing Department .....	23
Section 20 - Building Inspection Department .....	24
Section 21 - Youth Services Department.....	24
<u>CHAPTER XII - FINANCE ADMINISTRATION .....</u>	<u>24</u>
Section 1 - Fiscal Year.....	24
Section 2 - General Form of Budget Presentation .....	25
Section 3 - Departmental Estimates.....	25
Section 4 - Duties of the Water Pollution Control Authority and the Town Council on Enterprise Activity Budgets.....	25

Section 5 - Duties of the Mayor on the Budget .....	26
Section 6 - Duties of the Town Council on the Budget .....	27
Section 7 - Execution of the Budget .....	27
Section 8 - Emergency Appropriations.....	28
Section 9 - Purchasing .....	28
Section 10 - Accounting and Financial Control.....	28
Section 11 - Money Collected by Town Officers and Employees.....	30
Section 12 - Borrowing.....	30
Section 13 - Annual Audit .....	30
<u>CHAPTER XIII - TAXATION</u> .....	31
Section 1 - Taxing District.....	31
Section 2 - Extension of Services .....	31
Section 3 - Tax Bills .....	32
Section 4 - Assessment and Collection of Taxes.....	32
<u>CHAPTER XIV - THE MERIT SYSTEM</u> .....	33
Section 1 - Merit System Established .....	33
Section 2 - The Classified Service.....	33
Section 3 - Personnel Rules .....	33
Section 4 - Exemptions from Tenure Provisions of the Merit System .....	34
Section 5 - Pay Plan .....	34
Section 6 - Retirement of Town Employees .....	34
<u>CHAPTER XV - MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS</u> .....	34
Section 1 - Transfer of Powers.....	34
Section 2 - Existing Laws and Ordinances .....	35
Section 3 - Advisory Boards and Commissions .....	35
Section 4 - Personal Interest .....	35
Section 5 - Amendment .....	36
Section 6 - Saving Clause .....	36
Section 7 - Effective Date of Charter Provisions.....	36

**CHAPTER I**  
**PREAMBLE**

The Town of Vernon was incorporated in 1808. In the course of time, rural Vernon acquired within its boundaries a flourishing manufacturing center. In recognition of its differing need and in a spirit of cooperation, the City of Rockville was incorporated within the Town of Vernon in 1889. Continuing to manifest the same spirit of cooperation in response to progress and attendant change, the Vernon Fire District was created in 1947. As the Town grew further, the separate governmental bodies were consolidated into one in 1965 to form the present Town of Vernon.

The ability to accommodate change in a reasoned manner and thus provide for the best interest of the Town has long characterized the collective political efforts of Vernon's residents. Such ability shaped the content and form of the first Charter in 1965 as well as its revisions. It is the intent of this Charter that all boards, commissions, authorities and departments thus established shall enjoy full and unimpaired exercise of their duties and responsibilities. It is the further intent of this Charter that all Town boards, commissions, authorities, and departments shall cooperate in all possible instances for the sound development and proper government of the Town of Vernon, and shall encourage voters to remain informed and participate in the sound development of their Town.

**CHAPTER II**  
**CORPORATE POWERS**

Section 1. GENERAL GRANT OF POWERS.

In addition to all powers now or hereafter granted to cities, towns and fire districts under the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, the Town of Vernon shall have all powers specifically granted by this Charter and all powers fairly implied in or incident to the management of the property, government and affairs of the town, including the power to enter into contracts with the United States or any federal agency, the State of Connecticut or any political subdivision thereof for services and the use of facilities, the exercise of which is not expressly forbidden by the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended. The enumeration of particular powers in this and any other chapter of this Charter shall not be construed as limiting this general grant of power but shall be considered as an addition thereto.

Section 2. SPECIFIC GRANTS OF POWER.

The Town of Vernon shall have, in addition to all powers granted to cities, fire districts and towns under the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, all the specific powers set forth in Section 7-194 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, from time to time, such powers to be exercised by the Town through the enactment and enforcement of ordinances, by-laws or otherwise.

**CHAPTER III**  
**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Section 1.     APPLICABILITY OF GENERAL STATUTES

Except as specifically provided herein, the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended relating to the making and registration of voters, the holding of sessions, for the purpose of making an enrollment of the electors who are entitled to vote in any primary, caucus or election, the conduct of elections, the counting of votes and the declaration of the result, shall be applicable to all primary, regular or special elections held in accordance with the provisions of this Charter. The Town Council shall provide by ordinance for the manner of warning town elections and such additional regulations in respect to elections, not inconsistent with the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended or this Charter, as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this Charter.

Section 2.     STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICERS.

Nomination and election of state and federal officers, state senators and representatives, judge of probate, two (2) registrars of voters and not more than twenty (20) justices of the peace to be determined by the Town Council by ordinance, shall be conducted and the registrars of voters shall prepare lists of electors qualified to vote therefore, in the manner prescribed by the Constitution and the general and special laws of the State of Connecticut applicable to the Town of Vernon.

Section 3.     BASIS OF ELECTIONS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS.

The election of all elected Town officers shall be on an at-large basis. The Town Council by ordinance shall establish the number of polling places and/or voting districts within the Town of Vernon as may be deemed necessary from time to time.

Section 4.     NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR TOWN OFFICES.

Candidates for all elective positions in the Town shall be nominated (a) by political party endorsement or (b) by independent petition.

The name of any elector of the Town shall be placed on the voting machines at a Town election as a candidate for any office to be filled, in whose behalf there shall have been filed with the Town Clerk (a) a certificate of candidacy as a party-endorsed candidate made in accordance with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended or (b) a petition, filed in accordance with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.

Section 5.     DETERMINATION OF SUFFICIENCY OF PETITIONS.

The Town Clerk shall, upon filing of any such petition, proceed forthwith to determine its sufficiency by comparing the name of the candidate and the signatures thereon with the latest official list of the registrars

of voters and with petitions already filed for the same office. If the Town Clerk finds the petition insufficient, the Town Clerk shall notify the candidate in writing forthwith and no further proceedings shall be had thereon except in accordance with an order of a court of competent jurisdiction to which an appeal may be taken from the decision of the Town Clerk, provided nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing, in the case of petitions found to be insufficient, the obtaining of additional valid signatures and the refileing of the petitions for nomination within the time limits prescribed for the presentation of the original petition. Any such petition shall be recorded as of the time it is refiled.

Section 6. ELECTION OF NOMINEES.

No person shall be eligible for election to any Town office who is not at the time of election a resident elector of the Town of Vernon, and any person ceasing to be a resident elector of said Town shall thereupon cease to hold elective office in the Town.

Section 7. BREAKING A TIE.

When any regular or special municipal election conducted pursuant to the provisions of this Charter results in a tie, with the consent of the tied candidates, the tie may be broken by a single toss of a coin by a third party agreeable to the tied candidates. Otherwise, an adjourned election shall be held in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.

Section 8. METHOD OF ELECTING TOWN OFFICERS.

Town Elections shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November in odd-numbered years. There shall be elected from the Town at large:

- (a) One (1) Mayor.
- (b) Twelve (12) members of the Town Council.
- (c) Three (3) members of the Board of Education, all for terms of two (2) years.
- (d) Three (3) members of the Board of Education for terms of four (4) years.

The candidate for the Office of Mayor receiving the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected.

The twelve (12) candidates for the Town Council receiving the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected. The three (3) candidates for the Board of Education to serve two (2) year terms who receive the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected. The three (3) candidates for the Board of Education to serve four (4) year terms who receive the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected. These elected candidates shall take office on the Monday following the date of their elections.

Section 9. FILLING VACANCIES

Unless otherwise provided by law, any vacancy in any elective town office from whatever cause

arising, shall be filled by appointment of the Town Council for the unexpired portion of the term or until the next biennial election, whichever shall be sooner; except that when a vacancy shall occur in the office of Mayor within 270 days after a biennial election, the successor shall be chosen by a special election. The Town Council shall fill a vacancy on the Town Council by appointing an elector of the Town of Vernon who is endorsed by the political party having endorsed the vacating member. In the event that the vacating member was elected without the endorsement of a political party, the Council may then appoint any elector of the Town of Vernon. Vacancies which are the subject of this section shall be filled by seven (7) affirmative votes of the Town Council.

Section 10. MINORITY REPRESENTATION.

At any Town election, no political party, nor independent petition, shall nominate, and no elector shall vote for, more than eight (8) candidates for the Town Council. No political party, nor independent petition, shall nominate, and no elector shall vote for, more than two (2) candidates for the Board of Education for terms of two (2) years. No political party, nor independent petition, shall nominate, and no elector shall vote for, more than two (2) candidates for the Board of Education for terms of four (4) years. All boards and commissions, including those advisory commissions created by the Town Council, and all appointments to fill vacancies on such boards and commissions shall conform to Section 9-167a of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended concerning minority representation.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**RECALL, INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM**

Section 1. RECALL OF ELECTIVE OFFICERS.

Any elective officer of the Town may be recalled and removed from public office by the electors of the Town. Any elector may file with the Town Clerk a petition containing the name and title of the elective officer whose removal is sought and a statement of the grounds for removal. Said petition shall be signed in ink or indelible pencil by qualified electors of the Town equal in number to at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of electors who voted in the last municipal election in which such officer was elected, provided, no recall petition may be filed against any officer until such officer has held office for six (6) months, and only one verified recall petition may be filed against any one incumbent during the term for which elected. Said petition shall be accompanied by a statement of the circulator as provided in Section 7-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended. If the Town Clerk shall determine the petition and the affidavits to be sufficient in manner prescribed by law, a recall vote shall be taken within thirty (30) but not sooner than ten (10) days after the filing of the petition, the form of the question being as nearly as possible, "Shall (here insert the name and title of the elective officers whose recall is sought) be recalled?". If any elective officer whose recall is sought resigns before such recall vote is taken a referendum shall not be held. The elected officer whose removal is sought shall not be removed from office

unless fifty percent (50%) of the eligible voters entitled to vote on the question of recall have in fact voted and of those voting, two-thirds (2/3) have in fact voted in favor of the recall.

Section 2. INITIATIVE.

The electors shall have the power to propose to the Town Council any lawful ordinance or other measure, limited to the powers and duties of the Town Council, as provided in this Charter, except an ordinance or other measure appointing or removing officials, specifying the compensation of hours of work of officials and employees, appropriating money, authorizing the levy of taxes or fixing the tax rate. Any elector may file with the Town Clerk a petition containing a summary and a full writing of such ordinance or measure. Said petition shall be signed in ink or indelible pencil by qualified electors of the Town equal in number to at least one percent (1%) of the registered voters at the last municipal election. Said petition shall be accompanied by a statement of the circulator as provided in Section 7-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended. If the Town Clerk shall determine the petition and affidavits to be sufficient in the manner prescribed by law, said ordinance or measure shall be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Town Council and the Town Council shall permit at least one (1) of the electors whose signature appears on the petition to be heard on the proposed ordinance or measure. If the Town Council fails to adopt the proposed ordinance or measure within forty-five (45) days after the petition, as provided for herein, is filed, and if such petition shall be signed in ink or indelible pencil by qualified electors of the Town equal in number to at least ten percent (10%) of the registered voters at the last municipal election, the electors may adopt or reject the same at an election held within ninety (90) days after such petition was originally filed. Unless at least twenty percent (20%) of the electors entitled to vote on the question shall have voted, such proposed ordinance or other measure shall not become effective and the result shall be construed as against adoption. No ordinance or other measure which shall have been adopted in accordance with the election provisions of this section shall be repealed or amended by the Town Council, within two years of its adoption; but such ordinance or other measure may be repealed or amended by petition and vote of the electors in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this Chapter.

Section 3. POWER OF REFERENDUM.

The electors shall have the power to approve or reject at a referendum as herein provided any ordinance or other measure passed by the Town Council, except an ordinance or other measure appointing or removing officials, specifying the compensation or hours of work of officials and employees, appropriating money authorizing the levy of taxes or fixing the tax rate. Ordinances or other measures submitted to the Town Council by initiative petition as provided in Section 2 and passed by the Town Council without change shall be subject to a referendum in the same manner as other ordinances or measures. Within twenty (20) days after the publication of any ordinance or other measure which is subject to a referendum a petition signed in ink or indelible pencil by qualified electors of the town equal in number to at least ten percent

(10%) of the registered voters at the last municipal election may be filed with the Town Clerk requesting that any such ordinance or other measure be either repealed or submitted to a vote of the electors. Said petition shall be accompanied by a statement of the circulator as provided in Section 7-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended. The Town Clerk shall determine the sufficiency of the petition and the affidavits in the manner prescribed by law. Sixty (60) days after the filing of the petition if the Town Council fails to repeal such ordinance or other measure, the question of repeal shall be submitted to the electors of the town. Upon the filing of a sufficient petition, the ordinance or measure shall remain without effect until the electors vote on the question as above mentioned. A majority vote of the electors to repeal the ordinance or measure shall not become effective unless a total of at least twenty percent (20%) of the electors entitled to vote on the question shall have voted, and at least fifteen percent (15%) of the electors entitled to vote shall have voted for the repeal. If the vote to repeal fails, the ordinance or measure as passed by the Town Council shall become effective.

**CHAPTER V**  
**THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Section 1.     MEMBERSHIP OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.

There shall be a Town Council consisting of twelve (12) members, hereinafter referred to as the Town Council, the members of which shall serve without compensation except for the reimbursement of actual expenses incurred in the performance of official duties. No member of the Town Council shall hold any other elective or appointive office, under the government of the Town of Vernon as set forth in this Charter.

Section 2.     PRESIDING OFFICER.

The Mayor shall attend and be the presiding officer of meetings of the Town Council. The Mayor shall have full right of participation in its discussions but shall have no vote except in the case of a tie. Each newly elected Town Council at its first meeting, or as soon thereafter as practicable, shall elect from its own number a mayor pro tempore, who, in the absence or disability of the Mayor, shall act as mayor, but this office shall not deprive such mayor pro tempore of a vote on any question.

Section 3.     RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

The Clerk of the Town Council shall keep a public record of all proceedings of the Council including all roll call votes.

Section 4.     PROCEDURE.

At the first meeting of the Town Council following the Town election, the Town Council shall fix the time and place of its regular meetings and shall provide a method for the calling of special meetings. It shall determine its own rules of procedure. All meetings of the Town Council for the transaction of business shall

be open to the public and the votes shall be recorded as prescribed by Section 1-21 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended from time to time. The Town Council, except as provided elsewhere in this Charter, shall act by a majority vote of its members who are present and voting. Seven (7) members thereof shall constitute a quorum. Passage of all ordinances shall require approval of no fewer than seven members.

All ordinances and resolutions shall be confined to one subject which subject shall be clearly stated in the title. The Town Council shall keep for public inspection, a journal which shall be the official record of its proceedings. The record so kept shall be authenticated for each meeting by the signatures of the presiding officer thereof, or the clerk, or of both.

Section 5. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES.

The legislative power of the town shall be vested exclusively in the Town Council, except as otherwise provided in this Charter. Subject to the power of initiative and the power of referendum reserved to the electors by this Charter, the said Town Council shall have the power to enact, amend or repeal ordinances not inconsistent with this Charter, the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended. Each ordinance adopted by the Town Council shall provide that the ordinance will be effective for a period of not more than ten (10) years from the date of adoption. If the Town Council does not act to renew the ordinance, the ordinance is repealed. The Town Council may contract for services and use of facilities of the United States or any federal agency, the State of Connecticut and any political subdivision thereof, or may, by agreement, join with any such political subdivisions to provide services and facilities. The Town Council is authorized, in adopting ordinances, to incorporate any nationally recognized code, rules and regulations that have been printed in book form, or any code officially adopted by any administrative agency of the State, or any portion thereof, by reference thereto in such ordinance; provided, upon adoption of any such ordinance wherein such code, rules and regulations or portions thereof have been incorporated by reference, there shall be maintained three (3) copies of such code, rules and regulations in the office of the Town Clerk for examination by the public. Said Town Council, except as hereinafter provided, may fix the charges, if any, to be made for services by the town or for the execution of powers vested in the Town as provided by Charter. Any statutory functions and/or powers of the Selectmen not specifically delegated to other bodies shall be delegated to the Town Council.

Section 6. PUBLIC HEARING ON AND PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCES.

At least one (1) public hearing shall be held by the Town Council before any ordinance shall be passed. Public notice of said hearing shall be given at least five (5) days in advance, by publication in a newspaper having a circulation in the Town of Vernon, and by posting a notice in a public place. Such hearing and notice shall not be necessary for any ordinance relating to the Town Council, its procedures, or its appointment or designation of officers. Every ordinance, after passage, shall be given a serial number and

be recorded by the Town Clerk in a book to be kept for that purpose which shall be properly indexed. Within ten (10) days after passage, notice of the passage of an ordinance, described by title or subject matter together with such change in the proposed ordinance shall be published in a newspaper having a circulation in the Town of Vernon. Every ordinance, unless it shall specify a later date, shall become effective on the 15th day after such publication following its final passage, except as otherwise provided in this charter, provided an ordinance stated to be a public emergency measure and stating the facts constituting such public emergency shall become effective immediately after such posting and no public hearing or notice of public hearing shall be required for any public emergency measure.

Section 7. INVESTIGATIONS.

The Town Council shall have the power to investigate any and all departments, offices, agencies, boards, commissions and authorities of the town and for such purposes shall have the power to issue subpoenas. At the request of the Town Council, any judge may issue a "capias" for the appearance of witnesses and the production of books and papers. Any party to the investigation, on request of any Councilmember, may have witnesses subpoenaed on behalf of such party.

Section 8. RIGHT OF APPEAL.

Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Town Council acting under the provisions of Section 7 above, shall have the right of appeal from such decision as provided by law.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The annual town meeting for the consideration of the budget shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of April at such hour and at such place as the Town Council may determine.

The annual town meeting shall be called to order by the Mayor, or in his absence, the Town Clerk. A moderator shall be elected and all business conducted in the manner now or hereafter provided by Chapter 90 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, except as otherwise provided in this Charter. The Town Clerk shall serve as clerk of the annual town meeting, but in his absence an acting clerk may be designated by the meeting.

The annual budget shall become effective only after it has been approved by a majority vote of those qualified voters present and voting at such meeting. Such vote may neither increase nor decrease the amount approved by the Town Council. Three (3) official copies of the annual budget as finally approved shall be filed with the Town Clerk.

**CHAPTER VII**  
**OTHER ELECTIVE BOARDS AND OFFICERS**

Section 1. RELATION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION TO TOWN GOVERNMENT.

The power, duties and functions of the nine (9) member Vernon Board of Education shall be as provided by the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended. Candidates for the Board of Education shall be nominated and elected in the manner provided in this Charter and the terms of office of the incumbents so as to conform with the elective procedures as set forth herein.

No member of the Board of Education shall hold any other elected or appointed office under the government of the Town of Vernon, as set forth in this Charter.

Those powers and duties of the Board of Finance with respect to the Board of Education budget and financial program shall be exercised by the Town Council.

When inviting bids for services or commodities, the Board of Education may consider all departments of the Town as suppliers of services and commodities and may invite the said departments to bid on the proposed services or commodities: and if the bids of the said departments are equal to or less than the bids of other qualified bidders, the Board of Education shall declare the said departments to be the successful bidders and shall enter into agreements for obtaining the said services or commodities from the Town of Vernon, with payment to be made from the Board of Education budget.

Section 2. REGISTRARS OF VOTERS.

There shall be two (2) Registrars of Voters as required by statute, whose qualifications, method of election, duties and terms of office shall be in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.

**CHAPTER VIII**  
**COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND AUTHORITIES APPOINTED BY THE MAYOR**

Section 1. THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.

There shall be a seven (7) member Planning and Zoning Commission the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for terms of three (3) years. No regular member who serves two consecutive full terms shall be reappointed sooner than one year following the completion of the second term.

Said commission shall have all the powers and duties conferred and imposed upon both planning commissions and zoning commissions by Chapters 124 and 126 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.

Section 2. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS.

There shall be a five (5) member Zoning Board of Appeals, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for terms of five years. No regular member who serves a full five year term shall be reappointed sooner than one year following completion of such term. Such Board shall have all the powers and duties conferred or imposed by the Connecticut

General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended on boards of zoning appeals.

Section 3. WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY.

There shall be a five (5) member Water Pollution Control Authority, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for staggered three (3) year terms. All members may serve a maximum of two consecutive full terms and may not be appointed sooner than one (1) year following completion of a maximum term. Except as otherwise provided in this Charter, the Water Pollution Control Authority shall, with respect to Water Pollution Control matters, have all the powers and duties as set forth in Chapter 103 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, and shall exercise its powers and duties throughout the Town of Vernon.

Section 4. BUILDING CODE BOARD OF APPEALS.

There shall be a five (5) member Building Code Board of Appeals, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the a majority of the Town Council for staggered terms of three years. All members may serve a maximum of two consecutive full terms and may not be appointed sooner than one (1) year following completion of a maximum term. With respect to building matters, said Board shall have all the powers and duties conferred or imposed by the building code adopted by the Town Council by ordinance.

Section 5. HOUSING AUTHORITY.

There shall be a five (5) member Housing Authority, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for terms of five years. The Housing Authority shall be autonomous with respect to housing matters and shall have all the powers and duties, not inconsistent with this Charter, set forth in Chapter 128 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, and it shall exercise its powers and duties throughout the Town of Vernon.

The Town Council may, by ordinance, revoke or revise the authority given to the Housing Authority under the provisions of this section.

Section 6. ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS. BUILDING CODE BOARD OF APPEALS AND INLAND WETLANDS REGULATORY COMMISSION.

The Mayor shall appoint with the approval of a majority of the Town Council three (3) alternate members to the Planning & Zoning Commission, three (3) alternate members to the Zoning Board of Appeals, three (3) alternate members to the Building Code Board of Appeals for terms of five (5) years, and two (2) alternate members to the Inland Wetlands Regulatory Commission for terms of three (3) years. The duties of such alternate members shall be those set out in the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.

Section 7. PERMANENT MUNICIPAL BUILDING COMMITTEE.

There shall be a seven (7) member Permanent Municipal Building Committee, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for staggered three year terms. All members may serve a maximum of two consecutive full terms and may not be appointed sooner than one (1) year following completion of a maximum term.

The Town Council may authorize the Permanent Municipal Building Committee to act as agent of the Town to survey sites, recommend the acquisition of land, prepare sites and dispose of site buildings, engage architects and engineers and approve plans, procure bids and enter into contract for construction, supervise construction, and accept the work. At least annually, said committee shall inspect, and report to the Town Council on, the condition of town buildings and structures.

The Town Council may revoke or revise any authority given under the provisions of this section.

Section 8. INLAND WETLANDS REGULATORY COMMISSION.

There shall be a five (5) member Inland Wetlands Regulatory Commission, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for staggered terms of three (3) years. Initially, two (2) members will be appointed for terms of three (3) years, two (2) members for terms of two (2) years, and one (1) member for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, all terms shall be appointed for a period of three (3) years. All members may serve a maximum of two consecutive full terms and may not be appointed sooner than one (1) year following completion of a maximum term. Said Commission shall have all the powers and duties conferred and imposed upon Inland Wetlands Regulatory agencies by Sections 22a-36 through 22a-45 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.

Section 9. PENSION BOARD.

There shall be a three (3) member Pension Board, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for terms of three years. The Pension Board shall, with the advice and consent of the Town Council, be responsible for the administration of the Town of Vernon Pension Plan. The Town Council may, by ordinance, revoke or revise the authority given to the Pension Board under the provisions of this Section.

Section 10. CEMETERY COMMISSION.

There shall be a five (5) member Cemetery Commission, the members of which shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of a majority of the Town Council for staggered terms of three years. All members may serve a maximum of two consecutive full terms and may not be appointed sooner than one (1) year following completion of a maximum term. The Cemetery Commission shall be responsible for the administration, care and operation of all town-owned cemeteries. The Commission shall be authorized to

receive, hold and disburse all cemetery funds for the Town of Vernon, in accordance with Section 19a-296 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, as to the disbursement of funds.

The Town Council may, by ordinance, revoke or revise the authority given to the Cemetery Commission under the provisions of this Section.

Section 11. REMOVAL.

A member, or alternate member, of any board, commission or authority, as set forth in this chapter, may be removed by the Mayor, subject to approval by nine (9) members of the Town Council.

**CHAPTER IX**  
**OFFICERS AND BOARDS APPOINTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Section 1. TOWN CLERK.

The Town Council, by seven (7) affirmative votes, shall appoint a Town Clerk. Such appointment shall be made from a list of the top three candidates chosen exclusively on the basis of technical and administrative qualifications, character, education, training and experience as determined by competitive examinations and such other procedures as established by the Town Administrator and approved by the Town Council. Upon appointment such officer shall be included in the classified service and be subject to such rules and regulations as may be adopted pursuant to merit system provisions of Chapter XIV of this Charter. The Town Clerk shall act as Clerk of the Town Council or shall designate an assistant to so act, and shall have such other powers and duties as are prescribed in this Charter or by the Town Council. The Town Clerk shall appoint and remove, subject to such rules and regulations as may be adopted pursuant to merit system provisions of this Charter, all deputies, assistants or employees in this office. The Town Clerk shall receive a compensation fixed by the Town Council in accordance with the systematic pay plan adopted by the Town Council and all fees collected by the Town Clerk's office shall be paid into the Town Treasury.

Section 2. TOWN TREASURER.

The Town Council, by seven (7) affirmative votes at a meeting to be held not later than three months after each alternate election, shall appoint a Town Treasurer to serve for a period of four years from the date of appointment. The Town Treasurer shall have all the powers and duties imposed by law on town treasurers. The Town Treasurer shall receive a compensation fixed by the Town Council.

Section 3. BOARD OF TAX REVIEW.

The Town Council, by seven (7) affirmative votes, shall appoint a Board of Tax Review consisting of three (3) members who shall serve for terms of three (3) years. Said Board shall have all the powers and duties conferred or imposed by the Connecticut General Statutes on boards of tax review.

**CHAPTER X**  
**THE MAYOR**

Section 1. ELECTION AND QUALIFICATIONS.

From among the electors of the Town, a Mayor shall be chosen each two (2) years by election at large. Such Mayor shall serve for a term of two (2) years and until a successor shall be elected and qualified and shall take office.

The Mayor shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Town and shall receive such compensation as shall be fixed by the Town Council. The Mayor shall be recognized as the official head of the Town for all ceremonial purposes and for military purposes.

Section 2. POWERS AND DUTIES.

The Mayor shall be directly responsible for the administration of all departments, agencies and officers in charge of persons or boards appointed by the Mayor under the provisions of this Charter, and shall supervise and direct the same. The Mayor shall see that all laws and ordinances governing the town are faithfully executed; shall make periodic reports to the Town Council and shall attend and participate in its meetings as provided in Chapter V of this Charter; shall prepare and cause to be printed as soon as possible after the close of the fiscal year, an annual town report; shall recommend to the Town Council such measures as deemed necessary or expedient; shall keep the Town Council fully advised as to the financial condition of the town; shall prepare and submit to the Town Council an annual budget for the town government; shall prepare and maintain an administrative code; and shall exercise such other powers and duties as may be required of the Mayor by ordinance or resolution of the Town Council not inconsistent with this Charter.

The Town Council shall not diminish by ordinance, vote, or otherwise, the powers and duties of the Mayor, except those powers imposed by the Town Council under the provisions of this Section. The Mayor shall have the authority and responsibility to sign all documents requiring the signature of the chief executive officer. In the Mayor's absence the mayor pro tempore shall sign such documents.

Section 3. APPOINTING AUTHORITY.

Subject to the provisions of the merit system and other provisions established by this Charter, the Mayor shall appoint and remove all department heads and other officers and employees of the Town, except the officers and boards elected by the voters, appointed by the Town Council, appointed by the Water Pollution Control Authority, and appointed by the Board of Education. The Mayor may, at any time, delegate to the Town Administrator, the Mayor's appointive and removal authority set forth in this Section.

**CHAPTER XI**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE TO THE MAYOR**

Section 1. ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS.

The administrative departments of the Town shall include the following departments and such others as may be recommended by the Mayor and approved by a majority of the Town Council:

Finance Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, Building Inspection Department, Planning Department, Environmental Health Department, Social Services Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Engineering Department, Water Pollution Control Department, Data Processing Department and Youth Services Department. Such departments, except as otherwise provided in this Charter, shall have the powers and duties prescribed by law and by ordinance of the Town Council.

Section 2. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS.

(a) The administrative officers of the Town shall consist of the following:

1. Qualified officers outside the classified service.
2. Qualified officers within the classified service.
3. Other officers.

(b) Definitions:

1. Qualified officers are those administrative officers who must take competitive examinations before appointment.
2. Officers outside the classified service are those administrative officers who are not protected by the merit system provisions of this Charter.
3. Officers within the classified service are those administrative officers who are protected by the merit system provisions of this Charter.
4. Other officers are those administrative officers who are not full-time employees of the Town of Vernon, who do not have to take competitive examinations before appointment and who are not protected by the merit system provisions of this Charter.

Section 3. QUALIFIED OFFICERS OUTSIDE THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE.

(a) Those included: Qualified officers outside the classified service shall include the following and such other officers as may be recommended by the Mayor and approved by a majority of the Town Council:

Town Administrator  
Finance Officer  
Police Chief  
Fire Chief  
Public Works Director  
Director of Water Pollution Control  
Town Planner

Director of Social Services  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
Town Engineer  
Director of Data Processing  
Building Official  
Youth Service Director

- (b) Appointment: If no other method of appointment is set out in this Charter, subject to approval of a majority of the Town Council, the Mayor shall appoint each of such officers from a list of the top three candidates per position chosen exclusively on the basis of technical and administrative qualifications, character, education, training and experience as determined by competitive examinations and such other procedures as established by the Town Administrator and approved by the Town Council.
- (c) At the time of appointment, each such officer shall be a citizen of the United States, but no other requirement regarding residence or citizenship shall apply.
- (d) Removal of the Qualified Officers Outside the Classified Service: Power to Remove the Qualified Officers outside the Classified Service shall rest solely with the Mayor.

The Mayor may act to remove the Qualified Officers outside the Classified Service as follows:

At least thirty (30) days before the proposed removal date the Mayor shall notify each member of the Town Council by certified mail of intent to remove any qualified officer and said notification shall include a statement of the reasons for the proposed removal. The Mayor at the same time shall serve on any qualified officer or to such officer's usual place of residence, a copy of said notice with the reasons for the proposed removal.

Within ten (10) days of receipt of said notice, such qualified officer by written request to each member of the Town Council may demand a public hearing on the proposed removal, such public hearing to be conducted by the Town Council which shall designate one of its elected members to preside. In the event a public hearing is called for, such qualified officer shall not be removed until such public hearing is held.

The Town Council shall convene such hearing not earlier than five (5) days nor later than ten (10) days after receipt of the request for the hearing. At the discretion of the Town Council, said hearing may be recessed and continued as required, but the Town Council shall conclude the hearing and by majority vote either confirm or disapprove the removal action of the Mayor within twenty (20) days after the day of first convening the hearing.

During the period between the date of notice of intent to remove said qualified officer, and the date of the hearing, the Mayor shall have the right to suspend such officer.

During the period of suspension or of removal proceedings, said qualified officer's salary shall continue. The action of the Mayor and Town Council in removing any qualified officer shall be final. Upon

suspension of any qualified officer, the Mayor may appoint an acting substitute for such qualified officer, to serve at the Mayor's pleasure but for not more than one hundred twenty (120) days.

Section 4. QUALIFIED OFFICERS WITHIN THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE.

(a) Those included: Qualified officers within the classified service shall include the following and such other officers as may be recommended by the Mayor and approved by a majority of the Town Council:

- Assistant Town Administrator
- Assessor
- Deputy Assessor
- Purchasing Agent
- Collector of Revenue
- Assistant Collector of Revenue
- Captain of Police
- Deputy Director of Public Works
- Deputy Health Officer
- Assistant Director of Water Pollution Control
- Economic Development Coordinator

(b) Appointment. Subject to approval by a majority of the Town Council, the Mayor shall appoint each of such officers from a list of the top three candidates per position chosen exclusively on the basis of technical and administrative qualifications, character, education, training and experience as determined by competitive examinations and such other procedures as established by the Town Administrator and approved by the Town Council. Upon appointment, each such officer shall be included in the classified service and be subject to such rules and regulations as may be adopted pursuant to the merit system provisions of Chapter XIV of this Charter.

Section 5. OTHER OFFICERS.

Those included: Subject to approval by the Town Council the Mayor shall appoint and may remove the following officers and such other officers as may be recommended by the Mayor and approved by the majority of the Town Council:

- Town Attorney
- Civil Preparedness Director
- Director of Health

Section 6. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR.

Duties. The Town Administrator shall be directly responsible to the Mayor for the following

duties and for such other duties as the Mayor may assign:

1. Carry out administrative policies and rules adopted by the Town Council and Mayor;
2. Supervise, coordinate and report on such programs, activities and operations of the town government as the Mayor shall designate;
3. Perform research and administrative planning functions, and study, analyze and recommend to the Mayor improvements in organization, procedures, and departmental operations which will contribute to greater efficiency and economy;
4. Assist in the preparation of the annual budget document and recommend to the Mayor changes in departmental programs;
5. Assist the Mayor in the presentation of the annual budget to the Town Council;
6. Under the direction of the Mayor, administer the annual operating and capital budget;
7. Control town purchases and inventories;
8. Assist all elected and appointed boards, officers, authorities and commissions in the performance of their functions, as directed by the Mayor;
9. Administer the merit system for classified employees, except as to appointments, discipline, suspension, or removal of employees;
10. Recommend personnel action to the Mayor.
11. Sign all contracts for the purchase of materials, goods and services.

The Town Administrator shall serve as director or head of any department or office, or in any other position in the town government assigned by the Mayor. The Town Council shall not diminish by ordinance, vote or otherwise the duties or delegated powers of the Town Administrator.

#### Section 7. TOWN ATTORNEY.

The Town Attorney, who, at the time of appointment, shall be an attorney at law admitted to practice law in this state, shall have the following duties except as provided elsewhere in this Charter:

1. Shall appear for, and protect the rights of, the town in all actions, suits or proceedings brought by, or against, it or any of its departments, officers, agencies, boards, commissions, or authorities;
2. Shall be the legal advisor of the Town Council, the Mayor, and all town officers, agencies, boards, commissions, or authorities in all matters affecting the town;
3. Shall, upon written request, furnish town officers, agencies, boards, commissions, or authorities with a written opinion on any question of law involving their respective powers and duties;
4. Shall, upon request, prepare, or approve, forms of contracts, or other instruments, to which the town is a party or in which it has an interest;
5. Shall, with the approval of the Town Council, have the power to appeal from orders, decisions and judgments;

6. Shall, subject to approval of the Town Council, have the power to compromise or settle any claim by, or against, the town.

Section 8. CIVIL PREPAREDNESS DIRECTOR.

The Civil Preparedness Director shall plan and coordinate civil preparedness activities of the town and shall represent the town in civil preparedness matters.

Section 9. FINANCE DEPARTMENT.

- (a) The Finance Department shall consist of the Finance Officer, the Treasurer, the Collector of Revenue, the Assessor, the Purchasing Agent, and such other employees as the Town Council may determine.
- (b) Functions. The Finance Department shall be responsible for the keeping of accounts and financial records, the assessment and collection of taxes, special assessments and other revenues, the control over expenditures and such other powers and duties as may be required by ordinance or resolution of the Town Council. Accounts shall be kept by the Finance Department showing the financial transactions for all departments and agencies of the town. Forms for such accounts shall be prescribed by the Finance Officer with the approval of the Mayor. Financial reports shall be prepared for each quarter and for each fiscal year and for such other periods as may be required by the Mayor.
- (c) Finance Officer. Powers and Duties: The Finance Officer shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline, and good conduct of the department. Subject to the approval of the Town Council, the Finance Officer may perform the duties of Treasurer, and may perform the duties of any officer of the Finance Department and with the exception of the Assessor and the Collector of Revenue, may consolidate one or more such offices under one person. The Finance Officer shall assist in the preparation of the annual budget document and departmental estimates of receipts and expenditures.
- (d) The Collector of Revenue and the Assessor shall respectively have all the powers and duties conferred on collectors of revenue and assessors by the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, and such other duties as may be assigned them by the Town Council or Finance Officer.
- (e) Purchasing Agent. Powers and Duties: The Finance Officer shall act as the Purchasing Agent until the Town Council shall determine otherwise. The Purchasing Agent shall purchase all supplies, materials, equipment and other commodities required by any department, agency, office, board or commission of the town, including the Water Pollution Control Authority, except the Board of Education and the Probate Court, upon requisition signed by the head of the department, office or agency or chairman of the boards, commission, or authority, or responsible employees appointed by such official.

Nothing herein contained shall be construed to prevent the Purchasing Agent from serving as

the purchasing agent for the Board of Education and the Probate Court upon the written request of the chairman of the Board of Education or the judge of the Probate Court.

Section 10. POLICE DEPARTMENT.

- (a) The Police Department shall consist of a Chief and such other employees as the Town Council shall determine.
- (b) Functions. The Police Department shall be responsible for the preservation of the public peace, prevention of crime, apprehension of criminals, regulation of traffic, protection of the rights of persons and property and enforcement of the laws of the State and the ordinances of the town and all rules and regulations made in accordance therewith. All members of the department shall have the same powers and duties with respect to the service of criminal process and enforcement of criminal laws as are vested in police officers by the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and all powers and duties imposed by law on constables except as otherwise provided by rules and regulations of the department.
- (c) Police Chief. Powers and Duties: The Police Chief shall assign all members of the department to their respective posts, shifts, details and duties. The Police Chief shall make rules and regulations concerning the operation of the department and for the care, custody and control of all property used by the department. Disobedience to the lawful orders, rules and regulations of the police chief shall be grounds for dismissal or for other appropriate disciplinary action.

Section 11. FIRE DEPARTMENT.

The Town of Vernon Fire Department shall consist of the Fire Chief and such other officers and employees as authorized by the Town Council from time to time. It is the intent of this Charter that fire protection shall continue to be provided by the voluntary companies heretofore established or as otherwise established by ordinance. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to prohibit the Town Council from providing for paid personnel.

- (a) Functions. The Fire Department shall be responsible for the protection of life and property from fire and for the enforcement of all laws, ordinances and regulations relating to fire prevention and fire safety. In keeping with past standards of service, administration, personnel, and training all volunteer fire fighters shall receive remuneration, allowances, or wages based on their rank and actual service in fire protection or fire fighting.
- (b) Fire Chief. Powers and Duties: The Fire Chief shall submit such reports as the Town Council may require and shall submit all requests for appropriations through the Mayor. The Fire Chief shall make rules and regulations concerning the operation of the department and the conduct of the officers and firemen thereof and in proposing such rules and regulations, the Fire Chief may take cognizance of or include such rules as the personnel of the department may recommend. The Fire Chief shall be

responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the department and for the care, custody and control of all property used by the department. Disobedience to the lawful orders, rules and regulations of the Fire Chief shall be grounds for dismissal or other appropriate disciplinary action.

Section 12. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

- (a) Functions. The Public Works Department shall have supervision and control of the maintenance of all town-owned structures, except such structures under the control of the Water Pollution Control Authority and the Board of Education. The Department shall build, maintain and repair town streets, entrances and exits to all public property, highways and sidewalks. It shall have control over garbage and refuse collection, and the removal of trees within highways and public places. Any provision of this section notwithstanding, the Public Works Department may maintain, and care for, Water Pollution Control Authority facilities or school buildings and grounds, if requested by the Water Pollution Control Authority or the Board of Education and approved by the Town Council. Costs of such maintenance shall be charged against the budgets of the Water Pollution Control Authority or the Board of Education.
- (b) The Public Works Director shall organize the work of the entire department in such a manner as the Director shall deem most economical and efficient and shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the department. The Director shall execute and enforce all laws, ordinances, rules and regulations coming within the jurisdiction of the Public Works Department.

Section 13. PLANNING DEPARTMENT.

The Planning Department shall consist of the Town Planner and such other employees as authorized by the Town Council from time to time.

- (a) Functions: Assist and advise the Mayor, the Town Administrator and all other town agencies and officers on the efficient use of land areas within the town, on the disposition and use of town owned land, and on the location and character of proposed town improvements, installations and construction projects.
- (b) Town Planner. Powers and Duties: The Town Planner shall be responsible for the operation of the planning department and shall:

Serve as technical advisor and administrative officer to the Planning and Zoning Commission and shall assist such commission in the discharge of its statutory duties;

Aid said Planning and Zoning Commission in keeping up-to-date the various maps, regulations, ordinances, permits and approval forms and other items necessary to its efficient operation;

Cooperate in the development of town capital improvement programs and capital budget recommendations;

Undertake studies at the request of the Mayor to evaluate long range departmental needs, programs and services and to prepare recommendations regarding town services, improvements, regulations and standards as will best serve the public interest and promote the sound development of the town.

Section 14. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

The Environmental Health Department shall consist of the Director of Health, the Environmental Health Officer and such other employees as the Town Council may determine.

- (a) Functions: The Environmental Health Department shall be responsible for the preservation and promotion of the public health and shall perform such functions and shall have such powers and duties as are imposed by law on health officers and such other powers and duties as the Town Council may prescribe.
- (b) Director of Health. Powers and Duties: The Director of Health shall designate authorized agents to act for him in the performance of any of his duties and shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the department. The Deputy Health Officer shall be in charge of the administration of the environmental health activities of the Town and shall have power, with the consent of the Director of Health, to make all rules and regulations relating to the administration of the Environmental Health Department, not inconsistent with the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended and with the ordinances of the Town, and shall execute and enforce all laws, ordinances, rules and regulations with respect to the public health.
- (c) Nothing contained in this section or elsewhere in this Charter shall prohibit or be construed to prohibit the Town of Vernon and specifically the Environmental Health Department of the Town of Vernon from cooperating with other towns or political subdivisions of the state or private organizations in the formation and operation of district or regional public health organizations, under conditions established by the State Department of Health Services or by other individuals, groups, foundations or associations.

Section 15. SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

The Social Services Department shall consist of the Director of Social Services and such other employees as the Town Council may determine.

- (a) Functions: The Social Services Department shall have all the powers and duties relating to the poor, disabled and dependent persons vested by law in the selectmen of towns and such other powers and duties as the Town Council may prescribe.
- (b) Director of Social Services. Powers and Duties: The Director of Social Services shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the Department. The Director shall be in charge of the administration of public assistance activities of the town and shall have power to make all rules and regulations relating to the administration of the Department not inconsistent with

the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended and with the ordinances of the Town. The Director shall execute and enforce all laws, ordinances, rules and regulations with respect to public assistance.

- (c) Nothing contained in this section or elsewhere in this Charter shall prohibit or be construed to prohibit, the Town of Vernon and specifically the Social Services Department of the Town of Vernon from cooperating with other towns or political subdivisions of the state or private organizations in the formation and operation of district or regional general assistance administration, under conditions established by the State Department of Income Maintenance or by other individuals, groups, foundations, or associations.

Section 16. PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

The Parks and Recreation Department shall consist of the Director of Parks and Recreation and such other employees as the Town Council may determine.

- (a) Functions: The Parks and Recreation Department shall be responsible for the supervision and control of all parks, recreation areas and facilities belonging to the Town. Upon direction of the Mayor or Town Administrator maintenance operations on buildings and grounds may be performed by the Public Works Department, provided the expense of such operations are charged to the budget of the Parks and Recreation Department.
- (b) The Director of Parks and Recreation. Powers and Duties: The Director of Parks and Recreation shall administer the recreation programs and shall have the authority to fill authorized positions in the department and shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of personnel employed in the department. The Director shall have supervision and control of all parks, recreation areas and facilities belonging to the town. To the fullest extent possible, the Director shall coordinate programs and activities with those of the Board of Education and may cooperate with other governmental units, citizen groups, foundations and associations in the conduct of recreational programs and activities.

Section 17. ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT.

The Town Engineering Department shall consist of the Town Engineer, who shall be a Professional Engineer licensed in the State of Connecticut, and such other employees as authorized by the Town Council from time to time.

- (a) Functions: To perform engineering activities for the Town of Vernon; to review subdivision maps, plans of development and proposed zone changes; to act as consulting agency for the engineering, construction and maintenance of town projects and facilities; to perform such other functions as the Mayor and the Town Council shall direct.
- (b) Town Engineer. Powers and Duties: The Town Engineer shall be responsible for the

efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the Engineering Department. The Town Engineer shall be in charge of the engineering activities of the Town of Vernon and shall have the authority to make all rules and regulations relating to the administration of the Engineering Department.

The Town Engineer shall advise the Public Works Department, the Planning and Zoning Commission and other town officials on engineering matters relating to their departments and shall perform such other duties as the Mayor and the Town Council may direct.

Section 18. DEPARTMENT OF WATER POLLUTION CONTROL.

The Department of Water Pollution Control shall consist of the Director of Water Pollution Control, the Assistant Director of Water Pollution Control and such other employees as the Water Pollution Control Authority may determine. The Water Pollution Control Authority shall appoint, subject to provisions of Sections 3 and 4 of this Chapter, the director and other employees of the Department of Water and Pollution Control.

(a) Functions: The Department of Water Pollution Control shall be responsible for the preparation of water service and water pollution control plans, the construction, operation and maintenance of the sewage and water system owned by the Town of Vernon, and the keeping of accounts and records pertaining to water and sewage matters.

The department shall establish such procedures as are necessary relating to the collection and depositing in the Town Treasury of all money received for fees, permits, sewer user charges, assessments and other forms of income, and may, with the approval of the Mayor, utilize the assistance of other town officers and departments. This will enable the department to monitor all functions falling under the purview of the divisions of the Water Pollution Control Authority.

(b) Director of Water Pollution Control. Powers and Duties: The Director of the Department of Water Pollution Control shall organize the work of the department in the most economical and efficient manner and shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the department. The Director shall enforce all laws, ordinances, rules and regulations coming within the jurisdiction of the Department of Water Pollution Control.

Section 19. DATA PROCESSING DEPARTMENT.

The Data Processing Department shall consist of the Director of Data Processing and such other employees as authorized by the Town Council.

(a) Functions: To perform all data processing activities for the Town of Vernon including, but not limited to, the Board of Education, the Water Pollution Control Authority and all elected or appointed boards and commissions; to develop and maintain all town data processing projects and facilities; to perform such other functions as the Mayor and the Town Council shall direct.

(b) Director of Data Processing. Powers and Duties: The Director of Data Processing shall be

responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the Data Processing Department. The Director shall be in charge of all the data processing activities of the Town of Vernon and shall have the authority to make all rules and regulations relating to the administration of the department.

Section 20. BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT.

The Building Inspection Department shall consist of the Building Official and such other employees as authorized by the Town Council.

- (a) Functions: To perform building inspection activities for the Town of Vernon including the Board of Education, the Water Pollution Control Authority and all elected or appointed boards and commissions; to enforce the building code of the Town of Vernon; to perform such other functions as the Mayor and the Town Council shall direct.
- (b) Building Official. Powers and Duties: The Building Official shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the Building Inspection Department. The Building Official shall have the authority to make all rules and regulations relating to the administration of the department. The Building Official shall be the Enforcement Officer for the Town of Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission.

Section 21. YOUTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

The Youth Services Department shall consist of the Youth Services Director and such other employees as the Town Council shall determine.

- (a) Functions: The Youth Services Department shall be responsible for the supervision and control of all activities and programs connected with the counseling of youths of the Town of Vernon to prevent delinquency and to improve social conditions.
- (b) Youth Services Director. Powers and Duties: The Youth Services Director shall be responsible for the efficiency, discipline and good conduct of the Youth Services Department. The Director shall be in charge of all programs and activities concerning youth services undertaken by the Town of Vernon through action of the Town Council.
- (c) Nothing contained in this section or elsewhere in this Charter shall prohibit, or be construed to prohibit, the Town of Vernon, and specifically the Youth Services Department, from cooperating with other towns or political subdivisions of the state, or with private organizations, groups, foundations, associations or individuals in the formulation and administration of Department programs and activities.

**CHAPTER XII**  
**FINANCE ADMINISTRATION**

Section 1. FISCAL YEAR.

The fiscal year of the town is July 1 through June 30. The Town Council shall have power to fix the assessment date and the tax year.

Section 2. GENERAL FORM OF BUDGET PRESENTATION.

The Mayor shall require each department, office or agency of the town supported wholly or in part by town funds, or for which a specific town appropriation is made, including the Board of Education, to set forth, in narrative or such other form as the Mayor may prescribe, a program or programs showing services, activities and work accomplished during the current year and to be accomplished during the ensuing year. Such description shall include separate accountings for any enterprise activities conducted by said departments, offices and agencies.

Section 3. DEPARTMENTAL ESTIMATES.

The Mayor shall compile preliminary estimates for the annual budget. The head of each department, office or agency of the town as described in Section 2 of this chapter, including the Board of Education, not later than February 10, shall file with the Mayor, on forms prescribed and provided by the Mayor, a detailed estimate of the expenditures to be made by each department, office or agency and the revenue other than tax revenue, to be collected thereby in the ensuing fiscal year and such other information as may be required by the Town Council or the Mayor. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the enterprise activities or expenditure and revenue estimates of the Water Pollution Control Authority, provided, however, that said authority, not later than February 10, shall provide the Mayor with an estimate of the amount of any appropriation from tax revenues to be made in support or subsidization of any enterprise activity in the ensuing fiscal year.

Section 4. DUTIES OF THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY AND THE TOWN COUNCIL ON ENTERPRISE ACTIVITY BUDGETS.

Not later than March 15, the Water Pollution Control Authority shall present to the Town Council a summary and line item budget for each enterprise activity under its jurisdiction, in a manner and format as prescribed for the Mayor's budget in Section 5 of this Chapter.

Not later than April 15, the Town Council shall advise the Water Pollution Control Authority of any recommendations which it may choose to make with respect to expenditures for enterprise activities under said authority's jurisdiction. Such recommendations may be made by line item.

The Water Pollution Control Authority shall, not later than 10 days from the receipt of such recommendation, adopt a budget for each enterprise activity under its jurisdiction. In the event that any such adopted budget does not incorporate the recommendations of the Town Council provided for by this Section and Section 6 of this Chapter, the Authority shall state why such recommendations were not accepted.

In the event that the recommendations of the Town Council are not incorporated in any budget

adopted by the Water Pollution Control Authority, the Town Council, within 15 days by a two-thirds vote of its membership, may amend such budget to reflect in whole or in part any recommendation previously made under the provisions of this Section and Section 6 of this Chapter. No expenditure affected by a Council recommendation shall be made that would cause an expenditure for any enterprise activity that would be greater than that allowed by the greater of the Council's recommendation or the budget of the prior year until the 15 days allowed for Council action has passed.

Section 5. DUTIES OF THE MAYOR ON THE BUDGET.

Not later than March 15, the Mayor shall present to the Town Council a budget consisting of: (a) a budget message outlining the financial policy of the town government and describing in connection therewith the important features of the budget plan indicating any major changes from the current year in financial policies, expenditures and revenues together with the reasons for such changes, and containing a clear general summary of its contents; (b) estimates of revenue, presenting in parallel columns the itemized receipts collected in the last completed fiscal year, the receipts collected during the current fiscal year prior to the time of preparing the estimates, total receipts estimated to be collected during the current fiscal year, and estimates of the receipts, other than from the property tax, to be collected in the ensuing fiscal year; (c) itemized estimates of expenditures, presented in parallel columns the actual expenditures for each department, office, agency or activity for the last completed fiscal year and for the current fiscal year prior to the time of preparing the estimates, total expenditures as estimated for the current fiscal year, and the Mayor's recommendations of the amounts to be appropriated for the ensuing fiscal year for all items, and such other information as may be required by the Town Council. The Mayor shall present reasons for all recommendations. The Water Pollution Control Authority shall have the duties described in Section 4 of this Chapter. The Mayor shall be provided the opportunity to review the Water Pollution Control Authority's expenditure and revenue estimates and may make recommendations regarding such estimates to the Town Council, and the Board of Education shall have the same duties and follow the same form and procedure with respect to the budget of the Board of Education as required by the Mayor in Section 3 of this chapter for other departmental estimates. As part of the budget the Mayor shall present a program, previously considered and acted upon by the Town Planning Commission in accordance with Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, concerning municipal improvements, of proposed capital projects for the ensuing fiscal year and for five (5) years thereafter. Estimates of the costs of such projects shall be submitted by each department, office or agency annually in the form and manner prescribed by the Mayor. The Mayor shall recommend to the Town Council those projects to be undertaken during the ensuing fiscal year and the method of financing the same. The Town Council may by ordinance establish a capital improvement committee to advise and assist the Mayor in preparing said program. Such committee shall be appointed by the Mayor and shall have such duties and powers as the Town Council shall

prescribe.

Section 6. DUTIES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ON THE BUDGET.

The Town Council shall hold two or more public hearings, the last of which shall be the Annual Town Meeting, not later than April 30 at which any elector or taxpayer may have an opportunity to be heard regarding appropriations for the ensuing fiscal year. Following receipt of the estimates from the Mayor, the Water Pollution Control Authority and the Board of Education, the Town Council shall cause sufficient copies of said estimates to be made available for general distribution in the office of the Town Clerk and at least five (5) days prior to the aforementioned public hearings, the Town Council shall cause to be published in a newspaper having circulation in the town a notice of such public hearings and a summary of the said proposed budget and enterprise activity estimates showing anticipated revenues by major sources and proposed expenditures by functions or departments in the same columnar form as prescribed for budget estimates in Section 5 of this Chapter and shall also show the amount to be raised by taxation. Within ten (10) days after the final such public hearing, the Town Council shall approve a budget and shall cause such budget to be prepared and presented to electors and taxpayers at the annual town meeting for adoption. Within five (5) days of adoption of the annual budget by the annual town meeting, the Town Council shall fix the tax rate in mills which shall be levied on the taxable property in the town for the ensuing fiscal year. For the purposes of Chapter 108 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, the Town Council shall be deemed the budget making authority and the legislative body of the town and shall have all the powers and duties contained in said Chapter 108 for the creation of a Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-recurring Expenditures.

Section 7. EXECUTION OF THE BUDGET.

Prior to July 1, the Town Administrator shall advise each department, agency or office head of the appropriations approved for each unit. Within ten (10) days thereafter, any department, agency or office head, as requested by the Town Administrator, shall submit to the Town Administrator a work program for the full fiscal year with a suggested schedule of monthly appropriation allotments which shall not exceed in total the corresponding individual appropriation. The Town Administrator shall review and modify as necessary the proposed work program and suggested monthly allotment schedule and submit to the Mayor the recommended program and allotment schedule for all appropriations for the budget year. Upon approval of the Mayor, the Town Administrator shall advise each department, agency and office head of the approved program and allotment schedule. The Town Administrator shall file a copy of the allotments with the Finance Officer, who shall authorize all expenditures for the offices, departments and agencies to be made from the appropriations on the basis of approved allotments and not otherwise. An approved allotment may be revised during the budget year in the same manner as the original allotment was made. If at any time during the budget year, the Town Administrator shall ascertain that the available income, plus balances, for

the year will be less than the total appropriations, the Town Administrator shall reconsider the work programs and allotments of the several offices, departments and agencies and recommend to the Mayor revised allotments so as to forestall the making of expenditures in excess of the said income.

Section 8. EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS.

Emergency appropriations not exceeding five percent (5%) of the current budget for operations and capital improvements in any one fiscal year may be made upon the recommendation of the Mayor and by a vote of not fewer than three-fourths (3/4) of the Town Council present and constituting a quorum for the purpose of meeting a public emergency threatening the lives, health or property of citizens. A public hearing, at which any elector or taxpayer of the town shall have an opportunity to be heard, shall be held prior to making such appropriation. Notice of such hearing shall be given in a newspaper having circulation in the town not more than ten (10) nor less than five (5) days prior to such hearing. Such hearing and notice of hearing may be waived if the Town Council, by at least three-fourths (3/4) of its members present constituting a quorum, shall decide that a delay in making the emergency appropriation would jeopardize the lives, health or property of citizens. In the absence of an available unappropriated and unencumbered general cash balance to meeting such appropriation, additional means of financing shall be provided in such manner, consistent with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended and of this Charter, as may be determined by the Town Council.

Section 9. PURCHASING.

Purchases for the Town of Vernon, except the Water Pollution Control Authority, the Board of Education and the Probate Court, shall be made under such rules and regulations as may be established by the Town Council. For any purchase of \$10,000.00 or more, the Finance Officer or Town Administrator shall invite sealed bids unless the Town Council shall decide it to be against the best interests of the Town. The Finance Officer or Town Administrator shall give at least ten (10) days public notice to potential bidders by publication at least once in a newspaper having circulation in the town, and shall award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder thereon or may reject all such bids or proposals. All such sealed bids or proposals shall be opened publicly. Any purchase between \$5,000.00 and \$10,000.00 must be substantiated by at least three (3) written price quotations.

Section 10. ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL CONTROL.

- (a) No purchase shall be made by any department, board, commission or officer of the town, other than the Board of Education and the Probate Court, except through the Finance Department and such purchases shall be made under such rules and regulations as may be established by the Town Council or the Water Pollution Control Authority. The Finance Officer shall record the amount of authorized purchases and contracts for future purchases as encumbrances against the appropriation from which

they are to be paid.

- (b) No voucher claim or charge against the town including those of the Board of Education shall be paid until the same has been audited by the Finance Officer or his agent and approved by him for correctness and legality. Checks will be drawn and signed by the Finance Officer for the payment of approved claims which shall be valid only when countersigned by the Town Treasurer or Town Administrator. In the absence or inability to act of either the Finance Officer, Town Administrator or Town Treasurer with respect to the above duty, the Mayor shall be authorized to substitute temporarily for either one of them, but not for any two of them.
- (c) The Finance Officer shall prescribe the time at which and the manner in which persons receiving money on account of the town shall pay the same to the Town Treasurer.
- (d) The several departments, commissions, officers and boards of the town including the Board of Education and Water Pollution Control Authority shall not involve the town in any obligation to spend money for any purpose in excess of the amount appropriated therefor until the matter has been approved and voted by the Town Council and each order drawn upon the Town Treasurer shall state the department, commission, board or officer and the appropriation against which it is to be charged. The Finance Officer shall supply monthly reports showing the status of appropriation allotments to each organization unit head. When any department, commission, board or officer shall desire to secure a transfer of funds in its appropriation from funds within an account classification, before incurring any expenditure therefor, such department, commission board or officer shall make application to the Finance Officer whose duty it shall be to examine into the matter, and upon approval of the Finance Officer such transfer may be made, but not otherwise. When any department, commission, board or officer shall desire to secure a transfer of funds in its appropriation from funds set apart for one specific purpose to another, with the exception of transfers within account classifications as referenced above, before incurring any expenditure therefor, such department, commission board or officer shall make application, to the Finance Officer whose duty it shall be to examine into the matter, and upon approval of the Town Council such transfer may be made, but not otherwise.
- (e) Upon the request of the Mayor, but only within the last three (3) months of the fiscal year, the Town Council may transfer any unencumbered appropriation, balance or portion thereof from one department, commission, board, or office to another. No transfer shall be made from any appropriations for debt service and other statutory charges until such time that all obligations have been met or provided for by encumbrance.
- (f) Additional appropriations over and above the total budget or a new appropriation may be made from time to time by resolution of the Town Council upon recommendation of the Mayor except that any appropriation or new appropriation in excess of 1/10 of 1% of the total budget shall not be approved

unless a public hearing is held and the sum approved by a special town meeting held under the provisions as provided elsewhere in this Charter.

- (g) Appropriations for construction or for other permanent improvements, from whatever source derived, shall not lapse until the purpose for which the appropriation was made shall have been accomplished or abandoned, provided any such project shall be deemed to have been abandoned if three (3) fiscal years shall elapse without any expenditure from or encumbrance of the appropriation therefor. Any portion of an annual appropriation remaining unexpended and unencumbered at the close of the budget year shall lapse.
- (h) Every payment made in violation of the provisions of this Charter shall be deemed illegal and every official authorizing or making such payment or taking part therein and every person receiving such payment or taking part therein shall be jointly and severally liable to the town for the full amount so paid or received. If any officer or employee of the town shall knowingly incur any obligation or shall authorize or make any expenditure in violation of the provisions of this Charter or take any part therein, such action shall be cause for removal.
- (i) With respect to enterprise activities under its jurisdiction the Water Pollution Control Authority shall have and exercise all of the powers and duties conferred on the Mayor and Town Council by this Section. In the event that any provision of this Chapter is in conflict with commonly accepted enterprise fund accounting practices it shall cease to be effective to the extent necessary to eliminate any such conflict.

Section 11. MONEY COLLECTED BY TOWN OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES.

Except as otherwise provided by ordinance, all money, from whatever source and for whatever purpose, collected by officers and employees of the town in their official capacities belong to the town and shall be paid to the Town Treasury.

Section 12. BORROWING.

The Town shall have the power to incur indebtedness by issuing its bonds or notes as provided by the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended subject to the limitations thereof and the provisions of this section. The issuance of bonds and notes shall be authorized by ordinance and if any such bond issue or issuance of notes, except notes in anticipation of taxes to be paid within the fiscal year in which issued, and bonds or notes issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 110 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, entitled "Uniform Fiscal Year", shall exceed \$10,000 in any fiscal year, said bond issue, or issuance of notes shall be approved by a referendum vote.

Section 13. ANNUAL AUDIT.

The Town Council, by seven (7) affirmative votes at a meeting to be held not later than three (3)

months before the end of the fiscal year, shall designate an auditor or auditors to audit the books and accounts of the town in accordance with the provisions of Chapter III of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.

### **CHAPTER XIII** **TAXATION**

#### Section 1. TAXING DISTRICT.

- (a) It is the intent of this Charter that, insofar as practicable, taxes in the Town of Vernon shall be levied in equitable proportion to benefits and services received. For the purpose of financing the costs of services which are of general benefit and for general government purposes, the Town of Vernon shall constitute one taxing district. The Town Council shall define by ordinance those services which are of general benefit and for general government purposes, and those which are of a special benefit nature.
- (b) The costs of all services other than those of general benefit and for general government purposes and excepting those provided by the Board of Education shall be financed by user service charges, by connection fees, by special assessments against benefited properties or by a combination of these methods in a manner provided by ordinance or by the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended.
- (c) The Town Council is hereby empowered to determine and have prepared lists of properties against which necessary special assessments, user charges, or connection fees shall be charged to provide financial support for services which are of a special benefit nature provided however that the Water Pollution Control Authority shall exercise the above responsibilities with respect to special benefits relating to sewer and water activities.
- (d) The amortization of existing facilities for the disposal of sewage, rubbish and garbage and capital costs for construction of new such facilities shall be a general obligation of the Town.
- (e) Nothing in this section shall prohibit or be construed to prohibit the Town Council from levying a proper tax or charge to cover all costs of operation, maintenance, rehabilitation, construction or payment of debt principal and interest for services, facilities and improvements against any person or property within the Town of Vernon which is hereafter benefited by said services, facilities or improvements.

#### Section 2. EXTENSION OF SERVICES.

- (a) Upon the extension of a sewer line past any property for which there exists at the time of such extension an adequate private sewerage system, the owner of said property may or may not, at his option, connect that property to the sewer line. If he chooses not to avail himself of the sewer extension, he shall not be required to do so as long as his private sewerage system is not a menace to

the health and safety of the community. Any building which is erected and any subdivision which is developed in the town which can equitably be serviced by an existing sewer line or an extension thereof shall be required to be connected to same. The property owner shall be liable for any assessment or charge levied by the Town Council or the water Pollution Control Authority in appropriate cases whether or not he chooses to connect his property to the sewer line.

- (b) Residents of the Town shall have the right to petition for the extension of any town service. The Town Council by ordinance may authorize such extension. This provision shall not impair the authority of the Town Council to authorize by ordinance the extension of services on its own initiative.

Before authorizing the extension of services through the petition process the Town Council after receiving petitions shall seek an opinion from the Planning and Zoning Commission which shall have thirty (30) days in which to transmit its opinion; and the Town Council shall hold a public hearing in the manner specified by this Charter for all ordinances. The Town Council shall determine whether or when services petitioned for shall be extended.

The Town Administrator shall prepare a suitable petition form which shall be available in the Town Clerk's Office. Completed petition forms shall define the area of town for which the extension of services is sought and the nature of the requested services. Forms shall include or be accompanied by the signature of a majority of property owners in the defined area; and the authenticity of the signatures shall be sworn to by the person or persons filing the petition with the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk shall determine whether a majority of property owners in the defined area have signed the petition and shall communicate such finding, the petition form and signatures to the Town Council.

- (c) Extensions of service shall be financed through an appropriate user service charge, connection fee or special assessment as provided by Chapter 103 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended or in such manner as may be provided by the Town Council.

### Section 3. TAX BILLS.

It shall be the duty of the Collector of Revenue to mail to each taxpayer, before the date when taxes are due and payable, a tax bill, the form of which shall be acceptable to the State Commissioner of Revenue Services.

### Section 4. ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTION OF TAXES.

Except as specifically provided in this Chapter, the assessment of property for taxation and the collection of taxes shall be carried on as provided in the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended or special laws of the State of Connecticut applicable to the Town of Vernon.

**CHAPTER XIV**  
**THE MERIT SYSTEM**

Section 1. MERIT SYSTEM ESTABLISHED.

There shall be established a merit system which shall provide that all officers and employees in the classified service of the town, as described in Section 2 below, shall be appointed on the basis of merit and in conformity with recognized principles of public personnel administration. For purposes of this Chapter, an employee is a person who works at least 20 hours per week on a regularly scheduled basis.

Section 2. THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE.

The classified service shall include appointees to all presently existing positions or those hereafter created except the following: Elective officers and persons appointed to fill vacancies in elective offices; members of boards and commissions, employees of the Board of Education; persons employed in a professional capacity to make or conduct a temporary and special inquiry, study or investigation; person employed on a part-time basis; and persons employed for a temporary period not exceeding four (4) months and other persons specifically excepted in Chapter XI, Section 3 of this Charter. It shall be the duty of the Town Administrator to cause to be prepared a statement of the duties and responsibilities of each position in the classified service and of the minimum qualifications for appointment to such positions. These statements when approved by the Mayor, shall comprise the classification plan of the town which shall become effective upon approval by resolution of the Town Council and which may be amended upon recommendation of the Mayor, by resolution of the Town Council. New or additional positions in the classified service may be created and changes in the duties and responsibilities of existing positions may be made by resolution of the Town Council upon the recommendation of the Mayor.

Section 3. PERSONNEL RULES.

The Town Administrator shall cause to have prepared a set of personnel rules which shall provide, among other things, for the method of holding competitive examinations for entrance or promotion, the establishment and maintenance of lists of eligibles, administration of the classification plan, probationary periods of employment, hours of work, vacations, sick leaves and other leaves of absence, removals (subject to Section 4 of this chapter), and such other rules as may be necessary to provide an adequate and systematic procedure for the handling of the personnel affairs of the town. Such rules and any amendments thereto shall become effective upon being approved by the Town Council upon recommendation of the Mayor, and being filed by the Town Administrator with the Town Clerk. They shall have the force of and effect of law. Copies of such rules and any amendments thereto shall be distributed to all members of the classified service.

Section 4. EXEMPTIONS FROM TENURE PROVISIONS OF THE MERIT SYSTEM.

The tenure provisions of the merit system which provide that no employee in the classified service of the town may be terminated except for cause or because of reduction in force due to necessary economics, or because of abolition or consolidation of positions by reorganization, shall not be applicable to the officers listed in Sections 3 and 5 of Chapter XI of this Charter and such other department head positions the Town Council may create subject to other provisions of this Charter.

Section 5. PAY PLAN.

- (a) The Town Administrator shall prepare for the Mayor a standard, systematic schedule of pay for each class of position in the classified service. The Mayor shall submit the pay plan to the Town Council with desired changes and such plan shall take effect when adopted by the Town Council or on the thirtieth (30th) day after it is submitted if prior thereto the Town Council has not disapproved it by resolution.
- (b) The pay plan adopted by the Town Council shall include a minimum and maximum and such intermediate rates as may be deemed desirable for each class of position. Amendments to the pay schedule may be adopted by the Town Council, from time to time, upon recommendation of the Mayor. In increasing or decreasing items in the town budget, the Town Council shall not increase or decrease any individual salary item but shall act solely with respect to classes of positions as established in the classification and pay plans. In no event shall the Town Council reduce the salary of a class below the minimum or raise it above the maximum salary established by the pay plan except by amendment to the pay plan.

Section 6. RETIREMENT OF TOWN EMPLOYEES.

The Town Council may provide by ordinance a system of retirement allowances for the town's regular full-time paid employees and for contributions by employees and the town of a fund from which such allowances shall be paid. The town may enter into contract with any insurance company authorized to do business in this State for the purpose of insuring the whole or any part of its retirement plan, may elect to participate in the Connecticut Municipal Employees' Retirement Fund, or elect to participate in the old-age and survivor insurance system under Title II of the Social Security Act, in accordance with the provisions of Part II of Chapter 113 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, or may elect any combination thereof. Nothing in this Charter shall diminish or eliminate or be construed to diminish or eliminate any rights or benefits granted to any person under any municipal retirement pension system.

**CHAPTER XV**  
**MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

Section 1. TRANSFER OF POWERS.

The powers which are conferred, and the duties which are imposed, upon any commission, board, department or office under the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended or special acts concerning the Town, or any ordinance or regulation in force at the time this Charter shall take effect, if such commission, board, department or office is abolished by this Charter, shall be thereafter exercised and discharged by the commission, board, department or office upon which are imposed corresponding or like functions, powers and duties under the provisions of the Charter.

Section 2. EXISTING LAWS AND ORDINANCES.

All general laws, special acts or parts of special acts in their application to the Town of Vernon, City of Rockville and Vernon Fire District and all ordinances, by-laws, rules and regulations of the Town of Vernon, City of Rockville and Vernon Fire District shall continue in force and effect in their several areas except insofar as they are inconsistent with the provisions of this Charter. All special acts or parts of special acts relating to the Town of Vernon, City of Rockville and Vernon Fire District inconsistent with the provisions of this Charter are repealed.

Section 3. ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.

Nothing contained in this Charter shall prohibit or be construed to prohibit the creation or abolition of advisory boards and commissions by the Town Council. In each case of the creation of such advisory boards and commissions, the title of the board or commission shall include the word "advisory" and no such board shall be assigned or delegated either legislative, executive or administrative powers. The membership, term of office, qualifications of members, functions and purposes of such boards and commissions shall be set forth in the resolution or directive creating the board or commission and such resolution or directive creating the board or commission and such resolution or directive shall be filed with the Town Clerk.

Section 4. PERSONAL INTEREST.

In the event that any member of the Town Council, the Board of Education and any appointed Boards, Commissions or Authorities or any officer or employee of the town shall have a substantial financial interest, direct or indirect or by reason of ownership of stock in any corporation, in any contract or in the sale to the town or to a contractor supplying the town of any land or rights or interests in any land, material, supplies or services, such person shall disclose such interest and shall not take any action or participate in any vote in connection therewith. Any knowing violation of this section shall constitute malfeasance in office, and any such person found guilty thereof shall thereby forfeit the office or position held. Any violation of this section with the knowledge, express or implied, of the person or corporation contracting with the town shall render the contract voidable by the Mayor or the Town Council.

Nothing stated herein shall bar members of the Town Council who are employed as teachers in the Town of Vernon, or whose spouses are so employed from taking part in deliberations and votes regarding the

Board of Education budget if at such time teacher compensation for the forthcoming year has been established and is not directly affected by such votes.

Section 5. AMENDMENT.

Amendments to this Charter consistent with the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended may be adopted by the electors of the Town without recourse to the Connecticut General Assembly in the following manner. Such amendments shall be proposed in the form of ordinances either by the Town Council or by initiative petition, provided that the Town Council shall not adopt an ordinance proposing an amendment to this Charter by less than seven (7) affirmative votes and that the number of signatures required on an initiative petition proposing an amendment to this Charter shall be at least ten percent (10%) of the total number of qualified electors of the town as determined by the last effective list of the registrars of voters. An amendment, however proposed, shall become effective as part of this Charter when ratified at a regular or special election by a majority of those voting thereon provided that at least twenty percent (20%) of the electors entitled to vote on the question shall have voted.

Section 6. SAVING CLAUSE.

If any section of this Charter shall be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the remainder of this Charter nor the context in which such section or part of such section so held invalid may appear, except to the extent that an entire section or part of a section may be inseparably connected in meaning and effect with the section or part of a section to which such holding shall directly apply.

Section 7. EFFECTIVE DATE OF CHARTER PROVISIONS.

Unless otherwise provided therein, any amendment or revision of this Charter shall become effective upon the adoption by the electors of the Town of Vernon.