



**LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 18, 2025 - 6:00 PM
SPECIAL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE**

To participate in this meeting, please [join live via Microsoft Teams](#) or call 929-229-5356 (access code: 153 736 172#). If you have trouble accessing this meeting, please [email David Brooks](#).

1. Call to Order

The December 18, 2025 Lebanon City Council Special Meeting is hereby called to order.

2. Public Hearing Items

- A. Citizens Binding Initiative Petition to Establish a Finance Advisory Committee – Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving public input and taking action on a Citizens Binding Initiative Petition seeking to amend City Code Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commissions, to establish a Finance Advisory Committee.

3. New Business

- A. Discussion and Set Public Hearing for January 7, 2026: Consideration of City Clerk's Certification of Sufficiency for Citizens Binding Initiative Petition Seeking to Amend City Charter to Establish a Tax Cap.

4. Adjournment

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public who wish to attend remotely may do so by going to [LebanonNH.gov/Live](#) where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the City's virtual platform or by phone. Please note: Should technical difficulties occur during the meeting that disrupt virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and needs additional accommodation, please contact the ADA coordinator at City Hall by calling 603-448-4220 at least 72 hours in advance so that the City can make any necessary arrangements.

Agenda

Lebanon City Council

December 18, 2025

2. Public Hearing Items:

2.A – Citizens Binding Initiative to Establish a Finance Advisory Committee

A public hearing for the purpose of receiving public input and taking action to decide whether to pass, with or without alteration, the Citizens Binding Initiative Petition seeking to amend City Code Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commissions, to establish a Finance Advisory Committee.

The City Council scheduled this public hearing at its December 3, 2025 regular meeting. The public hearing was properly noticed in the *Valley News* on December 10, 2025 in accordance with City Code and State Law.

Background

On October 2, 2025, the City received a Citizens Binding Initiative Petition in accordance with Section 7.01 of the City Charter from the Petition Committee Chairperson. The Citizens Binding Initiative Petition seeks to amend City Code Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commissions, to establish a Finance Advisory Committee.

On November 25, 2025, in accordance with City Code §89-8.A, the City Clerk verified that the requisite number of signatures of registered voters had been obtained on the petition and certified the petition as sufficient to comply with the provisions of City Charter §7.01. Pursuant to City Code §89-10.A, the Clerk's certification was presented to the City Council on December 3rd, at which meeting the Council scheduled the current public hearing.

If, following the public hearing, the City Council decides to pass the Citizens Binding Initiative Petition without alteration, such action will have the effect of adopting Ordinance #2025-15, as proposed and included in this agenda packet.

If, following the public hearing, the City Council decides not to pass the Citizens Binding Initiative Petition as presented, or takes no action whatsoever, then the City Council shall cause the original, certified Citizens Binding Initiative Petition question and the brief explanation or synopsis to be placed on the ballot at the next municipal election on March 10, 2026 [§89-11].

Action:

If the City Council decides to pass the Citizens Binding Initiative Petition without alteration, the following motion is offered for consideration:

MOVED, that the Lebanon City Council hereby passes, without alteration, the Citizens Binding Initiative Petition seeking to amend City Code Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commission, to establish a Finance Advisory Committee, as reflected in proposed Ordinance #2025-15, as presented in the December 18, 2025 City Council Agenda Packet. The Ordinance shall become effective as of July 1, 2026.

If the City Council decides not to pass the Citizens Binding Initiative Petition without alteration, or decides to take no action at all, the following motion is offered for consideration:

MOVED, that the Lebanon City Council hereby orders that the original, certified Citizens Binding Initiative Petition question seeking to amend City Code Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commissions, to establish a Finance Advisory Committee, and the brief explanation or synopsis, shall be placed on the ballot for voter consideration at the next municipal election on March 10, 2026.

Included In This Section:

1. Final Language of Citizens Binding Initiative Petition question and brief explanation
2. November 25, 2025 City Clerk Certification of Petition Sufficiency
3. Proposed Ordinance #2025-15
4. City Charter Section 7.01 – Citizen Binding Initiative
5. City Code Chapter 89 – Initiative Petitions
6. Notice of Public Hearing as Published in the December 10, 2025 edition of the *Valley News*

Citizens Binding Initiative - Amendment #1
(Amend City Code Chapter 31 – Establish a City Finance Advisory Committee):

Sample Question: “Shall the municipality approve the amendment to City Code Chapter 31, summarized below, to establish a Finance Advisory Committee?”

Explanation of Question: Amend City Municipal Code Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commissions, to establish the Finance Advisory Committee to support the City Council on matters related to the annual operating budget.

Effective July 1, 2026, the Committee members shall be appointed by the City Council and shall consist of four citizen members and three City Council representatives, who shall serve staggered two year terms.

The purpose of the Finance Advisory Committee is to advise the City Council on future budgets and assist in determining whether the budget meets the needs of the City based on current and anticipated resources. This Committee is created pursuant to RSA 32:34, is purely advisory and has none of the duties or authority of an official budget committee.



City Clerk & Tax Collector's Office

51 North Park Street | Lebanon, NH 03766

Phone: (603) 448-3054 | clerk@lebanonnh.gov

www.lebanonnh.gov

CITY CLERK CERTIFICATION PETITION SUFFICIENCY

I, Jaseya Girona Ewing, City Clerk, do hereby certify that:

1. On October 2, 2025, Petitioner Committee Chairperson Lori Key submitted a citizen initiative petition proposing the establishment of a Finance Advisory Committee; and
2. On October 20, 2025, a total of 57 petition forms were issued to the Chairperson, with an additional 13 petition forms issued on November 20, 2025; and
3. Pursuant to §7.01 of the City Charter, a petition must be signed by registered voters equal in number to at least ten percent of the total ballots cast in the last gubernatorial election; and
4. The number of signatures required from registered voters residing within the City of Lebanon for the petition to be deemed sufficient is 818; and
5. Upon examination of the petition, I have verified that it contains 822 valid signatures, and therefore certify the petition as sufficient to be placed on the agenda for the City Council meeting on December 3, 2025.

Signed this 25th day of November, 2025:


Jaseya Girona Ewing, City Clerk

THE CITY OF LEBANON ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-15

An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Lebanon, Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commissions, to add a new section for a Finance Advisory Committee.

Section 1. Chapter 31 of the Code of the City of Lebanon is hereby amended to add a new section, Article XVIII as follows:

ARTICLE XVIII, Finance Advisory Committee

§31-63. Establishment; Membership.

A. Effective July 1, 2026, the Committee members shall be appointed by the City Council and shall consist of four citizen members and three City Council representatives, who shall serve staggered two year terms.

§31-64. Purpose

A. The purpose of the Finance Advisory Committee is to advise the City Council on future budgets and assist in determining whether the budget meets the needs of the City based on current and anticipated resources. This Committee is created pursuant to RSA 32:24, is purely advisory, and has none of the duties or authority of an official budget committee.

Section 2. Severability

The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable, and if any section, subsection, sentence, clause or part thereof is, for any reason, held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or parts of this ordinance.

Section 3. Effective Date

This Ordinance shall become effective July 1, 2026.

City of Lebanon Charter
Article VII - Role of Public Engagement

§ 7.01. Citizens Binding Initiative. [Adopted 11-2-1982, effective 1-1-1983]

Citizens may propose a measure with an initiative petition signed by qualified voters equal in number to ten percent of the votes cast in the last gubernatorial election. When said petition is complete, as certified by the city clerk to have met the above requirements, said proposed measure, shall be submitted to the city council requesting the city council to pass proposed measure without alteration; if said proposed measure be not passed without alteration within twenty days after the date of the Clerk's certification, then such proposed measure without alteration shall be submitted by the city council to the vote of qualified voters at the next municipal election. If a majority of the qualified voters voting on any proposed measure, and which falls within the lawful rights and powers of the city, shall vote in favor thereof, same shall thereafter go into effect on the first day of the next succeeding municipal year.

§ 89-1. Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to enact procedures to be followed when citizens file initiative petitions pursuant to § C419:23(a), Citizens Binding Initiative, and § C419:23(b), Citizens Nonbinding Initiative, of the City Charter. This chapter shall not apply to the amendment or revision of the City Charter, which shall be done in compliance with the provisions of RSA Chapter 49-B (Home Rule Municipal Charters).

§ 89-2. Authority for regulations.

These regulations are adopted pursuant to the authority vested in City Councils under the police power and under the provisions set forth in RSA 44:3, which permit the City Council to administer the prudential and municipal affairs of the city.

§ 89-3. Application for Petitioners' Committee.

Prior to filing any initiative petition, an application must be filed by at least five citizens who are registered voters in the city requesting that they constitute a Petitioners' Committee.

- A. No less than five citizens may serve on the Petitioners' Committee, but more than five may serve upon request.
- B. Members of the Petitioners' Committee shall sign an affidavit certifying that they are qualified voters in the City of Lebanon, that they have read and understand the instructions furnished by the City Clerk for circulating initiative petitions and agree to abide by these instructions, and that they will circulate and obtain signatures on the petitions of only registered voters within the city. In addition, the affidavit shall include the name and address of the Chairperson of the Petitioners' Committee to whom all notices to the Committee shall be sent.
- C. Applications requesting the establishment of a Petitioners' Committee for the purpose of filing an initiative petition may be filed only between September 1 and October 31 of any year for the municipal election to be held on the second Tuesday of March of the following year.

§ 89-4. Filing of sample question and explanation.

In addition to the application and affidavit, before a Petitioners' Committee application can be accepted, the Committee must file with the City Clerk a sample question which it proposes to become the subject of the initiative procedure.

- A. Explanation of question. The sample question shall include a brief statement of explanation as to what is the effect of the question. The brief statement explanation or a synopsis thereof shall appear along with the question on the ballot.
- B. Legal review. The City Clerk shall within two working days of receiving the sample question and explanation submit both to the Attorney for the city for review and comment with regard to whether or not the sample question and explanation are sufficiently clear and are in the appropriate form.

- (1) The legal review shall be in writing and delivered to the Clerk within 10 working days.
 - (2) The Clerk shall within two working days thereafter provide a copy of the legal comments to the Petitioners' Committee.
 - (3) The Petitioners' Committee will have the option of accepting or declining the recommendations and suggestions of the Attorney for the city, but must indicate in writing to the Clerk its decision within two working days.
- C. Minor textual changes. After the filing of the question, the substantive language of the question will not be changed except upon a petition for a new Petitioners' Committee being filed. Notwithstanding, the City Clerk may make such minor textual changes to the question as may be required to clarify the question, provided that the Petitioners' Committee first has an opportunity to review and accept the proposed textual change.

§ 89-5. Preparation and delivery of petition forms.

The petition forms shall be prepared by the City Clerk and returned to the Petitioners' Committee within five working days of the date on which the Clerk receives written notification from the Petitioners' Committee as to whether it has accepted or declined the written recommendations of the Attorney for the city. The petitions shall bear a number in the upper right-hand section. Each petition given out shall be numbered consecutively. Each member of the Petitioners' Committee shall be responsible for the numbered petitions which they are given. All persons signing the petition shall give their address and ward. Failure to provide this information may result in a signature on the petition being disqualified.

§ 89-6. Additional persons circulating petitions.

- A. The Petitioners' Committee may appoint additional individuals who are registered voters of the city to circulate a petition, provided that the names of these individuals and their addresses are furnished to the City Clerk prior to their circulating a petition.
- B. When the names and addresses of these individual circulators are given to the City Clerk, the City Clerk shall within seven working days verify that the individuals are registered voters of the city and issue a letter of authority indicating that the additional individuals may circulate and obtain names on the initiative petition.

§ 89-7. Deadline for filing petitions with City Clerk.

All initiative petitions, including those not used, shall be filed with the City Clerk not later than December 21 of any year for a question which is to appear on the ballot at the annual municipal election held on the second Tuesday of March of the following year.

§ 89-8. City Clerk's certification or refusal to certify.

- A. Within five working days after the filing of the petitions by the Petitioners' Committee, the City Clerk shall certify or refuse to certify in writing that the requisite number of signatures of voters necessary to comply with the provisions of §§ C419:23(a) and C419:23(b) of the City Charter have been obtained.

- B. The Clerk shall deliver a copy of the certificate or the refusal to certify to the Petitioners' Committee within the five-working-day period.

§ 89-9. Appeal procedure if Clerk refuses to certify petition.

- A. If the City Clerk refuses to certify the petition, the Petitioners' Committee or any member of the Petitioners' Committee may appeal the City Clerk's ruling to the City Council within two working days of the receipt of the written refusal to certify.
- B. Within 14 days after an appeal is filed with the City Council by the Petitioners' Committee, the City Council shall hold a public hearing, with seven days notice by publication, on such appeal and shall decide whether or not to certify the petition.
- C. All parties shall be given an opportunity to present evidence to the City Council at the hearing.
- D. The City Council's decision on this issue shall be final, and there shall be no further appeal available to the objecting party, except as may be permitted by law.

§ 89-10. Certification of petition by Clerk; placement on Council meeting agenda; public hearing.

- A. If the City Clerk determines that the requisite number of signatures has been obtained on a petition, the City Clerk shall cause the initiative petition to be placed on the agenda for a City Council meeting to be held within 14 days of that determination.
- B. At the City Council meeting referred to in Subsection A above, the City Clerk shall deliver the certification to the Council that all requirements of this chapter and of the Charter have been met. Within 20 days from the date of receipt of the City Clerk's certification at such Council meeting, the City Council shall schedule and hold a public hearing, with seven days' notice, and shall decide whether or not to pass the initiative without alteration.
- C. If the City Council certifies a petition after an appeal as provided for under § 89-9, the petition shall be considered to have been presented to the Council at that Council meeting as complete and the twenty-day period described in Subsection B above shall run from that Council meeting.

§ 89-11. Action by City Council to place initiative on the ballot.

If the City Council decides not to pass the initiative, or decides to pass the initiative but with substantive alterations, or takes no action whatsoever, then the City Council shall cause the original certified initiative petition question and the brief explanation or synopsis to be placed on the ballot at the next municipal election.

§ 89-12. Action by voters.

If a majority of the qualified voters voting on any proposed question shall vote in favor thereof, the amendment by initiative shall become effective on the first day of the succeeding municipal year.

December 10, 2025

The foregoing notice was published in the Valley News, a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Lebanon, in accordance with the City's code, on December 10, 2025.

Jaseya Ewing

Jaseya Ewing
City Clerk

LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, December 18, 2025 - 6:00pm

Council Chambers, City Hall or
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LebanonNH.gov/LIVE

The Lebanon City Council will hold a public hearing on December 18, 2025, beginning at 6:00pm for the following:

A. Citizens Binding Initiative Petition to Establish a Finance Advisory Committee – Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving public input and taking action on a Citizens Binding Initiative Petition seeking to amend City Code Chapter 31, Boards, Committees and Commissions, to establish a Finance Advisory Committee.

The December 18, 2025 City Council agenda packet and documents pertaining to the above-described public hearing will be available on the City's website beginning December 12, 2025:
LebanonNH.gov/Agendas

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public that wish to attend remotely may do so by going to LebanonNH.gov/Live where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the City's virtual platform or by phone. Please note: Should technical difficulties occur during the meeting that disrupts virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

Agenda

Lebanon City Council

December 18, 2025

3. New Business:

3.A – Discussion and Set Public Hearing for January 7, 2026: Consideration of City Clerk’s Certification of Petition Sufficiency for NH RSA 49-B:5 Petitioned Amendment to City Charter to Establish a Tax Cap

Background

On October 27, 2025, the City Clerk received an affidavit pursuant to RSA 49-B:5, II-a, (a), from a group of Lebanon voters seeking to form a Petitioners’ Committee for the purpose of pursuing an amendment to the City Charter. The Petitioners’ Committee seeks to amend the Lebanon City Charter, Article VI, Financial Management, §6.05, Budget Procedure, to impose a limit on annual budget increases in the amount to be raised by taxes in the City.

Following verification that the requisite 20 voter signatures had been obtained on the Petitioners’ Committee affidavit to initiate the charter amendment process, the text of the proposed amendment was forwarded to the Secretary of State, Attorney General, and the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue Administration for review. The state agencies responded on December 4th that they do not object to the proposed charter amendment. The Petitioners’ Committee has therefore been authorized to circulate petition forms to gather additional voter signatures in support of the amendment.

To advance the process, the Petitioners’ Committee is required to gather voter signatures equal in number to 15 percent of the number of ballots cast at the City’s last regular municipal election (RSA 49-B:5, II.). After the requisite number of signatures are gathered, the City Clerk has up to 20 days to certify the signatures (RSA 49-B:5, IV), after which the Council has 10 days to issue notice of a public hearing on the amendment (RSA 49-B:5, V(a)). No substantive changes may be made to the proposed amendment at the public hearing. Finally, within 7 days after the public hearing, the council must order the proposed amendment to be placed on the ballot at the next regular municipal election that occurs not less than 60 days after the date of the Council’s order.

With the next municipal election scheduled for March 10, 2026, the foregoing process must be completed by no later than January 8, 2026, or else the proposed charter amendment cannot be placed on a ballot until the 2027 municipal election.

The City Council’s January 7, 2026 meeting is the last regular meeting date to complete the process at least 60 days prior to the March 10, 2026 municipal election. As a result, it is suggested that the City Council schedule and notice a public hearing for January 7, 2026, with the caveat that the required number of voter signatures must yet be collected and submitted in time to allow the City Clerk to validate the signatures and issue a certificate of petition sufficiency prior to the public hearing. The City Clerk has offered to attempt in good faith to certify the petition by January 6th if the petition forms are returned by December 29th. However, if the signatures are not obtained and filed more than 20 days prior to the public hearing, and if, as a result, the City Clerk is unable to certify the petition as sufficient prior to the public hearing, then the public hearing would be cancelled or continued to a later date and the proposed charter amendment would not be eligible for placement on the ballot for the March 2026 municipal election.

Action

If the City Council wishes to move forward with consideration of the proposed charter amendment petition, the following motion is offered for consideration:

MOVED, that the Lebanon City Council hereby schedules a public hearing for Wednesday, January 7, 2026, beginning at 7:00pm in Council Chambers, City Hall, and Remote via the City's Virtual Platform, for the purpose of receiving public input on a petitioned amendment to the Lebanon City Charter, Article VI, Financial Management, §6.05, Budget Procedure, to impose a limit on annual budget increases in the amount to be raised by taxes in the City, and taking action to order the petitioned amendment to be placed on the ballot at the next regular municipal election to be held on March 10, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that the holding of such public hearing shall be contingent and conditioned upon the Petitioners' Committee's timely collection and filing of the requisite number of valid signatures as required by NH RSA 49-B:5, and upon the City Clerk's ability to validate the signatures and issue a certificate of petition sufficiency prior to January 6, 2026. The City Clerk shall not be held responsible if she is unable to validate the voter signatures and certify the petition in less than the 20 days allowed by RSA 49-B:5, IV.

Included In This Section:

1. Final Language of Petitioners' Committee's Question Seeking to Amend the City Charter
2. December 4, 2025 Response from NH Attorney General, on behalf of the state agencies
3. NH RSA 49-B:5, Charter Amendments, Procedure

Proposed Charter Amendment (Limitation on Budget Increase):

"Shall the City approve the charter amendment summarized below?"

Amend the Lebanon City Charter, Article VI, Financial Management, §C6.05 Budget Procedure, to include a limit on annual budget increases in the amount to be raised by taxes in the City, as follows:

A. Limitation on budget increase.

1. Recognizing that final tax rates for the City of Lebanon are set by the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration pursuant to RSA 21-J:35,1, the Manager of the City of Lebanon shall develop an annual budget proposal and the Mayor and City Council shall act upon such proposal in accordance with the mandates of this section.
2. Override Provision: Budgetary restrictions described in any part of this §C6.05 may be overridden upon a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of all the councilors elected. Such override expires following adoption of the annual budget. Subsequent budgets or supplemental appropriations require additional two-thirds (2/3) override votes, or the limitations expressed in this section will apply.
3. In the Manager's proposed budget submitted to the Mayor and City Council, the estimated amount of local taxes to be raised for the fiscal year shall not exceed the local taxes raised for the prior year, subject to adjustment as provided herein.

(a) If the local taxes raised for the prior year were reduced by any fund balance brought forward from previous years, the amount of such reduction shall be added back and included in the amount of taxes raised for the prior year.

(b) The estimated amount of local taxes to be raised for the fiscal year shall be increased to account for inflation and changes in the City's population, according to the following formula: This year's base = (Last year's base) x (1 + CPI-avg).

"Base" means the local taxes raised for the year. "CPI-avg" means the rolling three-year average of the annual percentage change of the Consumer Price Index-Urban (CPI-U) published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as of October 1 preceding the date of the budget adoption.

4. The mayor and city councilors shall assume estimated local tax revenue only in an amount not to exceed the local tax revenue due to be collected during the prior fiscal year, increased by the rolling three-year average of the Consumer Price Index-Urban (CPI-U) published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as of October 1 preceding the date of the budget adoption. If the CPI-avg is negative, then there shall be no assumed increase in local tax revenue.

B. Total budgeted expenditures.

Total budgeted expenditures for any given budget year shall not exceed the adjusted estimated amount of local taxes pursuant to Paragraph A.3. herein, increased by the other revenues generated by the City, subject to the Paragraph A.2. override provision. Supplemental appropriations following adoption of the annual budget shall be per §C6.08.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

1 Granite Place South
Concord, NH 03301

JOHN M. FORMELLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL



JAMES T. BOFFETTI
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

December 4, 2025

Sent by email only
Clerk@lebanonnh.gov
Jaseya Ewing
City Clerk
City of Lebanon

Re: Lebanon, Petitioned Charter Amendment

Dear Clerk Ewing:

Pursuant to RSA 49-B:4-a, you submitted a proposed City of Lebanon charter amendment for review on October 27, 2025.

After review and pursuant to RSA 49-B:4-a, the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office, the Secretary of State's Office, and the Department of Revenue Administration do not object to the proposed amendment to the city charter.

Sincerely,

/s/ *Brendan O'Donnell*
Brendan A. O'Donnell
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Election Law Unit

cc: Douglas Bruno, Office of the Secretary of State
Lawrence Gagnon, Department of Revenue Administration

TITLE III
TOWNS, CITIES, VILLAGE DISTRICTS, AND UNINCORPORATED PLACES
Chapter 49-B
HOME RULE-MUNICIPAL CHARTERS

Amendment of Municipal Charter

Section 49-B:5

49-B:5 Charter Amendments, Procedure. –

- I. The municipal officers may determine that one or more amendments to the municipal charter are necessary and shall, by order, provide for notice and hearing on them. The notice of the hearing shall be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality at least 7 days prior to the hearing, and shall contain the text of the proposed amendment and a brief explanation. The hearing shall be conducted by the municipal officers or a committee appointed by them. If substantive changes are made to the proposed amendment, a hearing on the modified amendment shall be held. Notice of the hearing and the conduct thereof shall be as provided in this paragraph.
 - (a) Within 7 days after the last public hearing, the municipal officers or the committee appointed by them shall file with the municipal clerk a report containing the proposed amendment. In the case of a report of an appointed committee, a copy shall be filed with the municipal officers.
 - (b) Within 7 days after receiving approval from the secretary of state, the attorney general, and the commissioner of the department of revenue administration under RSA 49-B:4-a, the municipal officers may order the proposed amendment to be placed on a ballot at the next regular municipal election. In the case of municipalities with biennial elections, the municipal officers may order amendments to be placed on the ballot at either the next regular municipal election or at a special municipal election that occurs not less than 60 days after the order.
 - (c) Each amendment shall be limited to a single subject, but more than one section of the charter may be amended as long as it is germane to that subject.
 - (d) Alternative statements of a single amendment are prohibited.
- II. On the written petition of a number of voters equal to at least 15 percent of the number of ballots cast in a municipality at the last regular municipal election, but in no case fewer than 10 voters, the municipal officers shall, by order, provide that proposed amendments to the municipal charter be placed on a ballot in accordance with the procedures set out in paragraphs II-a through V:
 - (a) Each amendment shall be limited to a single subject but more than one section of the charter may be amended as long as it is germane to that subject.
 - (b) Alternative statements of a single amendment are prohibited.

II-a. The following procedure shall be used in the alternative method set out in paragraph II:

- (a) Any 5 voters of the municipality may file with the municipal clerk an affidavit stating that they shall constitute a petitioners' committee. Such affidavit shall be signed by the members of such committee and an additional 20 voters of the municipality and shall include:
 - (1) The language of each proposed amendment.
 - (2) The names and addresses of the committee members.
 - (3) The address to which all notices to the committee are to be sent.
 - (b) Each signature on the affidavit required by subparagraph II-a(a) shall be included in the clerk's count of the number of signatures required by paragraph II unless a signatory has signed both the affidavit and the petition, in which case the signature shall be counted only once.
 - (c) Promptly after the affidavit is filed by the petitioners' committee, the clerk shall file a certified copy of the affidavit, including the proposed amendment, for review of the proposed amendment in accordance with RSA 49-B:4-a. Promptly after receiving approval of the proposed amendment from the state officials under RSA 49-B:4-a, the clerk shall issue petition form blanks to the committee. The petition forms shall read substantially as follows: "Each of the undersigned voters respectfully requests the municipal officers to provide for the amendment(s) of the municipal charter as set out below. If more than one subject is included in a petition, each subject shall be addressed in a separate amendment".
- III.
- (a) The petitioners' committee, or voters of the municipality designated by the committee, may circulate the petition and file it in proper form. Each signature affixed to a petition shall be in ink or other indelible instrument and shall be followed by the place of domicile of the voter with street and number, if any. No petition shall contain any party or political designation.
 - (b) The clerk shall note the date of each petition form issued and all petitions, unless sooner filed, shall become null and void for every purpose on the 120th day after the date of issue.
 - (c) Each petition form shall have printed on its back an affidavit to be executed by the circulator, stating that he personally circulated the paper, the number of signatures thereon, that all the signatures were affixed in his presence, that he believes them to be genuine signatures of the persons whose names they purport to be, that each signer has signed no more than one petition, and that each signer had an opportunity before signing to read the petition.
 - (d) Petition forms shall be assembled as one instrument and filed at one time with the clerk. The clerk shall note thereon the date of filing.
- IV. Within 20 days after the petition is filed, the clerk shall complete a certificate as to its sufficiency, specifying, if it is insufficient, the particulars wherein it is defective, shall promptly

send a copy of the certificate to the petitioners' committee by mail, and shall file a copy with the municipal officers.

- (a) A petition certified insufficient for lack of the required number of valid signatures may be amended once if the petitioners' committee files a notice of intention to amend it with the clerk within 2 days after receiving the copy of his certificate. Within 10 days after the date of filing of the notice of intention, the committee may file a supplementary petition to correct the deficiencies in the original petition. Such supplementary petition shall in form and content comply with the requirements for an original petition under paragraph III.
 - (b) Within 5 days after the filing of a supplementary petition the clerk shall complete and file a certificate as to its sufficiency in the manner provided for in an original petition.
 - (c) When an original or supplementary petition has been certified insufficient, the committee may, within 2 days after receiving the copy of the clerk's certificate, file a request with the municipal officers for review. The municipal officers shall inspect the petitions and shall make due certificate thereof, copies of which shall be filed with the municipal clerk and mailed to the committee. The certificate of the municipal officers shall be a final determination of the sufficiency of the petitions.
 - (d) Any petitions finally determined to be insufficient shall be void. Such petitions shall be stamped void by the clerk and shall be sealed and retained by the clerk in the manner required for secret ballots.
- V. (a) Within 10 days of receipt of a report that a petition is sufficient, the municipal officers shall by order provide for and issue notice of a public hearing on the proposed amendment. The notice of the hearing shall be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality at least 7 days prior to the hearing, and shall contain the text of the proposed amendment and a brief explanation. The hearing shall be conducted by the municipal officers and no substantive changes may be made to the amendment.
- (b) Within 7 days after the public hearing, the municipal officers shall file with the municipal clerk a report containing the proposed petitioned amendment and shall order the proposed amendment to be placed on the ballot at the next regular municipal election. In the case of municipalities with biennial elections, the municipal officers shall order the amendments to be placed on the ballot at either the next regular municipal election or at a special municipal election that occurs not less than 60 days after the date of the order.

Source. 1979, 241:1. 1988, 223:4, 5. 1991, 304:13. 1992, 96:2, 3. 1995, 53:2. 2005, 38:1. 2008, 230:1, 2, eff. Aug. 19, 2008. 2014, 292:2, eff. Sept. 30, 2014. 2016, 224:1-5, eff. Aug. 8, 2016.