

**§2354. Procedure for referenda on charter changes**

**1. Board of trustees of quasi-municipal corporation or district.** When a referendum on a charter revision is required under section 2353, the board of trustees of the quasi-municipal corporation or district shall initiate a corporation or district referendum and place before the voters the specific charter revision which has been proposed by the board or the petitioners.

[PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

**2. Method of calling a corporation or district referendum.** A corporation or district referendum shall be initiated by a warrant prepared and signed by a majority of the board of trustees. The warrant shall be countersigned by the municipal officers in each municipality where the warrants are posted.

A. The warrant shall direct the municipal officers of the affected municipalities to call a referendum on a date and time determined by the board of trustees. A warrant shall be prepared and distributed at least 30 days before the referendum.

(1) The warrant shall be directed to a resident of one of the affected municipalities by name ordering the resident to notify the municipal officers of each of the affected municipalities to call a town meeting or municipal election on the date specified by the board of trustees. No other date may be used. The person who serves the warrant shall make a return on the warrant stating the manner of service and the time when it was given.

(2) The warrant shall be served on the municipal clerk of each of the affected municipalities by delivering an attested copy of the warrant in hand within 3 days of the date of the warrant. The municipal clerk, on receipt of the warrant, shall immediately notify the municipal officers within the municipality. The municipal officers shall forthwith meet, countersign and have the warrant posted.

(3) The warrants and other notices for the referendum shall be in the same manner as provided in Title 21-A. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

B. The warrant shall set forth the articles to be acted on in each municipal referendum. The articles shall have the following form.

"Shall the charter of the quasi-municipal corporation or district of be revised to (insert summary of revision)?

Yes No " [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

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**3. Referendum procedures.** The following procedures apply to a corporation or district referendum.

A. The board of trustees shall prepare and furnish the required number of ballots for carrying out the referendum as posted, including absentee ballots. It shall prepare and furnish all other materials necessary to fulfill the requirements for voting procedures. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

B. Voting shall be held and conducted as follows.

(1) The voting at referenda held in towns shall be held and conducted in accordance with sections 2524 and 2528 to 2532, even though the town has not accepted the provisions of

sections 2528 and 2529. The facsimile signature of the clerk under section 2528, subsection 6, paragraph F, shall be that of the chairman of the board of trustees. If a corporation or district referendum is called to be held simultaneously with any statewide election, the voting in towns shall be held and conducted in accordance with Title 21-A, except that the duties of the Secretary of State shall be performed by the board. The absentee voting procedure of Title 21-A shall be used, except that the duties of the Secretary of State shall be performed by the board.

(2) The voting at referenda in cities shall be held and conducted in accordance with Title 21-A, including the absentee voting procedure, except that the duties of the Secretary of State shall be performed by the board of trustees. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

C. The return and counting of votes shall be as follows.

(1) The municipal clerk shall, within 24 hours of the determination of the results of the vote in the municipality, certify and send to the board of trustees the total number of votes cast in the affirmative and in the negative on the article.

(2) As soon as all of the results from all of the municipalities have been returned to the board of trustees, the board shall meet and compute the total number of votes cast in all of the affected municipalities in the affirmative and in the negative on the article.

(3) If the board of trustees determines that there were more votes cast in the affirmative than in the negative on the article, it shall declare that the article has passed.

(4) If the board of trustees determines that the total number of votes cast on the article in the affirmative is equal to or less than those cast in the negative, it shall declare that the article has not passed.

(5) The board of trustees shall enter its declaration and computations in its records and send certified copies of it to the clerk of each affected municipality. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

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**4. Reconsideration.** The procedure to reconsider votes taken at a corporation or district referendum shall be as follows.

A. The board of trustees shall, within 60 days, initiate a new corporation or district referendum to reconsider the vote of the previous referendum if, within 7 days of the first referendum, at least 10% of the number of voters voting for the gubernatorial candidates in the last gubernatorial election in the affected municipalities petition to reconsider a prior corporation or district referendum vote. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

B. A reconsideration referendum is not valid unless the number of persons voting in that referendum is at least equal to the number who voted in the prior corporation or district referendum. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

C. If the margin of the vote being reconsidered was between 10% and 25%, the petitioners shall post a bond with the petition equal to the actual and reasonable costs of the new referendum. If the margin of the vote being reconsidered exceeded 25%, the petitioners shall post an additional bond equal to the actual and reasonable costs which may be incurred as a result of the delay of an

authorization or approval granted in the prior corporation or district referendum. If the petitioners are successful, the bonds shall be canceled. [PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

[PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD).]

**5. Recount.** Upon written application of 10% of the persons, or 100 persons, whichever is less, whose names were checked on the voting lists at any quasi-municipal corporation or district referendum held under this chapter, a recount must be granted. The time limits, rules and all other matters applying to candidates under section 2531-B apply equally to applicants for recount.

[PL 2011, c. 255, §2 (AMD).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. A, §2 (NEW). PL 1987, c. 737, Pt. C, §106 (NEW). PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 608, §5 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 255, §2 (AMD).

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