

VOTERS IN THE TOWN OF SAUGUS...

On **November 3rd** you will go to the polls to elect:

- Board of Selectmen
- School Committee
- Town Meeting Members
- Housing Authority...

There is one question on the ballot about a document recommended by the **NINE MEMBER** charter commission.

Shall the town approve the new charter...?

This new charter will drastically change the structure of our government.

The citizens of Saugus need to know the simple facts about this charter before voting.

LOCAL ELECTIONS TO BE HELD EVERY YEAR

Article 7, Section 7-1

Every election costs money.

Here we're **increasing** our election expenses. There's no plan for increasing revenue, so for each extra expense, something else like a program for **seniors** or **children** must go.

Cost to taxpayers:

Over 5 years: an extra \$90,000

ELECTIONS HELD AGAIN IN 5 MONTHS

IF THE NEW CHARTER IS APPROVED

Article 7, Section 7-1

Similar to the elections previously held in NOVEMBER,
if the proposed charter is approved,
we will all be going back to the polls again in April of 2010
to elect members to our governmental body.

**Cost to taxpayers:
An extra \$30,000 just this year**

NEW TOWN AUDITOR POSITION

Article 2, Section 2-8 and Article 9, Section 9-5

The first year salary will be at least **\$25,000** and **cost to taxpayers over a five year period will be a minimum of \$250,000 plus benefits.**

This position is in addition to the annual audit cost by an outside C.P.A. firm.

Again, since there's no plan for increasing revenue, each new position will generally mean another position somewhere else like a teacher, a firefighter, or a policeman will have to go.

NEW MASTER PLAN

Article 5, Section 5-3

The Town has paid to create a Master Plan on several occasions.

None have ever been used enough to cover the cost of their creation.

Cost to the taxpayer:

Initial Plan-one time cost upward of.. \$80,000

Periodic updates.... \$5,000

**Cost over a 5 year period approximately
\$100,000**

NEW CLERICAL AND STAFF POSITIONS

Article 5, Article 6, and others

Currently most of the Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Authorities in Town do not have their own paid clerk.

Many of the Committees proposed in the new charter would have their own paid clerk and/or staff.

New staff in one area of the budget generally leads to staff reduction in another area as ultimately it will have to balance.

ONE-TIME COSTS OF NEW CHARTER

Master Plan ...	\$80,000
Re-codification of by-laws into ordinances, Town Assembly Rules, and Comprehensive Administrative Code ...	\$20,000

One time costs = \$100,000

ANNUAL COSTS OF NEW CHARTER

Town Assembly (based on 2 meetings per month)

Custodial cost = **\$2,800**

Clerk salary = **\$26,000**

Clerk supplies = **\$3,100**

Total cost to taxpayers each year... \$31,900

Six Standing Committees (based on 2 meetings per month)

Custodial cost \$115 per meeting/144 meetings = **\$16,560**

Clerk of all committees, fulltime. Salary plus Benefits = **\$52,000**

Clerk supplies; computer, copies, etc. = **\$4,000**

Total cost to taxpayers each year ... \$72,560

continued



Town Assembly Member Reimbursements...



Future cost unknown

Town Auditor-part time	\$25,000
Newspaper advertisements	\$2,000
Yearly master plan revision	\$5,000
Building Committee:	
Clerk, part-time	\$2,000
Board of License Commissioners:	
Clerk, part time	\$12,000
Yearly independent contracted audit	\$60,000
Town Election	\$30,000

**Total Yearly cost to taxpayers =
\$240,460**

NEW AD HOC POSITIONS

Article 2, Section 2-8

The new charter gives the Assembly the explicit right to hire people to assist it in carrying out its responsibilities.

Cost to the tax payer: unknown amount



MORE BUREAUCRACY

Article 2, Section 2-2 Article 2, Section 2-6b

The new charter mandates new layers of government:

- 1 Assembly President
- 6 At-Large Assemblors
- 2 Assemblors from each of the 10 precincts
(a total of 20)

This makes for less citizen input and (with at-large positions) less neighborhood representation than with the current system.

LESS EXPERIENCED COMMITTEES

Various articles

Existing committees like the Finance Committee and the Building Committee (currently mandated by Saugus By-Laws) are going to be overhauled in a questionable way.

While the proposed Charter would require more members of these committees to be from the Assembly, it has no hard requirements on technical expertise and could result in the loss of the professional expertise contained on these committees.

QUESTIONABLE FINANCE

Article 6, Section 6-8c

Instead of having 50 Town Meeting Members and 9 experienced Finance Committee Members reviewing the budget proposed by the Town Manager; We will have 27 Assemblors potentially voting on a budget where they might not have the financial expertise.

Under the new charter the budget can even be passed without a vote of the Assembly if one is not taken prior to June 30.

UNEQUAL RESIDENCY RESTRICTIONS

Article 4, Section 4-1

Under the proposed charter the Town Manager shall have to be a resident of Saugus

(or continuously seek temporary waivers of the residency requirement).

No other town employee, even the School Superintendent, has this restriction.

Regardless of whether one is in favor or against residency restriction, most can agree that they ought to be evenly applied when they exist.

UNTESTED CHARTER

The proposed charter is completely untested as no other charter in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is exactly like it.

Maybe it will work, and maybe it won't...

**Do you like gambling with
your tax dollars?**

“BYE BYE” BY-LAWS

Entire Document

The proposed charter would turn SAUGUS into a statutory **CITY** because without an open or representative town meeting, we cannot call ourselves a TOWN. With ordinances instead of by-laws this proposed charter is a **CITY CHARTER**. We can still refer to ourselves as a town, but will be **classified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as the City of Saugus** in Essex County, Massachusetts.

“BYE BYE” BY-LAWS

All of SAUGUS’ existing by-laws would have to be reformulated as ordinances.

The ordinances that are needed to replace the by-laws have not yet been written;

Who will do this and how much will it cost?

NEW LICENSING BOARD

The proposed charter calls for the formulation of a 5 member board of licensing commissioners to grant licenses relating to alcoholic beverages.

The police chief and fire chief will serve as non-paid members with three voters appointed by the select board.

The legality of having the police chief and fire chief serve on this newly created board is questionable and may involve conflict of interest issues.

A clerk will also be needed for this board.

Cost to the taxpayer:

Part-time clerk \$12,000 (conservatively)

- **Bigger government** as proposed in the new charter **is not** necessarily better government and **costs more**.
- The proposed charter would remove representative Town Meeting and SAUGUS would be classified by the Secretary of State as a statutory **CITY of Massachusetts**.
- Although the proposed charter will create new government positions, it does not attempt to increase revenue to cover these new expenses, so it will also result in cuts in other areas.

I would urge everyone to read through
the charter and confirm the simple
facts presented to you ...

**IT'S ALL ABOUT THE
MONEY**

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$

Cost of New Charter to Taxpayers:

✓ **\$240,460** [per year]

✓ **\$1,202,300** [for 5 years]