

Charter Commissioner: Karla J. de Steuben

**SAUGUS CHARTER COMMISSION
– JULY 10, 2008-
Step 3 – Develop Possible Solutions**

**Government Model to Improve Accountability, Transparency, and
Civic Engagement in Saugus**

	Your Description (brief narrative so that others will be able to understand what you have in mind)
Executive Administration	Please see attached.
Legislative Governing body	Please see attached.
School Committee	Please see attached.
Elections Zoning/land use policy	Please see attached.
Finance	Please see attached.
Budget	Please see attached.

**PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY,
AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN SAUGUS**

Charter Commissioner: Karla J. de Steuben

Governing Body: Thirteen member Town Council, with President and two other members elected at large.

My proposal combines the Board of Selectmen and the Representative Town meeting into a 13 member Town Council. Ten members will represent each of the 10 precincts and will serve for 2 year terms. Two members will be elected at large, but will each reside in different halves of the town. These two members will have two year terms or 4 year staggered, with one up for reelection every 4 years. The third at large member will be the Council President, who will serve for 4 years.

The Council President will serve as chair of the Town Council, will present an annual state of the town address, and will appoint citizens to boards and committees with the consent of the full council. The Council President will not have special voting privileges. The Council President also will serve on the School Committee.

No member of the Town Council can be a current employee of the town, or serve on any other body.

Administration: Town Manager or Chief Administrative Officer

The day to day managing of the town will continue to be overseen by a professional, full time manager, whether that person is called a town manager or a chief administrative officer. The Town Manager will be appointed by the Town Council with a majority vote. The person serving as the Town Manager will serve at the pleasure of the Town Council and will receive annual performance evaluations. He or she can be removed from office by a majority vote of the Town Council.

School Committee: Five member body.

The School Committee will remain a five member board. Four members will be elected for four year terms, staggered. Thus, every two years, two members of the School Committee will be up for re-election. The fifth member will be the Town Council President.

Zoning/Land Use

("Elections" are discussed above):

As part of the transition from the present form of government to the new form of government, the Town Manager and the Town Council will prepare, with input from the public, a comprehensive plan or master plan for future development and land use in Saugus. Any changes to the master plan or to zoning regulations will require a 2/3 vote by the Town Council.

Finance/Budget: Financial Procedures

For Current and Next Fiscal Year

The Town Council will have responsibility for considering and approving the Town budget as prepared by the Town Manager.

The first step in the budget process will be for the Town Manager to prepare a report on the previous fiscal year. This report will be prepared at the beginning of the current fiscal year.

The Town Manager also will prepare quarterly reports to the Town Council on the financial condition of the town and the future needs of the council.

The School Committee and the Town Council will meet with the Town Manager and the Superintendent to discuss preparation of the next fiscal year budget

The School Committee will prepare its budget for the next fiscal year, hold public hearings on its budget, and then submit budget to the Town Manager.

The Town Manager will present the total proposed budget to the Town Council which will hold public meetings on the budget before deciding whether to approve, amend, or reject the budget. The Town Council will not be able to increase any line item amount, but it will be able to reject or decrease a line item.

The Town Council may require an annual audit.

Future planning:

The Charter will require the institution of a capital improvement program overseen by the Town Council with the assistance of the Town Manager.

The Charter also will require the development and review of a long term financial plan.

Boards, Commissions, Appointees

I believe it is too soon to get into the finer details of what changes we should make to the appointment of people to the various boards, committees and town offices. I, therefore, have decided not to include any comments on this issue other than to state that there should be a separate Licensing Board to responsible for the licensing and permitting that is now handled by the Board of Selectmen. The members of the Licensing Board will be appointed by the Town Council.

[In my oral presentation, I added the establishment of a new Water and Sewer Commission. Presently the functions of a water and sewer commission are split between the Board of Selectmen and the Town Meeting. Members of the new Water and Sewer Commission would be appointed by the Town Council or elected by the voters.]

Town Meeting

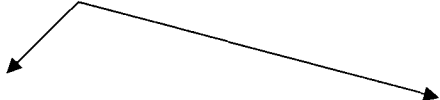
Four times a year, the Town Council, the Town Manager, and the School Committee will hold a “town meeting” at which any citizen of Saugus will be able to ask questions of their elected officials. These town meetings will be separate and different from any public comment time allowed during Town Council meeting because citizens will be allowed to ask questions and public officials will be required to answer them.

THE CITIZENS OF SAUGUS



Town Council

Thirteen (13) members
Ten (10) members, representing each precinct,
2 year terms
Two (2) members elected at large,
2 year terms (or 4 year staggered)
One (1) member elected at large to serve as Council President,
4 year term



Town Manager

Appointed by a majority vote of the Town Council
Dismissed by a majority vote of the Town Council
Serves at the pleasure of the Town Council

School Committee

Five (5) members
Four (4), elected at large,
4 year terms, staggered
Fifth member- President of the Town Council



Superintendent

Appointed by the School Committee

Licensing Board

Five (5) members, appointed by the Town Council

Please note: This preliminary proposal does not include consideration of any changes to the appointment of people to the other town boards and committees.