

*Matthew Normand*  
*City Clerk*



*JoAnn Ferruolo*  
*Assistant City Clerk*

*Lisa McCarthy*  
*Assistant City Clerk*

**CITY OF MANCHESTER**  
*Office of the City Clerk*

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Board of Mayor & Aldermen

FROM: Matthew Normand  
City Clerk

DATE: May 27, 2025

RE: Comparison of City Charters

At the last meeting of the Committee on Administration/Information Systems, I was asked to present to the board, a comparison of charters sections related to the school district within the current City Charter (known as the 1997 Charter) and the previous City Charter (known as the 1983 Charter) to the extent that the district had previously been considered a department. The attached table compares the relevant sections of the two charters.

In addition to comparing the charters, I also reviewed the 1996 Charter Commission minutes. It is clear that the commission was very deliberate in maintaining the same level of authority for both the district and the BMA outlined in the 1983 City Charter while making minor changes they believed would clarify responsibilities of each.

In summary, there is **no appreciable difference** between the two charters as it relates to the school district. There is no section of the 1983 City Charter that represents the district as a department; in fact, the 1997 City Charter expanded the seats on the Board of School Committee from twelve members to fourteen members (at-large positions), reiterated that the school district budget shall constitute a single line item, yet gave future mayors the ability to veto all acts of the aldermen including actions related to the entire budget or any line item thereof, for the first time.

1983 Charter (effective January 1983)	2025 Charter (effective July 1997)
<p><b>ARTICLE III. DEPARTMENTS</b></p> <p><i>Summary: The 1983 charter and the current charter do not identify the school as a department.</i></p>	
<p>1983 SECTIONS 3.02 – 3.29</p> <p>Department of Fire Protection  Department of Health  Department of Highways  Department of Parks And Recreation  Department of Police Protection  Board of Assessors  Department of Building  Department of Public Building Services  Department of Tax Collection  Department of Traffic  Department of Aviation  Department of Water  Department of Welfare  City Clerk  City Coordinator  City Solicitor  Finance Officer  Personnel Officer</p>	<p>1997 SECTION 3.02 DEPARTMENTS EXISTING AT ADOPTION</p> <p>(a) For reference, the following departments of the city exist at the adoption of this charter. The departments existing are as follows:</p> <p>Board of Assessors  Department of Aviation  Building Department  Office of City Clerk  Economic Development Office  Elderly Services Administration  Finance Department  Fire Department  Health Department  Highway Department  Information Systems  Library  Office of the Mayor  Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery  Personnel Department  Police Department  Public Building Services  Risk Management  Office of City Solicitor  Office of Tax Collector  Traffic Department  Water Department  Welfare Department  Office of Youth Services</p>

ARTICLE IV. SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

*Summary: This section of the charter has remained relatively unchanged since 1983. The most significant changes include identifying how many members serve on the School Committee, and defining how a vacancy on the School Committee is filled.*

1983 SECTION 4.01 SCHOOL DISTRICT

The City of Manchester shall continue to constitute a single school district and except as otherwise provided in this charter the board of mayor and aldermen and the school committee shall continue to exercise such power in relation thereto as these respective bodies have under the law in effect at the time of the adoption of this charter.

1983 SECTION 4.02 SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The school committee shall sit and act together as one body. The mayor shall be ex-officio a member of the committee with all powers and privileges of other committee members and shall be the chairman of the committee.

1983 SECTION 4.03 SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The school committee shall nominate a candidate for superintendent of schools for election by the state board of education.

2025 SECTION 4.01 SCHOOL DISTRICT.

The city of Manchester shall continue to constitute a single school district and except as otherwise provided in this charter the board of mayor and aldermen and the school committee shall continue to exercise such power in relation thereto as these respective bodies have under the law in effect at the time of the adoption of this charter.

2025 SECTION 4.02 SCHOOL COMMITTEE

**The School Committee shall be comprised of fourteen (14) members, one each from the twelve wards of the city and two from the city at-large.** The school committee shall sit and act together as one body. The mayor shall be an ex-officio member with all the powers and privileges of the other committee members and shall be chairman of the committee.

2025 SECTION 4.03 SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The school committee shall nominate a candidate for superintendent of schools for election **in accordance with state law.**

**2025 SECTION 4.04 VACANCIES**

**Should a vacancy occur in the office of school committeeman, the board of aldermen shall fill such vacancy until an election is held.**

ARTICLE VI. BUDGETS AND APPROPRIATIONS

*Summary: In the current charter, the mayor has the authority to establish the form and organization of procedures for preparation and adoption of the annual budget (6.03 a); this power is similar to the 1983 charter sections 6.01 and 6.02. These sections are cited in the charter sections that deal specifically with the school budget (current charter section 6.06).*

*The current charter gives the mayor power to veto (6.04 c), including the school budget (which is considered a single line-item); the previous charter gave the mayor no such power.*

*Current charter section 6.06 is similar to the 1983 charter section 6.08. Both sections deal with the school budget, and both sections make it clear that the BMA can accept or reject the school committee's initial budget, and final approval is made by the BMA.*

*The 1983 charter required that two-thirds of the school committee vote to approve transfers within its budget, while the current charter removes that two-thirds threshold. Both charters require two public hearings for the school budget.*

1983 SECTION 6.01 BUDGET FORM AND PROCEDURES

The mayor, upon consultation with the finance officer and the city coordinator, shall establish, unless otherwise established by ordinance, the form and organization of any procedures applicable to preparation and adoption of the annual budget, the capital improvement budget, and such other budget instruments and plans for future fiscal periods which he may deem appropriate. Such procedures shall require that all budgets include all proposed expenditures according to general line-item objects of expenditure and the proposed use thereof and all anticipated revenues, including those to be received from all other government sources as well as the amount to be raised through taxes. Such procedures shall further establish the form of appropriation resolutions in such manner as is considered necessary for effective budget administration and control.

SECTION 6.02 DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET REQUESTS.

Not less than one hundred thirty-five (135) days prior to the close of each fiscal year, as established by ordinance, all departments, agencies, and officers shall submit to the

2025 SECTION 6.03 BUDGET FORMULATION, SUBMISSION AND MESSAGE.

(a) The mayor shall establish the form and organization of procedures for preparation and adoption of the annual budget, the capital improvement budget, and other budget instruments and plans for future fiscal periods as the mayor deems appropriate and which shall conform to all city ordinances concerning budgets and fiscal matters. Such procedures shall require that all budgets include all proposed expenditures according to general objects of expenditure and the proposed use and all anticipated revenue.

<p>mayor a specific and detailed statement of the departmental budget requests and other appropriation requests in accordance with procedures established under the provisions of the preceding section.</p>	
<p>1983 SECTION 6.04 BUDGET ADOPTION.</p> <p>The finance committee of the board of mayor and aldermen shall conduct reviews and studies of the proposed appropriation resolutions and budgets therefor. The budget appropriation resolutions shall be finally adopted by a majority vote of the whole number of the board of mayor and aldermen in any event not later than the last day of the day of the preceding fiscal year, which adoption shall be preceded by a public hearing which shall be conducted on the second Tuesday of the last month of the preceding fiscal year. If the board of mayor and aldermen shall fail to adopt appropriation resolutions for the ensuing fiscal year as provided herein, no funds shall be deemed to have been appropriated, and no expenditures of funds may be made in the ensuing fiscal year except as are otherwise required by law. If the board of mayor and aldermen adopt appropriation resolutions, the expenditures as authorized shall constitute the authority for the several officers, departments, and agencies to spend the amounts appropriated in accordance with the appropriation resolutions, the budget, and any procedure established under the provisions of sections 6.11 and 6.12 hereof without further action of the board of mayor and aldermen.</p>	<p>2025 SECTION 6.04 BUDGET ADOPTION.</p> <p>(a) Notice and hearing. The board of mayor and aldermen shall publish a copy of the proposed budget, a notice stating the times and place where copies of the message and budget are available for inspection by the public, and the time and place for a public hearing on the mayor's budget as submitted, at least one week in advance of the public hearing.</p> <p>(b) Amendment before adoption. After the public hearing, the board of mayor and aldermen may adopt the budget with or without amendment. In amending the budget, it may add or increase programs or amounts and may delete or decrease any programs or amounts, except expenditures required by law or for debt service or for an estimated cash deficit, provided that no amendment to the budget shall increase the authorized expenditures to an amount greater than total estimated income and provided that no consolidation of city departments shall be accomplished solely in the budget process without separate and specific additional action by the board of mayor and aldermen. If amendments are made to the budget submitted by the mayor, a second public hearing may be held providing public comment on the changes made, prior to the final adoption of the budget.</p> <p>(c) Adoption. The board of mayor and aldermen shall adopt the budget on or before the second Tuesday in June of the fiscal year currently ending. Such adoption shall include such appropriation and revenue ordinances as shall be required to fund the budget adopted. <b>The power of the mayor to veto acts of the board shall apply to the entire budget or any line item thereof</b> stating the specific</p>

	<p>reasons for the objection and the proposed alternatives to the item vetoed, subject to the power of the board of aldermen to override. In the event of the exercise of a line item veto all portions of the budget not so vetoed shall be passed. (As used herein “line item” shall mean any object of expenditure listed in the budget.) <b>The school department budget shall constitute a single line item.</b> Action by the board of aldermen on any veto shall be completed by June 30. The final adoption of the budget shall require, subject to the veto powers of the mayor, the vote of eight members of the board of aldermen.</p> <p>(d) If the board of mayor and aldermen shall fail to adopt appropriation resolutions for the ensuing fiscal year as provided herein, the budget as originally submitted by the mayor shall become the budget.</p>
<p>1983 SECTION 6.08 SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUDGET.</p> <p>The school committee shall submit its budget in accordance with the provisions of sections 6.01 and 6.02, and the board of mayor and aldermen either shall accept such budget as submitted or shall reject the same and return it to the school committee along with the maximum dollar amount which the board of mayor and aldermen approves for the school department budget. The school committee shall submit another budget in accordance with the provisions of section 6.01 which budget shall not exceed the maximum dollar amount established by the board of mayor and aldermen. Notwithstanding section 6.12, transfers in the school budget shall not be subject to the approval of the board of mayor and aldermen or its finance committee but shall be made upon a vote of no less than two-thirds of all the members of the school committee.</p>	<p>2025 SECTION 6.06 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET.</p> <p>The school committee shall prepare and submit its budget proposal. The budget shall be subject to the approval of the board of mayor and aldermen. The budget shall be submitted in accordance with the budget schedule established by the mayor under Section 6.03(a). The board of mayor and aldermen shall accept such budget as submitted, or reject it and return it to the school committee along with the explanation for rejection and the maximum dollar amount which the board of mayor and aldermen will approve. The school committee shall then submit a revised budget which shall not exceed the maximum dollar amount established by the board of mayor and aldermen. <b>The school committee shall administer, expend and account for the funds approved by the board of mayor and aldermen and shall have the exclusive authority to transfer funds among line items in the school budget.</b></p>

1983 SECTION 6.09 SCHOOL  
COMMITTEE BUDGET HEARINGS.

The school committee shall conduct two (2) public hearings. The first shall be held prior to the submission of the school district budget to the board of mayor and aldermen; the second shall be held within thirty (30) days from the time of adoption of the school committee budget by the board of mayor and aldermen.

2025 SECTION 6.07 SCHOOL  
COMMITTEE BUDGET HEARINGS.

The school committee shall conduct two (2) public hearings. The first shall be held prior to the submission of the school district budget to the board of mayor and aldermen; the second shall be held within thirty (30) days from the time of adoption of the school committee budget by the board of mayor and aldermen.