



Newtown Legislative Council

Charter Revision Communications Committee

PUBLIC FORUM

Thursday, November 3, 2016



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To review all Charter revisions as proposed:
Go to the Town website (newtown-ct.gov).

Under Boards and Commissions,
click on Charter Revision Commission

First Selectman's Office: (203) 270-4201

Overview of the Revision Process

- July 2014 - Charter Revision Commission (CRC) was appointed by the Legislative Council (LC); charged with reviewing and revising the existing town charter.
- CRC recommended changes to the LC in Fall of 2015.
- Changes were approved by LC, will be voted on **November 8**.
- Proposed changes presented to the voters in **two** ballot questions.
 - Independent outcomes



Today's Forum

- Overview of the Revision Process
- BoE Political Party Representation
- Budget Referendum Questions
- Other Proposed Changes to Budget Processes
- Elimination of Town Meetings
 - Changes to the Appropriation Processes
 - Changes to Real Property Acquisitions and Dispositions
- Questions



QUESTION 1

SHALL THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF MEMBERS FROM ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY PERMITTED TO SERVE ON THE SEVEN (7) MEMBER BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL NOT EXCEED FOUR (4), (THE CURRENT CHARTER PROVIDES THAT THE LIMITATION IS FIVE (5) MEMBERS FROM ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY)?



BoE Political Party Representation

- 7th BOE seat added in 2007
- State statute mandates a 7 member board have minority political party representation minimum of 2 - allows town charter to increase the minority minimum



QUESTION 2

SHALL THE REMAINING CHARTER AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON NOVEMBER 18, 2015 BE APPROVED NOTWITHSTANDING THE RESULTS OF QUESTION NUMBER 1 ABOVE?

Remaining proposed amendments include changes to:

- Town Budget and Related Processes
- Elimination of Town Meeting and Corresponding Changes
- Real Property Processes
- Restructuring and Other Non-Substantive Changes



Budget Referendum Questions

Existing Charter

“Do you deem the proposed sum of \$___ to be appropriated for the Board of Selectmen as ‘too low’?”

“Do you deem the proposed sum of \$___ to be appropriated for the Board of Education as ‘too low’?”

Proposed Charter

“If the proposed sum of \$___ for the Board of Selectmen is not approved, should the revised budget be higher?”

“If the proposed sum of \$___ for the Board of Education is not approved, should the revised budget be higher?”



Other Proposed Changes to Budget Processes

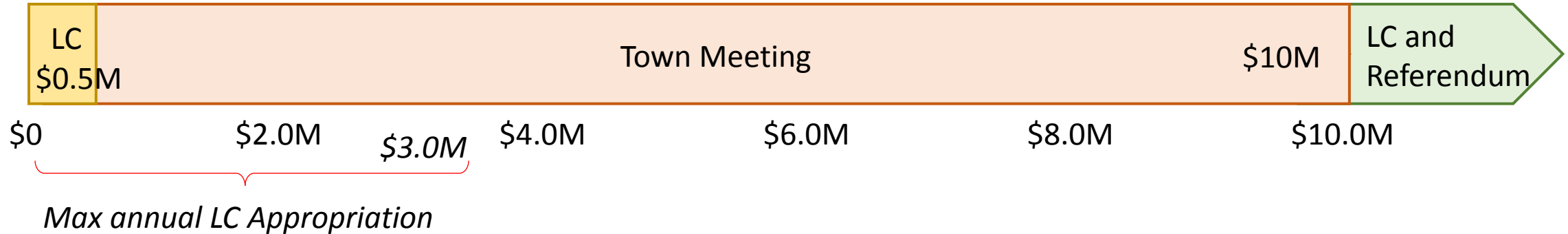
- Budget Referendum Processes have been codified
 - In the event of failed referendum, LC must confer with the Board of Selectman and the Board of Education for changes in their respective budgets
 - LC shall also request updated financial recommendations from the Board of Finance
- Amended budgets must be publically available after voter approval



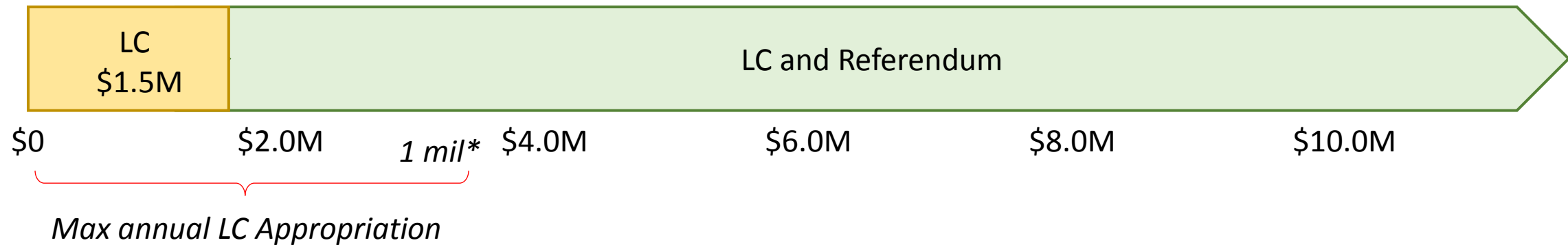
Elimination of Town Meetings

Changes to Appropriation Processes for a Single Item/Purpose

Approval levels and methods provided in **current charter**



Approval levels and methods provided in **proposed charter**



Right of Referendum [section 7-100 of current charter and section 3-25 of proposed charter] 5% of currently registered voters.

*1 mil is currently about \$3.0M

More on appropriations...

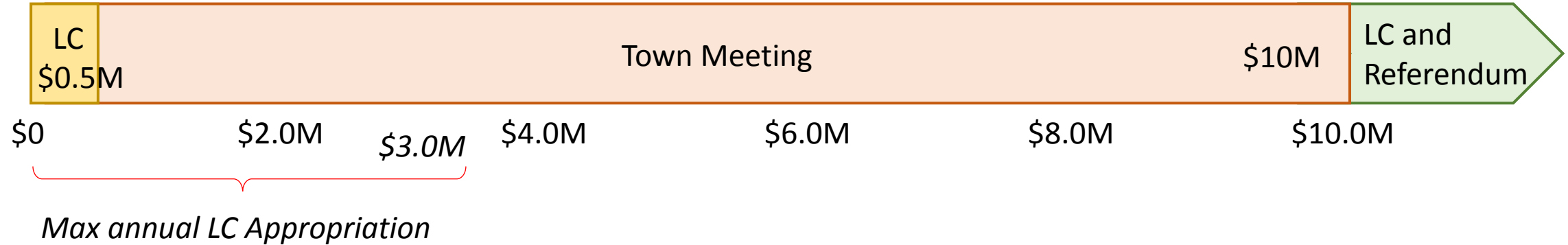
- For LC approved appropriations over \$1.5M, voters will cast a yes/no vote for each specific appropriation on the Referendum Ballot in April.
 - Appropriations in excess of the limit that are prohibited by timing or other factors from appearing on the ballot will warrant a special referendum.
- Language for appropriations changed from “per item” to “per purpose.”



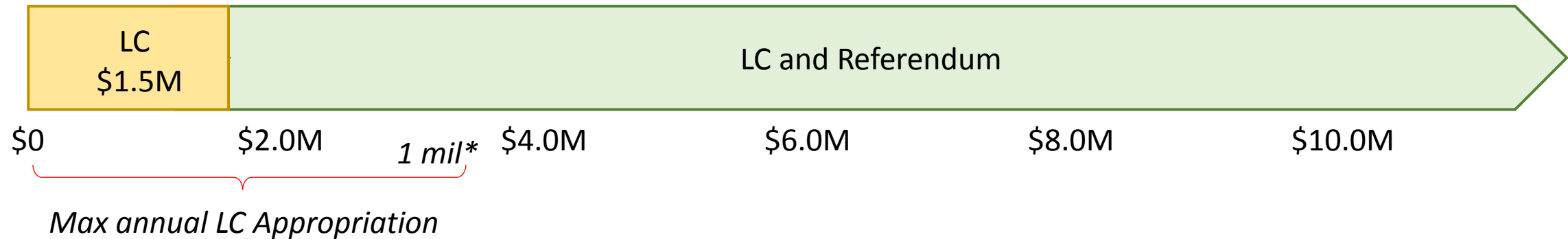
Elimination of Town Meetings

Changes to Real Property Acquisitions

Approval levels and methods provided in current charter



Approval levels and methods provided in proposed charter



*1 mil is currently about \$3.0M

Annual LC maximums defined for special and emergency appropriations apply to acquisitions.



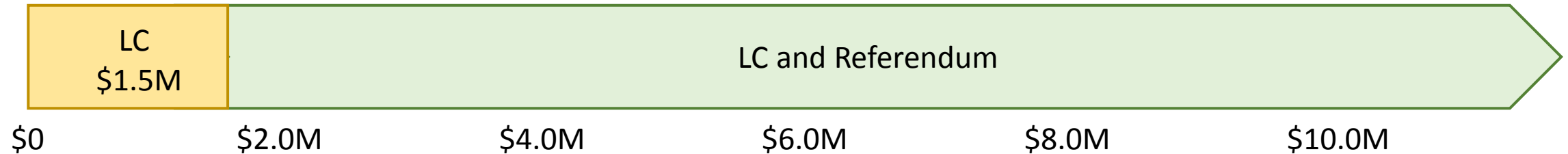
Elimination of Town Meetings

Changes to Real Property Dispositions

Approval levels and methods provided in current charter



Approval levels and methods provided in proposed charter



Additional requirements provided in the proposed charter

- Appraisal
- Opportunity for comments from all boards and commissions having an interest in the property
- Signage and local publication required



Decision Requirements for Real Property Dispositions

- The Board of Selectmen initiates the disposition of a town-owned real property by majority vote.
- The Legislative Council may vote to sell or otherwise dispose of the real property as required by the General Statutes, if applicable, or by majority vote.
 - Should the First Selectman decide to sell the property using private sale, the price and terms of the contract must be approved by a majority of the Board of Selectmen and at least eight (8) members of the Legislative Council.



Other Proposed Changes to Real Property Dispositions

- Sealed bid removed as method of disposition
- Private sale is similar to current private real estate practices
- The sale of property may be based, in part, on a buyer's binding commitment to use the property for a beneficial purpose
- Leasing of real property is specifically provided for



Tell your friends to...



ANY
QUESTIONS
?

**Please Take
a Pamphlet
or Two!**

Thank You

