

Form of Government Committee



Ridgefield CONNECTICUT

Visitors Government Community Calendar Forms & Documents Contact Us

Meeting Schedule
Meeting Videos
Press Releases

Stay Connected - Read more »

Home » Government » Boards, Commissions & Committees

Form of Government Committee

[View Contact Info](#)

The committee is charged with conducting a comprehensive study to compare various types of municipal governments. This study should delve into the structures, functions, and efficacy of different municipal government models authorized by State Statutes, including but not limited to council-manager, mayor-council, and town meeting forms of government. The committee's analysis should focus on the strengths and weaknesses of each model in terms of promoting efficiency, accountability, citizen participation, and responsiveness to local needs. Furthermore, the committee is expected to gather evidence and best practices from municipalities that have implemented innovative governance strategies, with the ultimate goal of providing evidence-based recommendations for improving municipal governance in Ridgefield and better serving the community.

Questions? Email us at: torfoga@Ridgefieldct.gov

Board Members

Todd Zagorec	Chair
Laurie Christiansen	
Robert Hendrick	
Mike Rettger	
Charles Robbins	
Jonathan David Seem	
Rachel Sondheimer	
Dennis Tracey	
Steve Zemo	

News

Stay Connected

Agendas

- Agenda
November 4, 2024 - 7:00pm
- Agenda
October 21, 2024 - 7:00pm
- Agenda
October 7, 2024 - 7:00pm

Minutes

- Minutes - Unapproved
October 21, 2024
- Minutes - Unapproved
October 7, 2024
- Minutes - Approved
September 16, 2024

Purpose

Process

How to Participate



Today's Topics



Committee Origins

Ridgefield's Current Form of Government

Changing Nature of Local Government

Committee's Charge and Process

Your Role

Origins

Form of Government Committee



Suggested by past two Charter Revisions Commissions:

- Residents
- Town Officials

BoS appointed Form of Government Committee:

- 9 members

Purpose:

- Research whether alternatives/enhancements to current form would better serve residents.

Town Meeting/Board of Selectpersons



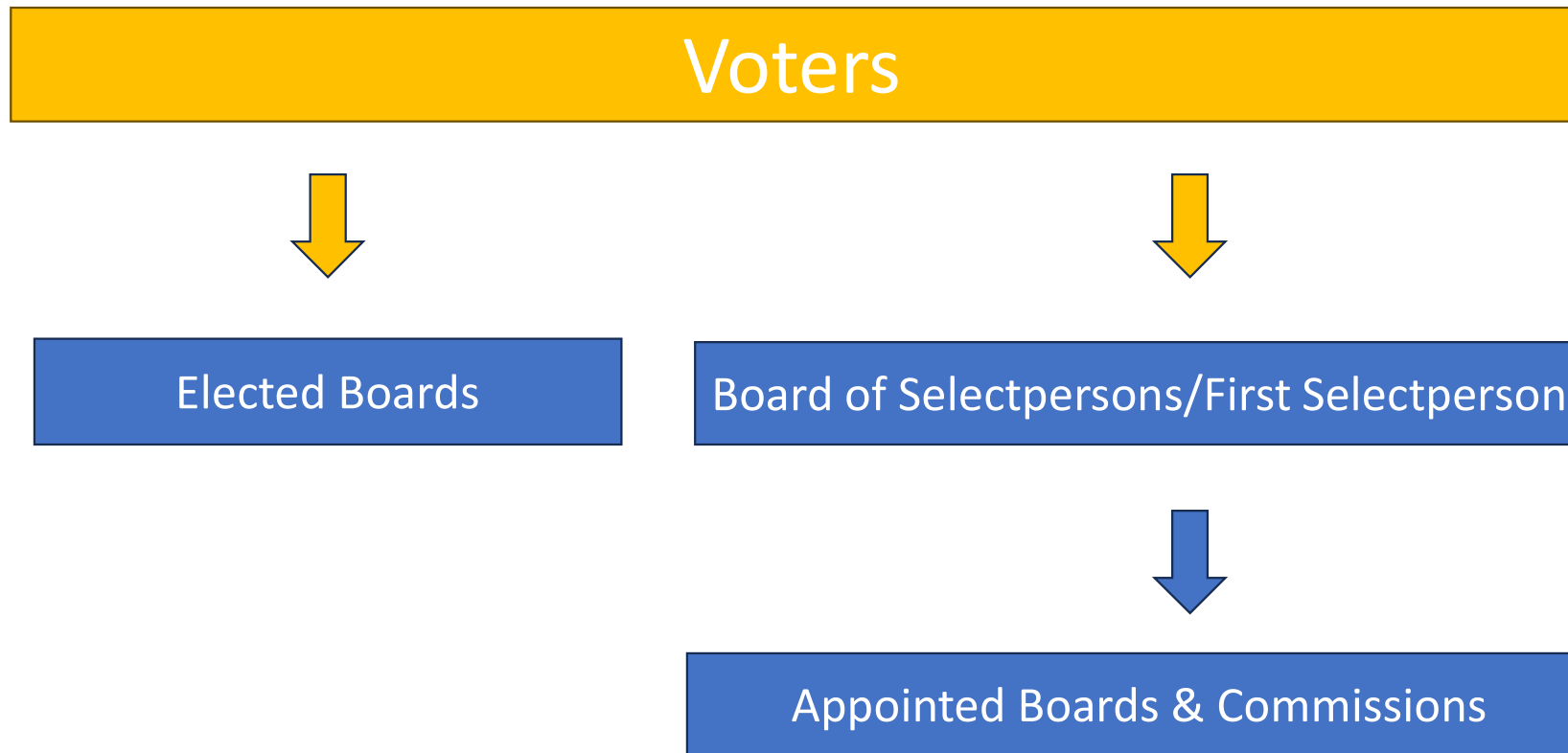
Oldest form of government in U.S.

Prevalent in New England

CT: 102 of 169 municipalities

‘True’ democracy: residents meet to
vote directly

Structure of Town Meeting Gov't



Town Meeting / Board of Selectpersons



Legislative authority

Voters decide:

- Annual/special budgets
- Ordinance/Charter changes
- Elected Committees

Participation is key



Executive Authority

BoS:

- Town Policies
- Appointed Committees

First Selectperson:

- Similar to CEO
- Day-to-day oversight

Changing Nature of Local Gov't



Life is more complex for all

Voters

- Difficulty getting to meetings
- High turnout only on controversial issues

First Selectperson

- Local and state issues/legislative processes
- Management
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Land use issues and regulations



Some CT Towns Enhancing/Changing

Of 24 CT towns with 20,000 - 30,000 populations:

- Only 7 continue to use Town Meeting
- 3 elect representatives to vote at Town Meeting
- 14 elect a Town Council

Others have modified format:

- Hire administrator or manager to oversee day-to-day operations
 - frees First Selectperson to focus on policy
 - helps ensure continuity in operations when elected officials change



Charge: Provide evidence-based recommendations to improve local government and better serve community

Process

Analyze current form

- strengths/weaknesses

Research changes studied and/or adopted by similar towns

Interview local leaders

Consult state resources

Considerations

Efficiency

Accountability

Citizen participation

Responsiveness

State statutes



After Research & Deliberation...

Committee will make recommendations to BoS

- Written Report
- Public Hearings

Any change would likely:

- Require vote
- Possible Charter change

Stay Informed

Committee Meetings

- 1st and 3rd Monday of each month
- 7 PM
- In person (Town Hall), streaming, Zoom

Local Press

Town Sources

- Website
- Newsletter
- Social Media
- Ridgefield Alerts



3 Easy Ways to STAY INFORMED

Social Media

Facebook
TownofRidgefieldCT

X
CTRidgefield

Instagram
town_of_ridgefieldct

Town Newsletter
Receive weekly updates straight to your inbox. Go to ridgefieldct.gov or scan the QR code to subscribe.

Ridgefield Alerts
Receive emergency information via text, email, phone or the app. Go to ridgefieldalerts.com or scan the QR code to subscribe.



Express Your Opinion

Comment in Meetings (7 PM)

- In person or by Zoom

Attend Public Hearings

Email Committee

- torfoga@ridgefieldct.gov

Write letter

- FoG Chair, Town Hall,
400 Main St.

The screenshot shows the Ridgefield Connecticut website. The header includes the town seal, the name "Ridgefield CONNECTICUT", and navigation links for Visitors, Government, Community, Calendar, Forms & Documents, and Contact Us. A search bar and social media icons are also present. The main content area is titled "Form of Government Committee" and includes a "View Contact Info" link. Below this, a paragraph describes the committee's mission: "The committee is charged with conducting a comprehensive study to compare various types of municipal governments. This study should delve into the structures, functions, and efficacy of different municipal government models authorized by State Statutes, including but not limited to council-manager, mayor-council, and town meeting forms of government. The committee's analysis should focus on the strengths and weaknesses of each model in terms of promoting efficiency, accountability, citizen participation, and responsiveness to local needs. Furthermore, the committee is expected to gather evidence and best practices from municipalities that have implemented innovative governance strategies, with the ultimate goal of providing evidence-based recommendations for improving municipal governance in Ridgefield and better serving the community." A "Questions? Email us at: torfoga@Ridgefieldct.gov" link is provided. A "Board Members" section lists: Todd Zagone (Chair), Laurie Christiansen, Robert Hendrick, Mike Rettger, Charles Robbins, Jonathan David Seem, Rachel Sondheimer, Dennis Tracey, and Steve Zemo. The right sidebar contains "News", "Agendas" (listing November 4, 2024 - 7:00pm, October 21, 2024 - 7:00pm, and October 7, 2024 - 7:00pm), and "Minutes" (listing Unapproved minutes for October 21, 2024 and October 7, 2024, and Approved minutes for September 16, 2024).