

Print**Town Charter Revision Commission - Town Administration, Staff, Board/Commission Chairs - Submission #455****Date Submitted: 7/12/2024****First Name***

Mara

Last Name*

Whitman

Town Department or Board/Commission*

Bloomfield Public Library

Email Address*

mwhitman@libraryconnection.info

The following questions are optional:**Are you a resident of Bloomfield?**☐ Yes☒ No**Proposed Recommendation to the Town Charter**

The Bloomfield Town Charter is available

at: https://library.municode.com/ct/bloomfield/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH**What section number of the Charter does your change affect?***

Chapter 6 Section 604

Proposed Recommendation *

Keep the Charter language from Chapter 6 Section 604 as it currently reads.

Brief description of the issue addressed by the proposed change:*

I propose that section 604 be left as it is currently written, with a Library Director who oversees all aspects of Library Operations, and a Library Board that appoints, and can remove, the library director.

Impact of Proposed Change

What benefits will be realized by the citizens and/or government of Bloomfield?*

Section 604 should be left as it is currently written. As the saying goes "if it is not broke, why fix it." Bloomfield Public Library is great because of Library Director Elizabeth Lane but also has the advantage of having a strong, capable Library Board to work with Elizabeth and help her govern the decisions that need to be made. The Library Board members are elected individuals who have many individual strengths. Many of them have have or had careers in librarianship. They are in a strong position to work with the Library Director on a daily basis. The Town of Bloomfield is blessed to have these individuals who donate their time and work very hard for the Bloomfield Public Library and the community.

What potential impacts may be associated with the proposal change?*

There is a Master's and a Doctorate of Library and Information Science for a reason. It is because running or working in a library is not easy or based on common sense. It is a career that requires specific knowledge. If the Charter was to change the governing individual, (the Mayor) would not necessarily have the ability or experience to understand the dynamics and intricacies of libraries and library science. Bloomfield is in a great position with a Library Board Member (Ava Biffer) because she has the experience needed to guide and lead the Library Board. It would be unfortunate if that was to change.

Can you provide data to assist in validating the impact of the proposed change?

I received my Master's in Library and Information Science in 1988. I have worked for many municipalities- Simsbury, West Hartford, Newington, Avon, Enfield, to name just a few. I have found Elizabeth Lane to be the best Library Director that I have ever worked under. I also have worked at Bloomfield Public Library for 30 years. I have worked under Beverly Lambert, Roberta LaMonaca and now Elizabeth Lane. BPL has done amazing things under Elizabeth's leadership and the Library Board. I don't understand why there would be a change to what is working soo well. BPL is going to have a brand new library building and a renovated library due to the hard work of Elizabeth and the dedicated library board. If the charter language was to change there is a big risk that all that has been accomplished will be lost.

Describe any obstacles, costs, or cost savings associated with the proposed change, if any?

Elizabeth Lane attended University of Michigan, the number one ranked Library School in the United States. She has years of experience as a Library Director. She has a fantastic working relationship with the Library Board and the Town Managers, The Town Council, The Friends of the Library, The Town Department Heads, the patrons and all of the BPL staff. She is also a resident of Bloomfield. She has gone out of her way to reach out to the community and follow the mission statement of the Library. As said before, please don't break what does not need to be fixed. BPL is one of the leading libraries in the State of Connecticut. Instead of considering a change in Chapter 6 Section 604, take the time to congratulate Elizabeth Lane, The BPL Board, The Friends of the Library and the hard working staff for all of their hard work and dedication. Be proud of all that has been accomplished and allow BPL to continue to "Bloom".

