

By Mr. Bliss of North Attleborough, petition of Donald T. Bliss (by vote of the town) that the town of North Attleborough be authorized to establish a form of representative town government. Local Affairs. [Local Approval Received].

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Six.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FORM OF REPRESENTATIVE TOWN GOVERNMENT
IN THE TOWN OF NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. It is hereby confirmed that there is established
2 in the Town of North Attleborough a form of representative town
3 government by limited town meetings. Twenty-four members
4 shall be elected from each of six precincts.

1 SECTION 2. *Voting Precincts*

2 The precincts shall be so established as to consist of compact
3 and contiguous territory to be bounded, as far as possible, by the
4 center line of known streets and ways, or by other well defined
5 limits. Their boundaries shall be reviewed, and, if need be, wholly
6 or partially revised, by the selectmen according to the next
7 nearest state or federal census or when the selectmen are so
8 directed by a vote of a representative town meeting. The
9 foregoing provisions of this section shall not authorize any action
10 contrary to the provisions of section nine-A of chapter fifty-four
11 of the Massachusetts General Laws as amended.

12 The selectmen shall, within ten days after any establishment or
13 revision of the precincts, file a report of their doings with the
14 board of election commissioners, with a map or maps or
15 description of the precincts and the names and residences of the
16 registered voters therein. The selectmen shall also cause to be
17 posted in the town office a map or maps or description of the
18 precincts as established or revised from time to time, with the
19 names and residences of the registered voters therein; and they

20 shall also cause to be posted in at least one public place in each
21 precinct a map or decription of that precinct, with the names and
22 residences of the registered voters therein. The division of the
23 town into voting precincts and any revision of such precincts shall
24 take effect upon the filing of the report thereof by the selectmen
25 with the board of election commissioners and upon approval by
26 the Commonwealth if necessary. Whenever the precincts are
27 established or revised, the board of election commissioners shall
28 forthwith give written notice therof to the secretary of state,
29 stating the number and designation of the precincts. Meeting of
30 the registered voters of the several precincts for elections, for
31 primaries, and for voting upon any question to be submitted to all
32 the registered voters of the town, shall be held on the same day
33 and at the same hour and at such place or places within the town
34 as the selectmen shall in the warrant for such meetings direct. The
35 provisions of chapters fifty through fifty-six inclusive, of the
36 Massachusetts General Laws as amended, relating to precinct
37 voting at elections, so far as the same are not inconsistent with
38 this Act, shall apply to all elections and primaries in the town
39 upon the establishment of voting precincts hereinbefore provided.

1 SECTION 3. *Elected Town Meeting Members*

2 The membership of the representative town meeting shall
3 consist of one hundred and forty-four members elected for terms
4 of three years. Any registered voter of the Town of North
5 Attleborough shall be eligible for election to the town meeting.
6 Each of six precincts shall be represented by twenty-four
7 members; eight of whom shall be elected annually. The voters
8 shall also at such election fill, for the unexpired term or terms any
9 vacancy or vacancies then existing in the number of elected town
10 meeting members in such precinct.

11 Election ties shall be decided by ballot vote of the remaining
12 representative town meeting members from the precinct. The
13 terms of office of all elected town meeting members from every
14 precinct shall cease upon the election as hereinbefore provided of
15 their successors. The board of election commissioners shall, after
16 every election of the town meeting members, forthwith notify
17 each such member by mail of his or her election. Representative
18 town meeting members shall serve without compensation.

1 SECTION 4. *Organization*

2 Within ten days after the annual election, the town clerk shall
3 cause each precinct to organize, to elect a chairman, secretary,
4 and to elect or appoint such other officers as the precinct deems
5 necessary. Precinct meetings shall be called by the chairmen or
6 their designees. The chairmen, or their designees, shall meet from
7 time to time to co-ordinate the activities relative to the
8 representative town meeting. This co-ordinating committee may
9 appoint Ad Hoc committees from the representative town
10 meeting membership. Said Ad Hoc committees shall report to the
11 representative town meeting through its co-ordinating committee
12 and to the selectmen. The selectmen shall include the report or
13 reports as submitted in the next annual Town Report.

1 SECTION 5. *Nominations*

2 Nominations of candidates and candidates for re-election for
3 town meeting members to be elected under this Act shall be made
4 by nomination papers, which shall show clearly whether he or she
5 has been a former town meeting member, and, if an elected
6 incumbent of such office, that he or she is a candidate for re-
7 election and shall bear no other political designation. Such papers
8 shall be signed by not less than twenty-five registered voters of the
9 precinct in which the candidate resides, and shall be filed with the
10 board of election commissioners at least ten days before the
11 election. If a town meeting member is a candidate for re-election,
12 the words "Candidate for Re-Election" shall be printed against
13 his or her name as it appears on the ballot for the election of town
14 officers. If a town meeting member, who has been chosen by the
15 remaining members from the precinct to fill a vacancy under the
16 provisions of section seven, is a candidate for election, the words
17 "Candidate for Re-Election" shall not be printed against his or
18 her name as it appears on the ballot. All candidates shall be listed
19 in alphabetical order. No nomination papers shall be valid in
20 respect to any candidate whose written acceptance is not thereon
21 or attached thereto when filed.

1 SECTION 6. *Resignations*

2 A town meeting member may resign by filing a written
3 resignation with the town clerk, and such resignation shall take

4 effect on the date of such filing. A town meeting member who
5 removes from the town shall cease to be a town meeting member.
6 A town meeting member who removes from the precinct from
7 which he or she was elected to another precinct, either by precinct
8 realignment or otherwise, may serve only until the next annual
9 town election.

1 SECTION 7. *Vacancies*

2 Any vacancy in the full number of town meeting members from
3 any precinct, whether arising from a failure of the registered
4 voters to elect, or from any other cause, shall be filled until the
5 next annual election, by the remaining town meeting members of
6 the precinct, from among the registered voters thereof who have
7 indicated their willingness to serve by a written notice to the town
8 clerk. Upon receipt of written notice of a vacancy, the town clerk
9 shall promptly give public notice of all vacancies in at least one
10 newspaper of general circulation in the Town of North
11 Attleborough, and shall also give written notice to the chairman
12 of the precinct in which the vacancy exists. Said notices shall
13 contain the date, time and place of the meeting to fill such
14 vacancies. Notification of a vacancy shall be submitted to the
15 town clerk and shall consist of either a written resignation or a
16 written notice signed by not less than ten town meeting members
17 from the precinct wherein the vacancy exists.

18 At the said meeting, a majority of the remaining members from
19 such precinct shall constitute a quorum. The choice to fill any
20 vacancy shall be by ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall
21 be required for a choice. The precinct chairman and secretary, or
22 their designees, shall count the ballots and shall make a certificate
23 of the choice and file the same with the town clerk, together with
24 a written acceptance by the member or members so chosen, who
25 shall thereupon be deemed elected and qualified as a town
26 meeting member or members, subject to the right of all the town
27 meeting members to judge of the election and qualifications of its
28 membership as set forth in section nine.

1 SECTION 8. *Moderator and Moderator Pro Tempore*

2 The moderator shall be an ex-officio member of the
3 representative town meeting. He shall possess all of the rights and

4 privileges of elected town meeting members, but shall have no
5 vote on any matter coming before the town meeting except in case
6 of a tie vote.

7 Nominations for and election of a moderator shall be as in the
8 case of other elective town officers, and any vacancy in the office
9 may be filled by the representative town meeting members at a
10 town meeting or at a meeting held for that purpose. If a
11 moderator is absent, a moderator pro tempore may be elected by
12 the town meeting members.

1 SECTION 9. *Articles in Warrant*

2 The articles in the warrant for every town meeting, so far as
3 they relate to the election of the moderator, town officers, and the
4 representative town meeting members, and as herein provided, to
5 referenda, and all matters to be acted upon and determined by
6 ballot, shall be so acted upon and determined by the registered
7 voters of the town. All other articles in the warrant for any town
8 meeting shall be acted upon exclusively by representative town
9 meeting members, who shall exercise all legislative powers of the
10 town. Said meeting shall be held at such time and place as shall be
11 set forth by the selectmen in the warrant for the meeting, subject
12 to the referendum provided for by section eleven.

13 Town meetings shall be held semi-annually on the first Monday
14 in April and the third Monday in October. Special town meetings
15 may be called by the board of selectmen or as provided for by
16 section ten of chapter thirty-nine of the Massachusetts General
17 Laws as amended.

18 The selectmen shall insert in the warrant for the semi-annual
19 town meetings all articles submitted to them in writing by ten or
20 more registered voters of the town, and in the warrant for every
21 special town meeting all articles submitted to them in writing by
22 thirty-six representative town meeting members and/or by one
23 hundred registered voters or as provided in section ten of chapter
24 thirty-nine of the Massachusetts General Laws as amended. The
25 town clerk shall notify the town meeting members of the time and
26 place at which representative town meetings are to be held, the
27 notices to be sent by mail at least fourteen days before the
28 meeting. Printed copies of the warrant shall be made available
29 twenty-one days prior to a town meeting. Printed finance
30 committee recommendations shall be made available fourteen

1 SECTION 12. *Open Public Meetings*

2 All meetings held by representative town meeting members for
3 any purpose relative to representative town meeting business shall
4 be open and comply with the laws of the Commonwealth of
5 Massachusetts.