

For the first time, voters can replace the **FTMeeting with the FTReferendum**

- 1994 Voters Adopt Town Charter
- 1999 Voters Reject Town Council Budget Adoption
- 2006 Voters Approve FTM Alternative Question
- 2008 Voters Not Given Opportunity To Vote On Referendum Proposal Prepared By Charter Review Commission
- 2008 Voters Reject Town Council Budget Adoption with Override
- 2008 Voters Approve FTM Being Saturday At 9AM
- 2010 Voters Reject Lowering The % Requirement For A Paper Ballot At The FTM
- ✓ **2011 Voters Can Vote To Replace The FTM With An
All Day Referendum**

Financial Town Meeting Changes Advisory Committee

- ✓ FTMCAC created by resolution of previous Town Council
- ✓ FTMCAC reauthorized by current Town Council
- ✓ FTMCAC held 13 public meetings
- ✓ FTMCAC led extensive outreach campaign
- ✓ FTMCAC considered 102 Recommendations

Proposed Charter Amendment

Ballot Question

Shall the Tiverton Town Charter (Articles II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, XI, XII, and XIII) be amended to implement a Financial Town Referendum in which voters, by private ballot at polling places open all day, vote on budget appropriations, the tax levy, and resolutions?

Reason for Change

The Financial Town Referendum (FTR) establishes a process by which the elected Budget Committee would recommend a budget appropriation (including Municipal and School) and resolutions for placement on the FTR ballot. This amendment also allows the Town Council, School Committee, and Electors via petition to place alternative budget proposals and resolutions on the ballot. Voting is on Tuesday by private ballot at polling places open all day, and a majority is required for adoption.

Features of the Financial Town Referendum (FTR)

- **Democracy:** The people remain the “appropriating body” of the town and retain exclusive authority to decide budgets and taxes. All voters have an equal opportunity to participate, regardless of health issues, child-care issues, work issues, etc.
- **Efficiency:** People can vote by briefly stopping at a polling place at any time during Tuesday.
- **Absentee Ballots:** The FTR provides for the Board of Canvassers to implement absentee ballots so that those out of town, in the hospital, nursing home, etc have the opportunity to vote.
- **Simplicity:** People can advocate and vote for their preferred budget proposal at the Financial Town Hearing (FTH) and FTR without procedural matters and confusion that accompany Robert’s Rules of Order.
- **Certainty:** The Board of Canvassers has jurisdiction over the FTR and using the normal voting process assures an accurate vote count.
- **Access to Ballot:** The Budget Committee recommendation will appear on the ballot. Municipal and School budget requests may optionally appear on the ballot. Electors will also have access to the ballot via Elector Petitions requiring just 50 signatures.
- **Informed Decision:** All budget/tax options on the ballot and the Budget Committee’s recommendations will have been discussed/vetted at a hearing two weeks prior. Voters will have ample opportunity to find out all implications of each plan, and two weeks is long enough for the local news cycle to inform.
- **Confidentiality:** People can vote their conscience on budget and tax matters in privacy as they do in elections.
- **Finality:** The town’s budget and tax-levy will be definitively set by the FTR, unlike the FTM which can go on indefinitely without resolution.
- **Practicality:** As with any election, all of Tiverton’s 11,000 plus voters can vote in the FTR with minimal consideration for facility capacity or comfort.

VOTE FOR ONE = Version 1

NO LATER THAN

January 15	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Joint Budget Workshop to establish general goals and objectives.2) School Committee submits preliminary school department budget to Budget Committee.3) Town Administrator submits preliminary municipal budget (excluding Clerk and Treasurer) to Budget Committee.4) Town Clerk submits preliminary budget to Budget Committee.5) Town Treasurer submits preliminary budget to Budget Committee.
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73 Days Prior to FTR 5-Mar-11	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Town Council approves and submits the final Municipal budget (excluding Clerk and Treasurer) to the Town Administrator.2) Town Council approves and submits the final revenue estimates to the Town Administrator.
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63 Days Prior to FTR 15-Mar-11	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) School Committee approves and submits final School Department budget to Budget Committee.2) Town Administrator submits approved Municipal budget (excluding Clerk and Treasurer) to Budget Committee.3) Town Administrator submits approved revenue estimates to Budget Committee.4) Town Clerk submits final budget to Budget Committee.5) Town Treasurer submits final budget to Budget Committee.
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44 Days Prior to FTR 3-Apr-11	Budget Committee submits Budget Committee Docket, Budget Proposal, and Resolutions to Town Clerk.
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37 Days Prior to FTR 10-Apr-11	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) School Committee submits Optional Budget Proposal and Resolutions to Town Clerk.2) Town Council submits Optional Budget Proposal and Resolutions to Town Clerk.
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35 Days Prior to FTR 12-Apr-11	Elector Petitions for Budget Proposals made available by Town Clerk.
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28 Days Prior to FTR 19-Apr-11	Elector Petitions for Budget and Resolutions due to Town Clerk
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21 Days Prior to FTR 26-Apr-11	Board of Canvassers completes certification of all Elector Petitions
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14 Days Prior to FTR 3-May-11	Financial Town Hearing
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10 Days Prior to FTR 7-May-11	Financial Town Referendum Notice Published
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Third Tuesday In May 17-May-11	FINANCIAL TOWN REFERENDUM
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14 Days After the FTR 31-May-11	Financial Town Referendum Runoff [Only if necessary]
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 **There is no Runoff in the Approve/Reject version = Version 2**

Access To FTR Ballot

- Automatic: Budget Committee
 - Budget Proposal
 - Resolutions
- Optional: School + Municipal
 - Budget Proposal
 - Resolutions
- Optional: Elector Petition
 - Budget Proposal
 - Resolutions
 - 50 Signatures

Budget Proposal Ingredients

- School Budget
- Municipal Budget
- Tax Levy
 - Total Tax Levy, including % increase over prior year
 - Real Property + Tangible Property
 - Motor Vehicle
- [If Needed] A statement of excess levy amount

Note that the tax increase implication
is presented to the voters
BEFORE
their vote is cast.

**Town of Tiverton
Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Budget and Tax Levy**

Vote For One = Version 1

Vote For Only One of the following Budget Proposals

← — 1. The Town shall:
Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for School Department General Operating & Capital Expenses; and,
Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for Municipal Operations & Capital Expenses; and,
Levy a Property Tax not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn
which is an increase to the prior year's certified Net Tax Levy of n.n% and includes a Motor Vehicle Tax Levy not to exceed \$n,nnn,nnn and a Real & Tangible Property Tax Levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn, as recommended by the Budget Committee .

← — 2. The Town Shall:
Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for School Department General Operating & Capital Expenses; and,
Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for Municipal Operations & Capital Expenses; and,
Levy a Property Tax not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn
which is an increase to the prior year's certified Net Tax Levy of n.n% and includes a Motor Vehicle Tax Levy not to exceed \$n,nnn,nnn and a Real & Tangible Property Tax Levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn; and,
Approve an excess levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,
as proposed by the Town Council and School Committee.

← — 3. The Town Shall:
Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for School Department General Operating & Capital Expenses; and,
Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for Municipal Operations & Capital Expenses; and,
Levy a Property Tax not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn
which is an increase to the prior year's certified Net Tax Levy of n.n% and includes a Motor Vehicle Tax Levy not to exceed \$n,nnn,nnn, and a Real & Tangible Property Tax Levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn; and,
as proposed by Elector Petition.

**Town of Tiverton
Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Budget and Tax Levy**

Approve / Reject = Version 2

Approve or Reject the following Budget Proposals

1. The Town shall:

Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for School Department General Operating & Capital Expenses; and,

**Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for Municipal Operations & Capital Expenses; and,
Levy a Property Tax not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn**

**which is an increase to the prior year's certified Net Tax Levy of n.n% and
includes a Motor Vehicle Tax Levy not to exceed \$n,nnn,nnn and**

a Real & Tangible Property Tax Levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn,

as recommended by the Budget Committee .

APPROVE ← —

REJECT ← —

2. The Town Shall:

Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for School Department General Operating & Capital Expenses; and,

**Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for Municipal Operations & Capital Expenses; and,
Levy a Property Tax not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn**

**which is an increase to the prior year's certified Net Tax Levy of n.n% and
includes a Motor Vehicle Tax Levy not to exceed \$n,nnn,nnn and**

a Real & Tangible Property Tax Levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn; and,

Approve an excess levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,

as proposed by the Town Council and School Committee.

APPROVE ← —

REJECT ← —

3. The Town Shall:

Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for School Department General Operating & Capital Expenses; and,

**Appropriate a sum of \$nn,nnn,nnn for Municipal Operations & Capital Expenses; and,
Levy a Property Tax not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn**

**which is an increase to the prior year's certified Net Tax Levy of n.n% and
includes a Motor Vehicle Tax Levy not to exceed \$n,nnn,nnn, and**

a Real & Tangible Property Tax Levy not to exceed \$nn,nnn,nnn; and,

as proposed by Elector Petition.

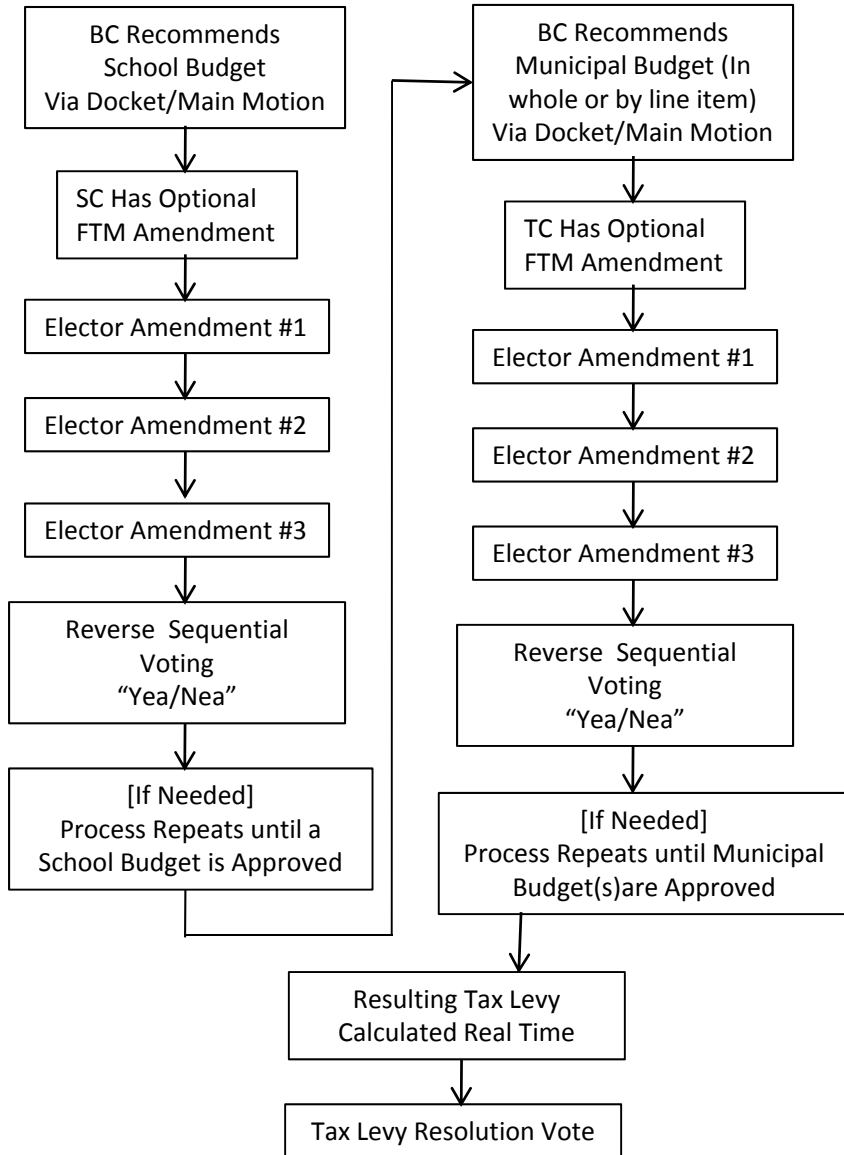
APPROVE ← —

REJECT ← —

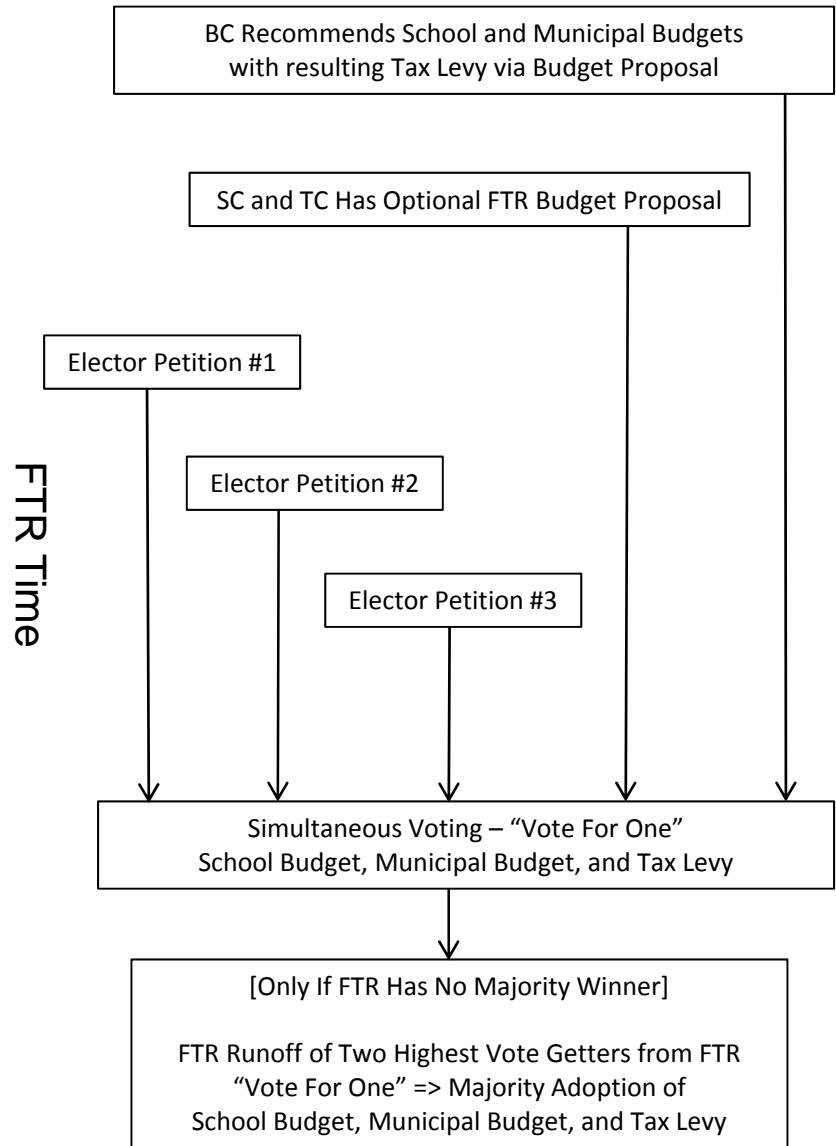
15-Jun-11	FTMCAC Decision Matrix: FTR Ballot Structure and Process				
Method #	Method	Process End Date	Majority Adoption?	End Date Certain?	Notes
1	<p>Yes/No Budget Proposals with no charter prescribed default.</p> <p>If no Budget Proposal passes then create new round of Budget Proposals entries and revote new ballot until one passes.</p>	Indefinite	YES	NO	This is not practical as the charter would be setting up a process that has no end date.
2	<p>Yes/No Budget Proposals with a charter prescribed default.</p> <p>If no Budget Proposal passes then the charter dictates how to set the budgets and the tax levy.</p>	Date of FTR	NO	YES	<p>While this concept is very simple and appealing, it garnered opposition from in 2008 when the CRC implemented it.</p> <p>The primary objection was that voters did not like the chartered dictating what the budget/tax increase would be under any circumstances.</p> <p>There would be no majority approval of the "default" budgets and tax levy implemented.</p>
3	<p>FTMCAC Proposal: Use a "Vote for One" format followed by a "Runoff" if needed.</p> <p>If there are 2 Budget Proposals or less on the FTR ballot then there is a clear majority FTR winner.</p> <p>If there are 3 Budget Proposals or more on the FTR ballot then there still may be a majority FTR winner.</p> <p>If there are 3 Budget Proposals or more on the FTR ballot and there is no majority winner, then the two highest vote getters are "Runoff" two weeks later.</p>	Date of FTR or Two Weeks After FTR	YES	YES	<p>This has the benefit of offering a finite end date and majority approval in all circumstances.</p> <p>There is also the possibility that in many years the runoff would not be needed.</p> <p>In the case of a Runoff, the Vote for One is essentially down selecting to those two Budget Proposals that garner the most public support.</p> <p>This option achieves both goals of a finite end date and majority voter approval.</p>

Vote For One (Version 1) Comparison

FTM



FTR

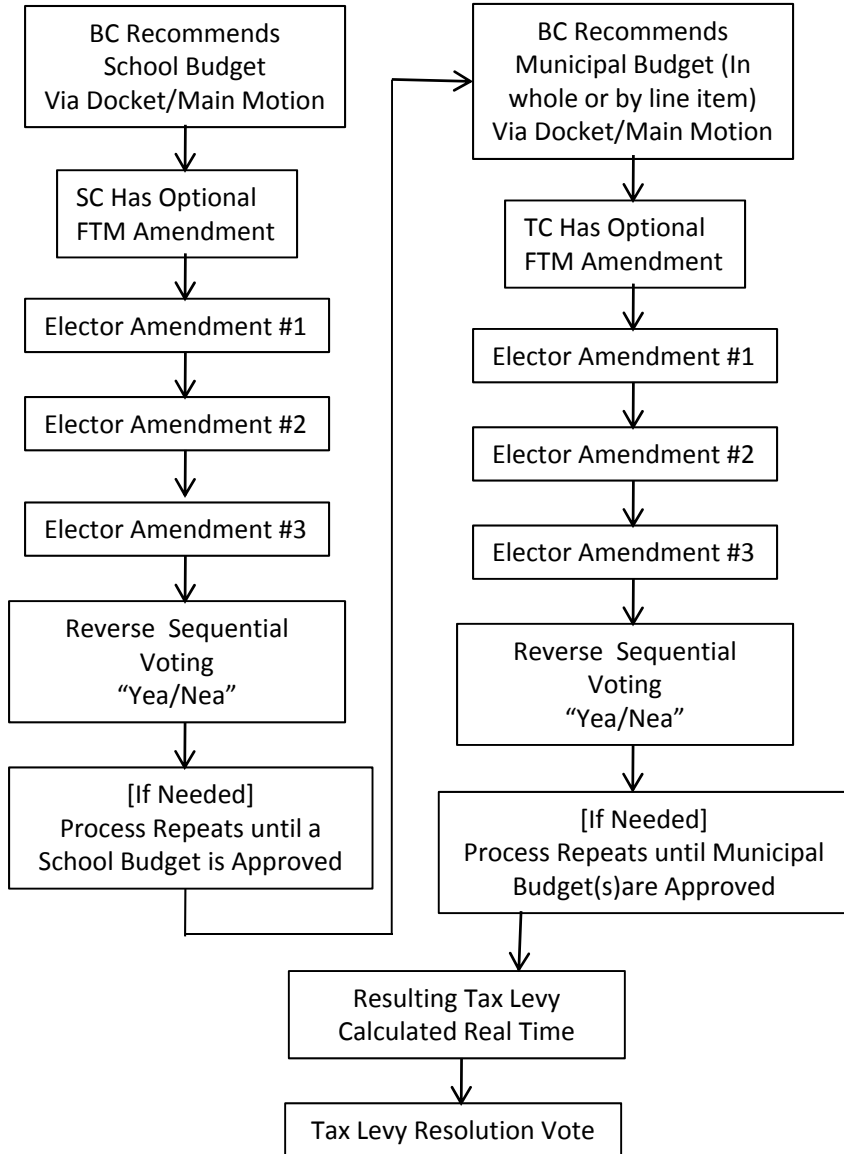


FTM Time

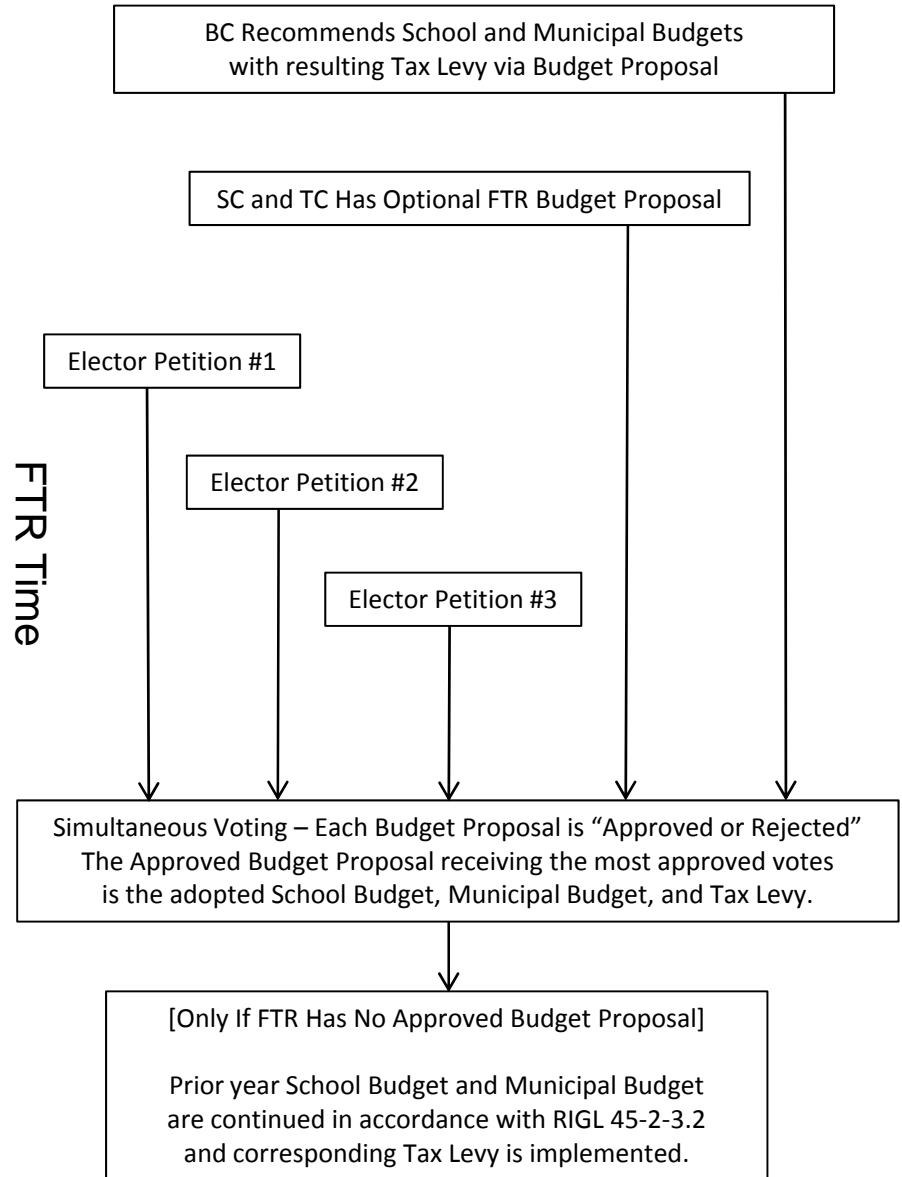
FTR Time

Approve/Reject (Version 2) Comparison

FTM



FTR



FTM Time

FTR Time

FTR Summary

- Budget development process
 - ✓ Current process substantially replicated
 - ✓ Current Balance of Power maintained
- Direct Voter access to ballot
 - ✓ If after all the govt. budgets are published an elector is not satisfied, then he/she is empowered to place their own Budget Proposal on FTR ballot with 50 signatures
- The Financial Town Hearing is two weeks before the FTR
 - ✓ Time to study budget proposals => Informed Voting
 - ✓ Voters will know what the proposed tax increases are before votes are cast
- The FTR is the third Tuesday in May
 - ✓ Voting Privacy
 - ✓ All Day Voting
 - ✓ Absentee ballot access
 - ✓ Less time commitment to vote
 - ✓ Elimination of Roberts Rules
 - ✓ Accuracy of vote count
 - ✓ Finality of town budget and levy