**A note from the members of the Charter Study Commission**

In November 2021, Red Bank overwhelmingly voted Yes to form a Charter Study Commission and elected 5 residents to study the form of government in Red Bank.

From swearing-in to the filing of the report, the Commission has educated itself – and the public – by conducting numerous interviews of current and former Red Bank governing body members, current and former business administrators, current employees, a political scientist, local government experts, and elected officials from other municipalities. The Commission sought and received public comment at meetings, through written submissions, and made to individual commissioners.

The Commission found the Borough form of government is not meeting the needs of Red Bank. The reasons are outlined in the report, with specific recommendations for public consideration, and are located on the Red Bank Borough homepage [www.redbanknj.org](http://www.redbanknj.org).

The Commission’s report recommends:

* A directly elected Mayor with a full vote
* A Professional Manager who runs the day-to-day business of the town
* A 6-member Council serving 4-year staggered terms
* Nonpartisan elections every 2 years
* Runoffs to ensure candidates are elected by true majority

The following outlines a few responses to the most frequently asked questions.

**A change in the Red Bank Charter has nothing to do with the Charter School.**

**Nonpartisan Elections**

Currently, 18 people from each party control which candidates appear on the party line of each major parties’ primary ballot. That means 36 people (Republican and Democrat) select candidates that the voter chooses for mayor and council.

Red Bank has approximately 7748 registered voters, 42.6% Democrats, 35.3% Unaffiliated, 20.8% Republican and 1.3% Other Parties. This means 36.6% of voters do not get a voice in the primaries. Nonpartisan elections are a responsible means of making certain all eligible voters have a more significant voice and a vote.

Nonpartisan elections will allow any candidate to run for mayor or council by filing a petition. Those elected would serve four-year terms, with elections staggered every two years.

This will counteract the outsized influence of party endorsements and favorable ballot positioning (see presentation made by Professor Rubin on the charter study website <https://www.rbcharterstudy.org/> ).

This change in government and electoral process only applies to mayor and council races.

**Month Elections are held**

The first - or as we like to call it - reset election, must be held in May 2023 by state statute. The winners of the Mayoral and Council seats will start their term July 1st .2023. Council may then pass an ordinance to move elections to November. This would reduce election costs and improve voter turnout. If Council does not move the elections to November, Red Bank voters would now have the power of Initiative and Referendum to move the elections to November. If either action is taken, the next election will be held in November 2025.

**Are we still called the Borough of Red Bank**

Yes! We are still called the Borough of Red Bank. We do not have to change street signs, logos, stationary, websites, building codes, etc. Local examples include the Borough of Tinton Falls, Ocean Township, Borough of Bradley Beach, Marlboro Township, and Asbury Park.

**Can we change it again**

Some people are concerned that if the town moves to a non-partisan government it has to remain that way forever. Not true. In 4 years, with the power of Initiative and Referendum, voters can place a question on the ballot to determine if they want to go back to partisan elections. (Asbury Park had a referendum and the voters chose overwhelmingly to remain nonpartisan. Even the local major political parties were against the change.)

As Red Bank residents we all want the town to run smoothly. We want the people we elect to work together with resident interests in mind. We want our concerns to be heard in making important town decisions.

Let’s move Red Bank Forward.

Former Red Bank Charter Study Commissioner

Nancy Facey-Blackwood

Kate Okeson

Ben Forest

Michael Dupont

Mark Taylor