

To see if the Town will vote to petition the General Court to enact a special act for the Towns of Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne as follows or take any other action thereto:

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE “FALLS” SENIOR SERVICES DISTRICT.

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

SECTION 1. It is hereby declared essential for the benefit of the people of the towns of Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne, in order to sustain and protect the welfare, prosperity and their living conditions of their senior populations, that the towns establish a Senior Services District; that accurate, appropriate, and self-sustaining fees and charges for said services be established; that said supplementary services for said municipalities be operated in an efficient and financially self-sustaining manner to further encourage the availability and soundness of senior programming and resources all to the public benefit and good, and to the extent and in the manner provided herein.

SECTION 2. For the purposes specified in section 1, the Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne Selectboard's, may create a senior service district to be known as the “Falls” Senior Service District, as created in accordance with this section, shall be a body politic and corporate and a public instrumentality, hereinafter referred to as “the district.” The district shall be created when this act has been accepted by the Selectboard and the Town Meeting body of each Town. Upon creation, the district shall have, any general or special law notwithstanding, as hereinafter provided and in accordance with this act, the power and authority to provide senior services and programs, construct, operate, and maintain a shared senior center within the geographical area described as follows:

“Within a two mile radius of the Bridge of Flowers in village of Shelburne Falls”

If any municipal entity, once having accepted this act in accordance with the provisions of this section, desires, upon town meeting vote, to withdraw from the district, it may do so with 12 months prior written notice to the board of managers, and in the same manner provided for acceptance of this act; provided, however, that such withdrawing municipal entity shall be obligated to pay its pro rata share on the municipal entity's obligations for the fiscal year in which it withdraws, together with its pro rata share on all bonds or notes which have been approved prior to the date upon which such municipal entity gives notice of its intention to withdraw from the district.

If any additional municipal entity wishes to join the district, the Board of Managers will set a policy to allow additional municipal units.

SECTION 3. The management and control of all property acquired by, and the exercise of all powers, privileges and duties conferred upon the district pursuant to the provisions of this act shall be vested in and exercised by a board of managers, which shall consist of two members appointed by the board of selectmen of each Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne. The district shall be deemed a governmental body pursuant to chapter 30B of the General Laws. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the administrators of the district who are procurement officers for said district shall participate in the Massachusetts public purchasing official certification program conducted by the office of the inspector general in order to earn a Massachusetts public purchasing official certificate. Of the two representatives of each town, one member shall serve for a term of two years, and the other shall serve for a term of three years. Members of the board of managers shall

not be compensated. Members may be removed for cause by their appointing authority. Members of the board of managers, together with its agents, employees, and professional staff shall be indemnified against personal liability by the district. The district shall be deemed a public employer pursuant to [chapter 258](#) of the General Laws. The district acting through its initial board of managers shall promptly adopt by-laws describing by whom and how meetings of the board may be called, notified and conducted; establish rules and regulations for the management of its affairs not inconsistent with this act or any other provision of law; shall appoint for such term as it may determine, a corporate treasurer of the district, and such other officers and employees not specifically provided for in this act as it may deem necessary and proper, and shall fix their compensation. The treasurer shall not be a member of the board of managers, and shall give bond to the district in such an amount as may be approved by said board with a surety company authorized to transact business in the commonwealth as a surety. The district may contract with any of the municipal entities for treasurer services upon terms mutually agreeable to the district and the municipal entity. A majority of appointed managers shall constitute a quorum of the board of managers. Vacancies occurring in the membership of the board of managers from any cause may be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by the appointing authority. No vacancy occurring in the membership of the board of managers shall disqualify the board of managers from taking any action authorized by this act.

The board of managers shall annually prepare and provide to the board of selectmen of the member towns and to each resident of member towns who requests the same, a written report of the operations and programming, the actions of the board of managers, and receipts and expenditures of the district for the preceding fiscal year.

SECTION 4. The district, acting by and through its board of managers, shall have all the rights and powers necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes of this act including, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following rights and powers:

(a) to adopt the by-laws for the regulation of its affairs and the conduct of its business, to promulgate rules, regulations and procedures in connection with the performance of its functions and duties, and to fix, enforce, and collect penalties for the violations thereof;

(b) to adopt an official seal and alter the same at its pleasure;

(c) to maintain an office at such place or places as it may determine;

(d) to apply for, receive, accept, administer, expend, and comply with the conditions, obligations and requirements respecting any grant, gift, loan, including without limitation any grant, gift or loan from agencies of local, state, and federal governments, donation or appropriation of any property or money in aid of the purposes of the district, and to accept contributions of money, property, labor, or other things of value;

(e) to acquire by purchase, lease, lease purchase, sale and lease back, gift, or devise, or to obtain options for the acquisition of, any property, real or personal, easements, water, or water rights, or any interest therein, in the exercise of its powers and the performance of its duties;

(f) to sell, lease, mortgage, exchange, transfer or otherwise dispose of, or grant options for any such purposes with respect to, any property, real or personal, tangible or intangible, or any interest therein;

(g) to enter onto any land within the geographical boundaries of the district to make surveys, borings, soundings and examinations thereof, provided that the district shall insofar as possible restore the land to the same condition as prior to the making of such surveys, borings, soundings, and examinations;

(h) to construct, improve, extend, enlarge, maintain, and repair the senior facilities located within the geographical jurisdiction of the district;

(i) to make contracts of every name and nature, and to execute and deliver all instruments necessary or convenient for carrying out any of its purposes;

(j) to fix, revise, charge, collect and abate fees, rates, rents, delinquency charges and other charges for water and other services, facilities and commodities furnished or supplied by it;

(k) to sue and be sued and to prosecute and defend actions relating to its properties and affairs, provided that only property of the district other than revenues pledged to the payment of bonds or notes shall be subject to attachment or levied upon execution or otherwise;

(l) to from time to time sell such of the property of the district as shall, in the opinion of its board of managers, be no longer useful in the conduct of the affairs of the district;

(m) to employ personnel and to engage architectural, engineering, accounting, management, legal, financial, and environmental consulting and other professional services;

(n) to establish specific construction standards and specifications for buildings and property under control of the district;

(o) to charge a programming and use fee to senior clients who are not residents of the district towns of Ashfield, Buckland or Shelburne and seek to use the services and resources of the district in such amount as the board of managers may determine; and

(p) to do all things necessary, convenient or desirable for carrying out the purposes of this act for the purposes expressly granted or necessarily implied in this act.

SECTION 5. Fees, rates, rents, assessments, and other charges for resources and services, facilities, and commodities furnished or supplied by the district shall be fixed and adjusted by the board of managers so as to provide funds at least sufficient in each fiscal year, together with other revenues and funds of the district, if any, available therefore, to pay the full cost of operation of the district for that fiscal year, including all current expenses; all debt service on bonds or notes of the district; all costs of maintenance, repair and replacement, including the establishment of reasonable overlay funds, stabilization funds, replacement reserves, and other similar funds in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, as determined by the board of managers to be necessary or desirable to be funded as current expenses; and all other amounts which the district may be obligated to pay or provide for by law or by contract. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the board of managers may establish rates, including differential rates, rents, assessments, fees and other charges authorized by this act.

SECTION 6. The district, for the purpose of paying expenses of maintenance and operation not covered by charges for services, grants or other funds, may, any other general or special law notwithstanding, and in accordance with this section, from time to time assess sums against the municipal entities that are members of the district and have accepted this act in accordance with section 2. If the board of managers of the district desires to make such assessments, the board of managers shall determine what sum, in the aggregate, is necessary to pay for expenses of the district not covered by fees charged in accordance with section 5, and shall apportion such amount in accordance with the proportional five-year average usage formula by each municipal entity of the services being supplied by the district. Upon determining such amounts, the board of managers shall certify, to the board of selectmen in the towns of Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne who shall have accepted the provisions of this act in accordance with section 2, that the board of managers have authorized an assessment against such municipal entities, and the amount to be assessed against each municipal entity therefore. The board of selectmen of each municipal entity, shall cause to be placed on the warrant for the next available special or annual town meeting, an article in the form specified by the board of managers, seeking authorization from the town meeting to raise and appropriate such amounts, for payment over to the district. Upon approval by the town meeting, notwithstanding any other general or special law to the contrary, all municipal entities that have been assessed by the board of managers in accordance with this section, shall raise and appropriate, and pay over to the district, such sums as have been assessed. Any sums assessed by the district and raised and appropriated by a municipal entity in accordance with this section shall not be subject to sections 20A, 20B and 21C of chapter 59 of the General Laws.

SECTION 7. The district, for the purpose of paying necessary expenses and liabilities incurred under this act, other than expenses of maintenance and operation, may, any other general or special law notwithstanding, and in accordance with this section, from time to time borrow such additional sums as may be necessary, not exceeding, in the aggregate \$10,000,000 and issue bonds or notes therefore which shall bear on their face the

words "Falls" Senior Services District Loan Act and such other distinguishing designation as may be determined by the board of managers, and each authorized issue shall constitute a separate loan and such loans shall be payable in not more than 30 years from their dates, notwithstanding any other provision of law. The district may borrow from time to time such funds as may be necessary for the purposes of this act in anticipation of revenue without the necessity of complying with this section. Indebtedness incurred under this act shall, except as otherwise provided herein, be subject to chapter 44 of the General Laws.

Prior to the issuance of such bonds or notes, other than borrowings in anticipation of revenue, the board of managers shall apportion the cost of repayment of each bond or note, which cost shall be apportioned to each municipal entity which has accepted this act pursuant to Section 2 in accordance with the proportional five-year average usage of the total amount of services supplied by the district and the equalized property and income values provided by the department of revenue of each such municipal entity.. Upon determining such amounts, the board of managers shall certify, to the board of selectmen in each town who shall have accepted this act in accordance with section 2, that the board of managers have authorized the issuance of such bonds or notes, and the amount to be assessed against each municipal agency therefore. The board of selectmen of each municipal entity, shall cause to be placed in the warrant for the next available special or annual town or district meeting, an article in the form specified by the board of managers, seeking authorization from the town meeting for the district to issue such bonds or notes, and the amount to be assessed therefore against each municipal agency. Upon approval by the town meeting of such municipal entities, the district may issue such bonds or notes as have been approved. Such bonds or notes shall be issued upon the full faith and credit of the district, and of all municipal entities who have accepted this act in accordance with section 2, notwithstanding any other provision of law. If the municipal entities which have accepted this act in accordance with section 2 shall approve the issuance of bonds or notes as set forth herein, all municipal entities which have accepted this act in accordance with section 2 shall, notwithstanding their refusal to approve such bonds or notes at an annual or special district or town meeting, as the case may be, be obligated to pay all sums certified by the district pursuant to this section. The indebtedness on bonds or notes issued by the district and the municipal entities pursuant to this act shall not be subject to [section 10 of chapter 44](#), and sums assessed by the district to repay such bonds or notes shall not be subject to sections 20A, 20B and 21C of [chapter 59](#) of the General Laws.

The fiscal year of the district shall commence July 1 and end June 30.

SECTION 8. In the event that the board of managers desires to terminate the district and dispose of its assets, a majority of the board of managers then existing shall first vote to do so, and give notice of such vote, in writing, to the board of selectmen of each municipal entity which has accepted this act in accordance with section 2. Each municipal entity shall thereafter provide, at its next regular or special election, a ballot vote which shall contain the question "Shall the "Falls" Senior Service District be dissolved, and its assets disposed of in accordance with the vote of its board of managers?". If a majority of municipal entities which have accepted this act vote in the affirmative, the district shall be dissolved, but not otherwise. In the event of such affirmative vote, the board of managers shall be empowered to dispose of the assets of the district in accordance with the General Laws.

In the event the board of managers desires to amend the district agreement it shall be done in the same manner in which the agreement was created.....

SECTION 9. If the district authorized by section 2 is not created in the manner described in said section 2 within ten years from the effective date of this act, then this act shall be without further legal effect.

SECTION 10. This act shall take effect upon its passage.