

CITY OF STAMFORD 19TH CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION CITY DEPARTMENTS COMMITTEE

Clemon Williams, Chair

Members

Frances Lane

Thomas Lombardo

JR McMullen

Anthony Pramberger

AGENDA

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

7:00pm

This meeting will be conducted remotely and can be accessed by computer, tablet or smartphone at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82748228092> or at www.zoom.com – Webinar ID 827 4822 8092 or by telephone at 1-646-558-8656 – Webinar ID 827 4822 8092

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Discussion with Town Clerk, Lyda Ruijter

a. **Charter Sec. C2-10-7. – Records** provides:

The Board of Representatives shall appoint a Clerk who shall keep a record of the resolutions and other proceedings of such Board and shall have custody of its correspondence, files, and other records. **When ordered by the Board, such records shall be filed with the Town and City Clerk and open for public inspection at reasonable hours.**

The City Departments Committee wants to know what steps are being taken to digitize City records to expand public access to these records, including (but not limited to) the voting records of elected officials. Also, we would like to know what steps are being taken to make these records available to citizens with disabilities.

b. Charge number 5 deals with **Charter Sec. C4-10-1 – Responsibilities and Duties of the Town and City Clerk** which provides:

The Town and City Clerk shall perform those duties which are imposed upon Town Clerks by law, and shall also be the Registrar of Births, Marriages, and Deaths and shall exercise all the powers and discharge all the duties conferred and imposed upon such registrars by law.

The City Departments Committee wants to know if you feel there is a need for a deputy Town Clerk given the breadth of the Town Clerk's responsibilities.

- c. Charge 5b asked the City Departments Committee to address the need of archiving City records. The Committee would like to know what is being done to archive City records and whether you have sufficient staff to address this issue.
 - d. Finally, we would like to know if you currently discharge the duties of the Town Clerk as set forth in the attached Connecticut OLR Research Report prepared by Kristin Sullivan. (See Attachment).
- 4. Review grid on Charter Issues for accuracy and recommendation to the full Charter Review Commission
 - 5. New Business
 - 6. Adjournment

Topic:

ELECTIONS (GENERAL); PUBLIC RECORDS; MUNICIPAL FINANCE; MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS/EMPLOYEES; APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE; VITAL STATISTICS; LICENSE FEE;

Location:

MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES;



April 26, 2006

2006-R-0297

TOWN CLERKS: DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND FEE COLLECTION

By: Kristin Sullivan, Associate Analyst

You asked for (1) town clerks' duties and responsibilities and (2) towns where town clerks keep the fees they collect. For those town clerks who keep the fees, you want to know what procedure they follow to report that money.

SUMMARY

Each Connecticut town elects a town clerk at its regular municipal election, unless otherwise provided by local charter, ordinance, or resolution, for a term between two and six years (CGS §§ 7-193 (b), 9-189, and 9-189a). According to the Connecticut Town Clerks Association (CTCA), 133 of Connecticut's 169 town clerks are elected and 36 are appointed. Of those who are elected, roughly 12 serve a four-year term and the remainder served a two-year term. CTCA was unaware of any town clerks who serve for six years.

State and local laws govern town clerks' duties and responsibilities. Generally, they are considered the local government official in charge of public records, vital statistics, and licensing. They also play a significant role in election procedures.

State law provides that town clerks are paid fees for performing their duties and other compensation for services such as enrolling electors (CGS §§ 7-34a and 9-195). However, it allows a town to provide through ordinance that its clerk instead receive a salary (CGS §7-34b).

According to CTCA, clerks keep the fees they collect in only seven towns: Beacon Falls, Bethlehem, Derby, Hampton, North Canaan, Thomaston, and Union. We contacted the clerks in most of these towns and found that the procedure they follow for reporting the fees is generally the same. State law requires them to provide

an annual accounting to their local legislative body listing fees and any other compensation (CGS § 7-34b (a)). In practice, we found that most (1) deposit their fees in accordance with local law, (2) report them to the legislative body in an itemized accounting on a weekly or monthly basis, and (3) subsequently receive the amount collected as part of their (weekly or monthly) paycheck. Such accountings are considered public records under the Freedom of Information Act.

If a town clerk receives a salary in lieu of fees and other compensation, the fees he collects belong to the town and he must deposit them accordingly.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Town clerks are public information officers who serve as liaisons between local government and the public. They are responsible for (1) public records, (2) vital statistics, and (3) licensing. They have certain duties in connection with elections; registrars of voters are responsible for others. Table 1 provides an overview of their major responsibilities under each area.

TABLE 1: TOWN CLERKS' DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Area	Duties and Responsibilities
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<p>Public Records</p> <p>(CGS § 7-23 et seq. and various other citations in Titles 22a, 26, 47, and 49, among others)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain and provide access to public records as required by state law and regulations 2. Provide certified copies of public records 3. Record, index, and preserve municipal land records, surveys, and maps 4. Post meeting notices for local governmental bodies 5. Maintain official records of charters, ordinances, oaths, appointments, and petitions 6. Maintain public meeting minutes, agendas, and notices 7. Record trade names and military discharges 8. Issue certificates of authority to justices of the peace, notary publics, and Superior Court commissioners 9. Maintain official copies of town budgets, audits, and annual reports 10. Administer the oath of office to local elected and appointed officials
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Area	Duties and Responsibilities
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<p>Registrars of Vital Statistics</p> <p>(CGS §§ 7-36 et seq., 19a-42, 19a-44, 19a-322, and 19a-323, among others)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Register and maintain original birth, marriage, civil union, death, and fetal death records 2. Issue certified copies of vital statistic records 3. Conduct or assist with genealogical research for members of certified genealogical societies
<p>Licensing</p> <p>(CGS §§ 21-35d, 22-338, 22-339, 26-28, 26-30, and 26-36, among others)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issue state marriage, liquor, hunting, fishing, dog, and trapping licenses, among others 2. Issue passport applications and citizen verifications 3. Issue burial, cremation, and removal permits
<p>Elections</p> <p>(CGS § 9-6 et seq.)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend bi-annual conferences hosted by the secretary of the state to discuss election laws, procedures, or related matters 2. Examine and approve applications for admission as an elector 3. Distribute campaign finance forms upon request 4. Act as filing repository for municipal office candidates' campaign finance statements 5. Notify the secretary of the state of campaign finance statement filing violations 6. Certify nominating petitions 7. Issue absentee ballot applications, direct the preparation of absentee ballots, and maintain permanent absentee ballot records 8. Compile election results and forward them to the Office of the Secretary of the State 9. Submit up-to-date voting district maps and reports on the number of registered and party-enrolled voters to the secretary of the state 10. Keep custody of voting machine keys and other election materials 11. Prepare the explanatory text for a local referendum question

KS:dw