

BYLAWS

MISSOURI CITY CLERKS AND FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION EASTERN DIVISION

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the association shall be "MISSOURI CITY CLERKS AND FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION, EASTERN DIVISION" and is hereinafter referred to as the "Association."

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Association shall be to promote the general welfare of municipalities and to strive toward ever improving administrative techniques used in the operation of municipal government by:

1. Promoting and developing the Association as an agency for the professional benefit of Municipal Clerks, Deputy/Assistant City Clerks, Finance Officers, and/or other officials or persons with the same or similar powers and duties;
2. Promoting a better understanding by the office holder of his/her official duties, obligations and responsibilities;
3. Establishing, when possible, uniform methods of procedure and encouraging the use of such procedures in the municipalities of Eastern Missouri and surrounding municipalities;
4. Promoting mutual cooperation and assistance between member and non-member Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers of Missouri CCFOA, Eastern Division and other municipalities;
5. Urging Association members to be active participants in this Association, the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association, and the International Institute of Municipal Clerks;
6. Promoting the cause of good government in municipalities by performing services which may best meet the interest and needs of the public; and
7. Promoting good public relations throughout Eastern Missouri to better communicate the needs of municipalities to the general public.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

A. Type of Membership and Eligibility:

The following types of Association membership and eligibility requirements are hereby established:

1. ACTIVE MEMBER

Municipal Clerks, Deputy Clerks, Finance Officers, and such other municipal officials or other persons with the same or similar powers or duties who are actively affiliated with a municipality located in Eastern Missouri and actively participating in the meetings and activities of this association.

2. ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Representatives of businesses, such as, public utility corporations, educational institutions, and governmental agencies interested in the welfare of this association.

3. LIFE MEMBER

City Clerks, Finance Officers, and Deputies/Assistants who served in that capacity at least ten (10) years and held Active Membership at the time of their retirement from their respective municipalities.

4. HONORARY MEMBER

Any individual worthy of such recognition.

5. AFFILIATE MEMBER

Former Municipal Clerks, Finance Officers, Deputies/Assistants, and such other municipal officials who no longer hold office but desire to maintain an interest in the Association.

B. Acceptance and Classification of Membership:

1. All applications for membership shall be submitted to the Treasurer who shall determine the applicant's membership classification and, upon verification, shall forward the applicant's name to the Secretary and the Chairman of the Membership Committee.
2. The Chairman of the Membership Committee, or duly authorized representative, shall, at the next regular meeting of the Association, introduce the new member and advise the membership of the new member's classification.
3. A proposal to award an Honorary Membership shall be:
 - a. Reviewed by the Board of Directors;
 - b. The President or a duly authorized representative shall, at a regular meeting of the organization, submit the name of the candidate for Honorary Membership to the members present for consideration; and
 - c. The presiding officer at the meeting shall then call upon the members present to vote on the proposed membership.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

The officers of the Association shall be: the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past President, and three (3) Directors. The Vice-President is the President-Elect for the forthcoming year and shall succeed to the Presidency provided that the Vice-President has fulfilled the obligations of that office during the previous year. The officers and three directors are known as the Board of Directors. Only persons holding Active membership shall be eligible to hold office in the Association or to serve on the Board of Directors.

The term of office of members of the Board of Directors shall be as follows:
One-year terms for the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President. Three-year terms for Directors, one member to be elected each year.

ARTICLE V. ELECTION

Election of officers shall take place during the regular Association meeting held in May. Terms of office of elected members become effective July 1st following the election. Vacancies occurring during a member's term shall be filled by holding a special election at a regular Association meeting no later than ninety (90) days after the vacancy occurs.

ARTICLE VI. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT – The President shall:

Preside at all meetings of the Association.

Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and provide oral report at the next regularly scheduled Division meeting.

Exercise and direct all administrative activities of the Association.

Appoint members to standing and special committee.

Except as otherwise provided, the president shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Provide compensation from the Treasury of \$140.00 to the Secretary and \$140.00 to the Treasurer at the end of their term.

In January of every even-numbered year, the President shall hold an election to select a member to serve as Eastern Division Director on the MoCCFOA Eastern Division Board of Directors.

Said association will pay for food at two (2) Board of Directors meetings per year. If additional meetings are called, meals will not be provided by said association.

VICE PRESIDENT – The Vice President (President Elect) shall:

Perform any administrative duties assigned by the President.

In the absence of the President, preside at the meetings and perform the duties of the President.

Chair the Education Committee and schedule programs of interest based upon the committee recommendations for each regular meeting of the Association.

Automatically become President for the unexpired term in the event the President is unable to serve.

Ascend to the position of President effective July 1, following installation in the office, provided he/she fulfilled the obligations of vice president during the previous year.

SECRETARY – The Secretary shall:

Keep proper records of all administrative actions of the Association.

Maintain rosters on membership and committee appointments.

Prepare the minutes of all Association meetings.

Distribute meeting notices, copies of the minutes and treasurer's report to all members no later than ten (10) days prior to each regular meeting.

An email notification of meeting date, location, time and topic should be sent out on the 1st day of the month (excluding weekends) to members.

In the event that the meeting date is changed, as designated by the Board of Directors, the secretary shall provide written notice to the membership at least 14 days prior to that date.

Handle all Association correspondence and perform other duties that may pertain to the office.

Arrange for meeting places for the regular monthly meetings.

In the absence of the President and President Elect, call the meeting to order and proceed with the election of a chairman *pro-tempore*.

TREASURER – The Treasurer shall:

Issue invoices and collect annual membership dues and special assessments.

Have custody of and handle all banking transactions for all Association funds.

Collect all monies at monthly meeting and makes a deposit within 7 business days following said meeting.

Pay all properly approved association bills and invoices.

Prepare monthly financial reports of all income and expenditures to be duplicated and distributed to the members prior to each regular meeting of the Association. In the event of the treasurer's absence, the secretary shall reconcile the regular meeting transactions and prepare the monthly financial report.

Provide the Audit Committee with current and complete July 1st-June 30th financial records by July 15th of each year.

Provide membership cards, if requested, to each member upon payment of dues. Determine applicant's membership classification and notify the Secretary and Membership Committee Chairman.

DIRECTORS – The Directors shall:

Participate in all Board of Directors meetings for the purpose of reviewing committee appointments, establishing organization goals and projects, and evaluating accomplishments.

Serve on the Budget Oversight Committee.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

REGULAR MEETINGS: The regular meeting of this Association shall be held on the third Thursday of each calendar month. The meeting date may be changed as designated by the Board of Directors as necessary, provided written notice is sent to the membership at least 14 days prior to that date.

SPECIAL MEETINGS: Special Meetings of the Association may be called by the President whenever he/she deems the meetings to be necessary and advisable, or by any five members of the Board of Directors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS: Meetings of the Board of Directors are to be held at the call of the President at a place designated by the President, at least twice yearly for the following purposes:

Review committee appointments

Establish organization goals and projects

Evaluate accomplishments

Review the organization's finances

Develop the annual budget which shall be presented to the general membership for consideration in May for the following fiscal year.

Discuss monthly meeting programs for upcoming year.

ARTICLE VIII. QUORUM

Twenty (20) active members, including at least two (2) officers, shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the purpose of transacting business at regular and special meetings.

ARTICLE IX. VOTING PRIVILEGES

VOTE: Each Active member who is present at a regular or special meeting shall have one vote.

PASSAGE/DEFEAT: Passage or defeat of a motion placed before the members present at a regular or special meeting shall be by majority vote. In case of a tie, the Presiding Officer shall cast the deciding vote. Passage or defeat of a motion amending or adopting new Association Bylaws shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article XIV.

ARTICLE X. RULES OF ORDER

The latest edition of *“Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised”* shall govern procedures to be followed during the course of regular and special meetings. In the event of a conflict between these Bylaws and the Rules of Order, the Bylaws shall take precedence.

ARTICLE XI. DUES

The fiscal and membership year of the Association shall be July 1 through June 30. Dues shall be payable by July 1 of each year in the amount set forth herein:

Active Member: Based upon the population of the member’s municipality, as established by the latest Federal Census taken, the annual dues shall be as follows:

POPULATION AMOUNT OF DUES

Cities 5,000 and under	\$10.00
Cities 5,001 to 10,000	\$20.00
Cities 10,001 and over	\$30.00
Additional members from a municipality	\$ 5.00

Affiliate Member: The annual dues shall be ten dollars (\$10.00) per year.

Associate Member: The annual dues shall be fifty dollars (\$50.00) per year for each business, corporation, or agency.

Life/Retiree Member: No annual dues shall be assessed. Honorary Member: No annual dues shall be assessed.

ARTICLE XII. ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

ORDER OF BUSINESS: The order of business for meetings of the Association shall be as follows:

REGULAR MEETINGS:

- Roll Call
- Program Presentation
- Approval of Minutes
- Financial Report
- Unfinished Business (if any)
- Committee Reports
- New Business
- Adjourn

SPECIAL MEETINGS:

Roll Call
Necessary Business
Adjourn

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the regular and special meetings shall be presented to the members for approval at the next succeeding regular meeting. Providing that copies of the minutes to be approved were mailed to the membership at least ten (10) calendar days prior to a scheduled meeting, the Minutes may be presented to the membership without a reading; however, if copies are not provided, then the Minutes shall be read in full before the membership will vote on its approval.

ARTICLE XIII. STANDING COMMITTEES

ESTABLISHED: The following standing committees are hereby established:

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Arrange for a yearly audit on all financial transactions for the Association. In case of change in the Treasurer's position, an audit must be made.
A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

BUDGET OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Shall meet as needed but at least twice a year, to review expenditures and recommend budget adjustments as needed. The Budget Oversight Committee shall consist of the three Directors.
A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

BYLAWS COMMITTEE

Yearly review the Bylaws for the Association.
Recommend any necessary changes.
A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Review and plan for speakers at each regular meeting of the Association.
Work with the Chair (Vice President) to secure speakers for the monthly meetings. Chair will be responsible for making contact with and scheduling all speakers agreed upon by the committee.
Said committee shall meet at least twice per year.
A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

HISTORIAN COMMITTEE

Responsible for all historical records for the Association.

Obtain any newspaper articles regarding the organization and/or its members in a scrapbook.

Retain past minutes and records of the organization.

A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

HOLIDAY PARTY COMMITTEE

This committee should be one of the first chosen due to the planning involved.

Plan annual Holiday Party.

Prepare invitations and send electronic invitations to Mayors and Clerks.

The party is always held on the normal meeting date of the second Thursday in the month of December, unless otherwise agreed upon.

A budget shall be established annually for the party by the Executive Board.

The budget should include, but not be limited to, the following:

Invitations

Table Favors

Table Centerpieces Miscellaneous

Meal

The committee must also organize attendance prizes, which may be solicited from members and corporate members. Gifts may also be purchased, budget permitting, at the approval of the Executive Board.

An annual written report should be submitted to the Executive Board after the party each year. The report should include general information and costs regarding the party.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Welcome any guests and new members at each meeting.

If anyone is attending the meeting alone, invite them to join members of this committee at their table.

Greet members at meetings.

The hospitality committee is responsible for coordinating the annual spring institute hospitality event as designated by the State association.

A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

INSTALLATION COMMITTEE

A budget should be established annually for the Installation Luncheon by the Officers and the Board of Directors.

Select site for the June luncheon.

Make all arrangements for the luncheon.

Arrange for an appropriate plaque and gift for the retiring President

Chairman should have all of the necessary plaques and oaths prepared for the new officers.

Order centerpiece for head table.

A report should be submitted to the officers and the board of directors each year that itemizes the general information regarding the luncheon and the costs.

A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Obtain a current list of the members. Invite new clerks to attend the meetings.

The Chairman of the Membership Committee or duly authorized representative shall, at a regular meeting of the Association, introduce the new and advise the membership of the applicant's membership classification.

A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The immediate past president shall serve as chairman of this committee, along with at least one other past president and three members at large.

Statement of Interest Forms shall be submitted no later than April 15 of each year. The Committee must review the Statement of Interest Forms submitted, determine if the applicant is qualified, and nominate new officers and new members for the Board of Directors for the organization in accordance with the Bylaws. In the event of no Statement of Interest Forms are received by the deadline, the nomination(s) shall be made at the sole discretion of said Committee. The Committee shall notify all applicants of the status of their Statement of Interest Form after the Nominating Committee has determined their recommendation.

A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Send articles regarding the Association and its members to various local papers. Obtain pictures to go with the articles, if necessary.

Send news items of interest to the State Organization for the newsletter. Retain current and past photo albums.

Be responsible for taking photos at meetings or special events. Maintain a division email list.

Maintain a website linked to the State MOCCFOA site.

A written report must be submitted annually to the President.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Oversee all Scholarship programs.

Make available to members of Eastern Division guidelines and forms for the following scholarships:

Spring Institute First Time Attendee Scholarship Spring Institute Financial Aid Scholarship Sharon Fagala Memorial Scholarship

Write letter to Board in November requesting funds for Sharon Fagala Memorial Scholarship.

Chairman shall verify with the State Scholarship Committee, the Eastern Division recipients of MoCCFOA (State Association) scholarships.

Review all applications and make recommendations to Board on determination of scholarship winners after December 31 application deadline.

After scholarships are granted the applicants should be notified. An annual written report must be submitted to the President.

CHAIRMAN: The President shall designate the Chairman of each committee.

MEETINGS: The Chairman shall be responsible for calling meetings and directing committee activity.

REPORTS: Committee reports shall be made as called for by the President. The reports may be oral or written, at the President's discretion.

Committee Members shall be members of the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association-Eastern Division. No committee shall consist of less than two members.

ARTICLE XIV. REVISION OF BY-LAWS

PROPOSED REVISIONS: New Association Bylaws, changes, or amendments may be presented and read in full at a regular meeting. Within thirty (30) calendar days of such presentation, the Secretary shall mail a copy of the proposed revision to each member of the Association (electronic mailing is acceptable). Copies of the old Bylaws, or portions thereof, shall also be distributed to each member. At the next regular meeting following the formal presentation, the proposed change in the Bylaws shall be voted upon. A TWO THIRDS (2/3) MAJORITY vote of all active members present shall be necessary for the adoption of any change affecting the Association Bylaws. Said voting shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article IX.

ARTICLE XV. FLOWERS, PLANTS, GIFTS OR PLAQUES

Flowers/Plants should be sent in the event of serious or life-threatening illness to any member of the Organization who has attended at least five of the monthly meetings within the past twelve months.

Flowers/Plants/Donations should be sent to the family in the event of the member's death, or in the event of the spouse's death.

A gift or plaque shall be given to any active member who retires after being a member of this organization for at least ten years. Other retirement/recognition gifts or plaques may also be given at the discretion of a majority of the Board of Directors.

All duties shall be performed by the treasurer.

STANDING RULES

RULE #1: Expenses for President and President-Elect

If the President and President-Elect (when acting in the absence of the President) attends the Spring Institute the MoCCFOA-Eastern Division will pay the registration fee; the published conference rate for the hotel if not paid by the President's or President-Elect's (when acting in the absence of the President) City; meals (minus the cost of the meals included with the registration fee); and mileage will be paid at the prevailing IRS per mile rate. Expense receipts shall be submitted to the Treasurer for review and payment and the amount shall not exceed \$500.00.

RULE #2: Additions and Amendments

Additions and amendments to these Standing Rules may be made by a majority vote of the membership in attendance at a regular meeting, previous notice has been given. Without previous notice a 2/3 affirmative vote of members present is required.

RULE #3: Payment of Scholarships

The Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division will reimburse scholarship recipients for approved expenditures. Scholarship recipients shall submit a Request for Reimbursement and provide conference receipts to the Treasurer no later than 15 days from the close of the conference or completion of training in order to be reimbursed. Any receipts submitted for reimbursement after 15 days from the close of the conference or completion of training will not be considered for payment.

RULE #4: Scholarships

First consideration will be given to applicants who actively participate in the meetings and activities of the MoCCFOA-Eastern Division. Scholarship recipient may receive only one Eastern Division scholarship per conference.

RULE #5: Additional Funds Available

If by January 1st of each year, the Eastern Division account balance is in excess of \$9,000 or more, and additional key note projects have not been earmarked, the Scholarship Committee shall award one additional winner per scholarship, if needed, following the same eligibility requirements. These additional winners should be listed

separately and voted for approval by the membership.

The Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division Scholarships are as follows:

Financial Aid Scholarship for MoCCFOA Eastern Division Spring Institute:

The Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division will award one Scholarship annually to a qualifying member of the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division. The purpose of the scholarship is to provide financial assistance for those members who would not otherwise be reimbursed by their city. The scholarship will include payment of the registration fee and hotel accommodations for a maximum of three nights for the attendance at the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Spring Institute. Note: Registration for the Master Academy and/or hotel accommodations prior to the Master Academy are not eligible expenses.

Eligibility:

Applicant must be a member in good standing of the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division.

Applicant must be employed by a municipality as a City Clerk or similar position.

Applicant must demonstrate financial need.

An applicant actively pursuing any level of his/her IIMC or Missouri certification will be considered before those who are already fully certified.

If applicant has 120 hours, IIMC or Missouri certification financial aid shall not be awarded in two successive years.

New members for less than one year prior to application submittal deadline are eligible.

All other applicants must have attended at least four meetings in the twelve months prior to the application deadline and are active participants on at least one committee.

For the purposes of obtaining a scholarship, the Annual Holiday Party in December will not be considered in the applicant's attendance record, as no business is conducted and no action is taken at this meeting.

Guidelines:

Applicant must submit the application to the Scholarship Committee no later than December 31.

Applicant must submit a letter from the Mayor, City Manager, City Administrator or City Council expressing support of the application and indicating a commitment to grant time off to attend the Spring Institute.

Applicant must submit a statement giving reasons why attendance at the Spring Institute would be important to the applicant's employment.

First priority on granting scholarships will be given to clerks pursuing their IIMC or Missouri certification, and only if they were not granted a scholarship the previous year.

Applications will include the statement "have you received a scholarship in previous years and please list years received".

Spring Institute First-Time Attendee Scholarship:

The Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division will award one Scholarship annually to a qualifying member of the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division who has not attended the Spring Institute previously. The purpose of the Scholarship is to provide financial assistance for those members who would not otherwise be reimbursed by their City. The Scholarship will include payment of the registration fee and hotel accommodations for a maximum of three nights for attendance at the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Spring Institute. Note: Registration for the Master Academy and/or hotel accommodations prior to the Master Academy are not eligible expenses.

Eligibility:

Applicant must be a member in good standing of the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division.

Applicant must not have attended a Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Spring Institute previously.

Applicant must be employed by a municipality as a City Clerk or similar position.

Applicant must demonstrate financial need.

Guidelines:

Applicant must submit the application to the Scholarship Committee no later than December 31.

Applicant must submit a letter from the Mayor, City Manager, City Administrator or City Council expressing support of the application and indicating a commitment to grant time off to attend the Spring Institute.

Applicant must submit a statement giving reasons why attendance at the Spring Institute would be important to the applicant's employment.

Sharon Faqala Memorial Scholarship:

The Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division will award one scholarship in memory of Sharon Faqala, former City Clerk of the City of Normandy, on an annual basis to a qualifying member of the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division. The purpose of the scholarship is to provide financial assistance for those members who would not otherwise be reimbursed by their city. The amount of the scholarship will be determined on an annual basis at the discretion of the Board of Directors based on organizational funds available, in an amount not to exceed \$500.00. The scholarship is to be used for payment of education and/or professional development, including expenses directly related to the training, while working towards IIMC or Missouri certification to include, but not limited to, the following:

Spring Institute Advanced Academy Regional Institutes

Missouri Municipal League International Institute of Municipal Clerks

The Sharon Fagala Memorial Scholarship may be used to supplement a scholarship received from the State Association or toward a combination of educational training and/or professional development but must be used within 12 months of being awarded.

Eligibility:

Applicant must be a member in good standing of the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division.

Applicant must be employed by a municipality as a City Clerk or similar position at least two continuous years.

Applicant must demonstrate financial need.

An applicant actively pursuing any level of his/her IIMC or Missouri certification will be considered before those who are already fully certified.

If applicant has 120 hours, IIMC or Missouri certification, financial aid shall not be awarded in two successive years.

New members for less than one year prior to application submittal deadline are eligible.

All other applicants must have attended at least four meetings in the twelve months prior to the application deadline and are active participants on at least one committee.

For the purposes of obtaining a scholarship, the Annual Holiday Party in December will not be considered in the applicant's attendance record, as no business is conducted and no action is taken at this meeting.

Guidelines:

Applicant must submit the attached application to the Scholarship Committee no later than December 31.

Applicant must submit a letter from the Mayor, City Manager, City Administrator or City Council expressing support of the application and indicating a commitment to grant time off to attend one of the above educational opportunities.

Applicant must submit a statement outlining the status of their certification and indicating the progress which will be realized toward their certification by attendance at the educational institute.

First priority on granting scholarships will be given to clerks pursuing their IIMC or Missouri certification, and only if they were not granted a scholarship the previous year.

Applications will include the statement "have you received a scholarship in previous years and please list years received".

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association Eastern Division

The purpose of the Association shall be to promote the general welfare of municipalities and to strive towards ever improving administrative techniques used in the operation of municipal government by:

Promoting and developing the Association as an agency for the vocational benefit of Municipal Clerks, Finance Officers, and/or other officials or persons with the same or similar powers and duties;

Promoting a better understanding by the office holder of his/her official duties, obligations and responsibilities;

Establishing, when possible, uniform methods of procedures and encouraging the use of such procedures in the municipalities of Eastern Missouri and surrounding counties;

Promoting mutual cooperation and assistance between member and non-member Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers or Missouri CCFOA, Eastern Division and surrounding counties;

Urging Association members to be active participants in this Association, the Missouri City Clerks and Finance Officers Association, and the International Institute of Municipal Clerks;

Promoting the cause of good government in municipalities by performing services which may best meet the interest and needs of the public; and

Promoting good public relations throughout Eastern Missouri to better communicate the needs of municipalities to the general public.

HISTORY OF THE MUNICIPAL CLERK

Early Beginnings

The Municipal Clerk is the oldest of public servants in local government, along with the tax collector. The profession traces back before Biblical times. For example, the modern Hebrew translation of Town Clerk is “Mazkir Ha’ir” which literally translated, means city or town. {Reminder: “The early keepers of archives were often called Remembrancers:” and before writing came into use, their memory served as the public record.}

Ancient Greece had a city secretary who read official documents publicly. At the opening of a meeting, one of his first duties was to decree a curse upon anyone who should seek to deceive the people.

St. Paul and his followers during his missionary work in Persia (now Western Turkey) owed their safety to the action of a town clerk. As related in Acts 19:22-41, written in A.D. 58, the artisans of Ephesus who made the idols of the time, feared the effect of Paul’s missionary work on their trade. They incited a mob to seize two of Paul’s followers. The town clerk however, spoke out against this action and insisted that charges laid against these men had to be settled in the proper manner and before the proper authorities. There was no justification for riotous conduct. With that, he dispersed the crowd.

Reportedly, the regency line of France descends from the office of the Clerk! According to James Bryce in his book "The Holy Roman Empire," there is a direct link between the position of Mayor of the Palace, a clerical post created by the Merovingian Kings of France, and all subsequent Kings of France.

In the eighth century, the Frankish Kings of France depended on the Mayor of the Palace to perform all manner of clerical and administrative tasks for the King including collecting taxes and fees, publishing documents, keeping state records and assisting in the enforcement of the King's justice.

In 751, the Merovingian King, Childeric, was deposed and his assistant, Pippin, the Mayor of the Palace, became not only the monarch of France but was simultaneously created a Patrician of Rome by Pope Gregory the Third.

Pippin was, in turn, father of the great Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman Emperor and founder of the Carolingian Dynasty of Europe on High, which in successive generations, produced the Kings of France, as well as the Emperors of Germany and Austria.

Development of England

The title "Clerk" as we know it, developed from the Latin clericus. During the Middle Ages, when scholarship and writing were limited to the clergy, "clerk" came to mean a scholar, especially one who could read, write, and thus serve as notary, secretary, accountant, and recorder.

In ancient England, the township (surrounded by its hedge or "tun") and the borough (an outpost fortified with a wall) developed a strong system of democratic local government. And one of the first officials these freemen elected was the "Clarke."

The beginning of the office of city clerk in England can be traced back to 1272 A.D. in the history of the Corporation of Old London. The "Remembrancer" was called upon to remind the councilors (members of the council) what had transpired at their previous meetings, since the meetings of the early councils were not recorded in written minutes.

In 1354, the Mayor of Nottingham appointed the Clarke and provided for his remuneration. In 1439, Symkyn Birches was awarded the office of "Toun Clerk" in another community for the rest of his life. In 1477 Thomas Carton, a town clerk, was the first English printer, and served as diplomat for the King. In 1485, Nichols Lancaster, the Clarke, became Mayor of York.

In the 1500's in England, there were not only the "Town Clarke", but also the Clerc Comptroller of the King's Honorable Household." In 1603, there was a "Clarke General of the Armie." Indeed, King Henry the Eighth had a "Clarke of the Spicery," and King Charles had his "Clarke of the Robes."

Perhaps the strongest statement of the unique position occupied by the Municipal Clerk is by an English Court in the Middle Ages ruling in the case. Hurlle-Hobbs ex parte Riley and another. Concerning this case, Chief Justice Lord Caldecote, observed:

“The office of town clerk is an important part of the machinery of local government. He may be said to stand between the local Council and the ratepayers. He is there to assist by his advice and action the conduct of public affairs in the borough; and, if there is a disposition on the part of the council, still more on the part of any member of the council, to ride roughshod over his opinions, the question must at once arise as to whether it is not his duty forthwith to resign his office or, at any rate, to do what he thinks right and await the consequences.”

Colonial Development

When the early colonists came to America they set up forms of local government to which they had been accustomed, and the office of clerk was one of the first to be established. When the colonists first settled in Plymouth, Massachusetts, they quickly appointed a person to act as recorder. That person kept all the vital records for birth, marriages, and deaths for the church, as well as various other records of appointments, deeds, meetings, and the election of officers at the annual town meeting.

Indeed, in Massachusetts, the town clerk was one of the earliest offices established in colonial towns. The settlers were well aware of the importance of keeping accurate written records of their agreements and actions including grants of land, regulations governing animals, the collection of taxes, and the expenditure of town funds.

The person given the responsibility for recording these orders was also often given other duties, such as sweeping the meeting-house and selling the seats, ringing the bell, and paying the bounty for jays and blackbirds whose heads were presented to him by the citizens. By the middle of the 17th century, the title town clerk appears in town records and this title has continued to the present.

One of the earliest statutory duties imposed by the Massachusetts General Court on town clerks was recording births, deaths, and marriages. Since that time, the General Court has formalized by statute many of the duties first delegated by vote of the town and has added others. By 1692, the town clerk was required to enter and record divisions of land and orders of the selectmen as well as all town votes, orders, and grants. Warrants directed to the constable for the collection of taxes were to be signed by the assessors or the town clerk. Between 1745 and 1756, the General Court made the town clerk responsible for maintaining a list showing each inhabitant's property value and for producing it, if necessary, to substantiate a person's voting rights. The town clerk was required to administer and record the oath of office taken by town official.

By 1776, the town clerk was empowered to call town meetings to elect selectmen if a majority of the selectmen had moved from the town or were absent in the service of the country.

The office of town clerk of Wethersfield, Connecticut, was established in 1639, and that person was to “keep a record of every man’s house and land,” and to present “a fairly written” of such to every General Court to be recorded by the secretary of the colony. In the first municipal election in New York City in 1689, the offices of Sheriff, Mayor, and City Clerk were on the ballot.

The Puritan town of Woodstock, Massachusetts, appointed a town clerk in 1693 to record deeds and mortgages and to record the books. Because the town’s people wanted to keep him on a permanent basis, he was given 20 acres of land and a fee of 12 pence for each town plus 6 pence for each grant filed. The Town Clerk of Middleboro, Massachusetts, on the other hand was compensated with “one load of fish taken at the herring-weir and delivered to his house.” Three centuries later, one of his seventh great-grandchildren is serving as City Recorder of the city of Newport, Oregon.

Over the years, Municipal Clerks have become the hub of government, the direct link between inhabitants of their community and their government. The Clerk is the historian of the community, for the entire recorded history of the town (city) and its people is in his or her care.

The eminent political scientist, Professor William Bennett Munro, writing in one of the first textbooks on municipal administration (1934), stated:

“No other office in municipal service has so many contracts. It serves the mayor, the city council, the city manager (when there is one), and all administrative departments without exception. All of them call upon it, almost daily, for some service or information. Its work is not spectacular, but it demands versatility, alertness, accuracy, and no end of patience. The public does not realize how many loose ends of city administration this office pulls together.”

These words, written more than 50 years ago, are even more appropriate today.

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