

# Ann Arbor City Clerk's Office

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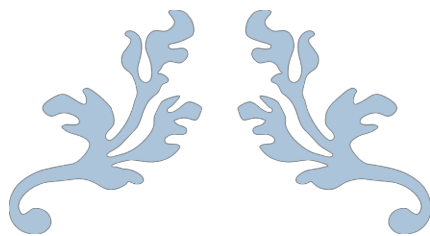


2019 FISCAL YEAR REPORT

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The City Clerk's Office is committed to maintaining the integrity of city government in the City of Ann Arbor and ensuring an informed citizenry by providing access to City government through open and accessible meetings and accurate recording of the City Council proceedings; by protecting and preserving City documents and records; through the conduct of fair and democratic elections; and by providing excellent service to the public.



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# FY 19 Annual Report: City Clerk

The City Clerk serves as the Clerk of Council and is responsible for keeping a public record of all proceedings of the Council, including the certification of all ordinances and resolutions. The City Clerk is the official custodian of the city seal and any other papers, documents or records pertaining to the City. The City Clerk's Office is also responsible for the administration of all city elections.

## Who We Are and What We Do

### **Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk**

Jacqueline Beaudry has served as City Clerk since April 2005 and has over 20 years of experience in local government. She is a Master Municipal Clerk, a Certified Michigan Municipal Clerk, and holds a Master of Public Administration specializing in local government management. Jackie has also represented the United States on four international election observation missions in Europe and Asia.



### **Jennifer Alexa, Deputy City Clerk**

Jennifer Alexa joined the City Clerk's Office in August 2012, taking on the management of the City's election preparation work, including voting equipment testing and precinct set-up. She also manages the City's Freedom of Information Act requests and responses. Jennifer previously served as the elected clerk of Freedom Township. Jennifer holds a Bachelor's degree from Eastern Michigan University.

### **Stephen Gerhart, Deputy City Clerk**

Steve Gerhart joined the Clerk's Office in January 2018. He holds a Master of Public Administration and a Graduate Certificate in Economic and Community Development. Steve currently serves on the Michigan Bureau of Election's Forms Committee. His responsibilities at City Hall include the management and coordination of the recruitment and training of election inspectors for each election and the supervision of the clerical employees in the City Clerk's Office.

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**Kelly Beattie, Boards and Commissions Coordinator**

Kelly Beattie joined the Clerk's Office team in August of 2017, after previously working in the City's engineering department and at the water treatment plant. Kelly manages compliance with state and local legislation and procedures for boards and commissions. Kelly also coordinates the annual Ann Arbor Citizens Academy and assists with all other management duties in the City Clerk's Office, and he is regularly assigned special research projects.

**Anissa Bowden, Administrative Assistant**

Anissa Bowden has worked for the City of Ann Arbor for over 27 years, working in the Building and Police Departments before her current position with the City Clerk's Office as an Administrative Assistant 5. Anissa's focus in the Clerk's Office is City Council support, acting as the Council Coordinator, with primary responsibility for preparing agenda packets for each Council meeting.

**Matt Morrow, Administrative Assistant**

Matt Morrow has worked in the City Clerk's Office since July 2014. He holds dual Bachelor of Science degrees in Political Science and Spanish and offers translation assistance to various City departments. Matt assists with the issuance of Clerk's Office licenses and permits, organizes citywide contract retention management, is responsible for the processing and issuance of absentee ballots and related election materials, and answers questions from the public at large.

**Dena Waddell, Administrative Assistant**

Dena Waddell began her current position with the Clerk's office in 2011, after previously working in the City's Housing Department for 15 years. She assists with processing licenses, permits, voter registration and other election related tasks. Dena also arranges burials and lot sales at Fairview Cemetery.

*Over 99,000 pages of the City's online agenda and meeting materials were viewed by members of the public in FY19.*

## Clerk of the City Council

A critical role of the Clerk's Office is serving as the clerk of the City Council and providing support for the dozens of boards and commissions within the City of Ann Arbor. In this capacity, the Clerk's Office prepared and distributed notices, agendas, packets, and minutes for **43 City Council Meetings**, including regular meetings, work sessions, and special sessions; totaling more than **27,625 pages of materials for agenda packets in the 2019 fiscal year.**

Almost all of this data was publicly accessible and shared online, including the **digital publication of 35 ordinances, enacted by the City Council**, providing significant updates to the City Code.



(Anissa Bowden, Council Coordinator, works on preparing the City Council agenda.)

The most used communications method for City Council and Boards and Commissions information was Legistar, the City's online legislative information database. In the 2019 fiscal year, the Legistar database received **99,470 unique page views from external traffic.**

## Boards and Commissions Support

Agenda administration work was not limited to direct support of City Council meetings; a major service provided by the City Clerk's Office included support to boards and commissions appointed by the Mayor and City Council. This support included providing training and technology solutions, as well as monitoring compliance with laws and policies for **461 meetings of boards, commissions, committees, subcommittees, and task forces.**

The Clerk's Office also streamlined the boards and commissions application process, incorporating new technology that allowed online submission of application materials by the public and provided the Mayor and Members of the City Council real-time access to the **149 applications submitted for consideration this fiscal year.** This change in process combined with new emphasis on tracking and sharing vacancy information **reduced the vacancy rate on boards and commission by a third** from 11.8% in FY18 to 7.86% at the end of FY19.



(Boards and Commissions Dashboard)

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## FY19 Boards and Commissions Accomplishments:

- Coordinated a new appreciation event at the Michigan Theatre for volunteer board and commission members in recognition of their thousands of collective volunteer hours each year
- Published a Boards and Commissions Handbook, providing guidance for appointed commissioners who do not attend in-person training
- Launched an automated alert program for Legistar data changes, which provides the public notice when meeting logistics or documents are added or updated
- Partnered with the City's IT Department to create a program to automatically draft meeting notices based on Legistar data, reducing errors in meeting notices and ensuring required information is included
- Updated *Administrative Policy 105: Posting of Notices, Open Meetings, and Recording Minutes* and the A2Central Staff Liaison Guide to provide guidance for staff pursuant to City Council direction regarding posting draft minutes and agendas

## Election Administration

The City Clerk's Office administered two elections during FY19 and **registered 7,960 new voters**. City Clerk's Office staff was increased in

**The City's election inspectors received over 1800 hours of training and instruction in 2018.**

the months of July to December to include two full-time temporary office staff and four part-time temporary field staff, in addition to overtime and assistance from other City departments. **During the two elections, a combined 86,799 ballots were cast, including 21,074 absent voter ballots.** To process these ballots, the City Clerk's Office hired community members to serve as election inspectors to staff the City's 53 neighborhood precincts and Absent Voter Counting Boards in August and November 2018. **Election inspectors received a total of 1861.75 hours of training and worked 9,935 hours on Election Days.** Training included specialized chairperson sessions, new inspector training, hands-on electronic poll book certification and Election Day refresher courses.

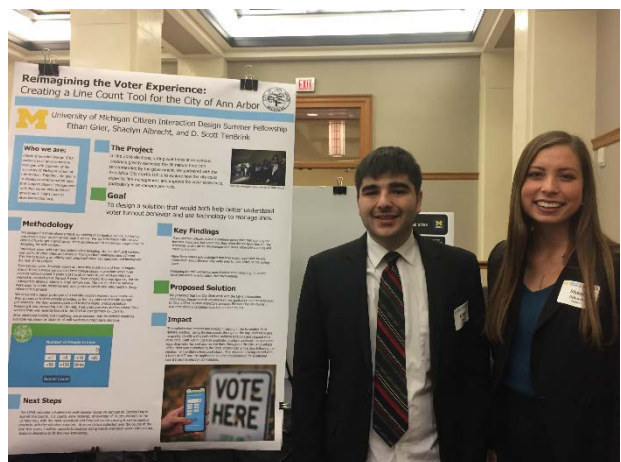


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Recruitment efforts for new election inspectors included the City’s ongoing AAPS student inspector program and the University of Michigan Law School. 65 high school students were trained and worked the November 2018 election. New outreach efforts focused on the University’s undergraduate students, with assistance from the UM Turn Up Turnout effort, which resulted in a successful program that allowed 41 undergraduate students to work near their classes and coordinate breaks to both attend school and participate at the polls. Deputy Clerk Steve Gerhart also worked with the Ann Arbor Housing Commission on a first-time recruitment effort with residents of public housing.

### Elections and Technology

To deliver exceptional customer service for voters, the Clerk's Office has embraced technology. Ann Arbor voters rely on the Clerk’s Office webpage for election information. Due to the gubernatorial election in FY19, the **City Clerk’s webpage received 100,337 unique page views, with 62,857 of those views attributed to the elections page.** Interestingly, these numbers surpass the unique page views recorded in the year of the last presidential election by 17.1% overall and 17.39% specifically on the elections page. Embracing the community’s technological inclination, the Clerk’s Office collaborated with students from the University of Michigan’s School of Information to launch a reporting tool to provide real-time reports of lines at polling locations throughout the City.



UM Fellows, Ethan Greer and Shaelyn Albrecht, present their final project regarding polling place lines at the School of Information symposium.

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In November 2018, Michigan voters approved a constitutional amendment removing some of the restrictions that previously surrounded absentee voting. "Promote the Vote" or Proposal 3 also greatly expanded voting rights in Michigan, including a new 15-day mail-in voter registration deadline and same-day registration for in-person voters on Election Day. In response to this amendment, the Clerk's Office once again sought out a better way to connect residents and deliver services, partnering with the City's Information Technology Service Unit to create a web-based form for Ann Arbor residents to sign up for the permanent absent voter application list; voters on this list automatically receive absentee ballot applications every election. The new online sign-up **increased the permanent absent voter application list by 23%, adding 926 voters** in FY2019.

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*[A2gov.org/avlist](https://a2gov.org/avlist)*

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## Program Coordinator for the Ann Arbor Citizens Academy



(City Clerk Jackie Beaudry and Deputy Clerk Steve Gerhart present at the 2019 Citizens Academy)

Boards and Commissions Coordinator Kelly Beattie organized the second annual Ann Arbor Citizens Academy in FY19, providing 20 hours of community programming. In addition to overall management of the Academy, Clerk's Office staff participated in Session 1 of the Academy, highlighting the work of the City Clerk's Office as part of the program. Graduates of the two A2CA classes are currently serving on the City Council, Water System Advisory

Council, City Planning Commission, Ann Arbor Public Art Commission, Housing Board of Appeals, and as Election Inspectors.

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## Freedom of Information Act Coordinator

Over the past 10 years, the amount of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests received annually has more than doubled. In response to the increased workload, Clerk's Office staff worked with IT to integrate response letter templates into the FOIA administration page. The new technology automated the draft responses for the **645 FOIA requests received in FY19**. Changes in the Michigan Freedom of Information Act by the State Legislature also prompted the Clerk's Office to work with the City Attorney's Office to review and revise the *City's FOIA Procedures and Guidelines Policy (APP 104)* as well as the *Written Public Summary of FOIA Procedures and Guidelines*.

## Licenses and Permits

The City Clerk's Office plays a role in the issuance of numerous licenses and permits. In FY19, **the City Clerk's Office issued 2,061 permits**. Many of these permits involve interdepartmental review, and range in complexity; some license and permit applications take only minutes to review while others require a process that takes several weeks to finalize. The overwhelming majority of licenses issued each year are dog licenses and dog park permits.

- 1,212 Dog Licenses
- 515 Dog Park Permits
- 147 Liquor Licenses
- 54 Domestic Partnership Declarations
- 44 Block Party Permits
- 30 Banner Permits
- 21 Backyard Chicken or Duck Permits
- 17 Coal Tar Sealant Applicator Permits



Matt Morrow, Administrative Assistant, meets one of the many dogs coming in for a license.

- 16 Medical Marijuana Facility Permits
- 3 Quadricycle Permits
- 2 Temporary Exemptions from the Maximum Permissible Sound Levels (Noise Permits)
- 2 Fairview Cemetery plot sales
- 5 Fairview Cemetery interments

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## Training and Education

Clerk's Office staff completed training in elections administration, the Open Meetings Act, the Freedom of Information Act, city code management, notary services, parliamentary procedure, cemetery preservation, cyber security, occupational safety, and other duties of the Clerk's Office.

## Accomplishments

- City Clerk Jacqueline Beaudry was awarded the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks, 2019 City Clerk of the Year. The award was presented to Jackie at the MAMC Annual Conference in June in Kalamazoo by Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson and members of the Board of the MAMC.
- City Clerk Jacqueline Beaudry was appointed to two election-related teams in FY2019. Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson created the Election Modernization Advisory Committee, which includes county and local clerks from Michigan, as well as election experts from national organizations and other States. One of the major tasks of this group is the implementation of Proposal 3. Jackie was also appointed to the Bipartisan Policy Center's national task force on Voter Registration. Three task forces were created by the BPC nationally, with a goal to produce recommendations on best practices in voter registration, casting votes and tallying votes.
- City Clerk Jacqueline Beaudry was asked to teach Clerking 101 at the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks annual conference in June. Jackie co-taught the class with Delta Township Clerk Mary Clark and Beth Grohman, Lexington Village Clerk. Clerking 101 is offered annually at conference as an introduction to the profession for new clerks. This year's class was the first to be presented as a two-day "boot camp" experience.



Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson and members of the MAMC present the 2019 Clerk of the Year award to City Clerk Jackie Beaudry.