

## Massachusetts Town Clerks' Association

# The Public Recorder

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OCTOBER 2013

### From the President, Nancy M. Blackmer

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We just completed another successful MTCA conference. The weather on Wednesday was perfect for our ride up the mountain. The view was beautiful. On Thursday, the weather was great as well, in fact, one afternoon class moved outside.

Tom Joyce, our Legislative Agent, did not attend but sent an update on H3647. This bill was voted favorably on September 13 by the Legislature's Joint Committee on Election Laws. One part of the bill will establish early voting for the 2016 Presidential primary and the 2015 Presidential election ONLY. The Clerks will choose where to conduct the early voting and it will be held on weekdays only. There had been a proposal for early voting that would have required us to hold it on weekends and at the polling locations. While some may not be happy about the early voting, the proposal in H3647 is better than the other proposal. The bill will also establish a task force and the MTCA will have a member on this. The task force will study and report on the implementation and impact of the early voting experiment. Please read Tom's report in this month's Recorder for more details about this bill.

Planning for the Winter Conference is ongoing. The dates are February 5, 6, and 7 and will be held in Sturbridge. The Education Committee is working on lining up the classes – if you have suggestions for classes for this or future conferences, please contact the Education Committee. If your town will not fund your attendance at our conferences, the MTCA offers scholar-

ships. Watch for the application in an upcoming Public Recorder. Any member of the MTCA can apply for a scholarship which may cover the cost of the registration, hotel costs, and if you are a commuter, meal costs. We keep hearing Clerks say they cannot attend the conferences because their town will not pay the costs – please take advantage of the scholarship program and attend.

The New England Conference will be held in Portland, Maine on November 13, 14, and 15. If you are planning on attending and have not registered, please do so quickly.

Massachusetts will be hosting the New England Conference in 2016. The committee is busy raising money; please support their efforts by bringing a basket for the raffle and also by purchasing tickets for the basket raffle and the 50/50 raffle.

Remember to check the MTCA website <http://www.masstownclerks.org/> to find information about upcoming conferences, to get the handouts from the conferences, to find the results of surveys done by clerks, and lots more valuable information. If you cannot get on to the website, please contact Amy Warfield from Burlington at [awarfield@burlington.org](mailto:awarfield@burlington.org) to get your user name.

## BEACON HILL REPORT

by Thomas Joyce, Esq.

It has been a month since the Legislatures Joint Committee on Election Laws reported House Bill 3647 favorably into the House. Not unexpectedly, the bill is still being vetted and awaits action. You will recall the largely favorable bill was unanimously endorsed by the MTCA legislative committee and Executive Board. As long as it stays in its current form both the Clerks, but most importantly, the Massachusetts voter WINS!

However, I suppose not to be overshadowed, and perhaps to add a little political urgency to the notion of "election reform", the Legislature met in a Constitutional Convention last week and voted to advance Senate Bill 12. A proposed legislative amendment to the Constitution, Senate Bill 12, sponsored by Senate President Therese Murray, would authorize the legislature to enact legislation permitting "no excuse" absentee voting generally and early voting for 10 days prior to all biennial elections.

Upon review I quickly conclude that House Bill 3647 while specific as to a number of things including a very favorable early voting experiment applicable to the 2016 Presidential elections ONLY, is critical in it's reliance on Clerks practical experience and expertise in the two task forces created, giving MTCA a prominent seat at the public policy table. Conversely and importantly, Senate Bill 12 as a proposed Constitutional amendment provides guidance only and needs to be approved again by the next elected General Court in either 2015 or 2016 and by the voters on the November 2016 ballot.

Simply stated, House Bill 3647 is the prime vehicle of focus. This proposal, which Chairman James Murphy of Weymouth in particular, worked tirelessly at crafting, would accomplish his goal of putting out a bill that was both meaningful and passable. Although the League of Women Voters and some of the other so called voter advocate groups are highly critical of the bill and working hard to sabotage it's passage as written, the most significant voter advocate of all I believe, the MTCA, is working diligently to pass it.

We need not be reminded that Clerk's help voters,

and concurrently their elected officials, daily on a whole host of matters. We will assist passage of legislation that is in the voter's best interest.

In closing, on Wednesday, October 16th we will be testifying in favor of House Bill 621 relative to municipal elections, an association bill sponsored by Rep. Dave Nangle of Lowell. The bill would prohibit municipalities from scheduling special municipal elections concerning local referenda within 30 days of any regularly scheduled state election. This bill is being heard before the Joint Committee on Election Laws along with a host of bills relative to the administration of elections. You may note this is the last regularly scheduled Elections Committee hearing for the year.

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### **MTCA CONFERENCES**

#### ***NEACTC CONFERENCE***

Holiday Inn by the Bay

Portland, Maine

November 13 - 15, 2013

#### ***MTCA WINTER CONFERENCE***

Sturbridge Host Hotel

Sturbridge, MA

February 5 - 7, 2014

#### ***MTCA SUMMER CONFERENCE***

Sea Crest Beach Resort (Tentative)

N. Falmouth, MA

June 11 - 13, 2014

## MTCA CERTIFICATION EXAM (CMMC) IN JANUARY

The MTCA examination for Certified Massachusetts Municipal Clerk (CMMC) designation will be offered in January. Applications must be received by Administrator Barbara LaBombard by **DECEMBER 15th** for the January exam, which will be mailed between January 1<sup>st</sup> and January 7<sup>th</sup>.

Applicants must have at least **three years** experience as **Town Clerk** and must complete a minimum of six required courses sponsored by the MTCA.

The Administrator will verify the courses through the Education Committee. More information is available in the certification program brochure.

Completed exams must be postmarked no later than February 10th for the January exam. Applicants are strongly urged to return the completed answer sheets by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Applicants will be notified by mail of the results of their exams by March 1<sup>st</sup>. A copy of the notification must be submitted with the application for MTCA certification. The notification of successful completion of the exam will be valid for one year and will have an expiration date printed on it. If an applicant

is not certified within one year, the test must be repeated.

The passing score for the exam is 80. Applicants are advised that they will need access to an updated copy of the Massachusetts General Laws to complete the exam successfully.

A non-refundable fee of \$50.00, made payable to the MTCA, must be submitted with the application. This examination is offered twice yearly – during the months of January and July. Application forms for the examination are available at all MTCA conferences and from the administrator, Barbara LaBombard - ([cityclerk@easthampton.org](mailto:cityclerk@easthampton.org)) or by calling 413-529-1460.



### Need to know what MTCA classes you have taken?

Contact Database Coordinator:

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[kingram@longmeadow.org](mailto:kingram@longmeadow.org)



## CERTIFIED MUNICIPAL CLERKS

I am pleased to inform you that as of today, the following individuals have earned the prestigious Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) designation from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC):

**Onorina Z. Maloney, CMC - Town Clerk - Town of Chelmsford, MA**

**Shawn C. Dooley, CMC - Town Clerk - Town of Norfolk, MA.**

The CMC designation program is designed to enhance the job performance of the Clerk in small and large municipalities. To earn the CMC designation, a Municipal Clerk must attend extensive education programs. The designation also requires pertinent experience in a municipality. The program prepares the participants to meet the challenges of the complex role of the municipal clerks by providing them with quality education in partnership with 47 institutions of higher learning. The program has been in existence since 1970 and has helped thousands of clerks in various municipalities.

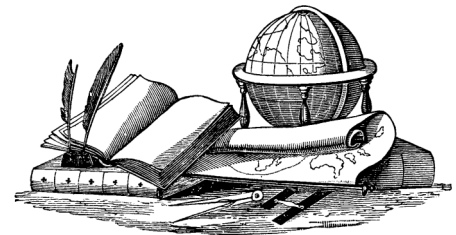
Founded in 1947, IIMC is a professional association with more than 10,000 members in the US, Canada and 15 other countries. IIMC's primary goal is to actively promote the continuing education and pro-

fessional development of municipal clerks through extensive education programs, certification, recertification, publications, networking, annual conferences and research. IIMC also engages in municipal research administration, enhances critical professional skill development and fosters a spirit of mutual assistance and good fellowship among municipal clerks around the globe. IIMC is governed by a 26-member Board of Directors.

For more information please visit our website at [www.iimc.com](http://www.iimc.com) or contact us at [hq@iimc.com](mailto:hq@iimc.com) or 909-944-4162.

Sincerely,

Chris Shalby  
Executive Director





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*- Mary-Ellen Lannon Town Clerk of Winchester*

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# Newsletter of the MTCA

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## **The Public Recorder**

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Closing date for copy submission is the FIRST DAY of each month. All news, notes, clippings, meeting notices, and address corrections should be sent to Editor Nancy E. Burnham, 584 Main Street, Athol MA 01331

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