

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

TOWN CLERK

Anita S. Tekle

Staff

During 2014 the Department was staffed by Assistant Town Clerk Patricia Clifford; Senior Department Clerk Arlene Fitzpatrick; and Office Assistant Bridget Rodrigue. The achievements of the Department were in large part due to the effort and commitment of these individuals, which is noted and appreciated.

Vitals

The presence of Emerson Hospital in the community results in a high number of birth recordings in Concord. The number of overall births remained fairly consistent for the past six years. The Office had a brisk business of certified copies of births, deaths and marriages, with 5,362 issued, generating revenue of \$63,944. In addition, the staff processed 50 Affidavit and Correction of Vital Records, and issued 316 burial permits. Our online offering for the processing of birth, death and marriage certificates has proven to be very popular with customers, with 1,038 transactions taking place online during 2014 (representing 43% of the birth certificate and 29% of the marriage certificate requests). This online offering allows us to provide expedited service for vital records (at an additional charge) and reduces the number of walk-in customers, allowing us to better manage the Division's workload.

RECORDED VITAL STATISTICS 2005-2014

(NUMBERS INCLUDE BABIES BORN TO CONCORD PARENTS AT OTHER MA HOSPITALS)
(# OF CONCORD RESIDENTS IS IN PARENTHESIS)

Year	Births	Deaths	Marriages
2014	1,226 (99)	348 (159)	77 (32)
2013	1,192 (125)	397 (174)	81 (35)
2012	1,171 (102)	367 (165)	67 (32)
2011	1,201 (96)	360 (156)	80 (33)
2010	1,183 (100)	384 (157)	84 (32)
2009	1,195 (122)	370 (134)	76 (25)
2008	1,199 (101)	402 (149)	58 (22)
2007	1,178 (87)	349 (133)	87 (21)
2006	1,244 (121)	423 (161)	74 (24)
2005	1,214 (111)	433 (171)	76 (30)

Implementation of the long-awaited electronic recording of death certificates began in earnest in September 2014, after almost two years of a pilot program. This follows the implementation of a statewide electronic system for recording and issuance of birth certificates in February 2011. It is now mandatory for all deaths in Massachusetts to be accessed and recorded electronically. The process has required the cooperation and participation of a number of entities in order for this to work—funeral directors, medical professionals, the medical examiner's office, the State Office of Vital Records, and local city and town clerk offices. These long-awaited changes—to provide for the electronic generation, recording and issuance of vital records—are the most significant improvements made to these processes in many generations.

Licenses

We reached another record for dog licenses issued during the year—1,968. Income of \$31,327 was received by the Town for dog licenses and late fees. Staff participated in the Rabies Vaccination Clinic sponsored by the Board of Health in March.

Town Meeting

The Town Clerk and staff attended and recorded the proceedings of the Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting during the year. For all Town Meeting events, we offered a daily update of the previous evening's session on the Town's web site, which proved very popular with residents. An excerpted copy of the proceedings is included elsewhere in this Report.

Recordings

The Department issued 111 Business Certificates during the year.

Miscellaneous

During the year, the staff swore in new committee and board appointees and posted 867 public meetings. Meeting postings are available on the bulletin board in the Town House lobby and for view on the Town's web site at www.concordma.gov. During the course of the year, the Office provided information to staff, boards and committees, and citizens on the issues of the Open Meeting, Public Records, Conflict of Interest, and Campaign & Political Finance Laws, and maintained records of completion

of the mandatory State ethics training by employees and board members. During the year, several inquiries were referred to the appropriate State authorities for formal determinations and rulings.

Department staff prepared and recorded 36 new cemetery deeds during the year, and continued to maintain the cemetery deed, burial permit, and lot records. Nineteen raffle permits were issued to community non-profit organizations. The Town Clerk's Office offers Notary Public services for customers with proper identification. A nominal fee is charged, and appointments are recommended for complex documents. Four staff members have been appointed by the Governor's Office to serve as "Commissioners to Qualify," which authorizes staff to administer the Oath of Office to individuals appointed as a Notary Public or Justice of the Peace in Massachusetts. We continued to receive and process routine genealogical requests, referring the more complex ones to the Library Archivist.

During 2014, the Town Clerk's Office turned over \$111,941 in general revenue to the Town. Feel free to contact our office if you have any questions (978-318-3080). Visit the Town's web site (www.concordma.gov), or contact us via e-mail at townclerk@concordma.gov.

BOARD OF REGISTRARS

Patricia E. Gerty, Chair
Elaine A. DiCicco
Joanne E. Mente
Anita S. Tekle, Town Clerk

The four-member Board of Registrars consists of two members from each of the major political parties--three members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, plus the Town Clerk.

Note: Detailed voter registration, election results, and a summary of Town Meeting action are reported elsewhere in this Report.

Voter Registration

The Town Clerk's Office continued to utilize the State's Voter Registration Information System for voter registration. This system connects Concord with Town Clerk offices across the state to avoid duplication of voter registrations, and allows residents to register to vote or change their address or party affiliation at the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

During the year when we encountered petition signers

who were not registered voters in Concord (and therefore could not be certified as signers), we mailed voter registration forms to them, resulting in an excellent return. We also continue to do this with younger residents when they reach voting age at 18, with good results. The Office registered 820 new voters during the year, ending the year with 12,581 voters. In addition, 1,017 voters were deleted, 200 switched parties, and 369 were placed on Inactive Voter status due to either not returning a census form, or information that we received that they no longer live in Concord. The number of registered voters declined following the November election, after we completed our biennial voter purge of inactive voters (after 4 years of inactivity).

Census

As has been done for the past several years, the Town Clerk's Office printed and prepared the census forms in-house, instead of using an outside vendor, resulting in a considerable cost savings. The forms were distributed to residents in late December. The January 2014 population per the Town Census was 15,830. Note that the Town Census does not include the prison population, while the Federal decennial census counts the prisoners.

Town Caucus—January 27, 2014

Turnout for the Town Caucus was high, with 97 in attendance. One individual was nominated each for Town Moderator and Board of Selectmen. Two were nominated for one position on the School Committee. No one was nominated for the one vacancy on the Concord Housing Authority. All are to be commended for their willingness to run for office and serve the Town in these volunteer capacities.

Annual Town Election—March 25, 2014

Turnout was modest, with 17% of registered voters participating, despite the one contested School Committee race. The five-year position for Concord Housing Authority was won by Edward Tar Lerner, who ran a write-in campaign and garnered 84 votes. There were 135 absentee ballots distributed for this Election. Concord was one of two communities that field-tested new voting equipment at this election, on behalf of the State. Concord received some financial benefit by agreeing to serve as one of the test sites, saving programming and printing costs. The test went well and the new equipment has been certified by the State as one of two models of electronic voting equipment available for use in Massachusetts.