

Memo

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Town Administrator Shaun Mulholland
Date: July 28, 2015
Re: Deputy TC/TC replacement options

The Board requested Town Clerk/Tax Collector Kathleen Rogers and I develop options for the Board to consider in regards to addressing the open Deputy TC/TC position. We analyzed five possible courses of action for the Board to consider. We considered the costs as well as the levels of service to be provided by each course of action.

1. **Utilize present Administrative Assistant to back fill functions of the Deputy TC/TC**

This option would utilize the present AA to perform the tasks of a motor vehicle registration clerk in addition to her presently assigned job functions. The present AA does not reside in Allenstown. A Deputy Town Clerk would still need to be appointed. This new position would presumably be paid with a stipend of an amount to be determined.

Advantages:

- A. The potential cost savings would be approximately \$18,000 per year.

Disadvantages:

- A. Distracts from the other job functions of the AA functions.
- B. Requires an additional level of complex tasks which must be completed.
- C. With fewer staff members available to work at town hall there will be more occasions when there is only one person in the building while the town hall is open.
- D. Challenges in finding a Deputy TC/TC who would be available on a flexible basis while only being paid a stipend.
- E. It would be challenging to keep a Deputy TC/TC who would only work irregularly proficient with the tasks required for the position.

2. **No assistance or Deputy**

This option would require the reduction of hours for the TC/TC to be open to 3 days per week. One day would be needed which could be dedicated to perform various administrative functions.

Advantages:

- A. The potential cost savings would be \$20,848 per year.

Disadvantages:

- A. This course of action would require closure of the TC/TC function when the Town Clerk/Tax Collector is on vacation, out on sick leave, training or the other leave options.
- B. The disruption in service for the periods of time discussed above would compound the workload upon the return of the Town Clerk/Tax Collector. The volume of work will remain the same regardless of a reduction in hours. Residents who would come to town hall to register vehicles, pay taxes or seek other services of the Town Clerk/Tax Collector would have to be squeezed into three days instead of the present four days. This would result in longer lines with the inherent longer waiting periods for residents to get their respective business at town hall done.
- C. If the present TC/TC left employment with the town there would be no one with experience who could take on this task. The delay in time to look for a replacement and time for that replacement to become proficient could be lengthy. During this time the level of service would be degraded or even non-existent for a period of time.

3. Hire a Deputy TC/TC for 20 hours per week

This course of action is the present organizational structure which has been budgeted for. This organizational structure has been in place for approximately 8 years. Previous to this structure the Town Clerk was a 30 hour per week position and the Tax Collector was a 40 hour per week. The Tax Collector was also the Deputy Town Clerk. The Administrative Assistant was the Deputy Tax Collector.

Advantages:

- A. Provides the necessary coverage at peak times to reduce lines and provide service levels the public is accustomed to.
- B. Provides the back-up needed to cover the Town Clerk/Tax Collector when she is on vacation, on sick leave, training or other types of leave.
- C. Allows all TC/TC functions to be performed in the absence of the Town Clerk/Tax Collector.

Disadvantages:

- A. Costs continue to increase slightly each year due to COLA and/or merit salary increases. This position does not receive any other fringe benefits.

4. Hire a Deputy TC/TC for 10 hours per week

This is a variation from the present organizational structure. The Deputy TC/TC would either be scheduled to assist during some of the peak times or on a slower day to allow the Town Clerk/Tax Collector to perform administrative tasks. The Deputy TC/TC would still need to work up to 41 hours per week to cover the absence of the Town Clerk/Tax Collector during leave periods.

Advantages:

- A. This would reduce operating costs by approximately \$8,000 per year.

Disadvantages:

- A. The time it would take to train a new Deputy TC/TC would be twice as long due to the limited hours of scheduled time.
 - B. It will be more difficult to get someone who would be interested in a part time position which only paid for 10 hours per week. Additionally retention would also be an issue as someone may take the job until something better comes along.
 - C. We would not be able to provide coverage during all of the peak business times as we are able to do now. This would result in longer lines and a reduction in the level of service.
 - D. The reduced hours will not provide enough continuity to make the Deputy TC/TC proficient in the varied tasks of the position.
5. **Develop a mutual aid agreement with another neighboring municipality to provide coverage during absences or closures.**

This course of action could be utilized in conjunction with Courses of Action #2 or #4. This option would require an inter-municipal agreement to be entered into in accordance with the provisions of RSA 53-A.

Advantages:

- A. This option would provide a back-up during the absence of the Town Clerk functions. This would limit the disruption to the public during those periods of absence.

Disadvantages:

- A. It is unlikely that another municipality would enter into such an agreement other than for unplanned for emergencies.
- B. This would add a significant workload to another municipality's Town Clerk function during those times when the tasks are shifted to them.
- C. Other towns may not want to take on this task which would make longer lines for their citizens to get business done.
- D. Our residents would have to travel further to transact their business.
- E. The fees for these functions would go to the municipality providing the service resulting in a net loss in revenues to the town. We are unable to determine an amount as it varies per transaction and the periods of absence vary as well.
- F. This course of action would not provide a solution to the Deputy Tax Collector function.