

City Clerk's Office

2012 Annual Report



City of Lawrence

Inside This Report

- 1 What Does Our Office Do?
- 1 Major Accomplishments
- 2 Licensing/Permitting
- 3 Customer Service
- 3 Open Government
- 3 Right-of-way Permits
- 4 Governing Body Support
- 4 Tax Certifications
- 5 Records Management

What does the City Clerk's Office do?

The City Clerk's Office administers various city licensing/permitting processes and coordinates public notices, legal publications, and public bid openings.

The City Clerk is the Freedom of Information Officer for the city, managing retention, maintenance and access to official city records. The City Clerk's Office is responsible for recording all activities relating to City Commission meetings, including meeting minutes, ordinances and resolutions.

City Commission election filings and other notices and details of elections are administered by the City Clerk and coordinated with the County Election Officer. The City Clerk administers oaths of office for elected officials and employees.

The City Clerk's Office is a division of the City Manager's Office and is staffed by the City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager, Deputy City Clerk, Software Specialist, and part-time Administrative Support person.

The City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager also oversees various projects at the directions of the City Manager.

2012 Major Accomplishments

A few major accomplishments of the City Clerk's Office in 2012 include:

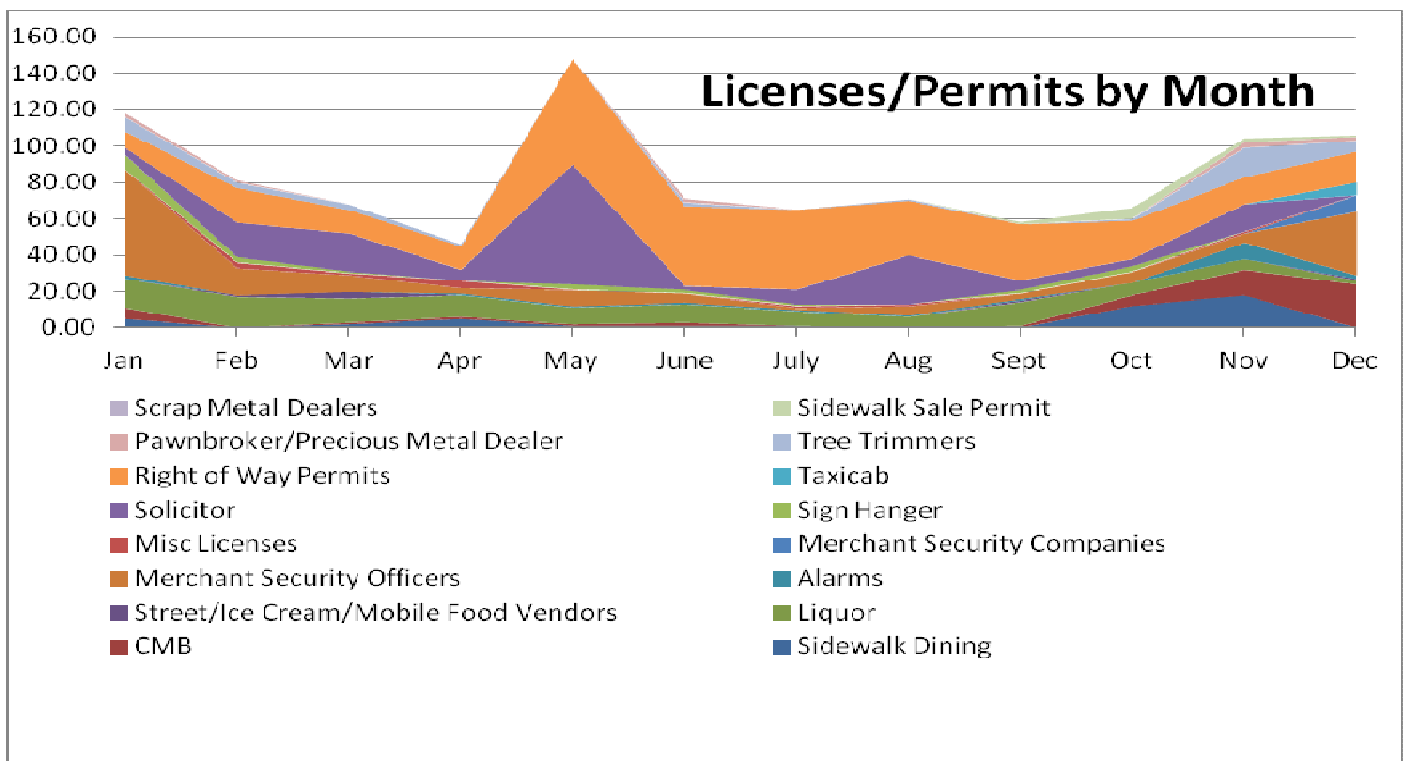
- Issued **992 licenses/permits** and collected **\$119,504** in revenue (3.2% more than in 2011)
- Placed over **\$2,800,000 in special assessments** on the tax rolls;
- Coordinated city approval and support for **53 events** (up from 34 in 2011) including KU Relays, Tour of Lawrence, KS Half Marathon, Bike MS, and Color Run;
- Created "Standard Conditions for Alcohol on the Right-of-Way" for events;
- Created new license regulations regarding sidewalk dining, sidewalk sales, and scrap metal dealers;
- Started accepting **credit card payments**;
- Began using a **new software system** for licensing and cash handling;

More details on these accomplishments can be found throughout this report.

Licensing/Permitting

The City Clerk's Office administers the licensing/permitting processes for various business and other activities. The table below includes the total number of licenses/permits issued by type.

Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Sidewalk Dining	-	25	27	28	33
Cereal Malt Beverage (CMB), all types	-	46	52	51	56
Alcoholic Beverage, all types <i>(went to 2 yr licenses starting mid-2011, so # issued in 2012 and later represents only a portion of the total active licenses)</i>	-	158	169	159	119
Street/Ice Cream/Mobile Food Vendors	-	5	5	5	7
Alarm Companies	-	13	15	15	19
Merchant Security, Company & Officers	-	89	116	133	163
Miscellaneous	-	15	18	8	11
Sign Hangers <i>(transferred to Development Services in mid-2012)</i>	-	25	27	23	23
Solicitors/Peddlers/Transient Merchants	-	178	183	143	177
Taxicabs and Pedicabs	-	5	17	14	7
Temporary Use of Right-of-Way	-	254	273	282	314
Tree Trimmers	-	25	29	33	41
Pawnbroker/Precious Metal Dealer <i>(grouped with misc. until mid-2011)</i>	-	-	-	9	10
Sidewalk Sales <i>(part of ROW permits until mid-2012)</i>	-	-	-	-	10
Scrap Metal Dealers <i>(registration mandated by State in 2012)</i>	-	-	-	-	2
TOTAL	-	838	931	903	992



Customer Service Enhancements

In 2012 the City Clerk's Office partnered with the Development Services Division to transfer responsibility for Sign Hanger Licensing to Development Services, so sign hangers can get their permits and business licenses in one place.

We also amended sidewalk dining regulations to streamline the renewal process while still maintaining protections for neighboring properties.

In 2012 the City Clerk's Office began accepting credit card payments for licenses, permits, and records requests.

Open & Transparent Government

The City Clerk is designated as the city's Freedom of Information Officer, and coordinates responses to many Open Records Requests. In 2012, the City Clerk's Office responded to **49 formal requests** (compared to 36 in 2011), as well as countless informal requests for information and documents. As needed, the City Clerk advises and assists other departments of the city with records requests.

The City Clerk's Office coordinates the publishing of many legal notices, ordinances, and other items in the local newspaper. In 2012, the City Clerk's Office incurred **\$19,281 in publishing costs** (compared to \$17,192 in 2011).

Temporary Use of Right-of-Way Permits

The City Clerk's Office processes Temporary Use of Public Right-of-Way Permits for activities such as:

- Private utility maintenance projects;
- Private construction projects (road construction, curb cuts, use of cranes or other equipment on the right-of-way adjacent to private property, etc.);
- Events such as runs, bike races, festivals, block parties, etc.; and,
- City utility or street maintenance projects (by private contractors and city crews).

This permit process helps protect public safety and the public's infrastructure investments. In addition to these permits, the City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager coordinated other approvals and city services in support of large events such as KU Relays, Tour of Lawrence, KS Half Marathon, Bike MS, and the Color Run, and numerous other smaller events (a **total of 53 events**, up from 34 in 2011). Total number of right-of-way permits issued in 2012 was 314, up from 282 in 2011. The City Clerk created new "Standard Conditions for Alcohol on the Right-of-Way" to help manage alcohol at events held on the streets.

Total active alcohol licenses at year end:

On premises CMB: **11**

Off premises CMB: **35**

On premises liquor: **132**

Off premises liquor: **26**

The City of Lawrence responds to records requests in compliance with the Kansas Open Records Act (KORA).

Please visit

http://www.lawrenceks.org/city_clerk/public_records_request

for more information.

In 1991, the issuance of temporary use of right-of-way permits became an administrative process and 16 permits were issued. In 2012, 314 were issued.

Governing Body Support

The City Clerk's Office supports the activities of the Lawrence City Commission in various ways, including attendance at meetings, keeping of meeting minutes, filing of ordinances and resolutions, City Commission election filings, and execution of documents such as contracts approved by the City Commission.

In mid-2009, the City Clerk's Office was reorganized following the departure of the former City Clerk, and the City Clerk's duties were absorbed by the Assistant to the City Manager. This overall reduction in staffing led to a re-evaluation of many procedures in the City Clerk's Office, including City Commission meeting minute taking. In 2011 the minutes were reformatted and simplified, and some unnecessary elements, such as transcriptions of staff reports (which reports are available online) were eliminated. These changes not only saved significant staff time, but they reduced the overall length of the minutes, increased readability, and dramatically decreased the turnaround time for getting the minutes approved by the City Commission and available to the public.

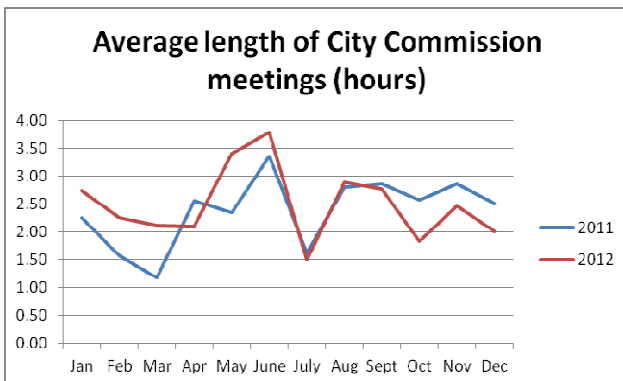
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of City Commission meetings	48	48	47	46
Average length of City Commission meetings	-	-	2 h 23 m	2 h 30 m
Pages of meeting minutes produced	1636	1510	724	1000
Minutes approved without correction	98%	96%	96%	96%
Minutes approved within 3 weeks of meeting date	60%	6%	89%	89%



Tax certifications and exemptions

The City Clerk's Office annually certifies to the County Clerk the special assessments to be placed on the property tax rolls for the following tax year. **This year \$2,825,992 in special assessments were placed on the tax rolls.** The City Clerk's Office fields numerous inquiries from real estate agents and prospective buyers about specials owed on properties throughout the city, and processes pre-payments for special assessments that have not yet been placed on the tax rolls.

The City Clerk's Office coordinates the tax payments or exemptions for city owned properties. While most city property is exempt from property taxation, certain properties titled to the city, such as properties for which industrial revenue bonds have been issued, are subject to tax. In those cases the company receiving the bond proceeds is responsible for the payment of the property taxes, and the City Clerk's Office ensures that the property tax bills are sent to and paid by the responsible party.



Records Management

The City Clerk's Office maintains many records of the city, including City Commission meeting minutes, ordinances, resolutions, bond issuance documents, election related documents, certain license/permit records, and many other miscellaneous records. In 2011 we began a major project to outsource long term storage of records which had been kept at the city's Solid Waste Annex North (SWAN) building. This project was completed in early 2012. The City Clerk's Office manages the contract with our outsourced records storage and destruction provider.

Volume (cubic feet) of outsourced records storage at year end			
Department or Division	2010	2011	2012
Building Safety	na	na	269.0 cf +1,114 rolled plans
City Attorney	na	na	253.3 cf
City Clerk	na	na	98.7 cf
City Manager	na	na	100.7 cf
Code Enforcement	na	na	5.0 cf
Finance	na	na	265.4 cf
Human Resources	na	na	182.8 cf
Information Technology	na	na	2.4 cf
Municipal Court	na	na	81.4 cf
Planning	na	na	93.5 cf
Risk Management	na	na	32.6 cf
Utility Billing	na	na	151.5 cf
Total Volume of Stored Records	na	na	1,536.3 cf + 1,114 rolled plans



Before: SWAN mezzanine, facing south



After: SWAN mezzanine, facing south

Visit the City Clerk's Office
online at

www.lawrenceks.org/city_clerk

for information on open records,
elections, agendas and
minutes, licenses and permits,
special assessments, and more.