

County Clerk Annual Report for 2020

The county clerk's office provides a wide range of services. One primary responsibility is the administration of elections within Eau Claire County to ensure we have fair elections, including the preparation of ballots, programming of election equipment, preparing required publications, and updating voter records in WisVote for 15 of the 18 county municipalities. The county clerk also serves as clerk for the county board by taking minutes, enrolling and publishing legislation, and compiling the journal of proceedings each session year. This office is also responsible for the tax deed process, which includes researching and notifying all owners of tax parcels that are at least three and one-half years delinquent as well as conducting tax deed public sales on properties that have been taken due to nonpayment of taxes. Other duties include issuing marriage licenses, distributing dog licenses to the municipalities and administering the dog license fund, compiling and distributing the county official directory and in-house telephone book, and the filing of highway relocation maps and timber-cutting notices.

Accomplishments in 2020

2020 was a busy election year. The office managed 4 elections and was able to handle all of the extra covid-related work associated with it. Our half-time person retired in early March and we were staffed with just three full-time employees until late October.

Marriage licenses were down about 15% compared to an average year, due to covid cancelling larger gatherings. We were able to have applicants make appointments and meet with them on the first floor to complete the paperwork, minimizing contact.

Tax deed activity was minimal. We took two parcels and deeded one to the Town of Pleasant Valley and the other will be deeded to the Village of Fairchild.

Alignment with Strategic Plan

Ensure Financial Stability

The county clerk's office continues to work with the municipalities to coordinate combined required election notices, which reduces cost as well as improves collaboration.

Innovate and Adapt

2020 brought the challenge of having staff work from home. Our office was successful in having two people work from home as much as possible. We also took precautions to keep staff separated in case of Covid exposure so the office wouldn't be completely shut down.

Improve Collaboration

The office collaborated with the Treasurer's office who shared an employee to do some work on the official directory due to the fact that we had a vacant position and no one to do that work.

2021 Future Opportunities

The Clerk's office will continue to look for new ways we can improve efficiency. With new staff members we can take a look at distributing office duties in a way that takes advantage of certain strengths of the employees. Further collaboration with administration or other offices to shift workloads if necessary is certainly possible.

Performance Management Summary by Program

Elections				
Administer elections within Eau Claire County, including the preparation of ballots, programming of election equipment, insuring all required publications are made in a timely manner and updating the Statewide Voter Registration System.				
OUTPUTS	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Number of paper ballots created for jurisdiction combinations:	55	166	61	152
Pieces of election equipment programmed to read ballots	75	144	72	144
Number of elections night results and reports:	2	4	2	4
Provide WisVote services for number of municipalities	15	15	15	15
Tax Deeds				
Administer the tax deed program, from research to determining ownership, through having a tax deed sale.				
OUTPUTS				
	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Tax deed notices:	144	150	129	80
Quit claim deeds if sold:	5	14	13	1
Taxes, interest, and penalties collected:	\$278,844	\$261,698	\$228,209	\$36,940
Other Services				
Issues marriage licenses according to state statute. Acts as records custodian for and liaison to the county board, its committees, boards and councils, including publication of the meeting notices, verifying attendance sheets and compilation and publication of the journal of proceedings. Process timber cutting notices and all claims against the county in accordance with state law. Act as the state's conduit to local municipalities for dog licenses and tags and payments. Compile and update the Official Directory and in-house telephone directory.				
OUTPUTS				
	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Number of applications and licenses:	651	603	608	519
Number of meeting minutes produced:	17	17	17	17
Number of enrolled legislation:	103	108	103	104
Journal of proceedings publication:	1	1	1	1
Dog licenses and tags distributed to the municipal treasurer and reconciled:	6997	6847	7002	6761
In-house phone directory books created:	750	750	800	825
Official Directory books created:	925	925	925	750