
City Secretary

The City Secretary's Department is the oldest public profession and the only Municipal employee required by State statute. The Department is a fast-paced department that plays a significant role in City Government. The City Secretary serves as a public access point between Fredericksburg residents and City government, working to enhance transparency and accessibility for members of the public to their local government. The office is at the forefront of the legislative and administrative processes and performs tasks as prescribed by Texas state law, the Fredericksburg City Charter, Fredericksburg Municipal Code, and Federal statutes implementing vital public and democratic functions and services. The City Secretary's Department is broken into bolded sections for this report to help clarify the responsibilities and duties.

In 2022, **Legislatively related duties** pertained to working for the City Manager and City Council in its legislative capacity to prepare and post 42 agendas in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, including attending 42 City Council meetings totaling 202 hours, 42 City Council agenda packets totaling an estimated 1,012 hours for one person, taking and preparing 42 minutes, attesting to the Mayor's signature on 40 Ordinances, 23 Resolutions, and 2 Orders. Other legislative-related duties included:

- prepared 15 Proclamations
- posted 72 public hearing notices
- signed in 467 speakers for City Council meetings (not including written comments)
- organized 51 employee recognition
- attended 52 Department Head Meetings and took minutes

As part of the legislative duties the City Secretary processed and retrieved 158 Open Records Request for records for an estimated 300 hours. The City Secretary also provided primary support for 101 hours of City Council subcommittee meetings.

The City Secretary also serves as the official keeper of City records. In 2022, a new Ordinance was adopted to streamline the City Records Management Program. Procedures and policies were adopted, and four meetings were held with Department Liaisons. The City's Vital and Essential Records were identified. During the City's annual shred day, 121 boxes of records were destroyed in accordance with Texas State Library of Archive Retentions. There are currently 304 boxes of records maintained through the records storage system.

In 2022, a campaign was kicked off to help employees think paperless processes when maintaining records, which has resulted in over 3,000 archived electronic records. As part of the Records Management Program, a contract management program was created. In 2022, an estimated 72 City Contracts, Deeds, and Easements were entered into the system.

As the City's Election Administrator, the City Secretary provides the election duties under the direction of the Texas Election Code and in coordination with the City Council, to serve as the Chief Election Official for the City. The City Secretary is responsible for the Local Elections. Other responsibilities include ensuring all elections are conducted in compliance with state and federal laws and outcomes of elections are accurate. The City Secretary is responsible for ensuring voting processes maintain a high level of professional election standards in order to earn and preserve public confidence in the electoral process.

For the May 7, 2022, General Election, the City Secretary processed filings for three Mayoral candidates and four City Council candidates. These filings included Applications for Place on the Ballot, Appointment of Campaign Treasurer, Candidate/Officeholder Campaign Finance Reports (an estimated four Candidate/Officeholder Campaign Finance Reports for each candidate). There were 295 Ballot by Mail (BBM) sent to voters with 216 returned with cast ballots, 1,464 early votes were cast, and 522 election day votes were cast. The 2022 election included several mandated changes, which one included an allowable corrective measure for voters who submitted a BBM, 32 voters were contacted regarding their BBM. There are 87 different election duties preformed for each election, which 19 of those are the creation and posting of notices to the public and the administering of three Oath of Offices were performed. The May 7, 2022, election process began in November of 2021 and run through March 6, 2024.

The City Secretary must certify all Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission Applications on behalf of the City whether they are new applications or renewals. Before the City Secretary signs an application or renewal, the applicant must get approval from the Health Department and Development Services to ensure that other requirements are met. During the summer of 2021, the City Alcohol Licensing was transferred to the City Secretary's Department and a new process was developed. Forty-eight letters were sent to license holders who were expiring, and 53 City Licenses were issued. According to TABC, there are 139 Alcoholic Beverage License holders within the City Limits.

The City Secretary's Department developed a more cost-effective way to maintain the History Walk "Pavers" in Market Square. Members of the Department began listing the names on the pavers and their location. There are 3,991 total pavers in the History Walk, and only 1,490 pavers have been purchased.

The City Secretary maintains the Boards and Commissions appointments, terms of office, required documents, and applications. A new Volunteer Interest Form and Application were developed. In 2022, a Boards, Commissions, and Committee Handbook and new webpage was created. The City Attorney and City Secretary held a training workshop with the Board of Adjustment, Historic Review Board, and the Planning and Zoning Commission to review the Texas Open Meetings Act, Conflict of Interest and additional information.

Hotel Occupancy Tax funding falls under the City Secretary's Department. This process begins with the City Council approving the process, timeline, and documents to be used for that year. A notification is sent to over 45 non-profits who have applied for funding in the past, and an ad is posted in the newspaper. In 2022, 28 applications were received, and

\$789,905. In 2022, in funding was requested. In 2022, 28 contracts were executed and received funding in the amount of \$536,565. The process does not end there; the funding recipients must follow the State guidelines regarding their funds and submit reports, which are maintained according to the State Library of Archives Retention.

Some of the other duties the City Secretary's Department does is conduct Council Relations Support, posting all Legal Notices, Public Hearing Notices, maintaining the department web page, attending a variety of meetings such as Neighborhood Town Hall Meeting, and City Manager's Coffees. The office also, maintains and serves as the official filing agent for the Civil Administrator Hearing Orders.

Ethical and professional duties -The professional reputation of a City Secretary and her department is always up-front and should always serve the City Council and City Manager by remaining neutral. The City Secretary's Department is run with the highest standards and ethical practices. The Texas Municipal Clerks Association and the International Institute Municipal Clerk's Code of Professional Ethics and the City of Fredericksburg Mission Statement serve as the department guide. The City Secretary is a Texas Registered Municipal Clerk (TRMC) and works annually to maintain that required designation through training. In 2022, the City Secretary received following:

- Certified Municipal Clerks (CMC) designation
- Government Archives and Records Management Administration Certificate
- TMCA Municipal Clerk's Office Achievement of Excellence Award
- TMCA President Choice for Outstanding Service (1 of 2 presented)
- Presenter at TMCA/TMCCP Records Management Seminar
- Served as the TMCA – Hill Country Chapter President 2020-2022

Due to the many Federal, State, City Charter and Ordinance requirements that must be followed, it is extremely important the City Secretary stays up to date on changes and new legislative processes. In 2022, the City Secretary attended 72 hours of Records Management training, 26 hours of Election training, 82 hours on Leadership training, 26 hours on City Budgets and Finance training. Additional training hours were taken in Open Government, Public Information Act, Ethics, Transparency, Human Resources, Land Uses, TABC, and Communications, as part of the required Certifications.

The City Secretary is an appointed officer of the City and City Manager and, as such is a public figure and is responsible for maintaining goodwill toward the city. The department members provided goodwill to the city through **community and social duties**. The department served as a member of the 175th Anniversary Planning Committee, Market Square Redevelopment Commission, Fredericksburg Food and Wine Fest Committee and assisted at the Oktoberfest. In 2022, the City Secretary's Office assisted the TCMA Region 10 with hosting a training session and diner where other municipalities enjoyed the City and great food. The department also host a booth at the annual Touch-a-Truck event.

As technology and legislation continues to change, the City Secretary must be an **agent of change** and demonstrated this during 2022. The motto of the office is to "never settle and

always find the best, most cost-efficient, and effective way to provide services. Always remain ethical because if you lose your integrity then you lose your self-worth.”

In 2022, the City Secretary Office accomplished several goals with a reduction in staff:

- Paperless Agenda Management
- Redevelopment a Records Management Program
- First steps for a paperless Records Management Program
- Identifying the City’s Vital and Essential Records
- Developed strong citizen Election Team
- Developed a new Board and Commission Interest Form and Handbook
- Better efficiency for the City’s Alcohol Permit Program
- Received two separate TMCA awards
- Presented at a Records Management TMCA/TMCCP Seminar
- Received two additional Certifications
- Adapted to changes in the City organization and other required changes