

REPORT OF THE ATKINSON VOLUNTEER STUDY COMMITTEE

The following report summarizes the findings and recommendations of the Volunteer Study Committee appointed by the Town of Atkinson Selectmen to study the impact of combining the Town Clerk and Tax Collector's Office. This Committee was founded following an affirmative vote on Article #2020-20 by Atkinson voters during the March, 2020 town election. Committee members are Wendy Barker, Sam Butler, Beth Cacciotti, Phil Sherwood, and Town Administrator David Cressman (ex officio). Our first meeting was held on September 9th, 2020. Our final meeting was held on December 23rd of the same year.

The Committee report is divided into the following sections.

Recommendation Summary

Methodology

General Conclusions

Appendices

1. Reorganization Report
2. Individual Town Interview Notes
3. Interview Spreadsheet (separate document)

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

After careful examination of the data gathered by the Committee, the Committee's recommendation is that the Selectmen should proceed with the plan to combine the Tax Collector's office with the office of the Town Clerk, assuming any further investigation taken by the Selectmen confirms the Committee's conclusion that the combination of the two offices would result in increased efficiencies for Atkinson residents at negligible cost, and that the transition be effected with minimal disruption to either office or their respective personnel.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Committee investigated the question posed by the selectmen: *Should the Tax Collector's and Town Clerk's offices be combined?* in several ways. Our primary investigation was through conversations with employees and elected officials in twenty-one towns in Rockingham county. These towns were divided into two groups: the sixteen towns that are already combined, and the five that are not. The combined towns were further divided into those that had combined recently, and those that had combined more than fifteen years ago.

Our conversations were primarily with:

1. Town Clerks;
2. Town Tax Collectors; and
3. Town Managers/Administrators.

We also spoke with several deputy clerks and deputy tax collectors. Our most informative conversations were with Patricia Curran of Hampstead, William Herman of Auburn, Chris Sterndale of Nottingham, Marge Morgan of Greenwood, and Angela Sherwood of Chester/Sandown. Angela is Phil's mother, and was especially helpful given her long association with both towns both as a selectperson in Sandown and finance person in Chester.

Sam Butler spoke with representatives of the five towns that have not combined. He asked the following questions. Individual responses are tabulated by town in the attached spreadsheet and interview notes.

- Are you affiliated with a union?
- Have you ever considered combining the two offices? Why? Why not?
- What was the determining factor for NOT combining?
- What do you perceive as an obstacle to combining?
- Were you combined at one time, but have chosen to reverse or separate the offices? Why?

Wendy Barker, Sam Butler, Beth Cacciotti, and Phil Sherwood were able to speak with ten of the other sixteen towns, asking a

slightly different set of questions. Their responses are also recorded in the attached spreadsheet and individual notes.

- Is anybody in your staff affiliated with a Union?
- When did you combine? Why?
- What was the deciding factor for the timing?
- What was the financial impact of the project?
- Are both positions elected or is the tax collector appointed?
- What was the human resource impact (training, knowledge transfer, new hires)?
- What are the benefits to the municipality? To the citizens?
- Were there any challenges to the process of combining the offices?
- What were the hours of each individual department before the combination?
- What were the technical challenges?
- Does each office use separate systems? Was there cross-training?
- How are the two "departments" assigned?
 - Do both clerk and collector share a physical office?
 - Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?
 - Is there only one position holding both titles?

In addition to interviews with town officials, the Committee also collected data on head counts and total expenditures for both departments in each town; examined the need for possible changes to the physical space of the Town Clerk and Tax Collector's offices in Atkinson; studied expenses involved in relicensing and retraining the current staff of the two offices so that everyone is capable of doing both jobs; and considered potential changes in the software currently used by both jobs.

Wendy Barker also spoke with both the Atkinson Tax Collector, Debra DeSimone, the Atkinson Town Clerk, Julianna Hale, and the Hampstead TC/TC Patricia Curran regarding specific training requirements and expenses for those two positions. Details of those conversations can be found in the Reorganization section of the appendices below.

Finally, and most importantly, the Committee notes that the office of Town Clerk is required by New Hampshire state law to be an elected position, while the office of Tax Collector is not. Therefore any decision to combine the two offices would require the remaining elected position to be that of Town Clerk.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The Committee broke the proposal down into two further questions.

1. Why the town would want to combine the two positions; and
2. If the decision is made to combine the Town Clerk and Tax Collector positions, what would be the timing of the proposed change?

Regarding the first question, the Committee believes there are three excellent and mutually reinforcing answers.

- A. To modernize the two two offices;
- B. To make them more efficient; and
- C. To increase accessibility.

Additionally, several of the individuals we interviewed, especially the Town Administrators and Managers, indicated that job accountability was one of the main reasons their towns had made the decision to combine, or might someday make that decision in the future. The reason for this was to make sure that at least one of the two positions was not subject to an election and could be hired and fired on the basis of job competence alone.

Cost benefits were not a main focus of our analysis. Although obviously relevant to the question, any actual cost savings and efficiencies achieved by combining the two positions would require closer examination than this Committee has been able to provide. Such an analysis would most properly be done by the town Administrator under direction of the Selectmen. The town Administrator has both better access to, and knowledge of, the particular costs and issues involved than does the Committee. Based on our conversations with various town clerks and tax collectors in similar towns across Rockingham County, each

town's different needs require different solutions to the ways in which they assign responsibility to the two departments, whether combined or separate.

The one clear answer we do have about cost, as made clear by Wendy in her reorganization analysis, is in the matter of remodeling expense. The Committee believes that the cost of physically combining the two offices would be minimal for Atkinson due to the fact that the offices are already side-by-side with a connecting door. As such, any construction costs would appear to be negligible.

Regarding the question of timing, should the Selectmen decide to follow the recommendation of the Study Committee and proceed with combining the two offices, we found that the people we interviewed generally recommended that the combination would best occur at a time when at least one of the two incumbents was ready to retire, and after the position of Tax Collector has already been made appointed rather than elected. This would require two warrant articles to be voted on by the town, the first being the change of the Tax Collector's position from elected to appointed, and the second being the combination of the two positions into one. This process is more fully explained in the Reorganization appendix below.

After careful review of the information collected, the Study Committee recommends the Selectmen move forward with the proposal to combine the Town Clerk and Tax Collector positions into a single position according to the timing recommendations laid out above.

Respectfully submitted 12/24/2020

Wendy Barker
Sam Butler
Beth Cacciotti
Phil Sherwood

APPENDIX 1 : REORGANIZATION

It was the committee's task to speak with several clerks representing towns that have merged the town clerk and tax collector offices into one department. In every case, the merge was accomplished many years ago, often too long ago for anyone currently in office to recall the specifics of the project. Therefore, the initial determining factor for combining the departments was not always known. Most cited population growth and increasing responsibilities as the leading probable cause.

Regardless of the lack of recollection of the specifics of the merge, most of the clerks we spoke with stated that this reorganization occurred due to the retirement or resignation of one or both (tax collector and town clerk) and that the position of tax collector at the time was appointed, or changed to appointed. The action of merging the two departments was presented to the citizens via a warrant on the ballot. Most of the people the Study Committee spoke with, who could recall details, suggested that this reorganization took place over a period of 2-3 years prior to the end of the current town clerk's term. In the case of Atkinson, this would require any warrant written for the 2021 ballot be for consideration at the end of the next town clerk's term (2024). Also, in our case, unless the Tax Collector is changed to an appointed position, this would coincide with the end of that position's elected term as well.

A description of the town clerk and tax collector positions, as well as the combined position, is described in the NHMA 2020 Edition of "Knowing the Territory", Chapter 4, Section D, Page 68 as follows. Topics such as vacancies, removals, terms and bonds are also detailed. It is important to note that per this publication, the person performing the duties of either or both positions must be bonded. *"The town treasurer, town clerk, tax collector and their deputies, as well as agents authorized to perform treasurer functions under RSA 41:29, VI, must be bonded at town expense. The purpose of the bond is to protect the town against loss through the failure of the officers to faithfully perform their duties, failure to account properly for all moneys or property received by virtue of their positions, or against fraudulent acts committed by them. The DRA determines the amount of the bond. RSA 41:6."* This should not be an additional expense

to the town since it is assumed current employees are bonded per this RSA.

https://www.nhmunicipal.org/sites/default/files/uploads/workshop-materials/knowning_the_territory_handbook.pdf

It is the opinion of everyone with whom we spoke that there are numerous benefits to having a combined office, the most favorable being convenience to the citizens they serve. Having a full staff trained in certain aspects of both office's functions and who are also cross-trained to cover variables in scheduling creates a seamless flow of service to the public.

None of the clerks we spoke with could see any drawbacks to the merge.

Training and Certification

Training

In most of the Rockingham County towns the Committee spoke with, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector department is structured using the following model:

- Full Time elected Town Clerk/Tax Collector(supervisor)
- Full Time appointed Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector (2 positions)
- Two Part Time Clerks

Given sufficient training, this staff is capable of handling the flow of annual work such as the twice annual tax collection and the periodic elections, which offset each other. Additionally, a staff of this size is sufficient to cover all daily administrative work and customer facing service. Most towns offer similar office hours to Atkinson for all services, allowing at least one extended day for customer convenience.

In order to fully incorporate both departments into one, all members of the combined staff should have the ability to perform certain tasks regarding tax collection and town clerical functions depending on their level of employment. They should

receive the appropriate cross-training required to successfully accomplish these tasks.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector (TC/TC) - Supervisory position with knowledge of all aspects of tax collection and town clerical functions. At the time of the reorganization the board or Town Clerk may decide that they would like to have either a Deputy or Assistant Town Clerk with the ability and level of responsibility required to fill in for the town clerk in the event of absence. Appropriate training is required and should take place during the year before the actual reorganization takes place.

Deputy/Assistant Town Clerk - As described above, training equal to that of the town clerk would be required.

Tax Collector Reporting Functions - At the time of the reorganization, the board may decide to have an individual similar to a Deputy Tax Collector who would be responsible for State and Department of Revenue communications and financial reporting. It is our understanding that only one individual can perform these activities and that in all cases it is either a deputy tax collector under the supervision of the TC/TC, or the TC/TC herself. In either case, a comprehensive knowledge transfer must take place in order to avoid any interruption of service to the customers. We have been told that this transition should take place at least a year before the actual reorganization takes place.

Clerical Positions - Any clerical positions should be cross-trained in all clerical and customer service functions of both offices. This can include, but is not limited to, vehicle, boat, dog, and voter registrations and tax bill processing. All clerks should be prepared to answer basic and frequent questions regarding both functional areas. At least a year of cross-training is advised in order to cover any functions that only occur annually.

All employees would need to have user licenses for the current software (Avitar and Interware) being used by the offices. Training should also be provided. It would be advantageous to explore the possibility of purchasing tax collection and

assessing modules from Interware in order to maintain ease of use when switching tasks, therefore preserving efficiency in customer service.

Certification

After speaking with other town clerks who already hold the combined position, past and present members of the NH City and Town Clerks' Association, as well as our own employees we obtained clarification of the term "Certification".

The initial search through the many different municipal websites disclosed clerical titles that included the term "Certified". It was our initial assumption that there was some type of requirement. Upon further research we discovered that there is no state certification required, however, the Department of Motor Vehicles and the US Election Assistance Commission do require a certain amount of training and the resulting certification for all NH Town Clerks.

The following is a list of "certifications" offered in the state of New Hampshire:

NHTCA/NHCTCA Joint Certification Program - This is not required, but rather it is considered a valued networking experience for employees of both functional areas. This program is offered in sections and different levels depending on the position held within the town. We have provided an example (Joint Certification Program.pdf) as well as a link to the 2019 schedule. The 2020 program was cancelled due to State Covid restrictions. We are not entirely sure if the program will be offered in 2021.

<http://nhctca.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Class-Schedule.pdf>

DMV Municipal Agent Certification/Training - This is required training for all town clerk department employees wishing to become Municipal Agents. There are different levels of training offered several times throughout the year. It is held in Concord

and is mandatory for any employee handling Motor Vehicle Records.

<https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/dmv/registration/municipal-agents/training.htm>

HAVA Election Training - This is also required training for all town clerk department employees. It is an Election Worker best practices series that is required for any town employee who will be handling/processing election materials.

<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/town-city-article/best-practices-series-election-worker-best-practices>

Financial Impact

Payroll/Benefits

In speaking with several town clerks in Rockingham county who hold the combined position we have found that there are several different factors in determining the pay rate of the positions required to properly staff the combined office. Those factors with the most influence are: employee experience and longevity, assigned responsibilities, town size/population, and existing pay matrix. In addition, most towns offer the same benefits package that Atkinson does (medical, retirement, PTO). The town of Atkinson's pay structure for this position would be determined by these factors, including our existing pay matrix.

Some examples on either end of the range are:

Town of Hampstead (population 8741) - combined TC/TC position with 20 years of experience. Supervises a staff of 2/3 employees (1 FT Deputy and 1 FT Clerk which may evolve into 2 PT clerks in the future). Current salary is approx. \$77,000

Town of Greenland (population 4146) - combined position with over 28 years of experience (13 as a TC, 15 as a deputy).

Supervises 3 employees (1 FT Deputy and 2 PT Clerks). Current salary is approximately \$57,000

These are both representative of the many clerks the Committee spoke with. We also noticed that most of the clerks we interviewed had a minimum experience of 12 years in their positions.

Physical space

Currently, Atkinson has both the Tax Collector and Town Clerk's offices adjoining with separate public entrances. Combining the two offices would cause little or no financial impact to accommodate both personnel and the public. Simply closing off the Tax Collector's office to the public by marking it "Employees Only" and using the door between the two offices as employee access to that office would serve both customer service needs and safe employee egress for to start. Consider adding another customer service window to that shared wall on the customer side of the plexiglass for future use.

Training/Certification

Most internal cross-training would be done during business hours and would be of no additional cost. However, due to time restrictions, there may be some training that will have to occur after business hours or on weekends. This would incur an additional payroll expense and would be at the discretion of the Town Clerk or Board of Selectmen.

The NHTCA/NHCTCA Joint Certification Program is \$600 per person/per program and is at the discretion of the town.

DMV and HAVA certifications are free of charge.

Software

All employees would need to have user licenses for the current software (Avitar and Interware) being used by the offices. Training should also be provided. We are in the process of

discovering what that would entail and the benefits of using Interware for all functions.

APPENDIX 2: INDIVIDUAL TOWN INTERVIEW NOTES

General Notes

Of the thirty-seven towns in Rockingham County, twenty-one have combined their Town Clerk and Tax Collector positions while sixteen have not. If one narrows the criteria to consider only the twenty-two towns with comparable populations to Atkinson (4k-10k), sixteen have combined and only six have not.

The list below is sorted alphabetically, with the towns that have combined listed first, and those that have not listed second.

BRENTWOOD

Daphne Woss, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

Eons ago. Previous person was doing both jobs anyhow

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

Wash

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

One stop shop / no need to send to a different office / or wait for an answer

What were the hours before and after combining?

Now: M/W/Th 8:30/4:30 Tues 8:30 - 7 / Fri 8:30 - 4 (32 hours) + one clerk

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

No one else wants the job.

CHESTER

Angela Sherwood, Town Secretary

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

Combined at least since the 1980s. Not sure of the exact date.

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

Unknown at this time.

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

Unknown at this time.

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

Work flow during busy times worked better as some of the activity is cyclical

What were the hours before and after combining?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

EPPING

Erika Robinson, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

No, too busy to combine into one office (personal opinion)

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

What were the hours before and after combining?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

FREMONT

Nicole Cloutier, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

Selectmen driven/change in leadership

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

Need to look at budget, wasn't clear at the time we spoke.

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

Increased hours of access

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

Increased hours of access

What were the hours before and after combining?

Not sure exactly but Covid has made everything appointment only.

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

GREENLAND

Marge Morgan, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

Done in 1970

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

No records she can find

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

Yes. Both cross-trained on all

What were the financial impacts of combining?

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

Needs at least 2 people

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

One stop shop / always a backup with same knowledge

What were the hours before and after combining?

M - F 8:30 - 4 (+ online + drop box) / sometimes one night a week (covid dependent)

Does each office use separate systems?

Yes / taxes / treasurer/ bookkeeper all use different systems / they like for checks & balances.

Other Comments

HAMPSTEAD

Patricia Curran, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

Reason determined in the 1980's. easier to service the citizens

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

All services available during business hours full time

What were the hours before and after combining?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

KINGSTON

Tammy Bakie, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?
Offices combined in 1987.

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?
Two full time employees. Deputy works 32 hours by choice (she's 80).

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

What were the hours before and after combining?
39 hours a week after combining

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

NEWMARKET

Terri Littlefield, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

Both positions retired and it was determined it was the right time to reorganize

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

What were the hours before and after combining?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

RYE

Donna Decotis, TC/TC

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

It was born out of a need to share space and consolidate. Population growth was steady in the 80s but inflation was forcing departments to expand (according to the town's smart plan from 1985.)

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

What were the financial impacts of combining?

Services provided for more hours. Coverage when people are sick. Better equipped to handle overflow (multiple residents seeking the same service simultaneously.)

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

Moving equipment was the most memorable takeaway

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

More access to in hours to services and efficiency in office space usage.

What were the hours before and after combining?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

SANDOWN

Angela Sherwood, Former Selectperson

Anonymous - The contact didn't want to share their name although has had direct knowledge of the departments as an employee.

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

AS - They were physically separated until a fire in the early 80s forced them to share offices. Stayed the same since even after expansion of Town Hall.

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

AS - Yes, although some support staff stay away from certain functions based on personal strengths.

Anon - Yes. Some staff excelled in different areas.

What were the financial impacts of combining?

AS - Too long ago unless we take a trip to the library but we don't even know which year it occurred and it would be quite the fishing expedition.

Anon- Not known. Although there is likely not adequate space for the two offices to separate.

What was the human resource impact (hours, training, new hires)?

AS - Combined offices allow for great access to residents for services. It's only occasional that support staff or part time help can't fulfill all the functions by the tax collector and clerk in the absence of colleagues.

Anon - If someone was poor at a certain job function there was generally always someone there that could better train them and or carry out the action for the taxpayer.

What are the benefits to residents/town govt?

AS - Better access to services.

Anon - Less likely to have someone unable to perform a function because of the cross-training. So fewer errors or time waiting for the resident.

What were the hours before and after combining?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

AUBURN

Kathleen Sylvia, TC

Susan Jenkins, Tax

William Herman, Town Manager

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

SJ- Yes. She thinks the town will seriously consider the question after she retires.

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

KS - Too expensive. Have to add a full time position with benefits.

SJ - She has no desire to be town clerk

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

WH - Never thought of combining. Might want to make collector appointed to ensure always having a competent collector. Tax collector on board, thinking of retiring in a couple of years. Thought is then to move motor vehicles over to the tax collector and make the town clerk part time, tax collector full time. Current collector has no desire to do motor vehicles. Several larger cities have already done this. Political considerations not important. Believes switching to appointed collector is two year process.

DANVILLE

Kimberly Burnham, Tax Collector and Town Administrator

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

Yes. Not enough business to justify combining. Might consider it when one of the two retires.

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

No current need.

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

NOTTINGHAM

Lori Anderson, TC

Chris Sterndale, Town Administrator

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

TC - Subject has come up in casual conversation, but never seriously. Consensus is the issue might be discussed if either the collector or clerk quit.

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

TC - There is a huge amount of knowledge and training that would be lost

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

CS - Town administrator has brought it up and it's in the back of selectmen's minds. Not something they're thinking about now as they have had stable employees. Worried that someday no one will run for tax collector. History of incompetent town clerks in the past might trigger the discussion. Think it might improve quality of service and hours. It's a personnel question not political. Would a town clerk want to take over both jobs? All incumbents would have to be on board unless it was a question of incompetence. Some folks might view it as a power grab by the selectmen. Public interested in longer hours for clerk, but otherwise doesn't care much about this question.

PLAISTOW

Martha Fowler, TC

Julie McNamara, Tax and Asst. Town Clerk

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

MF- Has only been considered casually. Nothing seriously discussed.

JM - Considered in 2012 but rejected because neither clerk nor collector wanted the other job.

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

MF -Both clerk and collector wanted to be elected not appointed.

JM - Julie has no desire to be town clerk. Happy working part time. Also have to hire and train new people.

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

MF - Town manager wanted to make the collector appointed rather than elected. Consolidation wasn't what was considered. (Sam was not able to talk to Town manager for confirmation.)

JM - Town manager looked into idea in 2011 but decided not to do it after both clerk and collector said they didn't like the idea.

SEABROOK

Cheryl Bowen, TC

Michelle Knowles, Tax

William Manzi, Town Manager

Have you ever considered combining two offices? Why? Why not?

CB - Never considered. Pleased with the way things currently are.

What was the determining factor(s) for combining/ not combining?

CB - Clerk's office too busy. Recently took on hunting and fishing.

MK - Both offices full time. Tax collector does sewer and water as well.

Do both departments share responsibilities (cross-trained)?

Does each office use separate systems?

Other Comments

WM - Moving to both appointed has been lightly discussed. Not currently on the selectmen's radar screen. Political question more than anything else. Manzi believes efficiency would be improved if the position was appointed. Public not clamoring for a change.