

CHAPTER 6

CITY OFFICIALS

Section 6.1 Exemption for Prisoners of War. Pursuant to RSA 261:157-a, the City of Somersworth hereby waives the fee charged for a permit to register one motor vehicle owned by any person who was captured and incarcerated for 30 days as defined in RSA 72:28 IV, and who was honorably discharged, provided the person provides to the Tax Collector satisfactory proof of these circumstances.

This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage, and any person entitled to said waiver who registered one vehicle prior to the effective date and after September 1, 1985, shall be entitled to a refund upon application and proper documentation. (Passed 11/18/1985.)

Section 6.2 Any vacancy in the office of Ward Clerk, Moderator, or Selectman shall be filled by the appointment of a qualified person by the Mayor with the consent of the City Council for the unexpired term. The person so chosen to fill the vacancy shall be of the same political party as the elected officer. The Mayor shall fill said vacancy at the first regular council meeting after such vacancy shall occur.

Emergency Appointment: In the event that a vacancy occurs due to an emergency and not a resignation, and in which case the ward official has to be absent for an election day only, a person will be appointed by the City Clerk for that election day only. (Passed 8/19/1975.) (Amended 12/1/1986.)

Section 6.3 The following procedure shall be followed for independent nominations for political office in the City of Somersworth.

1. Nomination Papers. The nomination of a candidate may be made by petition styled nomination papers. Such papers shall contain the name and residence of the candidate, the office for which he is nominated, the political party, if any, or principals he represents, and shall be signed by such persons only as are qualified to vote at the election of the candidates named in the petition. No voter shall sign more than one nomination paper for each officer to be voted for and no nomination paper shall contain the names of more candidates than there are offices to be filled. Each voter shall sign an individual petition.
2. Certification. Each nomination paper shall be submitted to a majority of the supervisors of the checklist of the ward or City if running at Large, in

which the signer resided or is registered, and they shall certify whether or not the signer is a legal voter in the said Ward or City.

3. Number. It shall require the names of fifty legal voters of a ward of a city to nominate a candidate elected by the voters of a ward of a city, or fifty legal voters of the city if running at large.
4. Filing of Nomination Papers. Nomination papers shall be filed with the City Clerk thirty days prior to the day of the election for all candidates for any office. The number of days herein given shall include Sundays, and shall end on the day before election at five o'clock in the afternoon.
(Passed 8/19/1975.)

Section 6.4 The Somersworth School Board elections shall be determined by plurality vote and not a majority vote as is provided in RSA 59:74 entitled "Special Provisions". (Passed 9/2/1975.)

Section 6.5 In lieu of filing the designated number of petitions as required by City Charter, candidates may pay to the City Clerk at the time of filing declarations of candidacy, the following fees:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Mayor | \$25.00 |
| Councilperson at Large | 5.00 |
| Ward Councilperson | 5.00 |
| School Board member at Large | 5.00 |
| Ward School Board Member | 5.00 |
| Ward Officer | 5.00 |

(Passed 6/7/1983.) (Amended 10/6/1986.) (Amended 05/16/2011.)

Section 6.6 Any candidate for whom a vote was cast for any office at the municipal election may apply for a recount in accordance with the provisions of the Somersworth City Charter, Section 2.9. Each candidate requesting a recount shall pay the City Clerk a fee according to the following schedule:

If the margin of defeat is 2 percent or less, there shall not be a fee. If the margin is greater than 2 percent but less than 10 percent, \$15 by ward and \$50 City wide or at large. If the margin is equal to or greater than 10 percent, \$100 in either case. Should the person requesting the recount be declared the winner, the fee shall be refunded. (Passed 10/14/1985.)

Section 6.7 Standing Committees of the City Council.

Section 6.7.1 Members of standing committees shall be appointed by the Mayor from amongst the membership of the City Council.

Section 6.7.1.1 Committee Chairperson

The Chair of any Standing Committee shall be appointed by the Mayor as spelled out by Council Rules. In the absence of the Chair and provided there is a quorum, the Committee members will appoint a temporary Chair.

(Passed 02/21/2006.)

Section 6.7.1.2 Committee Minutes

Standing Committees shall take meeting minutes and make them available in accordance with State of New Hampshire RSA 91-A, the so-called Public Right-to-Know Law. Committee minutes shall be approved by the Standing Committee at a subsequent Committee meeting.

(Passed 02/21/2006.)

Section 6.7.2 The function and duties of the standing committees shall be as follows:

Section 6.7.2.1 Government Operations Committee

The purpose of the Committee is to consider and recommend to the City Council changes in government operating policies and/or procedures where the Council has approval authority, facilitate annually the City Manager's performance evaluation process, to recommend changes to the City Council Rules and regulations as needed, and to review and recommend to the City Council changes to the City Personnel Plan as proposed by the City Manager as well as other matters referred to it.

(Amended 02/21/2006.)

Section 6.7.2.2 Finance Committee

The purpose of the Committee is to examine and recommend expenditures to the full Council, to authorize expenditures within its approved spending authority, to consider matters relating to the financial interest and budget of the City, as well as other matters referred to it.

Section 6.7.2.3 Recreation Committee

The purpose of the Committee is to consider matters relating to parks and recreational opportunities for all, recreational facilities and to assist in guiding the development of current and future recreational programs, as well as other matters referred to it.

Section 6.7.2.4 Public Safety Committee

The purpose of the Committee is to consider matters relating to Police and Fire services and other emergency response needs of the City, as well as other matters referred to it.

Section 6.7.2.5 Economic Development Committee

The purpose of the Committee is to be a liaison to the public and business community in regards to the economic conditions of commerce and industry within the City, to consider matters relating to the economic development of the City, and matters relating to the promotion and marketing of the City, as well as other matters referred to it. To review and recommend to the City Council any changes regarding property maintenance and enforcement, housing code review and compliance, and overall housing related issues.

(Amended 06/21/2010.)

Section 6.7.2.6 Public Works and Environment

The purpose of the Committee is to consider policy and ordinance matters and initiatives relating to City infrastructure including roads, buildings, and environmental matters such as water and wastewater treatment facilities, and municipal solid waste. It has the authority to recommend agreed upon policy, ordinance and/or initiative changes to the full City Council as well as other matters referred to it.

(Sections 6.7.2.2 through 6.7.2.6 passed 02/20/2006.)

Section 6.8 City Council Salaries. (Effective 1/1/1992).

Section 6.8.1 Each member of the City Council of the City of Somersworth shall receive an annual salary of \$1053 for attendance at all regular meetings of the City Council. If any member shall fail to attend any regular meetings of the Council, the sum of \$50 shall be deducted from his/her annual salary.

(Section 6.8.1 amended 07/14/2008.)

(Section 6.8.1 amended 07/13/2009.)

Section 6.8.2 City Council Meetings. The Council shall meet in regular session on the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m., unless otherwise agreed on by a majority of the members of the Council. When Monday is a holiday, the regular meeting shall be held on Tuesday following at the same

hour, unless otherwise agreed by a majority of the members of the Council. The place of the meeting shall be the Council Chambers at City Hall unless otherwise agreed by a majority of the members of the Council.

(Passed 12/14/2009.)

Section 6.9 Veteran's Property Tax Exemption.

(Passed 10/16/1989.) (Effective 4/11/1990.)

Section 6.9.1 Veteran's Exemption. The City adopts the provisions of RSA 72:28, V and VI for an optional veterans' exemption and an expanded qualifying war service for veterans seeking the exemption. The veterans' tax credit shall be \$250 with \$50 additional tax credit each successive tax year of 2005 through 2009. This veteran's tax credit of \$250 shall be effective for the tax amounts due for tax year 2004 (final bill due December 2004).

(Amended 11/17/2003 and 07/19/2004.)

Veteran's Tax Credit Amount – Tax Year Effective

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| \$250 - 2004 | \$350 - 2006 | \$450 - 2008 |
| \$300 - 2005 | \$400 - 2007 | \$500 - 2009 |

(Added 7/19/2004.)

Section 6.9.2 Service Connected Total Disability. The City adopts the provisions of RSA 76.35, IV for an optional property tax exemption on residential property for a service connected total disability. The disability exemption shall henceforth be \$1400 rather than \$700.

Section 6.9.3 Exemption for the Blind. Every inhabitant who is legally blind as determined by the administrator of blind services of the vocational rehabilitation division of the education department shall be exempt each year on the assessed value for property tax purposes of his/her residential real estate to the value of \$25,000. The term "residential real estate" as used in this section shall mean the same as defined in RSA 72:29. All applications made under this section shall be subject to the provisions of RSA 72:33 and RSA 72:34. This exemption shall be effective as of April 1, 1993. (Passed 3/1/1993.)

Section 6.10 City Accolades. The naming of City facilities, fields, parks or entity is an honor which is to be bestowed upon citizens who contributed to the progression of our community through countless hours and years of self-sacrifice and dedication for the greater good.

The naming of such facilities, fields, parks or any other entity of the City Government is to fit the historical intent and honor of the community as a whole and the passage of time assists with evaluating our past efforts.

Except under extraordinary circumstances:

- A. No City facility, field, park or entity shall be named after any current city or school employee until three years after their employment from said service.
- B. No City facility, field, park or entity shall be named after any citizen who currently holds local, state or federal office, unless the elected official has died in office or until three years after leaving office.
- C. No City facility, field, park or entity shall be named after any citizen who was not an employee of the city, school district or who did not hold local, state or federal office unless such said citizen has been recognized for exceptional service to the community.
- D. No City facility, field, park or entity shall be named after any city or school employee, local, state or federal official or private citizen without first having been held a public hearing.
- E. Upon completion of the public hearing all matters in said nature shall be referred to the appropriate City Council standing committee for further review prior to a second reading taking place on said matter.

(Section 6.10 passed 10/16/2006.)

Section 6.11 Joint Commission: City Council & School Board.

The Commission shall be comprised of two (2) City Councilors and two (2) School Board Members. Council Members of the Joint Commission shall be appointed by the Mayor, and School Board Members shall be appointed by the School Board Chair.

The Commission shall take meeting minutes and make them available in accordance with NH RSA 91-A, the so-called Public Right-to-Know Law.

The purpose of the Commission will be to continue the communication and collaboration between the two elected City bodies for the betterment of our Community. The Commission will provide a platform for discussion of issues which may be addressed by both the City Council and School Board.

(Section 6.11 passed 6/19/2017)