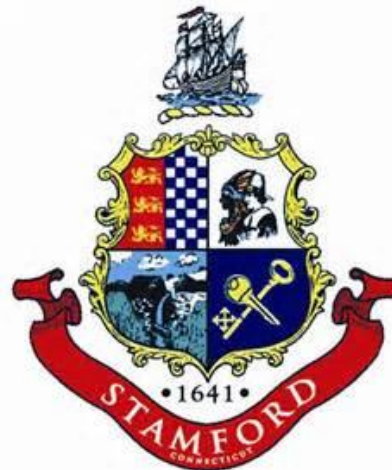


# City of Stamford Budget Presentation FY 2017-2018

Office of Legal Affairs  
April 26, 2017





# *Office of Legal Affairs*

The Office of Legal Affairs is comprised of the Law Department and the Human Resources Department. This presentation will cover the Law Department. A separate presentation will be made by the Human Resources Department.

## ■ **Mission**

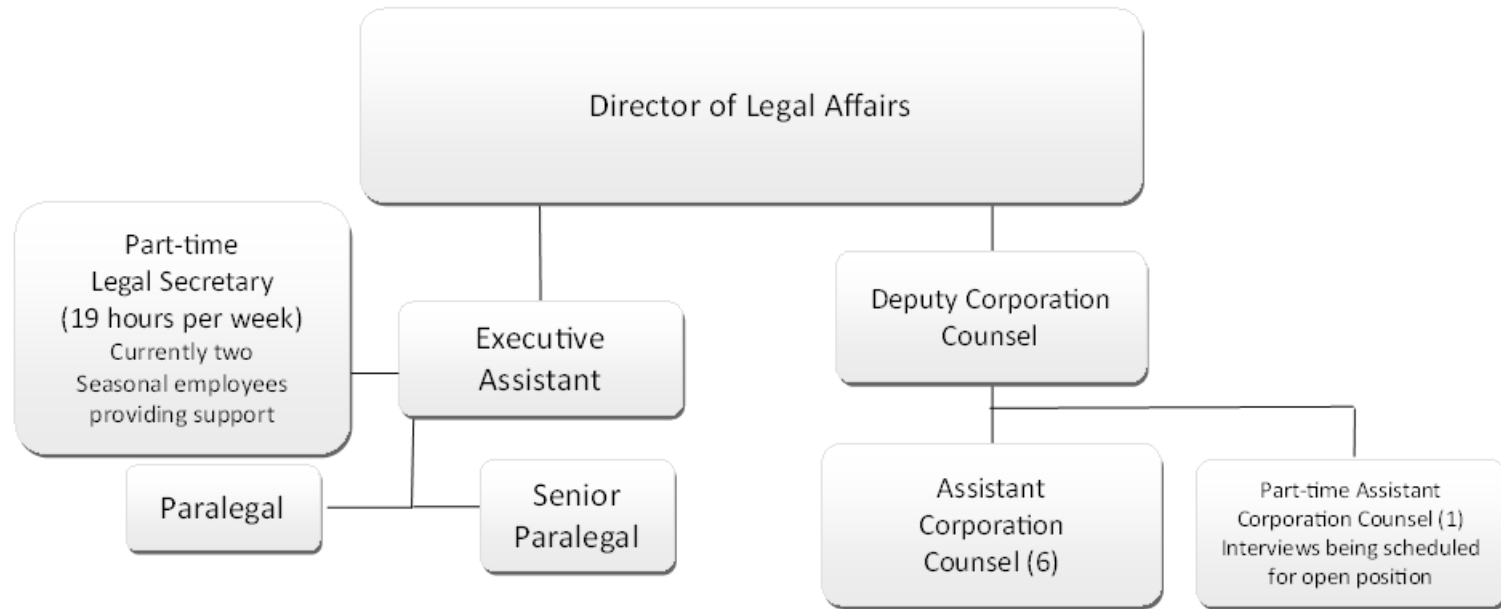
The Office of Legal Affairs provides legal services to all City officials, departments, boards, commissions and agencies. The Office of Legal Affairs also provides the professional human resources administration for the City of Stamford.

# Services Provided

(to citizens or departments)

Program	Services Provided (include Volume - if applicable)
Legal Services	Provide all required legal services to City officials, departments, boards, commissions and agencies
Litigation	Represent City officials, departments, boards, commissions and agencies in litigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 289 Pending lawsuits as of June 30, 2016</li> <li>• 102 lawsuits were filed in 2015/2016</li> </ul>
Claims	Manage claims against the City (i.e., pothole, City vehicle hit parked car, slip & fall): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 167 Claims were filed in 2015/2016</li> </ul>
Property Damage Collection & Other Collection	Collect damages on behalf of the City for damage to City property: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$57,235.03 in 2015/2016</li> </ul> Collect damages for illegal tipping and unpaid dumping fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$101,875 collected in 2015/16</li> </ul>
Delinquent Tax Accounts	Collect delinquent tax revenue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1,479,998.28 in 2015/2016</li> </ul>
Freedom of Information Requests	Respond to Freedom of Information requests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 355 requests in 2014 up by 35% over 2013/14</li> <li>• 718 requests in 2015/2016 up by 103% over 2014/2015</li> </ul>
Legal Opinions	Respond to requests for legal opinions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 written legal opinions</li> <li>• hundreds of informal legal opinions</li> </ul>
Contracting Process	Review, approve and process hundreds of contracts, agreements, RFP'S & bid waivers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estimated to be more than 500 in 2015/2016</li> </ul>
Other	Conduct training on legal issues including: freedom of information, police practices and contracting procedures. Draft ordinances/resolutions

# Law Department Organization, Personnel and Resources



*The Law Department utilizes outside counsel when conflicts exist or when the need arises for counsel with specialized expertise in a particular area of law (e.g., labor negotiations, education law for Board of Education, complex contracting and land use).*



# 2016-17 Highlights

## *What are the most significant accomplishments made or challenges faced by the department in the last FY?*

- Worked with the controller's office to implement the outside agency fiscal accountability agreement
- Worked with BOE to provide in house legal representation, assigned a dedicated Law Department attorney to BOE, and, after RFI, retained outside counsel with education law expertise to represent BOE and SPS
- Prepared contracts required for design and construction of Strawberry Hill School including a Project Labor Agreement, and Police Station construction projects; implemented use of AIA contracts for large projects
- Successfully defended the City in land use appeals
- Participated in negotiation and implementation of police and fire contracts
- Revised Blight Ordinance to address enforcement issues and drafted proposed Food Truck Ordinance for Board of Representatives incorporating input from relevant stake-holders
- Many favorable settlements, verdicts and dismissals in civil rights cases and personal injury cases that exposed the City to damages, attorney's fees and punitive damages
- Managed high volume of legal services with relatively small staff



# 2017-2018 Goals

## *What are the goals and plans that you have for your department this year?*

- Identify and address areas of land use policy implementation and enforcement that can be improved
- Coordinate with Board of Education to improve legal services to SPS/BOE and to reduce cost
- Identify and address areas of legal risk management where the need or opportunity exists to forestall or reduce the City's exposure to claims
- Develop program for providing in house, low cost continuing legal education [CLE] for the attorneys in the law department as now required by the Connecticut Rules of Practice
- Identify and address aspects of the City's purchasing process that can be improved to benefit the functionality of City purchasing

# ***Changes and Challenges***

- **Increase capacity with addition of a part-time Attorney**
  - Strengthen Land Use legal capacity
  - Enhance enforcement regarding land use matters
  - Increase capacity for expanded interface with Board of Education regarding legal work
- **Challenges**
  - **Complex litigation**
    - Defense of Badger cases
    - Defense of Springdale Volunteer Fire Company arbitration
    - Defense of Doe v. BOE cases
  - **Contracting projects**
    - Construction of Strawberry Hill School
    - Construction of Police Station



# Performance Measures

## Law Department Performance Measures

Performance Data	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY 15-16
Litigation Pending	523	557	582	310	289
Claims filed	133	92	140	235*	167
Property Damage collection	\$ 105,470	\$ 59,931	\$ 15,853	\$ 67,946	\$ 57,235
Delinquent Tax Collection	\$2,408,507	\$2,711,706	\$2,657,602	\$2,214,661	\$1,479,998
Freedom of Information Requests			264	355	718
Review, prepare & draft contracts				500	500 +/-
Legal Opinions	17	7	10	18	17
<b>*78 pothole claims in 2014/2015</b>					



Benchmark Against other towns	Stamford (pop 128k)	New Haven (pop. 130k)	Hartford (pop 124k)	Bridgeport (pop 147k)	Waterbury (pop 109k)	Greenwich (pop 62k)	Norwalk (pop 88k)
Corporation Counsel	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Deputy Corporation Counsel	1	2	1	1	1		1
Assistant Corporation Counsel	6	7	9	9	8	4	3
P/T Assistant Corporation Counsel	1			4	1		1
Executive Assistant	1	1	1	1		1	
Paralegal (Senior and standard)	2	5	2	3	3	1	
Legal Secretary		1	1	2	2	3	3
Other Staff	1**	1	6	3	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>21*</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
Budget for outside Profesional Legal services 14/15	\$600,000 (FY 15/16)	\$525,000 (FY 16/17)	(FY 2016)	\$700,000 (FY 2016)	\$545,000 (FY 2016)	\$1,118,000 (FY 16/17)	\$140,581 (FY 16/17)

\*numbers from 2014

\*\*19 hour secretary/currently 2 seasonal employees