



**Town of Arlington  
Office of the Town Manager**

**Sanford M. Pooler  
Town Manager**

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TO: Select Board  
FROM: Sandy Pooler, Town Manager *SMP*  
DATE: March 10, 2023  
RE: Warrant Article 13: Vote/Appointed Town Clerk

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I write to express my support for this article.

The Town Clerk is a key position in town responsible for maintaining and producing vital records, issuing licenses and permits, registering voters, and in recent years, conducting elections. All these activities, especially elections, come under heavy public scrutiny.

As Town Manager, I see the need for a professional Town Clerk, one who is accountable to this office for the Clerk's Office's performance.

The Town Clerk is not a political position. As the keeper of records and the manager of elections, it should be as far away from political as possible. It should be an office that performs its duties efficiently, effectively, and with transparency to the public. None of these requirements call for the sort of electoral accountability that one would want to see in an elected office.

Other department heads with vast public responsibilities and public impact are appointed, such as the Police and Fire Chiefs, the DPW Director, in fact, all the other department heads.

The Town has had great success in transforming elected positions into ones that are appointed by the Town Manager, the Town Treasurer being the most recent example. And while the current elected Town Clerk has done an excellent job, previously there have been severe problems of productivity, accountability, and communication when an election brings someone into office without the requisite skills.

The Town Clerk's Office should be subject to budget control, performance evaluation, and ongoing staff training/development. It would be in the Town's best interest to have an appointed Town Clerk.