

JANICE ROBERTS

1. Why are you running for city clerk?

I am grateful to the citizens of the City of Pine Bluff for electing me in 2020 as THEIR City Clerk! I want to continue improving systems and public services. I ask that the citizens "KEEP ME WORKING FOR THEM!" Vote to re-elect Janice L. Roberts for the City of Pine Bluff City Clerk on Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

By being re-elected, I can continue to deepen the connection between the community and local government. With my proven experience, I can highlight important topics and share helpful information regarding services provided by the Office of the City Clerk. I will continue to promote and apply transparency and greater access to City records and the legislative and democratic processes. As I have done during my first term, I will continue to communicate without bias or advocacy and disseminate information to residents through the City's website, social media, neighborhood watch groups, churches, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Southeast Arkansas College (SEARK), community outreach programs, and other avenues easily accessible by the citizens of Pine Bluff.

When I ran for City Clerk in 2020 and won, I did so with the commitment to respect the past and strengthen the future of this elected position. I fully understand that I was "elected" by the citizens of Pine Bluff and greatly appreciate the confidence the citizens of this great city have placed in my leadership in this public office. I am truly honored to be doing this vital work, and I ask for the citizen's continued support and vote to be re-elected as their Pine Bluff City Clerk.



2. Do you have prior experience working with local government? If so, what position did you hold?

Yes. Currently, Pine Bluff City Clerk, Pine Bluff City Council 2004-2010. Also, the State of Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research - Bills/ Recordkeeper 2006-2007, AR Department of Workforce Services - State Program Management Analyst 2007-2020, and the United States of America (Federal) Economist 1980-200.

3. Describe your experience preparing ordinances, resolutions, or proclamations for execution, recording, archiving, or distribution.

The City Attorney's Department drafts the ordinances and resolutions. My role as City Clerk is to make sure that all ordinances and resolutions are placed on the City Council agenda for discussion. I properly document the votes for the passage of these ordinances and resolutions. Once an ordinance or resolution is passed, I determine if the ordinance or resolution needs further action such as recording at the courthouse, publication in the newspaper, or some other further action. I am responsible for attesting that the mayor's signature is on all the passed ordinances and resolutions. The resolutions and ordinances are numbered then the completed document is scanned electronically as well as the original file in a binder for proper record-keeping

All ordinances are submitted to Municode for codification. We also now have all ordinances and resolutions uploaded to Munidocs for easier public viewing. The best way to prepare proclamations for either recording or distribution is to follow a template developed by the Arkansas Municipal League (AML) Legal Division, the Arkansas City Clerk's, Recorder's & Treasurer's Association (ACCRTA), or the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. Doing this ensures the proclamations for execution are presented in the same format each time, making them easy to understand and follow, and also assists in obtaining 100% legislative compliance with all laws, regulations, and standards that apply to the City Clerk's Department.

4. How do you go about ensuring the city is compliant with all laws, regulations, and standards that apply to your department?

Making sure the city remains compliant with all laws, regulations, and standards is a key element of the City Clerk's job. We monitor and review all laws, regulations, and standards set by federal, state, and local governments, to ensure the procurement, bidding, policies, etc. are enforced. Any questions concerning interpretation are discussed with the City Attorney's office or through the City Clerks' (CRT) community portal.

5. How organized are your fiscal records and accounts, and what one thing would improve the ability of others to easily access the records?

I am proud of the status of our records and how well they are organized. The vast majority of our fiscal records and accounts are stored electronically in our Financial Management Information Software System or are stored on the clerk's database in the computer. For those records that are still not stored electronically, we are aggressively looking into software; however, the other city departments would also have to be on board with purchasing new software.

6. What steps do you take to maintain transparency and open communication with the public?

All files/records/invoices/documents that come through the clerk's office are kept for record-keeping purposes according to the A.C.A. 14-59-114 schedule.

Under the Freedom of Information Act a resident of the state of Arkansas can request information. If the clerk's office is the custodian of such requested records, we make sure to provide the information according to the statute.

The public has the right to attend any public meeting.

Any issues that are discovered in the clerk's office are immediately brought to the attention of council members, the mayor, and the city attorney.

7. Describe your experience in collaborating with other departments within the city government.

As the City Clerks looks at "making real" changes to Pine Bluff's City Government, we dispelled the notion that it is acceptable for the government to "just" consult with the community on the important issues affecting them, and engage/connect the community at all levels.

We interact with other departments in the city daily. Customer service and professionalism are priorities for the City Clerks when interacting daily with all city departments and the general public. If information is requested, we are set to provide the information expeditiously.

- Operate in a common theme of government by communicating data entry issues, providing assistance with obtaining proper documentation to ensure compliance, walking in late payments to utility companies, and/or directly contacting vendors to request pay extension; is this good business practice... NO; but to drive the department's operability/achievability and provide required services to the general public...! DO!

- **Make sure the department heads and data entry staff are on the same page (clear understanding and knowledge) of all laws, regulations, and standards set by federal, state, and local governments**
- **Ensure the departments abide by the procurement laws, bidding process, invoice policies and procedures clearly defined and understood.**

8. What steps would you take if you discovered a potential violation of city ordinances or policies?

- **Conduct detailed internal investigations to determine whether actions violate relevant city, state and federal rules and regulations.**
- **Enforce regulatory compliance necessitates adherence to city, state and federal laws, rules and regulations.**
- **Collaborate with the City Attorney, City Council and Mayor on findings of deceptive actions.**

9. Can you describe your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Municipal Clerk?

The Office of City Clerk is an elected position with duties prescribed by the Arkansas State Constitution (PDF) through various Arkansas General Assembly legislative acts. The City Clerk is the person responsible for legislative operations of the City in conjunction with the Mayor, City Council, City Attorney, City Treasurer, and Municipal Judges.

The Office of the City Clerk serves as an information center whose services impact a diverse clientele, including the public, the media, and other government entities. Although the City Clerk's Office is traditionally associated with municipal election petitions and recording the minutes of the City Council Meeting, its daily scope of business demands versatility, alertness, accuracy, and patience when providing the services listed below.

The Clerks serves as the official day-to-day Administrative Services Administrator for the City of Pine Bluff. Develops, Plans, and Implements the goals and objectives of the City Clerk's office by providing high-level administrative directions:

- **Performs legislative research for Council Members.**
- **Engages the Religious Community in City Council meetings and other events as requested.**
- **The Clerk makes recommendations/suggestions to the Council Members based on public calls and complaints received in the Clerk's Office.**
- **The Clerk develops, Establishes, and Implements monthly Retirement Reports.**
- **The Clerk is the City's Non-Uniformed Pension Administrator.**
- **The Clerk is the Secretary and a Voting member of the Non-Uniformed Retirement Pension and Depository Boards.**
- **The Clerk develops, implements, and maintains the Clerk's Annual Budgets.**
- **The Clerk is the City's Bill Payment Processor.**
- **Maintains Revenue Bonds Reports.**
- **The Clerk is the Processor and Point of Contact for the City's Department's Contractual Bids.**
- **The Clerk presides over all City's Departments Bid Openings.**
- **The City Clerk's Office coordinates and prepares agendas for the City Council Regular and Special Called Meetings, signs and countersigns ordinances, resolutions, and other official documents.**
- **Assists and coordinates with other City Departments to carry out city legislation.**
- **Researches City, County, State, and Federal Codes and Statutes.**
- **Responsible for codification of Codes for the City of Pine Bluff Code Books.**
- **Maintains and preserves the City Seal.**
- **The Clerk maintains and archives all (historical) ordinance and resolution books.**
- **Attends all meetings of the City Council, reads according to established order of procedure, all motions, resolutions, and ordinances listed on each agenda, if needed.**
- **Records and transcribes minutes of each City Council meeting and others as required.**

- **Records and publishes ordinances and resolutions of each Pine Bluff City Council Meeting as required by State Statute or ordinance, ensuring compliance with those laws.**
- **Assigns numbers to ordinances and resolutions passed or adopted by the Pine Bluff City Council with distributions of ordinances and resolutions processed for Department Directors and others, as designated.**

The City Clerk has signature and seal authority required on all ordinances and resolutions and other official documents of the City. The City Clerk's Office is a City-wide information and document resource center.

The Mission of the Pine Bluff City Clerk's Office: It is to address and approach the challenges of the 21st Century, such as digital transformation and increasing public expectations, effectively and efficiently by addressing all statutory obligations with respect to elections petitions, records, and legislation of the City of Pine Bluff.

The vision of the Pine Bluff City Clerk's Office: The vision of the City Clerk's Department is to develop and implement cutting-edge systems for exceptional values to support the citizens, city council members, colleagues (City Attorney, Mayor, and Treasurer) and other professions; to maintain excellence in the area of record management and grow into current technology that will give access to the public, showing our government commitment of transparency.

10. Why do you believe you are the right candidate for this City Clerk position? Simple - PROVEN EXPERIENCE! I am the current City Clerk with the "DIRECT EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE" of this elected position and the city, state and federal rules and regulations for local government administration. Since 2021, I have continually improved the vital services of the Clerk's Office core commitment. I have maintained the office operations of transparency, service, and integrity.

Because of my ethical morals and government operational values that drive my professional actions:

- **Respecting rules and ethical obligations;**
- **Thinking forward and anticipating complications;**
- **Developing positive professional relationships;**
- **Being hardworking, dedicated, professional, and "going above and beyond" the call of duty;**
- **Knowing and staying abreast of city, state, and federal laws and regulations, enactments, and coercive measures;**
- **Being responsible; and**
- **Defining processes.**

The promise I make about the approaching four years is the one I made when I was first elected City Clerk; that is: "The Office of the City Clerk will be progressive and proactive in connecting the residents to City Government.

As we conclude 2023 and enter the 2024 election year, it has been the honor of my life to serve the City of Pine Bluff. Being the City Clerk has also been a great privilege and learning experience. The knowledge I have gained continues to guide me in this upcoming race, with the approval of the voters and will culminate in another term of continued PROGRESS for our City.

I, humbly, ask for an opportunity to KEEP ME WORKING FOR THE PEOPLE OF OUR BELOVED CITY.

MARY LIDDELL

1. Why are you running for city clerk?

I am running for City Clerk because I excel in administrative work. My skills go beyond just typing. I have project management skills, leadership skills, and sound decision-making skills. I can prioritize my work, I have outstanding listening skills, and I love working and talking to people. I would like to utilize my former work skills as a Loan Officer and Processor to make sure the city clerk's office is run efficiently. As a retired educator, I would like to continue the work ethic that I use in and out of the classroom. It is important to have a great relationship with the employees that you work with.

2. Do you have prior experience working with local government? If so, what position did you hold?

For the last 7 years, I have worked as a floater for the City of Pine Bluff. I visit at least 15 of the offices in the building. I was the City of Pine Bluff's 2020 Census Coordinator. I had over 100 people working to make sure that all citizens in Pine Bluff were counted. I worked at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff as the USDA Liaison Officer making sure that the university and USDA worked hand in hand to help students find jobs during the summer and after graduating from college. The city clerk's office acts as a liaison between the city council and the general public ensuring transparency and communication.

3. Describe your experience preparing ordinances, resolutions, or proclamations for execution, recording, archiving, or distribution. As a floater, I worked many times in the mayor's office preparing resolutions and proclamations for the general public.



I prepared ordinances and other documents when I worked for the Farmers Home Administration (FMHA) and the National Bank of Commerce making sure that the mortgage loan paperwork was completed, filed and recorded.

4. How do you go about ensuring the city is compliant with all laws, regulations, and standards that apply to your department?

The city clerk must understand the ordinances that are passed by the city council. If a city ordinance is violated there should be a consequence. The violation could be a fine. It is important to check the specific ordinance and local regulations to understand the exact consequences of a particular violation.

5. How organized are your fiscal records and accounts, and what one thing would improve the ability of others to easily access the records? At present, I have no fiscal records and accounts that I am responsible for as it relates to the City Clerk's office. Records should be kept in a secure place and kept safe. They should be accessible for use by the public and city officials (except as restricted by law).

6. What steps do you take to maintain transparency and open communication with the public?

Without the citizens, there would be no job for the city clerk. The city clerk must maintain a relationship with all citizens, not just a few. Strong communication abilities are essential for effective interaction with all citizens and stakeholders. I will have an open-door policy and use sound judgment when dealing with any situation.

7. Describe your experience in collaborating with other departments within the city government.

Working as the 2020 Census Coordinator it was important for me to visit every office in city hall and to meet the department heads. The purpose was to explain the importance of the Census and to get them to allow me to have small workshops and meetings with the employees. It was important to establish a working relationship not only with the employer but also with the employees.

8. What steps would you take if you discovered a potential violation of city ordinances or policies?

I will make sure that I report the violation to the proper department. If it is a violation of a city ordinance or policies that falls within the city clerk's office, I would do the following:

- 1. Convince the violator to voluntarily cease the violation.**
- 2. Report the violation to the regulatory agency.**
- 3. File a formal complaint.**
- 4. Take the complaint to the next level.**
- 5. Apply political pressure.**
- 6. Take direct action.**
- 7. Initiate legal action if necessary.**

9. Can you describe your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Municipal Clerk?

A municipal clerk is responsible for a variety of legal, clerical and administrative tasks within a municipality. During the city council meetings, municipal clerks record minutes. He/she edits and finalizes the minutes before distributing them to relevant staff members and municipal officials.

Municipal clerks schedule appointments and manage official forms and documentation. Prepare and maintain official reports, reference materials, and legal documents. They ensure accurate record-keeping and compliance with regulations. Provide clerical assistance to the City Council. Invoices are also processed through the City Clerk's office.

10. Why do you believe you are the right candidate for this City Clerk position? I have been blessed with many skills that I would like to utilize to carry out the task as the City Clerk. Having leadership skills, computer skills, and administrative skills, will be a plus for the City Clerk's office. Since moving back to Pine Bluff I have spent the last seven years volunteering my services to help citizens in everything that affects their livelihood. I would like to continue helping the Pine Bluff residents but in the capacity of the City Clerk.

I care for the future of Pine Bluff. I know that the work that the City Clerk does impacts everyone who lives in the city. I want to contribute to doing good work, which eventually means contributing to a better life for all citizens.