

Preserving the Past, Protecting the Future



HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY

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Front Cover

Early 18th century tax abstract. *Tax Abstracts*, 1739-1804. Office of the Town Clerk. Newtown, CT.
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Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program FY2011 Legislative Report

I. Description of Grants

a) Goals and Objectives

The primary objective of the Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program has been to provide financial assistance to Connecticut's 169 towns and cities for the preservation and management of municipal public records. The program provides a targeted grant to each town that applies for an eligible project. Until recently, the program also funded competitive grants that allowed a small number of towns to pursue larger projects than is possible with the targeted grants. However, because the program relies on revenue generated by filing fees from real estate recording, the stagnant real estate market has resulted in barely sufficient revenue to cover the targeted grants let alone any competitive grants.

The targeted grant program offers a wide variety of eligible projects. The Office of the Public Records Administrator continues to identify needs and expand the types of projects eligible for funding beyond the initial emphasis on preservation and conservation of land records. Consequently, many more types of public records throughout town halls have been preserved and made more accessible to citizens across the state.

b) Grant Awards

The Office of the Public Records Administrator awarded 149 targeted grants for a total of \$573,000 during FY2011. This includes 97 Preservation/Conservation projects for \$195,262; 84 Organization and Indexing projects for \$266,729 for; 29 Storage and Facilities projects for \$81,708; and 9 Program Development projects for \$29,301. The reduction in the total amount awarded compared to the previous fiscal year is the result of the long-term decline in revenues from land recording fees as well as the loss of \$900,000 that was "swept" from the Historic Documents Preservation Fund for deficit mitigation at the end of FY2010 exhausted the funding cushion built by the State Library to keep award levels stable.

July 2010 Awards - Cycle 1

a. Targeted Grants

Municipality	Category	Amount
Andover	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Ashford	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Avon	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Barkhamsted	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000

Municipality	Category	Amount
Berlin	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Bethany	Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Bethel	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Bethlehem	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Bloomfield	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Bolton	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Bozrah	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Branford	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Bridgeport	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$9,000
Bridgewater	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Bristol	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Burlington	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Canaan	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Canton	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Chaplin	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation; Program Development	\$3,000
Cheshire	Storage & Facilities	\$6,000
Clinton	Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Colchester	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Colebrook	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Columbia	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Cornwall	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Coventry	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Cromwell	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Darien	Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Deep River	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Derby	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Durham	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
East Granby	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
East Haddam	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
East Hampton	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
East Hartford	Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
East Haven	Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
East Lyme	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000

Municipality	Category	Amount
Easton	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Ellington	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Enfield	Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
Essex	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Farmington	Program Development	\$3,000
Franklin	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Glastonbury	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Granby	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Greenwich	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Griswold	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Groton	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
Hamden	Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
Hartford	Organization & Indexing	\$9,000
Hartland	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Harwinton	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Hebron	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Killingly	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Killingworth	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Lebanon	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Lisbon	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Litchfield	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Madison	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Manchester	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
Mansfield	Preservation & Conservation; Program Development	\$3,000
Marlborough	Program Development	\$3,000
Meriden	Program Development	\$6,000
Middlebury	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Middlefield	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Middletown	Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$6,000
Milford	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Montville	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Morris	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Naugatuck	Preservation & Conservation; Program Development; Storage & Facilities	\$6,000
New Britain	Organization & Indexing; Preservation &	\$6,000

Municipality	Category	Amount
	Conservation; Storage & Facilities	
New Fairfield	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
New Hartford	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
New Milford	Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
Newington	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Newtown	Preservation & Conservation; Program Development	\$6,000
Norfolk	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
North Branford	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
North Canaan	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
North Haven	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Norwich	Storage & Facilities	\$6,000
Old Lyme	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Oxford	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Plainville	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Pomfret	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Portland	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Preston	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Putnam	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Redding	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Ridgefield	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Rocky Hill	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Salem	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Scotland	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Seymour	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Sharon	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Shelton	Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$6,000
Sherman	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Simsbury	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
South Windsor	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Southbury	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Southington	Storage & Facilities	\$6,000
Sprague	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Stafford	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Stamford	Preservation & Conservation	\$9,000

Municipality	Category	Amount
Sterling	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Stonington	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Stratford	Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
Thomaston	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Tolland	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Torrington	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Vernon	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Voluntown	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Wallingford	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Warren	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Washington	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Waterbury	Preservation & Conservation	\$9,000
Waterford	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Watertown	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
West Hartford	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Weston	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Westport	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Wethersfield	Preservation & Conservation; Program Development	\$6,000
Willington	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Wilton	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Winchester	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Windham	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Windsor	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Wolcott	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Woodbridge	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Woodbury	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Woodstock	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Total		\$507,000

b. Competitive Grants

No grants were awarded due to insufficient funds.

December 2010 Awards – Cycle 2

a. Targeted Grants

Municipality	Category	Amount
Brookfield	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
East Windsor	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Eastford	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Goshen	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Hampton	Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Kent	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Monroe	Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
New Haven	Organization & Indexing	\$9,000
New London	Organization & Indexing	\$6,000
Orange	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Plainfield	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Prospect	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Suffield	Organization & Indexing; Preservation & Conservation; Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Thompson	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Trumbull	Preservation & Conservation	\$6,000
Union	Storage & Facilities	\$3,000
Westbrook	Preservation & Conservation	\$3,000
Windsor Locks	Organization & Indexing	\$3,000
Total		\$66,000

b. Disaster Recovery Grants

There were no requests for disaster recovery grants in FY2011.

II. Administrative Activities

a) Program Development

Given the reductions in funding, the staff proposed no changes to the program scope or funding areas for FY2011. Continuing declines in revenue due to the recession led to the additional reduction in grant award levels from the previous year. As a result, targeted grant amounts for FY2011 were reduced by 40% from \$5,000 to \$3,000 for small towns

(less than 25,000 in population), \$10,000 to \$6,000 for medium towns (population of between 25,000 and 99,000) and \$15,000 to \$9,000.

No competitive grants were awarded for FY2011 due to insufficient funding. In order for the program to offer competitive grants again, it will need to build up the fund's balance to an amount capable of supporting the competitive grants, in addition to restoring the targeted grants to a more appropriate level. The amount for disaster recovery grants remained at \$10,000, but would be dependent upon the availability of funds at the time of the application.

The municipal population figures have been updated to reflect the changes from the 2010 census. Four towns moved from the small to the medium funding level. They are Farmington, Mansfield, South Windsor, and Windham. No towns moved to a lower funding level. As a result there are now 124 towns in the small town category, 40 towns in the medium town category and 5 towns in the large towns category.

b) Town Clerk Training

The Office of the Public Records Administrator presented the twelfth and thirteenth in a series of workshops for town clerks through the Historic Documents Preservation Program in conjunction with the Connecticut Certified Municipal Clerk Institute during FY2011. On December 4, 2010 Donia Conn of the Northeast Document Conservation Center, presented "Municipal Records Preservation: The Basics and Beyond." The workshop, attended by 23 town clerks, included information on records materials, environmental control, storage and handling, security, microfilming, digitization, conservation, and disaster preparedness.

On June 14, 2011, Ms. Conn also served as the presenter for two half-day workshops for town clerks entitled, "Disaster Recovery: The Damp, the Wet and the Ugly," The workshop focused on hands-on recovery methods for wet records. Thirty-nine clerks attended the sessions. The December and June workshops both received very favorable evaluations.

c) Advisory Committee

The following individuals served as members of the Historic Documents Preservation Program Advisory Committee during FY2011:

Nancy Bray, Colchester Town Clerk
Jane Cullinane, Preservation Librarian
Mary Louise Jensen, Building Consultant
Dr. Mark H. Jones, State Archivist
Joyce P. Mascena, Glastonbury Town Clerk
Therese Pac, Bristol Town Clerk
Carla Pomprowicz, Hebron Town Clerk
LeAnn Power, Public Records Administrator
Joseph Quartiero, Torrington Town Clerk
Virginia Salisbury, Southbury Town Clerk

c) Advisory Committee (cont.)

Mark Smith, Fiscal Administrator
Antoinette Spinelli, Waterbury Town Clerk
Patricia H. Strauss, Westport Town Clerk
Louisa Trakas, Plainfield Town Clerk
Lisa A. Valenti, North Branford Town Clerk
Sandi Wieleba, East Hampton Town Clerk
Kendall F. Wiggin, State Librarian

III. Financial Statement

Historic Documents Preservation Fund

FY2011 receipts	\$1,169,374
FY2011 interest accrued	<u>\$1,651</u>
	\$1,171,025
FY2010 balance carried forward	<u>\$790,467</u>
	\$1,961,492
Unexpended FY2010 grant funds returned	<u>\$204</u>
Total	\$1,961,696
Grants awarded	
<i>Targeted</i>	\$573,000
<i>Competitive</i>	N/A
<i>Disaster Recovery</i>	<u>\$0</u>
Total Grants Awarded	\$573,000
FY2011 operating expenses	<u>\$304,127</u>
Total	\$877,127
Year End Balance	\$1,084,569

IV. Local Projects

CGS §7-34a(d) states that one third of the amount paid for fees shall be retained by the town clerk and used for the preservation and management of historic records. Many town clerks utilize the funds for projects such as reformatting records from paper to electronic media with a microfilm backup; purchasing equipment and supplies to improve internal records management; and improving intellectual access to the town’s vital records, minutes, land records, maps, town code and charter through indexing projects. Town clerks also may use the funds to support staff training and continuing education.

The revenue from this fee is to be kept in a separate account. The original intent for the local historic preservation fund was to provide some relief to the town clerks from the municipal budgetary process. The fund was to allow the town to make records management improvements to benefit future records as well as preserve older records without being tied to budgets and political climates. Even the smallest towns have the means to improve records services to their citizens.

On occasion, town clerks have had difficulties accessing these local funds especially in tight economic times when fiscal officers or finance boards take them to supplement the general fund. In these circumstances, the Office of the Public Records Administrator works with the town clerk to educate finance officials and return access to the funds.

V. Findings and Recommendations

During FY2011 the cumulative amount awarded under the grant program surpassed \$11 million. From FY2002 through FY2011, 1,459 grants have been awarded for a total of \$11,179,901. This includes 1,427 targeted grants (\$10,014,552), 4 disaster recovery grants (\$18,675) and 28 competitive grants (\$1,146,674). As a result of improved records management functions in the towns, the Office of the Public Records Administrator has seen a dramatic increase in the number of disposal requests for records past their retention period. As towns eliminate unnecessary records, they become more efficient and provide better services to their citizens.

Fund revenues appear to have reached bottom level. Total revenues for FY2011 dropped nearly 4% from the previous year after having risen 5% the year before. After close examination of the fund balance, the State Librarian and the Public Records Administrator set the funding levels at \$3,500, 6,000 and \$9,000 for FY2012. The smaller towns received a slight increase in their grant fund levels. Given the low fund balance, competitive grants were suspended for the coming fiscal year.

The town clerks attempted to introduce legislation to create an additional filing fee for land recordings that would have been used for electronic records management and preservation. The State Library would have received two dollars of the proposed fee for the preservation and management of electronic records collections maintained by the State Library and for development and implementation of a statewide electronic records management initiative for records created and maintained by state agencies, municipalities and quasi-public agencies. Unfortunately, the proposal did not find a legislative sponsor prior to the deadline to submit stand-alone bills.

The Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program is a beneficial program for the citizens of the State of Connecticut. Even in difficult economic times, the program continues to assist municipalities in making significant progress in preserving, maintaining, and accessing their most valuable records.

Respectfully submitted,



LeAnn Power, CRM
Public Records Administrator