



ESTABLISHED 1659

**CITY OF NORWICH**  
CONNECTICUT

John Salomone  
City Manager  
(860) 823-3747

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Norwich, CT 06360  
Fax (860) 885-2131

November 15, 2017

Dale S. Plummer  
25 Broadway, Apt. 204  
Norwich, CT 06360

RE: Advisory opinion 2017-17

TOWN CITY CLERK  
NORWICH CT

2017 NOV 22 A 11:52

RECEIVED

Dear Mr. Plummer,

Thank you for submitting a request for the advisory opinion of the Ethics Commission with respect to accepting work from the Norwich Historical Society, Inc as City Historian.

The discussions about this opinion again came down to parts of the job description of the City Historian. "Promote an awareness of and an appreciation for the city's history, through research, writing and public speaking; through publications, projects, exhibits, displays, celebrations and commemorations; through the maintenance of plaques, markers and monuments; and through the preparation of classroom aids, guides, workshops and training. . . . Serve as a liaison among the city's museums, libraries and historical associations and with similar outside groups, to encourage historical coordination, cooperation and resource sharing. Maintain a reference library of historical information. Serve as a central referral point for inquiries for information" (City of Norwich Charter and Ordinances, Sec. 2-19, subsection 1 and 3.)

Section 2.19, subsection 4 allows the City Historian to "expend funds and obtain contributions and grants to carry out these duties". This certainly would allow you to apply for grants and contributions to support the work of the office of the City Historian and any programs that would originate from that office. It would be acceptable for the Norwich Historical Society to make a contribution to the office of the City Historian. However, the Commission feels that for you to enter into a paid contract as a consultant with the Norwich Historical Society for work that falls within your stated duties as City Historian may be considered unacceptable.

While we appreciate the proposed project is perhaps much larger in scope than anticipated when the job duties were established, we have based our decision on the job description. We note that if you want to go forward with this contract, there are likely some other avenues that you could pursue to address the ethics issue including but not limited to (a) revising your job description to allow for such projects and contracts, (b) asking the City Council to reconsider your request as a one-time special project, in effect revising your job description to address this one project, or (c) resigning your position. During our discussions it was also our opinion that you could do similar work, as described in the proposed contract, for municipalities and entities other than Norwich.



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If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further with the Ethics Commission, please feel free to let me know.

Kind Regards,

Carol Menard  
Ethics Commission Chairperson