

WHO'S WHO IN NYC GOVERNMENT: THE MAYOR

- ✓ Elected by the City's voters every four years
- ✓ May only serve two terms
- ✓ Chief Executive Officer of the City: In charge of ensuring the well-being of the City's citizens and the functioning of the City's agencies

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Works with the Borough Presidents to prepare and submit the City's budget to the City Council every year
- ✓ Signs the budget when it is approved by the Council
- ✓ Signs or vetoes all legislation passed by the Council; the Council can override a veto by a 2/3 majority
- ✓ Appoints the heads of City agencies and departments

RESOURCES

Community Assistance Unit

- ✓ Coordinates the activities of City agencies
- ✓ Coordinate Town Hall meetings
- ✓ Often represent the Mayor at community meetings

Mayor's Action Center

- ✓ Serves as a clearinghouse for all letters and phone calls from individuals in New York City
- ✓ Receives complaints about City services

Mayor's Voluntary Action Center

- ✓ Acts as a clearinghouse for recruitment and referral of volunteers for projects around the City

HOW TO CONTACT

Web site: www.nyc.gov/html/om/home.html

City Information Hotline: 311

WHO'S WHO IN NYC GOVERNMENT: THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE

- ✓ Elected by the City's voters every four years
- ✓ May only serve two terms
- ✓ Represents the consumers of City services and presides over the meetings of the City Council.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Serves as an ombudsman, or go-between, for individuals having trouble with City services
- ✓ Reviews and investigates complaints about City services
- ✓ Determines whether agencies are responsive to the public
- ✓ Monitors compliance of City agencies with the City Charter
- ✓ Makes recommendations to improve agency programs
- ✓ Can sponsor legislation in the City Council
- ✓ Votes in the Council in the event of a tie
- ✓ In the event of the Mayor being removed or resigning, acts as Mayor until the next election.
- ✓ Will pursue investigations of City agencies in response to stated public concerns, or of larger public health or consumer issues.

HOW TO CONTACT

Web site: www.pubadvocate.nyc.gov

City Information Hotline: 311

WHO'S WHO IN NYC GOVERNMENT: THE COMPTROLLER

- ✓ Chief financial officer and auditor for the City
- ✓ Elected by the City's voters every four years
- ✓ May only serve two terms

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Conducts performance analyses of City agencies to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of City services
- ✓ Advises the Mayor, the City Council and the public of the City's financial conditions
- ✓ Issues financial reports
- ✓ Makes recommendations on City programs and operations, fiscal policies and financial transactions
- ✓ Settles and adjusts any claims against the City
- ✓ Issues and sells City bonds
- ✓ Maintains the City bank accounts

HOW TO CONTACT

Web site: www.comptroller.nyc.gov

City Information Hotline: 311

WHO'S WHO IN NYC GOVERNMENT: BOROUGH PRESIDENTS

- ✓ Administrative head and executive official of the borough
- ✓ Elected by the borough residents every four years
- ✓ May only serve two terms
- ✓ Must be a resident of the borough when elected and throughout his or her term

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Works with the Mayor to prepare the proposed annual budget
- ✓ May review, comment on and appeal major land use decisions
- ✓ May initiate legislation in the City Council and propose zoning changes
- ✓ Monitors and modifies delivery of City services within the borough
- ✓ Appoints members to the Community Boards in their borough
- ✓ Chairs the Borough Board and Borough Service Cabinet (see below)

OFFICE STRUCTURE

Borough Boards:

These comprise the chairs of each Community Board in the borough and the Councilperson from each district in the borough. Borough Boards have the same general function as Community Boards (see *Community Boards* fact sheet) but at a borough level:

- ✓ Advise on zoning variances and other land use issues
- ✓ Can initiate and review comprehensive plans for the boroughs
- ✓ Develop budget priorities and needs for the borough
- ✓ Evaluate progress on capital developments
- ✓ Mediate disputes between Community Boards

Borough Service Cabinet:

Comprises borough officials appointed by the head of each City agency that delivers services in the borough (e.g., the Parks Borough Commissioner).

- ✓ Coordinates delivery of City services throughout the borough
- ✓ Deals with interagency problems
- ✓ Plans and develops programs based on needs and priorities of the borough
- ✓ Consults with residents and Community Boards about service problems and issues

HOW TO CONTACT

City Information Hotline: 311

- ✓ Each borough president has either a Community Affairs Director or Public Relations staff through which he or she can be reached.
- ✓ All the borough presidents have websites, accessible through the New York City website, www.nyc.gov.

WHO'S WHO IN NYC GOVERNMENT: THE CITY COUNCIL

- ✓ The legislative branch of the City's government
- ✓ Elected by the City's voters every four years
- ✓ Individual Councilmembers may only serve two terms
- ✓ Currently 51 members each representing districts of approximately 157,000 people. Of the 51, 8 are from the Bronx, 16 from Brooklyn, 10 from Manhattan, 14 from Queens and 3 from Staten Island. (Some districts include portions of more than one borough.)

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Meets twice a month; holds hearings and committee meetings most days per month (except July & August)
- ✓ Enacts legislation and adopts City laws
- ✓ Approves the City budget
- ✓ Maintains oversight over City agencies
- ✓ Makes decisions on many land-use issues
- ✓ Gives advice and consent to many Mayoral appointments
- ✓ While the Mayor must sign a bill for it to become law, the Council can override a Mayoral veto with a 2/3 majority
- ✓ Submit nominations for Community Boards
- ✓ Council members allocate discretionary funds for projects in their districts

OFFICE STRUCTURE

- ✓ Most of the Council's legislative work is done in **committees**. Proposed legislation is initially debated in committee; committees also hold hearings giving members of other government branches and the public a chance to comment. Committee assignments are made by the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections and voted on by the entire Council.
- ✓ Committees focus on particular issues, including Parks, Waterfront, Environmental Protection, and Economic Development
- ✓ The Council also comprises a number of **task forces**, set by the Council, to look into specific issues.
- ✓ Council members elect a **Council Speaker** from among themselves. The Speaker:
 - ▶ Hires staff
 - ▶ Appoints committee chairs
 - ▶ Assigns members to standing committees
 - ▶ Chooses the legislation that goes to the floor for discussion
 - ▶ Ultimately plays an important role in determining the agenda of the Council
- ✓ Council members also elect a **Majority Leader, Deputy Majority Leader, Majority Whip, Minority Leader and Minority Whip**.

HOW TO CONTACT

City Information Hotline: 311

City Council Web site: www.council.nyc.ny.us

- ✓ Each Councilperson has staff responsible for addressing the concerns of district residents. Many Councilmembers are open to meeting with representatives from community organizations or speaking at community events. Community groups can also work with Councilmembers to develop new legislation.

WHO'S WHO IN NYC GOVERNMENT: COMMUNITY BOARDS

- ✓ Local representative bodies that play an advisory role in dealing with land use and zoning matters, the City budget, municipal service delivery and many other matters relating to their communities' welfare.
- ✓ 59 Community Boards City-wide, each with up to 50 unsalaried members
- ✓ Members sit for two-year terms; the terms are staggered (i.e., half the members are replaced every two years)
- ✓ Members appointed by the Borough President
- ✓ Half of Community Board appointments must be from nominations submitted by the City Council
- ✓ Civic and other groups may submit nominations for the other seats
- ✓ Any person with a "residence, business, professional or other significant interest" in the Community Board district is eligible for appointment to the Board in that district.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Resolves residents' concerns and problems with delivery of City services
- ✓ Advises on zoning & other land-use issues, community planning, the City budget process and the coordination & delivery of City services in the Community Board's district
- ✓ Prepares comprehensive & special purpose plans for the growth, improvement and development of the community district
- ✓ Consults with City agencies on the capital and program needs of the district
- ✓ Reviews estimates on such projects
- ✓ Holds public hearings on these needs and estimates
- ✓ Prepares budget priorities for the next fiscal year
- ✓ Submits an annual statement to the Mayor on the community district needs
- ✓ Holds hearings or investigations on any matter relating to the district's welfare
- ✓ Assists City agencies in communicating with the residents of the district
- ✓ Grants permits for block parties
- ✓ May have discretionary funds to provide to community groups
- ✓ Holds public meetings once a month
- ✓ May hold additional private meetings; however, they may only take action at public meetings.

OFFICE STRUCTURE

- ✓ Each Board hires a full-time **District Manager** and other staff to run the district office
- ✓ Boards elect **officers**, enact **by-laws** and maintain **public records**
- ✓ Boards do most of their work in **committees**—either functional committees such as Budget or Land-use, agency committees such as Parks, or area committees which cover specific neighborhoods.
- ✓ **Any resident of the Community Board's district can sit on a committee along with appointed Board members; however, they cannot vote.**

HOW TO CONTACT

City Information Hotline: 311

Individual Community Board contact info: home.nyc.gov/html/cau/html/cblist.html

- ✓ The District Manager for your Community Board is the day-to-day liaison between the Board and the community.