

**2020 Annual New Clerks Institute (Online)**  
**UNC School of Government**

**Thursday, December 10, 2020**

**Agenda**

- 9:00 a.m.           **Welcome and Course Overview**  
**Trey Allen**, Associate Professor of Public Law and Government, UNC School of Government
- 9:15               **Laws That Affect the Clerk**  
**Trey Allen**  
*This session will provide an overview of important laws with which all clerks must be familiar, including the open meetings law, the public records law, laws regarding the administration and filing of oaths of office, legal restrictions on multiple office holding, and various statutory public notice requirements.*
- 10:30              Break
- 10:45              **Laws That Affect the Clerk (cont'd)**
- 12:15 p.m.        Break
- 1:00               **The Ins & Outs of Minutes & Agendas**  
**Trey Allen**  
*Taking minutes and preparing agendas are two of a clerk's most significant professional responsibilities. This session will cover best practices and common pitfalls involving those tasks.*
- 2:15                **Break**
- 2:30                **How Governing Boards Do Their Work**  
**Trey Allen**  
**Tom Carruthers**, Senior Assistant General Counsel, N.C. League of Municipalities  
*This session will familiarize clerks with some of the procedural rules local governing boards follow in doing their work.*
- 4:00                **Orientation for New Clerks: An Introduction to the Clerks' Profession**  
**Donna Buff**, President, NC Association of County Clerks  
**Melody Shuler**, President, NC Association of Municipal Clerks  
*The leaders of our State's two clerks associations will share their insights regarding the role of the clerk and highlight important "dos" and "don'ts."*
- 4:30                **Institute Adjourns**

**New Clerks Institute**  
**Thursday, December 10, 2020**

**Instructor Biographies**

**Trey Allen** is Associate Professor of Public Law and Government at the UNC School of Government, where he researches and writes about the general regulatory and enforcement powers of local governments, local government liability, and board procedures. Trey also teaches and advises extensively on those topics. Trey has authored books, book chapters, and articles on issues within his subject areas, and he contributes to the School's blog *Coates' Canons: NC Local Government Law*. In 2019 Trey received the Margaret Taylor Writing Award for his book *Local Government Immunity to Lawsuits in North Carolina*. On the programming side, Trey plays a major role in planning and coordinating the School's many educational offerings for clerks to municipal and county governing boards. Annually these programs include the Clerks Certification Institute, the New Clerks Institute, a three-day academy for experienced clerks, annual conferences for the NC Association of Municipal Clerks and NC Association of County Clerks, and several regional academies conducted around the State with the support of the NCAMC and NCACC. Trey was previously an attorney at Tharrington Smith LLP in Raleigh, where he represented local school boards. Prior to that he served as a law clerk for Justice Paul M. Newby of the North Carolina Supreme Court and as a judge advocate in the United States Marine Corps. Trey earned a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke and a law degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was a published staff member of the *North Carolina Law Review*.

**Donna Buff** is Clerk to the Gaston County Board of Commissioners and President of the North Carolina Association of County Clerks. She has been designated a North Carolina Certified County Clerk by the NCACC.

**Tom Carruthers** is the Senior Assistant General Counsel with the NC League of Municipalities where he provides legal advice and support to League Departments, assists member local governments on legal, procedural and strategic issues, prepares and presents educational materials, drafts Amicus briefs, and interprets and drafts legislation in support of local government issues. Prior to joining the League, Tom served as Assistant County Attorney to the Guilford County Sheriff Danny Rogers. His areas of practice included civil litigation, public records requests, public contracting and advisor on First Amendment issues. Tom also served as the City Attorney with the City of Greensboro where he provided critical legal guidance to the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager across numerous practice areas. He served as a key strategic planner, advisor, and liaison. Tom coordinated closely with City Manager, senior administrators and department heads to implement the Manager's vision and directives from the City Council and managed departmental legal resources including seven staff attorneys, five paralegals and assigned administrative staff. Earlier in his career, Tom served as an Assistant District Attorney with the 24th Judicial District and has also worked in private practice in civil litigation and business law.

**Melody Shuler** is Town Clerk for the Town of Waxhaw and President of the North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks. She has been designated a Master Municipal Clerk by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks and a North Carolina Certified Municipal Clerk by the NCAMC.

### Credit for Successful Completion of New Clerks Institute

The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) has designated the School of Government of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as the official education provider for municipal and county clerks in North Carolina. By participating in the School's clerk-focused programs, clerks can earn credit towards the IIMC's designations of Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) or Master Municipal Clerk (MMC). The School also works cooperatively with the North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks (NCAMC) and North Carolina Association of County Clerks (NCACC) to offer programs through which clerks who have obtained certification through the NCAMC or NCACC can earn continuing education credit.

Clerks who have joined the IIMC and who successfully complete the 2020 New Clerks Institute will earn three (3.0) CMC points. Clerks who have obtained certifications from the NCAMC or NCACC and who successfully complete the 2020 New Clerks Institute will receive eight (6.0) hours of continuing education credit. **To receive points/credit, the student must attend all sessions as shown by the School's electronic attendance monitoring system and must complete and submit an on-line evaluation form for that event.**