WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §8-1-2

Part II. Definitions.

§8-1-2. Definitions of terms.

(a) For the purpose of this chapter:

(1) "Municipality" is a word of art and shall mean and include any Class I, Class II, and Class III city, and any Class IV town or village, heretofore or hereafter incorporated as a municipal corporation under the laws of this state;

(2) "City" is a word of art and shall mean, include, and be limited to any Class I, Class II, and Class III city, as classified in section three of this article (except in those instances where the context in which used clearly indicates that a particular class of city is intended), heretofore or hereafter incorporated as a municipal corporation under the laws of this state, however created and whether operating under: (i) A special legislative charter; (ii) a home rule charter framed and adopted or revised as a whole or amended under the provisions of former §8A-1-1 *et seq*. of this code, or under the provisions of §8-3-1 or §8-4-1 of this code; (iii) general law, or (iv) any combination of the foregoing; and

(3) "Town or village" is a term of art and shall, notwithstanding the provisions of §2-2-10 of this code, mean, include, and be limited to any Class IV town or village, as classified in §8-3-1 of this code, heretofore or hereafter incorporated as a municipal corporation under the laws of this state, however created and whether operating under: (i) A special legislative charter; (ii) general law; or (iii) a combination of the foregoing.

(b) For the purpose of this chapter, unless the context clearly requires a different meaning:

(1) "Governing body" shall mean the mayor and council together, the council, the board of directors, the commission, or other board or body of any municipality, by whatever name called, as the case may be, charged with the responsibility of enacting ordinances and determining the public policy of such municipality; and in certain articles dealing with intergovernmental relations shall also mean the county commission of any county or governing board of other units of government referred to in said articles;

(2) "Councilmen" shall mean the members of a governing body, by whatever name such members may be called;

(3) "Mayor" shall mean the individual called mayor unless as to a particular municipality a commissioner (in a commission form of government) or the city manager (in a manager form of government) is designated or constituted by charter provision as the principal or chief executive officer or chief administrator thereof, in which event the term "mayor" shall mean as to such municipality such commissioner or city manager unless as to any particular

WV Legislature

power, authority, duty or function specified in this chapter to be exercised, discharged or fulfilled by the mayor it is provided by charter provision or ordinance that such particular power, authority, duty, or function shall be exercised, discharged, or fulfilled by the individual called mayor and not by a commissioner or city manager, in which event such particular power, authority, duty, or function shall in fact be exercised, discharged, or fulfilled in and for such municipality by the individual called mayor: *Provided*, That in the exercise and discharge of the ex officio justice of the peace, conservator of the peace, and mayor's court functions specified in this chapter, the term "mayor" shall always mean the individual called mayor;

(4) "Recorder" shall mean the recorder, clerk, or other municipal officer, by whatever name called, charged with the responsibility of keeping the journal of the proceedings of the governing body of the municipality and other municipal records;

(5) "Treasurer" shall mean the treasurer or other municipal officer, by whatever name called, exercising the power and authority commonly exercised by a treasurer;

(6) "Administrative authority" shall mean the officer, commission, or person responsible for the conduct and management of the affairs of the municipality in accordance with the charter, general law, and the ordinances, resolutions, and orders of the governing body thereof;

(7) "Charter" shall mean, except where specific reference is made to a particular type of charter, either a special legislative charter (whether or not amended under the provisions of former §8A-1-1 *et seq*. of this code, or under article four of this chapter, and although so amended, such special legislative charter shall, for the purposes of this chapter, remain a special legislative charter), or a home rule charter framed and adopted or revised as a whole or amended by a city under the provisions of former §8A-1-1 *et seq*. of this code or under the provisions of article three or article four of this chapter;

(8) "Ordinance" shall mean the ordinances and laws enacted by the governing body of a municipality in the exercise of its legislative power, and in one or more articles of this chapter, ordinances enacted by a county commission;

(9) "Inconsistent or in conflict with" shall mean that a charter or ordinance provision is repugnant to the constitution of this state or to general law because such provision: (i) Permits or authorizes that which the constitution or general law forbids or prohibits; or (ii) forbids or prohibits that which the constitution or general law permits or authorizes;

(10) "Qualified elector," "elector," "qualified voter," or "legal voter" shall mean any individual who, at the time he or she offers to vote or at the time he or she participates in any event or activity (such as signing a petition) under the provisions of this chapter for which he or she must be a qualified elector, elector, qualified voter, or legal voter, is a resident within the corporate limits of the municipality or within the boundaries of a territory referred to in this chapter, as the case may be, and who: (i) Has been a resident of

WV Legislature

the state for one year and of the municipality or territory in question for at 60 sixty days next preceding such election or date pertinent to any such event or activity; and (ii) in the case of a regular municipal election, special municipal election, municipal public question election, or any such municipal event or activity, is duly registered on the municipal registration books set up in the office of the clerk of the county commission of the county in which the municipality or the major portion of the territory thereof is located under the integration of the municipal registration of voters with the "permanent registration system" of the state, or, in the event there be no such integration of the municipal registration of voters, is duly registered in the county in which he or she resides to vote in state-county elections; or (iii) in the case of a territory election, general election, or any such territory event or activity, is duly registered in the county in which he or she resides to vote in state-county elections; and any charter provision or ordinance establishing a voting residency requirement different than that in this definition provided shall be of no force and effect; and in any case where a particular percentage of the qualified electors, electors, qualified voters, or legal voters is required under the provisions of this chapter in connection with any such event or activity as aforesaid, the percentage shall be determined on the basis of the number of qualified electors, electors, qualified voters, or legal voters, as of the time of such event or activity, unless it is impracticable to determine such percentage as of such time and it is provided by ordinance, resolution or order that the percentage shall be determined on the basis of the number of qualified electors, electors, qualified voters, or legal voters, as of the date of the last preceding election (whether a general election, regular municipal election, or special municipal election, and whether or not they voted at such election) held in such municipality or territory, as the case may be;

(11) "Public question" shall mean any issue or proposition required to be submitted to the qualified voters of a municipality or of a territory referred to in this chapter for decision at an election, as the case may be;

(12) "Inhabitant" shall mean any individual who is a resident within the corporate limits of a municipality or within the boundaries of a territory referred to in this chapter, as the case may be;

(13) "Resident" shall mean any individual who maintains a usual and bona fide place of abode within the corporate limits of a municipality or within the boundaries of a territory referred to in this chapter, as the case may be;

(14) "Freeholder" shall mean any person (and in the case of an individual one who is sui juris and is not under a legal disability) owning a "freehold interest in real property";

(15) "Freehold interest in real property" shall mean any fee, life, mineral, coal, or oil or gas interest in real property, whether legal or equitable, and whether as a joint tenant or a tenant in common, but shall not include a leasehold interest (other than a mineral, coal, or oil or gas leasehold interest), a dower interest, or an interest in a right-of-way or easement, and the freehold interest of a church or other unincorporated association shall be considered as one interest and not as an individual interest of each member thereof;

WV Legislature

(16) “County commission” shall mean the governmental body created by section 22, article eight of the Constitution of this state, or any existing tribunal created in lieu of a county commission;

(17) “Code” shall mean the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as heretofore and hereafter amended; and

(18) “Person” shall mean any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, company, association, joint-stock association, or any other entity or organization of whatever character or description.

(c) The term “intergovernmental relations” is used in this chapter to mean undertakings and activities which may be undertaken or engaged in by two or more units of government acting jointly, and in certain headings in this chapter to call attention to the fact that the provisions under such headings apply to units of government in addition to municipalities.

(d) For the purpose of this chapter, unless the context clearly indicates to the contrary, words importing the masculine gender shall include both the masculine and feminine gender, and the phrase “charter-framed and adopted or revised as a whole or amended (or words of like import) under the provisions of former chapter eight-a of this code” shall include a charter-framed and adopted or revised as a whole or amended under the provisions of former article two of former chapter eight of this code.

WV Legislature