



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 532

January Session, 2015

Substitute House Bill No. 6966

House of Representatives, April 8, 2015

The Committee on Planning and Development reported through REP. MILLER, P. of the 36th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL NEWSPAPER POSTINGS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 1-2 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2016*):

3 (a) Each provision of the general statutes, the special acts or the
4 charter of any town, city, [or] borough [which] or metropolitan district
5 that requires the insertion of an advertisement of a legal notice in a
6 daily newspaper shall be construed to permit such advertisement to be
7 inserted in a weekly newspaper, including, but not limited to, a weekly
8 newspaper distributed free of charge to the residents of the town, city,
9 borough or metropolitan district; but this section shall not be
10 construed to reduce or otherwise affect the time required by law for
11 giving such notice. Whenever notice of any action or other proceeding
12 is required to be given by publication in a newspaper, either by statute
13 or order of court, the newspaper selected for that purpose, unless
14 otherwise expressly prescribed, shall be one having a substantial

15 circulation in the town in which at least one of the parties, for whose
16 benefit such notice is given, resides.

17 (b) With respect to any requirement for the insertion of an
18 advertisement of a legal notice in a newspaper by a town, city,
19 borough or metropolitan district, a description of such legal notice
20 containing a brief summary of the matter being noticed and a reference
21 to the Internet web site of the newspaper in which such legal notice is
22 placed may be published in lieu of the full legal notice. Any newspaper
23 that offers publication of such legal notices on an Internet web site
24 shall post the full legal notice in a conspicuous location on such web
25 site and make any such full legal notice available to the public free of
26 charge.

27 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 1-225 of the general statutes is
28 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
29 *January 1, 2016*):

30 (a) The meetings of all public agencies, except executive sessions, as
31 defined in subdivision (6) of section 1-200, shall be open to the public.
32 The votes of each member of any such public agency upon any issue
33 before such public agency shall be reduced to writing and made
34 available for public inspection within forty-eight hours and shall also
35 be recorded in the minutes of the session at which taken. Not later than
36 seven days after the date of the session to which such minutes refer,
37 such minutes shall be available for public inspection and posted on
38 such public agency's Internet web site, if available, [, except that no
39 public agency of a political subdivision of the state shall be required to
40 post such minutes on an Internet web site.] Each public agency shall
41 make, keep and maintain a record of the proceedings of its meetings.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	January 1, 2016	1-2
Sec. 2	January 1, 2016	1-225(a)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In section 1, "or metropolitan district" was inserted after the references to town, city or borough for conformity.

PD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
All Municipalities	Savings	Minimal	Minimal

Explanation

The bill allows municipalities to publish summaries of legal notices in newspapers, rather than full legal notices.

This potentially reduces the cost of posting a legal notice in a newspaper, as many newspapers charge based at least partially on the size of the notice. Any savings is expected to be minimal.

As an illustration, Danbury and Stamford each spend approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000 on advertising of legal notices.

The provision requiring municipalities to post public meeting minutes on their Web sites, if they maintain one, has no fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of legal notices published in newspapers.

Sources: City of Danbury
City of Stamford

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6966*****AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL NEWSPAPER POSTINGS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill allows towns, cities, boroughs, and metropolitan districts, whenever they must publish a legal notice in a newspaper, to instead publish a brief description of the matter being noticed in the print version of a newspaper along with a reference to the newspaper's website where the full notice is located. Newspapers must (1) place full legal notices in a conspicuous location on their websites and (2) not charge the public to access such notices.

By law, certain legal notices must appear in a daily or weekly newspaper that has a substantial circulation in the town, city, borough, or metropolitan district where at least one of the parties, for whose benefit the notice is given, lives. The bill specifies that these legal notices may be published in a free weekly newspaper that is distributed to residents.

The bill also eliminates a Freedom of Information Act exemption for municipal agencies. Without the exemption, municipal agencies must post public meeting minutes on their websites, if they maintain one. As is the case for state agencies, the posting requirement applies only to minutes that must be publicly disclosed (i.e., not executive session minutes).

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2016

COMMITTEE ACTION

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 0 (03/20/2015)