



PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS
2024 County Office
QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Jonathan Ring

Office Sought: Register of Deeds, Essex Southern District

Party: Republican

Website: www.jonathanring.org

Email questions to elections@progressivemass.com.

About Your Candidacy

1. Why are you running for this office? What are your top three priorities if elected?

To prevent title fraud and enhance Registry services by: Working with town and city board of assessors to promote the Property Fraud Program and Homestead Protection Act; Assess needed improvements in technology, online security, and the Property Fraud Watch Program to better protect homeowner's title security; Promote seminars that educate citizens on property rights and homeownership; Ensure that all new deeds and plans are promptly recorded in the Registry of Deeds database; Add in cemetery plot records and continue to update the Veteran's Memorial website; Make all 17 th and 18 th century deeds fully indexed and accessible for historical research.

2. What prepares you to serve in this office?

My years of service in the public and private sectors have prepared me for management of the Registry of Deeds. As a commissioner and chair of the Rockport Housing Authority, I managed a board that oversaw a \$3 million state and federal supported budget. (The Registry of Deeds also operates with a \$3 million budget). As a manager of a UPS store franchise, I managed a store that brought in half a million in sales annually. I will come to this job with those management skills and experience that will allow me to excel in the role of chief supervisor of the Registry of Deeds. I look forward to earning your vote this November. Go to www.jonathanring.org to learn more.

3. What do you think are the most significant challenges facing the office, and how do you intend to address those challenges?

A principal challenge of the Register of Deeds is maintaining a cyber secure, redundant, zero down-time server with a 100% accurate database of deeds and plans covering four centuries of Essex County history. It's also important that we maintain title security, enhance and promote the fraud watch program to ensure that homeowner's title security is maintained. With the growing threat of title fraud, "squatting" and other violations of property rights, record management security at the Registry of Deeds is of the utmost importance. To prevent title fraud and enhance Registry services by: Working with town and city board of assessors to promote the Property Fraud Program and Homestead Protection Act; Assess needed improvements in technology, online security, and the Property Fraud Watch Program

to better protect homeowner's title security; Promote seminars that educate citizens on property rights and homeownership.

4. What progressive policies or programs will you implement if elected?

There are language translation programs available, and those language translation programs, such as google translate, can be utilized with the current Registry of Deeds website. However, I would also direct the IT department to assess needed improvements with website translation services. The website should also be ADA compliant. For example, user interface that allows voice command or keyboard, not just a mouse, and making sure that navigation tabs are easy and understandable. The Registry could set up additional satellite offices in municipal buildings such as court houses and city or town halls. These satellite offices would allow internet access to the registry and on-line translation services.

I would gather input from the public and employees about how to improve on-line and in-person customer service. I want to focus on making sure that title examiners can easily access the books, not just rely on scanned images that may or may not be clear. Once again, the focus always needs to be on customer service – providing a recording room, having translation software, making sure that the home page alerts users about technical errors that may occur due to maintenance or other internet events, and staying up to date with the most current indexing standards and change journal requirements.

5. (If not an incumbent) How do you see yourself as similar to or different from your predecessor in the office you are running for?

Like my predecessor John O'Brien, I care about preventing Title Fraud and will work to promote and enhance the Property Fraud Watch program and Homestead Protection Act.

6. Why should people care about this election and this office?

If you are a taxpayer, home owner, renter, you should care about whether or not the Registry keeps accurate records of property in your name, and if the Registry is using your tax dollars wisely and efficiently to serve the public. Your rights as current or future land owner can be affected by the accuracy of the recording service at the registry. The registry offers protections against title fraud in the form of service alerts, and works to alert the public about various title scams - it can also expand those services to provide rent scam alerts to protect renters.

7. If a voter asked you what this office does, how would you answer (in no more than 3 sentences)?

The Registry of Deeds is a public recording office for all real estate transactions. It records mortgages and liens on real estate. It also provides a fraud alert service to prevent title fraud, and a homestead protection act to protect homeowners against certain creditors.

8. (As Relevant) What do you view as the role of county government in Massachusetts? To what extent would you like to see it expanded or limited?

I would say that the role of a county government depends on the needs of the citizens in that county. Some parts of the state still have a separate county government. In Essex County, the county government was abolished many years ago, and agencies like the Essex County Sheriff's department, Essex County Clerk of Courts, and the Registry of Deeds Essex county north and south are all state government entities. The Registry of Deeds offices operate under the Secretary of State's office in particular.