

PORT CHESTER IS --- GOVERNMENT AND ITS CITIZENS

Government exists to meet the needs of its citizens. In this chapter, you will learn how various levels of local government accomplish this goal by providing services and by regulating community activities. The chapter is made up of a series of charts, which outline the government structure of Westchester County, the Town of Rye, and the Village of Port Chester and a host of interesting activities to test your citizenship skills.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

TOWN OF RYE

VILLAGE OF PORT CHESTER

Westchester County (official website)

www.westchestergov.com

Town of Rye (official website)

<http://www.townofryeny.com>

- Brief description of town history
- Lists town officials (with contact info)

Village of Port Chester (official website)

www.portchesterny.com

- Synopsis of Port Chester history
- Mayor's welcome
- Lists elected officials (with contact info)
- Links to county and state government websites

Village of Rye Brook (official website)

<http://www.ryebrook.org>

- Mayor's Corner
- Links to Village officials, departments, and offices (with contact info)
- Events Calendar

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

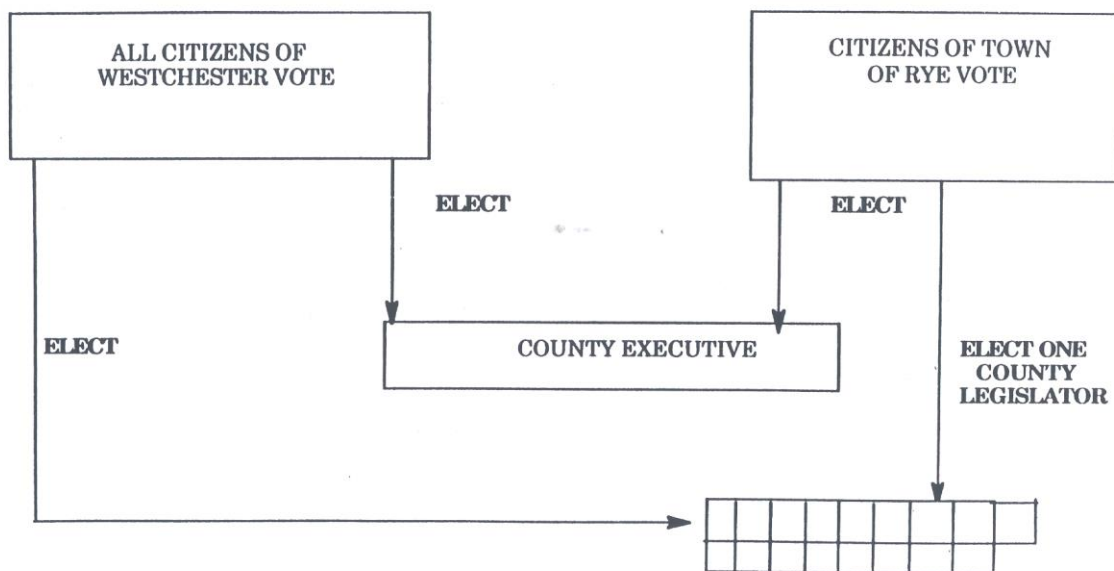
Westchester County has a charter which was adopted in 1937. It defined and expanded the duties of the Board of Supervisors, now called the County Board of Legislators, and it established the Office of County Executive.

Many services are provided by the county. For an initial list consult the Blue Pages of the Westchester Telephone Directory under County Government Offices.

The County Seat for Westchester is White Plains. The County Courthouse is located in White Plains as is the Board of Elections. The Motor Vehicle Bureau is in White Plains and in Yonkers and Peekskill.

The chart below will help you better understand the structure of the County Government.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY GOVERNMENT



TOWN OF RYE

According to the 2000 census, 43,880 people live in the Town of Rye. The town is made up of the Villages of Port Chester, Rye Brook and the Rye Neck section of the Village of Mamaroneck.

The citizens of the Town of Rye select a Town Supervisor, a Town Clerk, a Receiver of Taxes, and a Superintendent of Highways, who all serve for a four year term of office.

Four councilpersons are elected by the citizens of the town to serve on the Town Board. Each councilman serves four years. Two are elected every other year, and rather than representing a district, they are elected at-large. The Town Board meets in the Court Room of the Town Office Building, 10 Pearl Street, Port Chester, New York, on the third Tuesday of the month.

The Town Court is maintained by two Town Justices elected by the people of the Town of Rye.

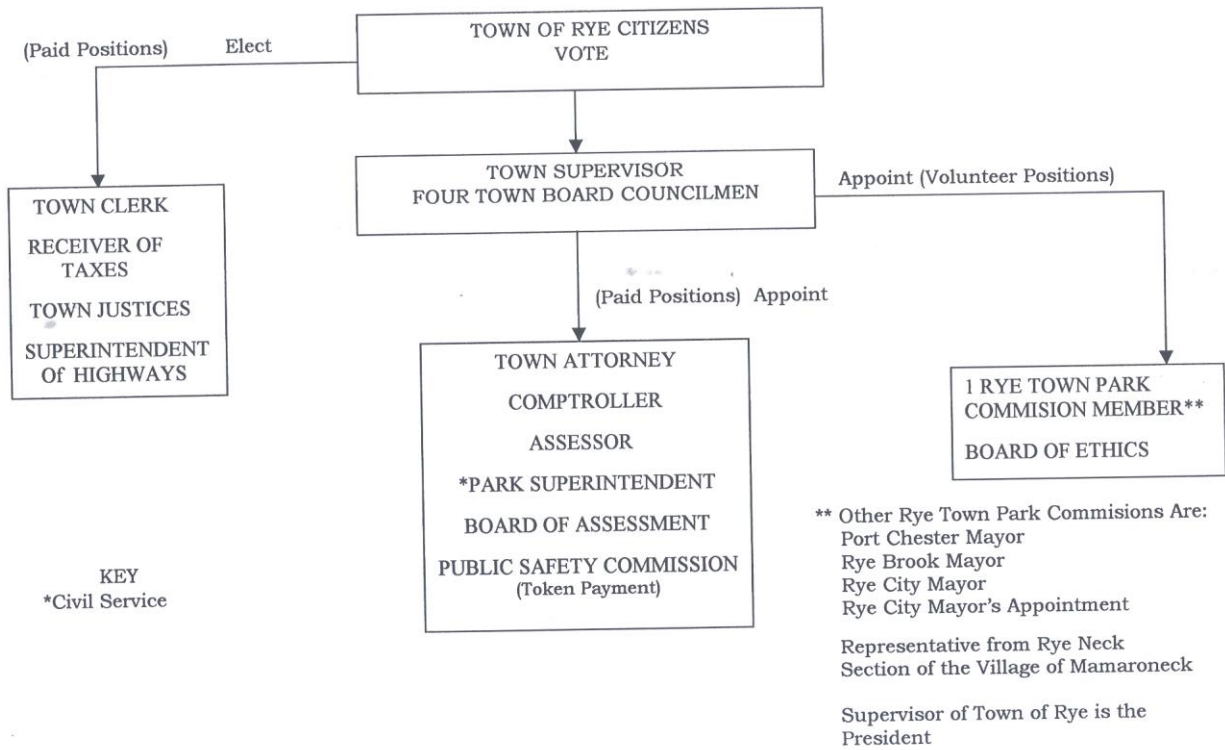
The Town assesses property and the Receiver of Taxes collects school, village and county taxes for all properties.

The Town Clerk's office maintains the records of the original settlers who arrived in 1660, and maintains the Municipal Archive Center in which many historical documents are preserved. The clerk's office also issues marriage licenses and hunting and fishing licenses.

The Town of Rye operates two Town Parks, Crawford Park and Rye Town Park.

The Town of Rye does not have a Police Department, Sanitation Department, Fire Department, Building Department or Planning Board. These services are provided by the various villages within the Town of Rye.

TOWN OF RYE GOVERNMENT



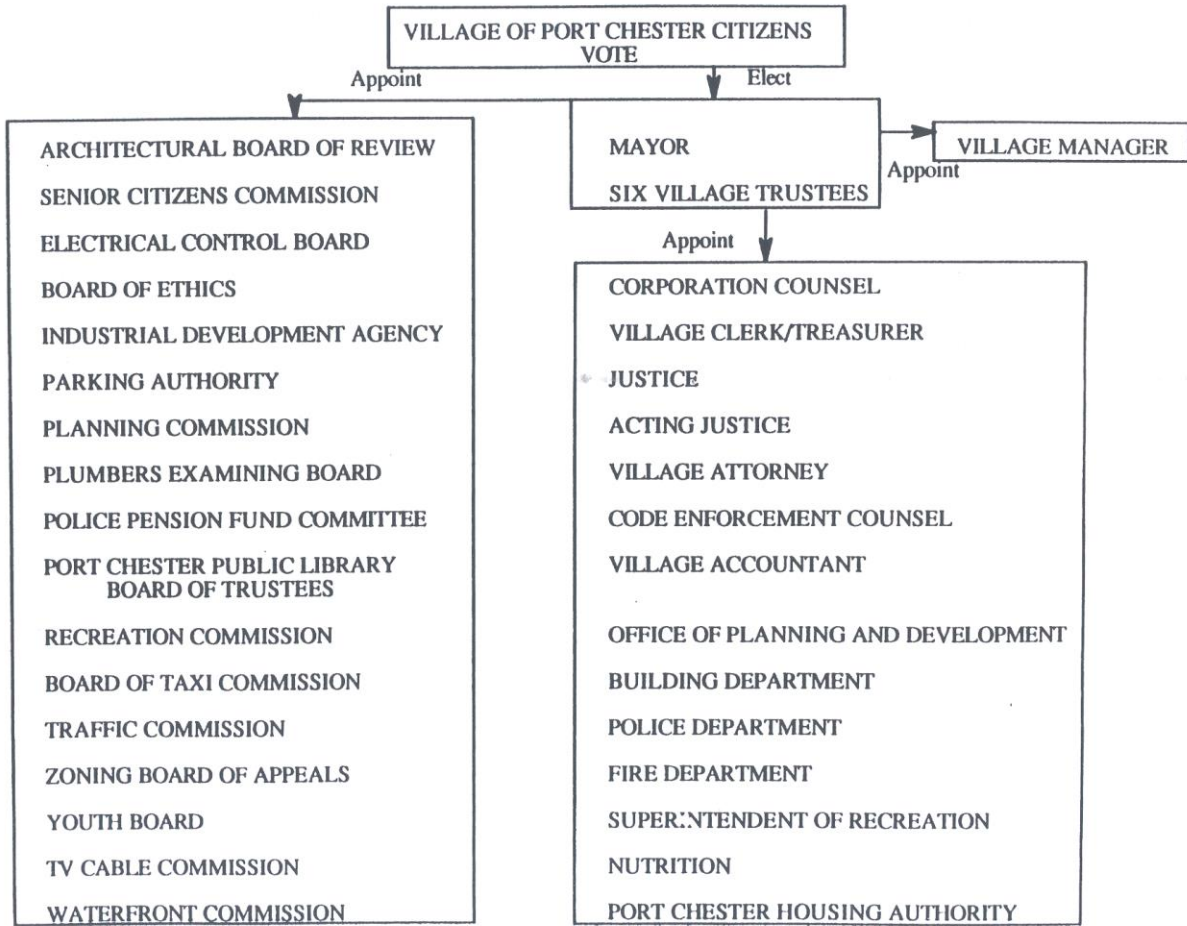
VILLAGE OF PORT CHESTER

The Village of Port Chester provides many services including building, housing, and fire code enforcement, courts, election supervision, fire protection, garbage and waste disposal, library, licensing, parks and recreation, planning and zoning, police protection, a nutrition program for the elderly, streets and highway maintenance.

- ❖ Port Chester was incorporated on May 4, 1868. It is a village within the Town of Rye.
- ❖ According to the 2000 census, 27,867 people live in the village of Port Chester.
- ❖ The village has a mayor, elected by the citizens of Port Chester for a two year term. It also has an appointed village manager.
- ❖ The citizens of Port Chester elect six members of the Board of Trustees. The trustees are elected at-large and each serves for three years. The Board of Village Trustees meet the first Monday of the month at the Village Court Room 350 North Main Street, Port Chester.
- ❖ Port Chester has a Police Department, a village court and village justices. The village provides waste collection and disposal.
- ❖ Fire protection is provided by a combination of volunteer and paid firemen. The paid firemen are paid by the Village of Port Chester.
- ❖ Port Chester has a planning commission, which meets in the Police Court Room the last Monday of the month.
- ❖ Port Chester requires and provides for inspection of buildings.

The chart on the following page describes the many parts of village government and shows which officials are elected or appointed to service.

VILLAGE OF PORT CHESTER
GOVERNMENT



VILLAGE OF RYE BROOK

History

In 1940, the area now known as Rye Brook had less than 2,000 residents. As the population of this area grew to 8,000 people by 1980, the citizens wanted a stronger voice in the town government. The Village of Rye Brook was incorporated on July 7, 1982. According to the 2000 census, about 8,500 people live in Rye Brook. Rye Brook is one of three separate municipalities that make up the Town of Rye. The other municipalities include the Village of Port Chester, and the Rye Neck section of the Village of Mamaroneck.

Where is Rye Brook?

Rye Brook is located approximately 15 miles northeast of New York City. The Village of Rye Brook is bordered by Greenwich, Connecticut to the north and east, Port Chester, to the east, Rye, to the south and Purchase / Harrison to the west. Rye Brook covers an area of 3.5 square miles.

How is Rye Brook Governed?

The Village of Rye Brook is located in the 18th Congressional, the 36th State Senatorial, the 85th State Assembly and the 6th County Legislative Districts. The Village of Rye Brook has a Mayor, a Board of Trustees, a village board, committees, commissions and councils. The people elected to these positions do not get paid. They volunteer their time to ensure the quality of life for the citizens of Rye Brook.

How is Rye Brook Governed?

The Village is governed by a Mayor, who is the chief executive officer of the village, and a Board of Trustees, who appoints the Village Administrator. The Village Administrator's job is to supervise all village operations. The Building Department consists of a building inspector who is responsible for enforcing all New York State building and fire codes. The Village has a police force of 25 officers. Rye Brook has a fire department that works in conjunction with the Port Chester fire department.

Rye Brook also has a Recreation Department that runs programs ranging from pre-k children to senior citizens. A Parks and Recreation Supervisor is in charge of overseeing all programs. Rye Brook has four main parks and utilizes Crawford Park as well as various facilities of the schools.

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining streets, sewers and storm drains. Nine full-time staff members work for the department. In Rye Brook, there are approximately 120 roads that are owned by the village.

The Ridge Street Elementary School and the Blind Brook Middle / High School educate about 1,400 students living in the Village of Rye Brook.

Did you Know?

- ❖ The Great Swamp was the general area west of what is now Rye Ridge Shopping Center.
- ❖ The area between Ridge Street and Lincoln Avenue was called “Hog Pen Ridge”. This was where the early settlers penned in hogs to keep them out of town.
- ❖ The circus came to Port Chester each year. One year, the circus was more memorable than others. In that year, the elephants broke loose and roamed around Ridge Street for hours!

MY CITIZENSHIP

I am a citizen of the Village of Port Chester, which is part of the Town of Rye, which is in the County of Westchester, which is part of the State of New York, which is part of my country, The United States of America. I elect people to represent me in the government of my village, my town, my county, my state and my country. I receive services from my village, my town, my county, my state and my country. I pay taxes to my village, my town, my county, my state and my country. I obey the laws and rules of my village, my town, my county, my state and my country.

Village of Port Chester

Town of Rye

County of Westchester

State of New York

United States of America

LEARNING MY GOVERNMENT LEADERS

I, _____, am a citizen of the
Village of _____, in the Town of _____,
living in the County of _____ in the State of
_____ in the country _____.

Citizens elect leaders to represent people in government. Some leaders who serve me are:

MAYOR OF PORT CHESTER _____

SUPERVISOR OF RYE _____

WESTCHESTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE _____

GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK _____

A member of the Board of Village Trustees is _____

A member of the Board of Education is _____

A councilman on the Town Board is _____

The county legislator representing me in White Plains is
_____, elected from the 6th district.

The state assemblyman representing me in Albany is
_____, elected from the 91st district.

The state senator representing me in Albany is _____,
elected from the 36th district.

A U.S. congressperson serving me in the United States House of
Representatives (Washington, D.C.) is _____.

The two United States senators from New York representing me in the
United States Senate (Washington, D.C.) are _____
and _____.

A LOOK AT OUR TOWN



1. Make a chart showing the members of your family and their responsibilities at home.
2. Make a chart showing the members of your class and their responsibilities in school.
3. List the rules that govern the operation of our classroom. Who makes the rules? Why are they needed?
4. Identify all the people with decision-making power over your school building. Compile a chart showing the decisions they make that affect you.
5. Consider the formation of a student council. What purpose would it serve? Who would be on it? How would they be selected? What issues might it deal with? How would it be an example of local government?
6. Make an organizational chart of our school district. How are members of the Port Chester Board of Education selected? How many people serve on the board? When and where do they meet? What powers do they have? What are their responsibilities?
7. Compare and contrast manners, traditions, and laws. Give an example of each. How do they make life happier for you? What is the penalty for violating each one?
8. Make a bulletin board display of newspaper articles that discuss community services in Port Chester.
9. Many services are provided by our village government. The town, county, state and federal governments also provide services. Service are also provided by volunteer and commercial enterprises. Make a mobile or collage showing the services provided in one of these ways.
10. Design a coloring book for younger children showing community services in Port Chester. Duplicate, assemble and distribute.

GOVERNMENT SEARCH AND FIND



Based on Port Chester/Town of Rye Handi-Book published by Kaiser or the Official Village of Port Chester website, the following activities may be done by students working in teams of two or by the teacher for background information.

Using the page titled GOVERNMENT, find out the following information. Make a chart or poster to share what you have learned with the class.

1. Who is the mayor of Port Chester? What political party does he/she belong to? For how many years was he/she elected? When will we vote again for mayor?

2. How many people are elected as members of the Board of Village Trustees? What are their names? For how many years are they elected?

3. Who is the Port Chester Village Manager? In addition to the Village Manager, what jobs are held by appointed officials? List the jobs and the names of the people who do them.

4. Five people are elected as members of the Board of Education. What are their names? Who is President of the Board of Education? The Board of Education appoints the Superintendent of Schools. Who is our present superintendent?

5. Citizens of Town of Rye elect a town supervisor, four councilmen on the town board and other officials. Who is our town supervisor? Who are the councilmen? Which other officials in the Town of Rye are elected?

6. A County Legislator serves the people of Port Chester. What is his name? For how many years will he serve?

7. What officials are appointed in the Town of Rye? List their jobs and their names.
