

Society Seneschal's Corpora interpretation regarding officers required of a barony or province, upheld by the Board July 24, 2022:

I was asked what officers are required for a barony to maintain its status. Must all great offices required of a principality or kingdom be filled within a barony?

Corpora is maddeningly non-specific on this subject. A principality is required to have "candidates for all Great Officer positions" while a shire, canton, or college is only required to have "at least 3 officers, including a Seneschal, an Exchequer, and one of the following: a Herald, a Marshal, or a Minister of Arts and Sciences. Local branches are encouraged to fill all the latter positions."

For a barony, Corpora simply says "A set of officers acceptable to the Crown". It does not define what offices that "set" consists of.

The Seneschal's Handbook states that "a set of officers is generally considered to consist of the Great Officers required to run the group: Seneschal, Exchequer, Herald, Marshal, Chronicler, and Minister of Arts and Sciences." This isn't recent wording; a 2005 edition of the Seneschal's Handbook contains the exact same sentence. The largest issue seems to be with the office of Chronicler, and is possibly a function of the fact that for all practical purposes, a barony nowadays needs a web minister and/or social media officer, which are demanding communications jobs in their own right.

Seneschal and Exchequer are clearly non-negotiable; without those offices a group cannot exist. It is difficult to conceive of a barony having a suitable activity level without a Knight Marshal, a Minister of A&S, and a baronial Herald to hold courts. As for the office of chronicler, the Society Chronicler's Policies, approved by the Board of Directors in October of 2021, states: "A Barony and any group that aspires to higher status than Baronial must have an active newsletter and a warranted chronicler. Baronies must publish a newsletter on a regular basis, no less frequently than quarterly." (p.17, Society Chronicler's Policies, October 2021). However, there is no policy which states that this newsletter must be a print edition, nor that the baronial chronicler cannot also hold another office.

My interpretation is: There is nothing that prevents the newsletter from being produced by the web minister or social media officer, so a barony could combine communication functions if desired. Further, since one of the concerns raised had to do with "shell baronies" where the barony consists of a number of cantons with no independent area of the barony (rather like a kingdom consists of its branches), unless kingdom law forbids it there is no reason that a canton's herald, marshal, or A&S minister could not also hold that position for the barony.

Kingdom Law may further specify other officers required for a barony, as a kingdom may add to but not subtract from Corpora's requirements.