



Benton County Board of Commissioners
Policy Manual
Revised August 1, 2025

Table of Contents

1.	Organization of county government	Page 1
	▪ County Board as governing body	
	▪ Elected officials	
	▪ Appointed positions	
2.	Managing day-to-day county functions	Page 3
	▪ County Administrator	
	▪ Department Heads	
3.	Meetings of the County Board	Page 5
	▪ Regular	
	▪ Special	
	▪ Emergency	
	▪ Committee of the Whole	
	▪ Remote participation in Board meetings	
4.	Meeting procedures.....	Page 7
	▪ Quorum	
	▪ Creating the agenda	
	▪ Parliamentary procedures	
	▪ Closed sessions of the County Board	
5.	Board member compensation and benefits	Page 10
	▪ Salary and benefits	
	▪ Per diem	
	▪ Expense reimbursement	
6.	Overview of County Board statutory duties.....	Page 12
	▪ Financial	
	▪ Health and Welfare	
	▪ Roads	
	▪ Public safety and emergency management	
	▪ General county administration	
	▪ Conflicts of interest	
	▪ Appointments to boards and commissions	
7.	Board member code of conduct	Page 17

1. Organization of County Government

- *County Board as Governing Body*

State law recognizes the County Board as the governing body of Minnesota counties. County Boards exercise this authority in various ways. For example, the County Board sets the budgets for all Departments and functions of County government. Boards approve all contracts for every Department, including those headed by other Elected Officials. Most counties operate under Personnel Policies adopted by County Boards and applicable to all employees of the County, with the exception of Elected Official Department Heads. Boards enact local ordinances, which are essentially County law. Ordinances can regulate a wide range of activities within the County and provide for criminal penalties for violations.



The structure of County government can vary based on local decisions to make certain positions appointed, whether authorized by special legislation or done under the authority of existing state law.

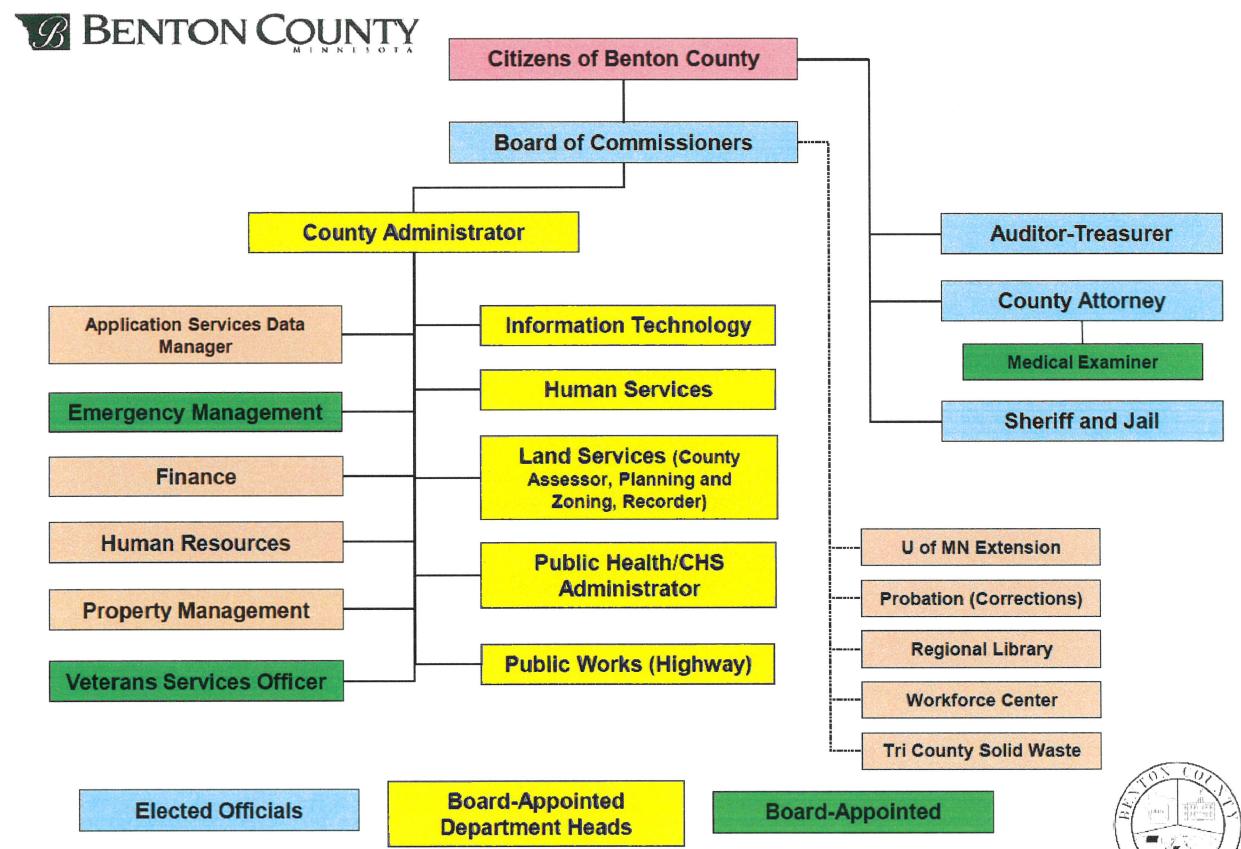
Figure 1 on the following page shows the current structure of Benton County government. **Blue boxes** show Elected Officials. **Yellow boxes** show Department Head positions directly appointed by the County Board. County Sheriff and County Attorney remain elected positions, which is true of all counties in Minnesota. Our Auditor-Treasurer is also an elected position, while the County Recorder function is now appointed. Benton County received special legislation in 2017 to make the Recorder function appointed. Those functions are now vested with the Land Services Director and carried out by the Recording Division within Land Services. **Green boxes** show other positions whose appointment is a function of state statute.

- ***Elected Officials***

As noted above, Sheriff, County Attorney and Auditor-Treasurer remain as elected positions in Benton County. Questions often arise regarding the authority of County Boards over these elected Department Heads. In general, Minnesota law provides these elected officials with substantial discretion over the management of their respective Departments. These elected officials are considered the “hiring authorities” for their Departments, so they decide who to hire, terminate or promote. County Boards

set the annual budgets for Elected Official Departments. And, the County Board sets the salaries for these Elected Officials. In addition, the Board must approve contracts, can adopt Personnel Policies and ratifies labor agreements covering Elected Official Departments.

Figure 1.
Benton County Organization Chart
January 2024



Revised January 16, 2024

▪ **Appointed Department Heads and Other Board-Appointed Positions**

The County Board directly appoints the following positions: County Administrator, Information Technology Director, Human Services Director, Land Services Director, County Assessor, Public Health Director/Community Health Administrator, County Engineer (Public Works Director), Emergency Management Director and Veterans Services Officer. These appointments are a direct function of the County Board based on various individual state statutes covering these positions. Each position is

consider “at will” and serves at the pleasure of the County Board. However, County Assessor and County Engineer by statute are appointed to four-year terms and can be removed from their positions only for “gross negligence.” Also, the Veterans Services Officer has veterans protections in state law.

2. Managing day-to-day county functions

County Board involvement in the daily functions of county government will vary substantially from county to county. To some extent that involvement is based on the organizational model chosen by the County for its daily management. According to the Association of Minnesota Counties, 64 counties have adopted the County Administrator model. Twelve counties have County Coordinators. Ramsey and Dakota follow the County Manager model, while the remaining counties (mostly smaller counties) rely upon the County Auditor or Auditor-Treasurer for daily management functions.

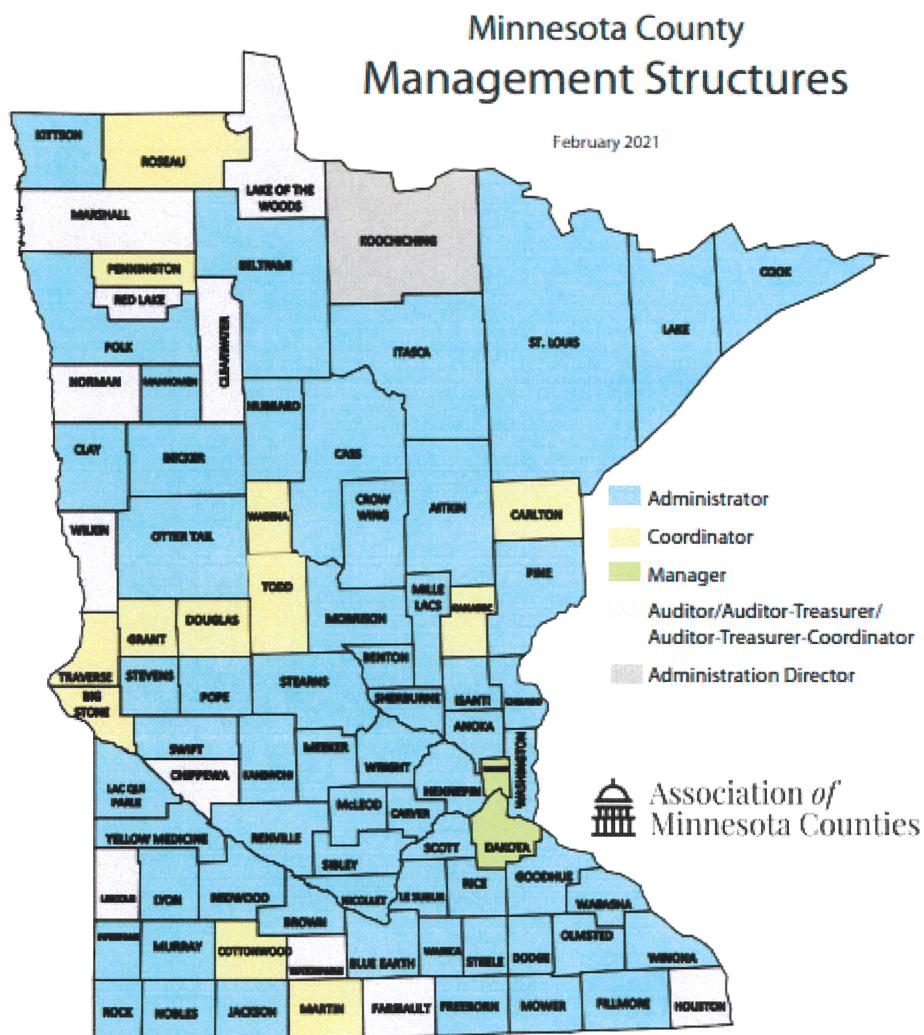
- *County Administrator*

Under the County Administrator model, *appointed* Department Heads are under the general supervision of the County Administrator. To cite MN Statutes §375A.06, the County Administrator is considered “the administrative head of the county and shall be responsible for the proper administration of the affairs of the county placed in the administrator's charge.” Further, “the administrator shall exercise general supervision over all county institutions and agencies and, with the approval of the county board, coordinate the various activities of the county and unify the management of its affairs.” Benton County adopted the County Administrator model in 2003. The primary difference between Administrator and Coordinator is that all appointed Department Heads report directly to the County Board under a Coordinator model. Figure 2 on the following page shows current organizational models used by the 87 counties.

Given the general nature of MN Statutes §375A.06, County Boards have wide discretion in the duties and authority they vest with the County Administrator. Here in Benton County, the County Board retains the authority over hiring and termination of appointed positions. The Board remains involved in annual performance evaluations for the appointed Department Heads. The County Administrator position exists to relieve the County Board of the burden of daily management of County business. The Administrator is charged with carrying out Board direction, implementing Board policies, representing

the County when authorized by the Board and fulfilling all other responsibilities and expectations set forth by the Board.

Figure 2. County Organizational Models (Association of MN Counties)



- *Department Heads*

Under the County's Personnel Policies, certain positions are defined as "Department Heads" and are thereby excluded from the jurisdiction of the Personnel Policies. Generally, this means Department Heads are considered "at-will" employees, serve at the pleasure of the County Board and have no grievance rights through the Personnel Policies. The following positions are considered Department

Heads: County Administrator, Information Technology Director, Land Services Director, Human Services Director, Public Health Director/Community Health Administrator and County Engineer (Public Works Director). Positions such as Human Resources Director and Property Management Director are not considered Department Heads.

3. Meetings of the County Board

County Boards meet under conditions established by the Minnesota Open Meetings law (MN Statutes Chapter 13D). County Boards can meet in the following three ways: 1) in a regular meeting, 2) a special meeting and 3) in an emergency meeting. Also, as described below, County Boards may conduct meetings remotely under limited conditions established in Chapter 13D and County Board policy.

- *Regular meetings*

Under Minnesota law, County Boards are required to meet on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in January. Otherwise, all other meeting dates are left to the discretion of the County Board. Many counties meet twice per month, while some meet three times per month. Boards can meet in locations other than the County seat. Also, state law does not prescribe the time of day a Board meets. Traditionally, the Benton County Board meets at 9:00 a.m. on the first and third Tuesdays, but it could meet in the evening or on other days. A schedule of regular meetings for the year must be adopted at the initial meeting in January and posted at the County. No further posted notice is required.

- *Special meetings*

Circumstances may require a County Board to meet at times other than its regular meetings. A time-sensitive matter may require Board action sooner than the next regular meeting, or the Board may choose to move a regular meeting to another date and time, making the new meeting a “special meeting.” To hold a special Board meeting, the County must post a notice three days prior to the meeting. We must also send the notice out to any organization or person who has requested to receive such notices. This listing typically includes local news media. A special meeting carries one other important distinction from a regular meeting: the meeting notice must include the purpose of the



meeting (in addition to date, time and place). Since the purpose of the meeting was established in the posted meeting notice, the special meeting agenda may not be amended when the meeting begins.

- *Emergency meetings*

On rare occasions, the County Board must meet to take action on an urgent matter, generally when the failure to act could result in substantial financial harm to the County. Examples include natural disasters or state government shut-downs. In the instance of an emergency situation, the County Administrator would consult with the Board Chair and County Attorney to determine if an Emergency meeting should be called. If one will, the County must post and transmit a meeting notice at the earliest opportunity.

- *Committee of the Whole (COW)*

The Benton County Board often meets in work sessions we refer to as Committees of the Whole (COW). This term originates in Minnesota Statutes §375.06, which describes that committees of the board may be comprised of all of its members. Historically, the Benton County Board has used COWs for informal discussions of topics requiring more time than available during a regular Board meeting. COWs can be used to provide Board feedback to Departments on proposed ordinances, road plans, the County budget and levy, and other significant matters in advance of formal Board action at a regular Board meeting. By custom, the County Board has not used COWs to take formal action on any subject and instead reaches consensus and provides direction to County staff. Technically, a COW is considered a special Board meeting, which requires a three-day posted notice, including the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting. And like a special meeting, the agenda may not be amended.



- *Remote participation in Board meetings*

Minnesota's open meeting law permits members of public bodies to participate in meetings remotely, under certain conditions. Those conditions can be found in MN Statutes §13D.02, as amended by Laws of 2025, Chapter 39. County Board members may participate in Board meetings from a non-public location subject to the following conditions:

- a. Board members may participate remotely not more than four times per calendar year for regular County Board meetings, and not more than four times per calendar year for

Committee of the Whole meetings. Additional remote participation for health-related reasons may be permitted, with the approval of the County Board. (Board policy)

- b. All Board members must be able to hear and see each other (Statutory)
- c. At least one Board member must be physically present at the regular meeting location (Statutory)
- d. All votes must be by roll call (Statutory)
- e. The names of Board members who may participate remotely must be published with the meeting agenda not less than three days prior to the meeting date. (Statutory)



4. Meeting Procedures

- *Quorum*

As a public body, County Boards may conduct business only when a majority of its members are present (MN Statutes §357.07). Most County Boards have five members, so three members comprise a quorum. For any motion to pass, a majority of the Board then in office must vote in the affirmative. A Board meeting could occur with just three members present, but for a motion to pass all three members must vote to approve.

Questions sometimes arise about whether a gathering of three or Board members constitutes a public meeting of the County Board and consequently requires a posted meeting notice. A general “rule of thumb” is that any meeting in which “county business” is discussed and will be attended by three or more Board members constitutes a public meeting. Meetings that are purely social in nature do not require a posted meeting notice. However, Board members should refrain from discussing County matters at such meetings.

- *Creating the meeting agenda*

The County Administrator’s Office is responsible for preparing the agenda for all Board meetings. Approximately one week prior to each regular County Board meeting the Administrator’s Office requests agenda items from County Departments. The Administrator’s Office does not determine what items will or will not appear on a County Board agenda. On occasion the Administrator’s Office will suggest an

appropriate placement on the agenda (e.g., consent agenda vs. a regular agenda item) or may adjust the time allotted to an item. County Board members can also place items on the agenda by contacting the Administrator's Office. Agendas for regular meetings follow this format:

1. Introductory items; roll call and approving/amending the agenda
2. Open forum; time set aside for the public to make comments on issues of concern; no Board action but potentially follow-up assigned to the relevant Department
3. Consent agenda; routine, recurring items such as Board minutes, contract renewals with no substantial changes in cost or terms, Board/Commission appointments and recurring grant awards.
4. Regular agenda items; typically new and substantive action items requiring greater time for staff presentations and Board members questions; this section of the agenda may also include Public Hearings
5. Commissioner meeting updates; Board members share information and updates on meetings of other Boards, Commissions or Committees in which they are Benton County's designated representative
6. Comments by Commissioners (formerly "Commissioner Concerns"); time set aside for Board members to introduce a new topic or raise a concern; no action take but potentially follow-up assigned to the relevant Department
7. Set Committees of the Whole; scheduling work sessions or other meetings in which three or more Board members will attend and "county business" may be discussed; also, when the County Board formally designates meetings as a "Committee of the Whole," attendance at the meeting is thereby eligible for per diem (see more discussion about per diem in Section



- *Parliamentary procedures*

The County Board strives to conduct its meetings in an orderly manner, respecting the rights of members to participate, speak on issues and vote. While not required by law, the Benton County Board follows “Roberts Rules of Order” when conducting its meetings.

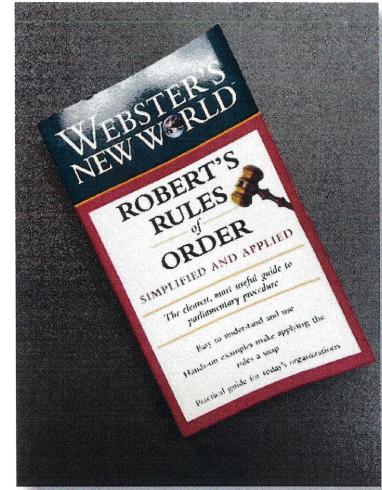
Generally, Roberts Rules place the Chair in the position of managing the meeting, keeping discussion focused on the issue at hand, recognizing members who wish to speak and bringing matters to some form of conclusion. Members wishing to speak should first obtain the acknowledgement of the Chair.

A full discussion of Roberts Rules of Order is beyond the scope of this Board policy manual. Board members should be familiar with Roberts Rules of Order. Should questions arise during a meeting regarding the application of Roberts Rules, the County Administrator can advise the Board or otherwise research Roberts Rules and respond at a subsequent Board meeting. For purposes of this Policy Manual, the following are key points of Roberts Rules:

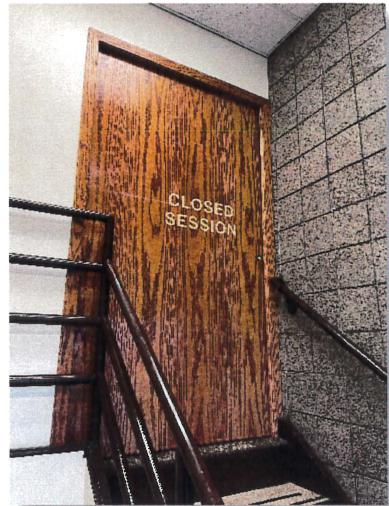
- ✓ The Chair may not limit debate as long as any member wishes to speak; however, debate can be ended by motion and second of the members, and must be approved by a 2/3rds vote; such motions are not debatable
- ✓ A Chair is not prohibited from making motions; Roberts Rules state that in large Boards a Chair should not make motions and should instead focus on managing the meeting
- ✓ Motions to table an item until later in the meeting are not debatable; motions to postpone action on an item until some date in the future are debatable
- ✓ Motions to amend a primary motion should be voted on prior to a vote on the primary motion.

- *Closed sessions of the County Board*

County Boards may close their meetings to the public under limited conditions set forth in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13D. It is important to clearly establish in the motion to close the meeting the statutory basis for a closed meeting and commit to the record other facts supporting the reason for conducting a closed session. Below is a summary of permissible reasons to conduct a closed session:



1. To discuss labor negotiations strategies
2. To discuss offers on real property
3. To discuss threatened or pending litigation with attorney (attorney-client privileged information)
4. To evaluate the performance of an employee subject to County Board authority (but may be opened by the employee who is the subject of the meeting)
5. For preliminary consideration of allegations or charges against an employee subject to County Board authority
6. To discuss: (1) data that would identify alleged victims or reporters of criminal sexual conduct, domestic abuse, or maltreatment of minors or vulnerable adults; (2) active investigative data as defined in section 13.82, subdivision 7 or internal affairs data relating to allegations of law enforcement personnel misconduct collected or created by a state agency, statewide system, or political subdivision; (3) educational data, health data, medical data, welfare data, or mental health data that are not public data; or (4) an individual's medical records.
7. To receive security briefings and reports, to discuss issues related to security systems, to discuss emergency response procedures and to discuss security deficiencies in or recommendations regarding public services, infrastructure and facilities, if disclosure of the information discussed would pose a danger to public safety or compromise security procedures or responses.



All closed sessions of the County Board must be audio recorded, with the exception of those conducted under #3 Attorney-Client privilege.

5. Board member compensation and benefits

▪ *Salary and Benefits*

Board members receive an annual salary set by the County Board. Minnesota Statutes §375.055 requires County Boards to set Board salaries annually by Resolution. Any change in salary will be effective January 1st. State law does not prescribe a methodology for setting Board member salaries. Instead, Boards may follow whatever practices the Board considers reasonable and appropriate. Factors historically considered include Board salaries in comparative counties, general wage increases adopted for County employees and overall County budgetary conditions.

Under Minnesota Statutes §375.055, Subdivision 5, Board members are eligible to participate in the County's group health insurance plan. Board members receive a County contribution towards their insurance at the same rate provided to non-union employees. County Board members may also participate in the Minnesota Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) Defined Contribution plan. Participation is voluntary and can be

terminated at any time. If chosen, PERA withholds 5% from the Elected Official's compensation for investment in the PERA

Defined Contribution plan. The County matches that 5%.



MEMBERS

BENEFIT RECIPIENTS

- *Per Diem*

Board members may receive a per diem when attending a meeting formally recognized as a County function. This recognition occurs in two ways: 1) when the County Board adopts its "Boards and Commissions" assignments at the first Board meeting in January; and 2) when the Board adds meetings to the Committee of the Whole listing during regular meetings throughout the year. It is worth stressing that per diem may be claimed in only these two instances. Attending meetings of other groups not listed as a County-approved meeting do not qualify. Also, an individual Board member meeting a constituent at the constituent's property does not qualify. Board members may find they have two or more meetings on one day, but may claim only one per diem for that day.

The per diem rate is set by the County Board annually by Resolution. Under MN Statutes §375.055 Board members may not receive a per diem for service on "the board of auditors, the board of equalization, or the canvassing board." Also, by Resolution Board members do not receive a per diem for attending regular and special meetings of the County Board.

- *Expense reimbursement*

Board members are eligible for the reimbursement of reasonable and customary expenses associated with their service on the County Board. Examples include mileage for driving to County functions, meals at such functions, parking, hotels and airfare. Ideally larger expenses such as hotels and airfare will be reserved by the County and paid directly by the County, avoiding the need for reimbursements.

The conditions of Board member expense reimbursement are set forth in the annual Resolution adopted by the Board that establishes the per diem rate. This Resolution provides that mileage reimbursement shall be at the current IRS business mileage rate. The Finance Department within the County Administrator's Office will provide Board members with the current IRS mileage rate. Further, the Resolution states that dollar amounts for meal reimbursements shall follow the County's Personnel Policies. The Finance Department will provide Board members with forms for submitting per diem and expense reimbursement claims.

6. Overview of County Board Statutory Duties

The section provides a general description of the major statutory responsibilities of County Boards. A detailed accounting of all County Board statutory responsibilities is outside the scope of this Policy Manual. Questions regarding Board responsibilities should be posed to the County Attorney's Office. This overview will focus on the following major areas of Board responsibilities: 1) financial, 2) health and welfare, 3) roads, 4) public safety and emergency management and 5) general County administration.

- *Financial*

County Boards are vested with financial management of the County through various statutory responsibilities. Those responsibilities include: 1) setting the County budget and property tax levy, 2) arranging for the creation and publication of the County's annual financial statements, 3) arranging for the annual external audit of the financial statements, 4) reviewing and approving the County's five-year capital improvement program, including the road program, 5) authorizing the issuance of debt (bonds) to finance capital projects, and 6) reviewing revenue and expenditures during the year through regular reports provided by the County

Administrator's Office and taking corrective action as necessary. The County Board can also exercise indirect influence over County spending through its approval of all contracts for goods and services.

- *Health and welfare*

The County Board also functions as the social services and public health boards for the County. As the social services board, the County Board must administer a wide range of State-mandated social services



The screenshot shows the Minnesota Statutes website for the year 2022. The header includes links for 'Retrieve by number', 'Statutes', 'GO', 'Statutes', 'Laws', 'Rules', and 'Court Rules'. Below the header, a breadcrumb navigation shows '2022 Minnesota Statutes > COUNTIES, COUNTY OFFICERS, REGIONAL AUTHORITIES >'. The main title is '2022 Minnesota Statutes'. Under 'CHAPTER 375. COUNTY BOARDS', there is a table with two columns: 'Section' and 'Headnote'. The sections listed are 375.01, 375.02, and 375.025. The headnotes for 375.01 and 375.025 mention 'MEMBERS. NUMBER OF.' and 'COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS.' respectively. The headnote for 375.02 indicates it is '[Repealed, 1974 c 240 s 2]'.

Section	Headnote
375.01	MEMBERS. NUMBER OF.
375.02	[Repealed, 1974 c 240 s 2]
375.025	COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS.

programs. Examples include out-of-home placement, adult and children's mental health services, substance abuse services, child protection, child support enforcement and adult/elderly services. In most instances, the County does not provide direct services. Instead, the County connects residents to contracted service providers through screening and case management. The County also administers State supportive services, including cash assistance, food support, child care and rental assistance. Funding for client services and program administration is derived from a combination of federal funds, state funds and County levy dollars.

Mandated public health functions vested with counties are more limited. Examples include the responsibility under MN Statute §145A.04 to "investigate, report and control communicable diseases." Also, local public health boards also required to "remove and abate" public health nuisances. Under MN Statutes §256B.0655, personal care assistant (PCA) assessments shall be conducted by a county public health nurse or by a certified public health nurse under contract with the county. MN Statutes §145A.04, Subdivision 2 permits but does not require a county to establish a public health department. Public health functions other than disease control, nuisance abatement and PCA assessments are not mandated (optional services include health education, car seat clinics, child/teen checkup, maternal/child health and dental varnishing). Grant sources offset approximately 80% of the cost of public health, with the balance covered by levy dollars.

- *Roads*

Minnesota Statutes §162.02 requires counties to construct, improve and maintain the county state-aid highway system (per this section, the MNDOT Commissioner shall determine what roads constitute the county state-aid system). In addition, the County Board is responsible for the County road system (those roads numbered above 33). MN Statutes §163.02 prescribes that "county highways shall be established, located, relocated, constructed, reconstructed, improved, maintained, revoked, or vacated by the several counties." MN Statutes §163.07 requires a County Board to appoint a Highway Engineer, while MN Statutes §389.011 requires the County Board to appoint a County Surveyor.



- *Public safety and emergency management*

In general, public safety functions are vested with the elected County Sheriff. County Boards approve the number of deputies a Sheriff has, plus the Board approves the budget and contracts for the Sheriff's Office. A significant role held by County Board in public safety is the provision of a County jail. MN Statutes §373.05 requires each County to provide at the County seat a "suitable and sufficient" jail (County Board's may create regional jails under Chapter 641).

MN Statutes §387.11 places the County jail under the control of the Sheriff (except regional jails). Thus, day-to-day operations of the County Jail are the responsibility of the Sheriff. The County Board is responsible for facility maintenance, Jail capital projects and utilities (e.g., heating and cooling).



Responding to emergency events in the County falls to the County Board through its Emergency Management Director. MN Statutes §12.25 requires each political subdivision of the State (except Townships) to have a "local emergency organization." Each County must appoint an Emergency Management Director and one or more Deputy Directors. General emergency management responsibilities include developing and maintain various emergency response plans, conducting training for County staff and other jurisdictions within the County and coordinating the County's response during an actual emergency events.

- *General County administration*

In addition to the preceding specific duties, County Boards hold the responsibility for the general administration of County operations. Examples include:

- ✓ The County Board controls all County facilities and is responsible for maintenance, repairs and daily cleaning
- ✓ The County Board is responsible for any facility planning to accommodate the County's future space needs
- ✓ Employee conduct is governed by Personnel Policies adopted by the County Board; those policies set forth the compensation and benefits of non-union employees and cover aspects of employee conduct not prescribed in labor agreements

- ✓ The County Board determines the number of employees for all County departments, including those headed by Elected Officials
- ✓ The County Board negotiates labor agreements with the County's collective bargaining units; such agreements establish pay and benefits for union employees, along with other terms and conditions of employment
- ✓ The County's information technology systems are provided by the County Board, to include the acquisition of hardware and software, and providing IT staff to support all departments.

- *Conflicts of interest*

Legal conflicts of interest for County Board members are defined in various Minnesota statutes. Board members with questions about conflicts of interest should consult with the County Attorney's Office since each case will be fact-specific. In general, the County may not enter into contracts to purchase goods or services from a company in which a Board member has a direct or indirect financial interest. Direct would mean the Board member owns or works for the company in question. Indirect means the Board member's spouse or close family member owns or works for the company. State statutes allow for certain exceptions, so if in doubt it is important to consult legal counsel and then disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the County Board. It is important note that abstaining from a vote on a contract may not be sufficient to satisfy the statutory conflict of interest test.



Board members may from time to time be offered a complimentary meal or gift by a current or prospective vendor. State law prohibits public officials from accepting gifts. However, items of insignificant value such as a pen (or cowbells) are acceptable. Accepting a free meal is prohibited, unless the Board member is appearing at a meeting as part of the meeting program. Plaques acknowledging service to an organization are acceptable as gifts. Consult with County Attorney if in doubt. Of course the safest route to avoid any appearance of impropriety is to decline gifts.

- *Appointments to boards and commissions*

County Board members serve on numerous boards and commissions, many of which are external to the County. Those organizations classified as Joint Powers Organizations (JPO) require a County

Commissioner as a member. The general concept behind JPOs is that they are created to jointly provide a service or function that one County would otherwise provide on its own. Examples of JPOs locally include the Great River Regional Library and the Tri-County Solid Waste Commission. County Board members serve terms set forth in the JPOs enabling Joint Powers Agreement and bylaws.

County Board members have been invited over the years to join the boards of other external organizations. Also, some appointments occur by virtue of the County being a member of the external organization. One such example would be the Association of Minnesota Counties and the appointment of County Board members to its various Policy Committees. The County's membership in the Benton Economic Partnership is a local example. With other Boards like Retired and Senior Volunteer Program or Tri-County Action Program, Board members have been invited to sit on the organization's governing Board. Many such organizations have ties to the County as service providers to County residents and clients.

The County Board historically has reviewed appointments to the various boards and commissions at the first regular meeting in January. In most cases, one Board member is appointed as the primary Benton County representative to the board or commission. Usually, the Board also appoints an alternate to provide representation when the County's primary appointee is unable to attend. The Board member appointed as an alternate should attend only when contacted by the primary appointee, thereby avoiding any potential quorum situations or confusion regarding who will be voting for Benton County.

Newer County Board members have posed questions about how appointments are made to boards and commissions. The most prevailing factors historically have been Board member seniority and subject matter preference. Otherwise, no Joint Powers Agreements or the bylaws of external boards and commissions stipulate which County Board member will be appointed to serve. In some cases, an external board may deal with only rural issues, or conversely urban issues, so that geographical focus can tend to align certain County Board members with that external board. Overall, the County Board strives to achieve a fair and reasonable distribution of board and commission appointments among the County Board, recognizing the significant time investment such appointments can carry.

7. Board member code of conduct

The County Board recognizes that each member is an independent Elected Official, accountable to the voters of each member's respective Commissioner District. As such, adhering to this Board member Code of Conduct is voluntary. By adopting this Code of Conduct, the County Board desires that all Board members will make a good-faith effort to follow it.

Benton County Board Code of Conduct

1. During meetings of the County Board we will follow Roberts Rules of Order, respecting the role of the Chair to manage the meeting and acknowledging the right of every Board member to be heard
2. We will arrive to County Board meetings in time for the gavel and will be prepared by reading meeting packet materials prior to the meeting
3. Regarding all external boards and commissions to which we are appointed, we will adhere to the same meeting standards as we would for our County Board meetings
4. Board members may choose to attend meetings of other organizations beyond those set forth in the official boards and commissions appointment listing; Board members attending such meetings should establish with the organization that the Board member is present as a private citizen and not representing the Benton County Board
5. We recognize that the County Board exercises its authority collectively as a five-member governing body of Benton County
6. Board members may contact any County Department seeking information and working to address constituent concerns; in doing so we will refrain from giving individual directives to any County employee or Department Head and will instead bring matters requiring direction to the attention of the full County Board at a regular meeting
7. We will disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interest to the County Board and will obtain County Attorney counsel on appropriate action by the member and the County Board in response
8. We will educate ourselves on our statutory duties as County Board members by utilizing various resources, including County Administration, County Attorney, County Departments and the Association of Minnesota Counties.

9. Board members are encouraged to follow no less than a "business casual" dress code when attending external meetings on behalf of Benton County.

Adopted this 15th day of July, 2025



Scott Johnson, Commissioner District 1



Ed Popp, Commissioner District 2



Steven J. Heinen, Commissioner District 3



Jared J. Gapinski, Commissioner District 4



Pam Benoit, Commissioner District 5

Attest:



Montgomery Headley
County Administrator