

Roles and Responsibilities of County Commissioners (all members)

Summary

A Board of County Commissioners holds a pivotal role in governing and overseeing county government operations, with specific duties varying across states and jurisdictions. The key areas of responsibility encompass legislative authority, budget and finance, governance, zoning and land use, oversight of other governing boards, personnel matters, infrastructure and public works, intergovernmental relations, and community engagement.

Legislative authority

- Enact ordinances and resolutions
- Enact policies

Budget and Finance

- Establish budgets
- Establish service levels
- Establish fees and charges
- Send county-wide measures to the ballot
- Approve investment policies
- Review financial performance
- Serve as the audit committee
- Approve purchasing policies
- Approve purchases above a defined dollar threshold and or other metrics

Governance

- Appoint members to various advisory and operating committees/commissions/boards
 - Planning Commission
 - Fair Board
 - Ag Extension Service District Advisory Board
 - Board of Property Tax Appeals
 - Budget Committee
 - Abatement of Dangerous Building Code, Appeals Committee
 - Community Health Advisory Council
 - Compensation Committee
 - Flat Rock Road District
 - Hahlen Special Road District
 - Library Board of Trustees
 - Local Public Safety Coordinating Council
 - Museum Advisory Board
 - Natural Resource Advisory Committee
 - Solid Waste & Recycling Advisory Committee
 - Taylor Grazing
 - Wolf Depredation Compensation Committee

Zoning and Land Use

- Appoint the Planning Commission
- Approve the comprehensive land use plan and changes
- Serve as the appeals board for land use decisions

Governing board of other districts

- The Crook County Road District

Personnel

- Appoint and terminate County Administrator
- Ratify appointment of department heads
- Approve labor agreements
- Approve pay and benefits for unrepresented employees
- Establish personnel policies

Infrastructure and Public Works

- Approve airport master plan
- Approve leases
- Approve transportation system plan
- Approve capital projects
- Approve solid waste management plan
- Approve franchise agreements

Intergovernmental Relations

- Serve on various boards/committees
 - EDCO
 - COIC
 - COHC
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - AOC/committees
 - AEOC

Community Engagement

- Engage with community groups and organizations
- Respond to citizen inquiries

In summary, County Commissioners play a multifaceted role in legislative, financial, governance, and community aspects, contributing to the overall well-being and development of the county.

Role of County Judge/Board Chair

(prepared by Judge Crawford)

The role of a County Judge/Chair is both outward facing and inward facing. The J/C works with staff to identify community priority agenda items, prepare Agendas for County meetings, and run those meetings. By proactively providing information related to community priorities the J/C helps advertise and promote the work of the County Government. The amount of media coverage of County business has declined in the last decade, so social media reach is a necessary part of the job.

The J/C also handles all public relations and manages relationships with the Association of Oregon Counties, Association of Eastern Oregon Counties, state-wide elected officials, state legislators, and members of Congress.

The County does not have a public relations or lobbying team, so the J/C takes on those roles to insure that County residents and non-residents are well aware of County issues and opportunities for economic development and tourism. This involves work with Business Oregon as well as Travel Oregon. The J/C interfaces with other state agencies as well as the Governor on an as needed basis, to insure that leaders in Salem are aware of the local impacts of State Agency Actions.

When it comes to discretionary state funds such as ARPA dollars the J/C coordinates with the AOC and other groups to maximize state and federal dollars coming back to Crook County.

If the County refers an election issue, such as bonds, to the voters of Crook County, the J/C takes a leading role in those campaigns. The J/C manages messaging around the issues, as well as campaign fundraising to make sure that County voters understand the benefits and burdens associated with the election issue.

The J/C is the face of the County government and needs to regularly attend and actively participate in stakeholder organizations that promote Crook County, as well as regional organizations that could have a positive or negative impact on the County.

The J/C is the person that constituents reach out to if they have questions related to how to go about a project or who at the County they need to talk to to get questions answered. The position is both a proactive and reactive position, that prevents problems or corrects misinformation, so that it doesn't lead to problems. Constituents regularly contact the J/C outside of normal work hours. Prior County judges have referred to it as an on-call position. That is consistent with my experience and the expectation of community members.

If there is a community event, community members expect that the J/C will be in attendance and actively participating.