

County Governing Bodies
Roles and Responsibilities
Comparable Size Oregon Counties
February 2024

The following provides information each county has posted on their website describing the roles and responsibilities of their board of directors.

1. Crook County

The Crook County Court consists of three elected officials - the county judge and two county commissioners. The judge functions as the day-to-day administrator of the county as well as the chair of the County Court. The commissioners are part-time and acting as the Court set policy for the county and represent the County in various forums.

The County Court has no judicial authority. For information about Crook County Circuit Courts, call (541) 447-6541. Although authorized by statute to preside over probate court and juvenile court, the last county judge to actually perform that function was Judge Dick Hoppes. There are 9 counties in Oregon which use the County Court structure.

The Court oversees personnel administration for approximately 200 employees within the county and supervises the operation of 23 separate departments. Some departments are headed by elected rather than appointed officials. Those departments include the offices of assessor, clerk, district attorney, sheriff, surveyor and treasurer. Departments headed by elected officials are responsible for setting and administering policy for their respective departments and do not answer to the court for the performance of their duties. They do require the consent of the Court in seeking hiring authorization and budget appropriations.

In addition to its legislative responsibilities, the Court's other primary function is to oversee the budget of Crook County. The Court administers approximately \$11 million in general fund dollars as well as a \$30 million road fund \$2.5 million in grant funds and \$4 million in other funds.

2. Wasco County- not able to locate anything on their website

3. Deschutes County

The Board is elected at large, serves as the public's elected advocate, and is the policy making body of Deschutes County government. The Board's duties include executive, judicial (quasi-judicial), and legislative authority over policy matters of countywide concern. The executive duties include establishment of the budget, which is done with the aid of the three lay members of the Budget Committee. To implement policy and

manage the day-to-day operations of the county, the Board appoints a county administrator.

The Board's responsibilities also include creation and enforcement of county ordinances and, in general, providing constituent services through various county departments. In addition, the Board is involved in a host of regional and community efforts.

The Board of Commissioners is also the governing body for other boards such as the Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District, the Black Butte Ranch Service District, the Extension/4-H County Service District, and the Sunriver Service District.

4. Jefferson County

The Board is responsible for approving ordinances (County Laws); adopting the County budget; setting standards for the use of County property; appointing non-elected officials, boards, commissions, and committees; and overseeing the operation of County departments with appointed department heads.

5. Morrow County- not able to locate anything on their website

6. Union County

As the County's governing body, the Board of Commissioners has the leading role in policy, legislative and administration duties. It alone is empowered to pass an ordinance, adopt a budget or a comprehensive plan or give official status to policy or course of action. Although the Commission shares the actual administration of county affairs with the elective department heads, it is, nevertheless, the focal point for decisions that must be made locally with respect to county affairs.

The Union County Board of Commissioners has adopted the practice of making primary liaison assignments to each member. These assignments allocate liaison responsibilities for various county departments, boards and commissions, advisory committees, intergovernmental agencies and outside organizations to individual commissioners. Liaison assignments are, however, necessarily limited in scope and responsibility for the authority of the commission is collective on both policy and administrative matters. The liaison role involves communication and advice, but final decisions can be made only by the governing body as a whole.

7. Hood River County

The Commission in Hood River County serves as the policy makers for the County. The Commission reviews and adopts Ordinances, Resolutions, and Orders as needed and adopts other policies as needed to ensure services are provided as efficiently as possible.

The Commission appoints a County Administrator to serve as the "CEO" of the County to manage the day-to-day business and oversee the many departments of the County.

8. Curry County

The Commissioner(s) serve as the legislative as well as, to some degree, the executive and quasi-judicial branches of Curry County government. Commissioners are responsible for the planning, formation, and implementation of the annual budget.

In addition, Commissioners serve on other federal, state and local mandated governmental panels, boards and commissions with fiscal duties and authority over public monies.

The BOC, nevertheless, sets the annual budget for all county departments, and determines overall administrative policy for every department. The BOC also act as liaisons to assure the smooth coordination and functioning of all county offices and departments.

9. Tillamook County

The Board serves as a direct link between the county citizens and their local, state, and federal governments. It carries out an array of state mandates including adopting the county budget and ordinances (laws), appointing boards and committees, administering the organization of special districts, sitting as the local public health authority and county contract review board, and conveying county lands. The board also oversees the operation of county departments and functions as the board of the Solid Waste Service District, 4-H and Extension Service District, and County Road District. The commissioners represent the county and its interests by serving on a variety of diverse commissions and committees and are instrumental in furthering pivotal projects such as the rural broadband to the home, Salmonberry Trail, and Neskowin Emergency Egress Route.

10. Malheur County - not able to locate anything on their website

11. Clatsop County - not able to locate anything on their website

12. Lincoln County

Today, county government responsibilities include public health, mental health, community corrections, juvenile services, criminal prosecution, airports, parks, libraries, land-use planning, building regulations, refuse disposal, elections, recording of vital records, air-pollution control, veterans services, economic development, urban renewal, public housing, county fairs, museums, animal control, emergency management, senior services, and many others.