

APPOINTEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS SERVING ON STATUTORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS*

Introduction

The County Board of Commissioners in each Michigan County has the statutory responsibility of making various appointments to boards and commissions. Each statutory board or commission varies in terms of:

- 1) the duties of the individuals appointed
- 2) the length of the appointment
- 3) compensation, if any, that is to be received
- 4) the time of the year in which the appointment is made
- 5) whether County Commissioners may serve as members of the board or commission
- 6) the date and time of meetings and the number of meetings per year

Appointment Process

- 1) **Nomination** - A person can be nominated for the position by others – either at the applicable Standing Committee (normally County Affairs) or Board of Commissioners meeting.
- 2) **Solicitation** – The board or commission opening is advertised in the local media for all but Commissioner positions or for positions that don't require solicitation.
- 3) **Application** – A person completes an application form – whether they are nominated or solicited. The forms are available in Administrator/Controller's Office and on the County's internet website www.co.jackson.mi.us

Completed applications are submitted to the Administrator/Controller's Office – 6th Floor, County Tower Building, 120 W. Michigan Avenue, Jackson, MI 49201; fax # 517-780-4755; or submitted on-line on the County's website.

Applicant Requirements

Potential nominees to boards and commissions should:

- Have an interest in the board or commission they are applying for
- Be willing to become knowledgeable about the particular board or commission
- Be committed and willing to serve as a representative of the County on the board or commission
- Have no conflict of interest in regard to the board or commission they are applying for
- Apply or accept a nomination willingly, and not out of a sense of obligation
- Be available on the dates/times of the meetings of the particular board or commission.

Attendance at meetings is encouraged. Board Rule Policy 4090, Section 9.6 applies: Positions of Commissioner appointees may become vacant if three (3) unexcused consecutive or five (5) unexcused absences in a year. The determination of unexcused absences shall be made by the respective committee. A recommendation for removal from office shall be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners. This Section shall not apply to statutory boards which have other procedures for removal of members

Roles and Responsibilities - The roles of individuals appointed to various boards and commissions vary depending on the statutory nature of the appointment.

1) Some board or commission appointments serve only in an **advisory capacity** while other positions may be both **advisory and policy management**. The statutes govern the nature of the role of the board or commission.

a) **Advisory Boards** - Boards and commissions which are advisory in nature function as a sounding board to the agency director or management personnel. The board member is appointed to solicit feedback from the community and to advise the management staff on such issues as program priorities, the success of the agency in meeting stated objectives and to provide assistance to management staff in addressing issues and concerns which may develop in relationship to the agency functioning in the community. Separating an advisory role from a policy management role is a fine line which may have to be defined by mutual agreement between the board and management staff. The internal day-to-day management and operation of an agency is not the function of an advisory board unless the management staff solicits input. If the operation, management and performance is below desired levels (assuming it is known what those levels are), the advisory body has an obligation to provide feedback to the management staff and actively seek resolution of the deficiencies.

b) **Advisory and Policy Management Boards** - Boards or commissions which have both advisory and policy management responsibilities, such as hiring the agency director, performing evaluation of management, approving contracts, and approving and reviewing budgets, require a more active role on the part of appointed board members. Such boards or commissions require the appointee to gain an in-depth understanding not only of the financing arrangements but of the operating policies and guidelines which contribute to the operation of the agency. However, the day-to-day management of the agency remains with the management staff.

2) After Appointment:

a) Once appointed, board and commission members have the responsibility to become familiar with the goals and objectives of the agency, and any state and/or county statutes which guide the operation of the agency and its financing arrangements. Some agencies have a complex financing arrangement with federal, state and local funds involved. Developing a knowledge base of the financing arrangement is important if the board member is to fulfill their role as a contributing member to the advisory body.

b) Appointees should be mindful that they are serving as a representative of the County on the board or commission.

c) Appointees should come prepared to meetings. Board members should take the time to become familiar with the agency, its challenges, problems and programs. In addition, gaining operational knowledge of the financial condition is paramount to becoming an effective board member.

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*Excludes the Road Commission

