



Council of  
Metropolitan  
Area Leagues  
MINNESOTA

# COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA

**Report to Members of the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of  
Women Voters, on a study conducted to update League positions  
on metropolitan area county governments.**

**January 2022**

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# **COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN AREA LEAGUES OF WOMEN VOTERS**

## **Metro-County Government Update Study**

**January 2022**

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Report to members of the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters on a study to update its positions on county government in the metropolitan area.

### **Purpose of the Study on County Government**

The purpose of this study is to update the 1975 position of the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters on county government in the metropolitan area. The 1975 position was adopted following publication in January 1975 of its study “Seven Counties in Transition,” a groundbreaking publication that compared, for the first time, the seven counties making up the newly-established metropolitan area as a geographic area subject to specific types of regulation by the newly-created Metropolitan Council. The 1975 study focused on the structure and functions of county government.

### **Current CMAL position on County Government**

#### **The Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues**

Supports measures to ensure accountability and visibility of county government. Support measures to improve cooperation and communication between the Metropolitan Council and county government within the metropolitan area (1975).

Believes that accountability of a governmental body is obtained by effective communication of its policies and procedures to residents of its jurisdiction. CMAL also recognizes the responsibility of citizens to become adequately informed and involved, and to participate in the election process.

Accountability of county government would be increased in several ways, including the following:

- Public access to the budget process where priorities and policies are set, including citizen review of revenue-sharing allocations and funding for public services and citizen review of methods of setting budget priorities.
- Systematic and objective evaluation of county programs:
  - a. Creation of a public information system to ensure not only public access to meetings of the county board and advisory committees but also more understanding of the issues being considered by the county board;
  - b. Ample publication of location, time, date and agenda of meeting and publication of background information prior to the decision-making time when policy is set;
  - c. Dissemination of information on the procedures for citizen appointments;
  - d. Regular communication between county and municipalities and other levels of government;
  - e. Full disclosure of campaign financing by every candidate in county elections [note: this is already in state law, so committee recommends dropping this].

CMAL views the Metropolitan Council as the regional planning and coordinating body, while the counties are viewed as administrators, implementers, and enforcers of regional policy. CMAL believes that counties should be involved in the initial planning and policy-making stages of Metropolitan Council activities in order for counties to carry out their eventual implementation.

## Background

The 1975 CMAL study focused on the functions and organization of county government in the metro area. The current study focuses on those aspects of the 1975 CMAL position regarding the transparency and accountability of county government, as well as the communication between county government and other levels of government. Based upon the study committee research, it appears that during the intervening 46 years the seven metro area counties have made substantial progress towards increasing their transparency and accountability. For example, all seven maintain robust websites and other on-line opportunities for the public to follow the activities of county government and provide their own input. Details of these opportunities may be found in Appendix C.

County Boards still meet on weekday mornings, a fact lamented in the 1975 study. However, developments in technology serve to make such meetings more accessible to the public. Given the substantial functions assigned to county government, as compared to municipalities, townships, and school boards, it seems unlikely that county boards would ever turn to routine evening meetings. Many county commissioners consider themselves to be full-time. Many commissioners who consider themselves part-time nonetheless attend many meetings above and beyond county board meetings.

CMAL's current position recognizes citizens' [sic] responsibility to become adequately informed and involved.

At present, this means that members of the public typically must be able to utilize current technology tools to do so. Not all members of the public have this opportunity. This makes it even more important for county governments to continue to reach out to population segments without such opportunity through alternative means.

In the nearly five decades since the 1975 study, individual county commissioners represent substantially larger populations in their counties.

For example, look at the growth data since 1974 to today regarding the population served by county commissioners:

	<b>1974</b>	<b>2020</b>
Ramsey County	70,955	78,907
Scott County	7,750	30,186
Dakota County	35,032	61,289

Fortunately, technological developments provide platforms where commissioners may serve their larger constituencies.

## Process

In January 2020 delegates to CMAL voted to study county government in the metropolitan area that would focus on the visibility, accountability, civic engagement, and intergovernmental relations of the seven counties. A committee was established to undertake the study and prepare the report that follows.

The committee followed a two-part strategy. The first part consisted of reliance on county websites to develop answers to a list of questions concerning the visibility, accountability, civic engagement, and intergovernmental relations of county government.

The second part consisted of interviews with county officials and/or staff to answer the questions that could not be answered by consulting the county websites.

Committee members with direct, personal knowledge also contributed information.

## Executive Summary

Study committee research shows that, since the 1975 CMAL study of metro counties, the counties have made substantial progress towards increasing their transparency and accountability. Nonetheless, the differences between counties and how they operate with – or without - community member involvement in local government is stark. There are similarities, but also key differences in how each county encourages transparency.

We did not always get answers about relations with the Met Council and the county legislative agenda, but where we did, we seemingly saw a big contrast between the relationships for the two large urban counties and the further-out exurban/suburban counties and that Met Council relationship.

## CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

As you read the report, please consider the following consensus questions for updating CMAL's county government position and answer YES if you Agree or NO if you Disagree for each of the questions.

1. County governments should provide ample time and easily accessible notice and background information regarding all:  
  - County Board Meetings
  - County Board Committee Meetings
  - County Board Work Sessions/Workshops/Briefings
  - Advisory Committees/Commission Meetings**YES – NO**
  
2. County government should video record and post on their websites:  
  - a. County Board Meetings **YES – NO**
  - b. County Board Committee Meetings **YES – NO**
  - c. County Board Work Sessions/Workshops **YES – NO**
  - d. Advisory Committee/Commission Meetings **YES – NO**
  
3. County government should post information on their websites regarding:  
  - The number of members for each advisory committee/commission
  - The current appointees
  - The minutes of their meetings.**YES – NO**
  
4. County government should provide members of the public opportunity for public comment at:  
  - a. County Board Meetings **YES – NO**
  - b. County Board Committee Meetings **YES – NO**
  - c. County Board Work Sessions/Workshops **YES – NO**
  - d. Advisory Committee/Commission Meetings **YES – NO**
  
5. County government should offer opportunities outside of meetings for members of the public to give timely and meaningful input into the county budget, policy development, initiatives, and capital projects.  
  
Options could include: one-on-one meetings with county commissioners, virtual and in person town meetings, and open houses. **YES – NO**
  
6. County government should post information on their websites about funds they receive from or through the Metropolitan Council and how such funds are used. **YES – NO**

## RESEARCH RESULTS

The Tables that follow constitute the committee's attempt to synthesize and summarize some of the information acquired during the research process.

This study was not meant to be an exhaustive compare and contrast of the activities of the seven (7) metropolitan counties in Minnesota, but to update the 1975 CMAL positions.

In the process of this research, the committee members obtained a large number of interesting data points found from county websites, interviews with county commissioners, administrators, and county personnel, and through the personal experiences of committee members. This raw data is located in Appendix C.

Readers are encouraged to read through this raw data, especially for their own county, to get a fuller picture of how their county compares to other metro counterparts.

The Tables are formatted to speak for themselves. Accordingly, this report includes only limited narrative commentary on the information displayed in them. Table information will also help inform the reader when responding to consensus questions.

## DATA TABLES

### A. Commissioner Information

- The study looked at whether commissioners' salaries are "readily" found on the county website, not merely available if one knew where to look for the information.
- Since county commissioners set their own salaries by official action at a county board meeting, board meeting agenda packets and minutes would always include this information.
- However, the study committee found that most counties do not make this information "readily" available on their websites.

**Table 1: Transparency of Commissioner Information**

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Number of residents each commissioner represents:	50,989	21,017	61,289	183,080	78,617	29,802	52,488
2020 Census information: Population was divided by the number of districts. <a href="https://www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/minnesota-population-change-between-census-decade.html">https://www.census.gov/library/stories/state-by-state/minnesota-population-change-between-census-decade.html</a>							
Commissioners: Full or Part Time	FT	NOT SPECIFIED	PT	FT	FT	PT	PT
Do Commissioners hold Town Hall or Virtual Meetings?	ONE DOES	BOTH	YES	BOTH	YES	NO	NO
Are Commissioners available by Phone?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are Commissioners available by email?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are Commissioners available to meet in person?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
What is the salary range for a commissioner?	\$73,028	\$76,344 - \$76,044	\$85,869	\$113,566	\$97,102 – \$100,138	\$72,306	\$70,720
<a href="https://www.lcc.mn.gov/legsalarycouncil/reports/LSC-report-3-23-21-final.pdf">https://www.lcc.mn.gov/legsalarycouncil/reports/LSC-report-3-23-21-final.pdf</a>							
Are the Commissioners Salaries readily found on the county website?	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Does the County Board have a Code of Ethics	NOT ADOPTED	YES Carver County Board Operating Rules	YES	YES Same as the City of MPLS	YES	YES	YES

## B. County Board Meetings

- Anoka County does not permit public comment at county board meetings.
- Ramsey County does not generally permit public comment at county board meetings
- Whether members of the public have the opportunity to make comments at public meetings varies among the counties.

**Table 2: County Board Meetings**

COUNTY BOARD MEETINGS	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Are there Board Committees made up exclusively of Commissioners?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board <b>Agendas</b> posted on the county website?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board Meetings posted on the website	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board Meetings Recorded?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are the minutes of a County Board Meeting posted on the website	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Can the public subscribe to receive notice of Meetings, Agendas, Minutes via the website	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are public comments permitted during County Board Meetings	NO	YES	YES	YES	NOT GENERALLY	YES But only on topics that are not the agenda	YES

## C. County Workshops and Briefings

- The purpose of workshops is to educate the commissioners so they can vote later on a policy or issue with knowledge and awareness of how it will affect residents.
- There is a mixed approach for county board workshops/work sessions.
- Anoka and Ramsey County appear to disallow/discourage public comment at both county board and workshop meetings.
- Rather than workshops, Anoka County uses committees (Parks, Human Services, Transportation, Information Technology and more), composed of two to four commissioners to review policies, agreements, budgets, plans and issues in many departments and work areas. The Committee Chair reports to the full Board at regular Board Meetings, presenting recommendations for action. None have a citizen appointee. Citizen comments are allowed at the beginning of the committee meetings.
- Only Dakota County allows public comments at both county board meetings and workshops/briefings.
- This does not mean there are no other opportunities for members of the public to comment upon county policies and actions, but it does point to a need to make those opportunities clear.

**Table 3: County Work Sessions and Briefings**

COUNTY BOARD WORK SESSIONS/BRIEFINGS	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Are County Board work sessions or workshops posted on the website	MOST OF THEM ARE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board work sessions or workshops agendas posted on the website	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board work sessions or workshops recorded	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board work sessions or workshops minutes posted on website?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO Minutes are not taken, as there are no votes taken
Can the public subscribe to Meetings, Agenda, Minutes on the website	MEETING NOTICE ONLY	NO	YES	NO	YES (except for minutes)	YES	NO
Are public comments permitted during County work session or workshops?	NO	NO Sessions are for informational purposes only. No votes are taken.	YES	NO Sessions are for informational purposes only. No votes are taken.	NO	NO Sessions are for informational purposes only. No votes are taken.	YES Chair may allow public to speak, but it is not set in policy
Can the public subscribe to work session or workshop information on the website	MEETING NOTICES ONLY	NO Can call county and asked to be notified.	YES	NO But can be asked to be on notification list	YES	YES	YES

## D. County Advisory Meetings

- The 1975 study referred to the “elaborate advisory committee system” at the county level.
  - The current study reveals that there still is a large system of county advisory boards and committees.
  - The current study did not evaluate the effectiveness of the current system or delve into the particulars of the appointment processes used by the counties.
  - Based on the committee research, it does appear that many county advisory committee committees and boards are quite transparent and that their meetings are quite accessible.
  - People who live or work in the county are appointed to advisory councils for the purpose of advising the county board on particular issues.
- (Note: This table does not refer to Anoka County advisory committees that are composed of commissioners and staff.)

**Table 4: County Advisory Meetings**

ADVISORY COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Are County Advisory Committees <b>open to the public</b>	YES	YES	YES	VARIES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Advisory Meetings <b>agendas</b> posted on the website	YES	YES	YES	VARIES Not Readily found	YES	YES	SOME
Are County Advisory Meetings <b>recorded</b>	NOT ALL	NO	YES	VARIES	NO	SOME	NO
Are the minutes of County Advisory Meetings posted on the website	YES	YES Each committee has a web page for agendas & minutes	YES	VARIES among the committees	VARIES among the committees	YES	YES
Can the public <b>subscribe</b> to County Advisory Meetings, Agenda, Minutes on the website	ONLY LIBRARY BOARD	YES  But not on the website	SOME	YES Public can contact the Chairs to get on list	YES	SOME	YES
Are public comments permitted during County Advisory Meetings?	ONLY FOR SOME MEETINGS	YES	YES	YES  Public can participate via voice recordings	YES	YES	SOME

## E. Engagement of the Public in the Planning Process

- The study questions regarding county processes for designing and implementing policies and projects were organized based on type (budget, parks, roads, etc.).
- However, from one County Manager/Administrator we learned that variations to public engagement seems to be more dependent on the scope of the project rather than the type of project.
- League interviewers were told that a small roadway resurfacing project that is going to happen no matter what would involve informing the nearby neighbors that it is going to happen.
- A larger project such as adding a new park feature or a complex transportation system change that would elicit high levels of interest would be part of a long-range Master Plan, with public engagement opportunities built-in at various stages along the way.
- Other counties proved similar.
- Accordingly, the timing and design of public participation in planning and implementing county policies and projects may depend more upon the size or scope of the policy or project rather than their subject matter.
- Some specific county strategies may be found in Appendix C, but the materials therein are not oriented to the size of projects.
- Anoka County only involves the public in park and road projects near homes and businesses. There is no public engagement in budgeting or setting policies. However, comments are allowed at committee meetings where budget components are reviewed; not at overall budget discussions at Commission workshops.

**Table 5: Engagement of the Public in the Planning Process**

BUDGET PLANNING	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Is the public involved in the budget planning process	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are budget planning documents available to the public on the website	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are public comments permitted during budget planning sessions	LIMITED	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

POLICY INITIATIVES	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Is the public involved in the development of policy initiatives	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are policy initiatives planning documents available on the website	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are public comments permitted during the development of policy initiatives	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

ROADS & BRIDGES TRANSIT PARKS & RECREATION	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Is the public involved in determining roads and bridges strategy	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES Through CIP process	YES	YES
Are planning documents available on the website	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are public comments permitted during the planning phase of roads & bridges	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES At community meetings and online surveys	YES	YES

## Appendix: A

## Study Committee

Committee Chair: Mindy Greiling, LWV Roseville Area

CMAL Chair: Karen Schaffer, LWV Roseville Area

### *Committee Members:*

Dee Ann Christensen	LWV Anoka/Blaine/Coon Rapids Area
Nikki Marie Coler	LWV Bloomington
Peg DuBord	LWV South Tonka
Joann Ellis	LWV St. Paul
Holly Jenkins	LWV Dakota County
Linda Krefting	LWV Brooklyn Park/Osseo/Maple Grove Area
Marti Micks	LWV Golden Valley
Heather Mockler	LWV Woodbury/Cottage Grove Area
Amy Mino	LWV Woodbury/Cottage Grove Area
Thana Ross	LWV Dakota County
Maureen Scaglia	LWV Richfield
Lisa Scribner	LWV Roseville
Julie Trude	LWV Anoka/Blaine/Coon Rapids Area
Wes Volkenant	LWV Anoka/Blaine/Coon Rapids Area

### *Researchers:*

Anoka County:	Wes Volkenant, Dee Ann Christensen, Julie Trude
Carver County:	Peg DuBord, Susan Carlson – LWV Eastern Carver County
Dakota County:	Thana Ross, Lisa Scribner
Hennepin County:	Linda Krefting, Nikki Marie Coler, Maureen Scaglia
Ramsey County:	Joann Ellis, Karen Schaffer
Scott County:	Thana Ross, Lesley Hauser – LWV Dakota County
Washington County:	Marti Micks, Heather Mockler, Amy Mino

## County officials and staff who provided interviews and information

Anoka County:	Rhonda Sivarajah, County Administrator; Commissioner Scott Schulte, Board Chair; Commissioner Mike Gamache
Carver County:	David Hemze, County Administrator; Commissioner Tim Lynch, Board Chair; Commissioner Gayle Degler
Dakota County:	Matt Smith, County Manager; Jessica Johnson, Administrative Coordinator to the County Manager
Hennepin County:	Office of the Clerk to the Board; Commissioner Jeff Lunde; Anna Schmiel, Policy and Communications Aide to Commissioner Lunde
Ramsey County:	Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk and Director of Administrative Services; John Siqveland Director of Communications & Public Relations
Scott County:	Lezlie Vermillion, County Administrator; Commissioner Barb Weckman Brekke
Washington County:	Kevin Corbid, County Administrator

**ANOKA COUNTY**

September 30, 2021

**ANOKA Researcher(s): Dee Ann Christensen, Julie Trude, Wes Volkenant**

Respondent(s): Please link answers to websites whenever possible. Also, please note what information you were able to find on the website versus what you had to ask the county for.

**Key:**

**W** – from website

**A** – County Administrator

**C** – Commissioner

**O** – Observer

**I. Visibility of County Government****A. County Board****1. List Board Members and their districts.**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/693/Board-of-Commissioners>

Matt Look, District 1

Julie Braastad, Vice Chair, District 2

Robyn West, District 3

Mandy Meisner, District 4

Mike Gamache, District 5

Jeff Reinert, District 6

Scott Schulte, Chair, District 7

**2. Are their terms staggered?**

**W:** Yes, see: <https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/27153/POG-03-30-2021>

**3. What are their salaries?**

**W:** Nothing current found.

**A:** \$73,028.80 is set by Resolution but all commissioners declined to accept the last raise authorized all employees.

**4. Are they considered part-time?**

**W:** Nothing found.

**A:** No, although there is no prohibition on holding other employment. Some commissioners are self-employed and continue to operate businesses. Others may work for a flexible employer allowing them to attend the many day meetings and other events.

**C:** It's a full-time job. They're paid like full time, and they're always on call. However, several commissioners have other jobs or businesses they own, so they divide their time. There is flexibility for how county business is conducted, as there is for staff.

## **5. Do they hold town meetings, Facebook sessions or the like?**

**W:** Nothing found.

**C:** No.

**O:** One commissioner uses Facebook session to host meetings. Another commissioner hosts a political Facebook page soliciting and sharing comments about the county; only accepted members may comment.

## **6. How do they make themselves available? Do they make clear how to contact them? How do they do that?**

**W:** Commissioner E-mail addresses and phone numbers are here: <https://www.anokacounty.us/693/Board-of-Commissioners>

**A:** County Board members are all accessible via phone or email. In addition, they are out in their communities at many events.

**C:** Attending public events, speaking with people who patronize their businesses, campaigning, hearing from residents through phone calls and emails.

## **7. Does the Board have a Code of Ethics?**

**W:** None posted.

**A:** In their orientation they are given the Association of MN Guide of Ethics and abide by the state laws that govern their positions.

**C:** No.

**O:** The commissioners chose not to pursue adopting a Code of Ethics, which had been proposed by one commissioner in 2021 following a claim by a resident of on-line harassment by a fellow commissioner. See <https://www.startribune.com/anoka-county-commissioner-denounces-harassment-allegations-as-colleague-pushes-for-ethics-code/600021189/>

## **B. Board Meeting Structure**

### **1. What is the Board Meeting schedule?**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/693/Board-of-Commissioners>

Meeting calendars: <https://www.anokacounty.us/calendar.aspx?CID=25>

**A:** The full county board generally meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 9:30AM. They have other committee meetings that meet on other days throughout the month.

**2. Are Board meetings recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/693/Board-of-Commissioners>

Board meetings are shown live on the website at the time of the meeting.

Also see You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/AnokaCountyMN/featured>

**A:** Yes, by video and they are livestreamed. Meetings can be accessed live via county website or on demand via Anoka County YouTube channel. Some local cable access channels replay the meetings and also make them available on their websites. The board meetings are also open for public attendance.

**3. Is there a time slot at Board meetings for public comment?**

**W:** Agendas for most meetings, accessible from the online board calendar, note public comments are only accepted at committee meetings. No agendas are posted for study sessions.

**A:** No.

**O:** Requests for public comment at regular board meetings has been rejected. See: [www.hometownsource.com/abc\\_newspapers/news/government/anoka-county-board-rejects-proposal-for-public-comment-at-meetings-but-will-revisit-issue/article\\_892d4996-3895-11ea-b833-578c554e7184.html](http://www.hometownsource.com/abc_newspapers/news/government/anoka-county-board-rejects-proposal-for-public-comment-at-meetings-but-will-revisit-issue/article_892d4996-3895-11ea-b833-578c554e7184.html)

**4. What is the Board work or study session schedule?**

**W:** Board work sessions are posted on the online calendar, but they are not regularly scheduled and no agenda is found.

**A:** As needed.

**5. Are these sessions recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

**W:** No.

**A:** No. The public is welcome to attend.

**6. Is there a time slot at work or study sessions for public comment?**

**W:** No.

**A:** No.

**O:** No, although in early-2021, we believe one work session was opened for a brief public comment at the end of the meeting. The work session was discussed in the news and on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/340454623277998/posts/724275271562596>

**7. Do Commissioners also have other briefings, workshops, or the like?**

**W:** Nothing found.

**A:** Not as a group. At times if there is something happening specific to a commissioner's district, or a committee they chair, administration or department heads or division managers may reach out to a commissioner and make them aware of a situation.

**C:** Occasionally, one or two commissioners appointed to a committee are contacted by staff for briefings related to the committee. These are not covered by the Open Meeting Law, so the public is unaware of these meetings.

**8. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

**A:** No.

**9. List Board Committees, which Commissioner chairs, and which Commissioners serve on each.**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/693/Board-of-Commissioners> (Commissioner contact info starting on page 6, committees starting on page 9); Also see pages 9, 10, 11 of the Anoka County Public Officials Guide: <https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/27153/POG-03-30-2021>

**10. Is there a time slot at committee meetings for public comment?**

**W:** Yes, noted on Agendas as found through on-line calendar.

**A:** Yes.

**O:** Yes, at the beginning before any business is conducted. In mid-2020 this changed from at the conclusion of meetings which allowed relevant questions about items discussed at the meeting. Now it is more difficult to ask questions related to items discussed at current meeting. Better follow-up of questions asked by public needs to occur as the policy allows no interaction to allow an exchange of information. Sharing of contact information between staff and public with questions would facilitate information sharing.

**11. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

**A:** No. The public may attend.

**O:** All committee meetings occur during the regular business day when most residents are at their jobs.

**12. When are public hearings typically scheduled that are separate from regular meetings and what circumstances call for them?**

**W:** View posted on-line calendar for specific agenda items for meetings and public hearings.

**A:** Public hearings take place during regular meetings and are held based on requirements of state/federal statutes and program requirements. Examples include issuing bonds, changing fees, etc.

**O:** The annual Truth-in-Taxation public hearing is the only evening Board meeting all year.

**13. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?**

**A:** Yes, service delivery model changes to reduce barriers to service, and more.

**C:** Very likely as many people work from home and the county had very high attendance, up to 1,000 people would attend a Zoom public open house on a road project. The Zoom meetings allow attendees to get online videos, statistics, and an opportunity to comment. If any participant submits a question through a Zoom meeting, the staff is able to research and provide direct information back as the names and addresses of all attendees are taken at the meeting.

**O:** The County could offer more public video and audio of committee meetings. During first year of Covid-19, it was not possible to practice social distancing and attend some of these meetings held in smaller rooms that observers had been attending and so there was no way of knowing what occurred.

**B. Public Notification**

**1. How is the public notified about County Board meetings, committee meetings, work sessions or any briefings or workshops?**

**W:** Online calendar: <https://www.anokacounty.us/calendar.aspx?CID=25#previousToCurrentMonth>

**A:** Website and bulletin board on first floor of government center.

**O:** Meetings are listed on a calendar at the bottom of the home page for Anoka County. Agenda notices are posted on a bulletin board on the first floor of the Government Center (however, the building was closed to the public for a time, during COVID), and on the seventh floor, outside of the Administrative Offices, although this floor was inaccessible to the public for over a year, due to COVID. Anyone may subscribe to notices of meetings on the county Agendas and Minutes page. These notices arrive days ahead of the meetings in an e-mail.

**2. How is the public notified when a meeting time or location is changed after notice is published?**

**W:** Online calendar notes changes in bold letters.

**A:** Website and bulletin board on first floor of government center.

**O:** Subscribers receive an e-mail notice. A changed agenda would be available in the Agenda Center. The 7<sup>th</sup> floor bulletin board is also used besides the first floor one.

**3. How may the public obtain agendas and minutes?**

**W:** Agendas may be downloaded or viewed by using links to the meeting posted on the online calendar. <https://www.anokacounty.us/calendar.aspx?CID=25#previousToCurrentMonth> Minutes are posted online. <https://www.anokacounty.us/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Commissioners-2>

**A:** Agendas are posted for board and committee meetings on first floor of government center and on the website. Agenda and Minutes are posted on the website.

**O:** These can also be received through the e-mail subscriptions.

## **C. Appointed Commissions and Advisory Committees**

**1. List the Commissions and Advisory Committees to which the Board makes appointments, their purpose, how many serve on each and their terms.**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/3122/Citizen-Advisory-Boards-and-Commissions> A county employee's contact information is also provided on this page, to seek details not posted online.

**A:** There is an entire book that has committee members, terms, etc.

**O:** Some of the committee memberships are listed in the annual guide.

<https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/26964/POG-03-11-2021>

**2. What is their meeting schedule?**

**W:** A few are posted in the online calendar.

**A:** Varies depending on committee.

**3. Are they subject to the Open Meeting Law?**

**W:** Not found.

**A:** Some are, and some are not.

**O:** The ones not subject to the Open Meeting Law likely discuss private data, covered by an exception to the law.

**4. Is the public notified about their meetings and hearings and if so, how?**

**W:** Some are posted in the online calendar, but not all.

**A:** On the county website.

**5. How are minutes and agendas accessed?**

**W:** If a meeting is posted in the online calendar, an agenda link is on the calendar. Not all committees post agendas or minutes.

**A:** On the county website.

**6. Which advisory committees and boards meetings are videotaped or audio-recorded? How can residents access these recordings?**

**W:** The Community Corrections Advisory Committee uses @webex for meeting access.

**A:** Public is welcome to attend. Some have @webex access options for meetings.

**7. Describe the process the County board uses for recruiting and appointing members.**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/3122/Citizen-Advisory-Boards-and-Commissions> posts list of boards seeking applications and has an application link.

**A:** Many committee appointments are by district so up to the individual commissioner as to what process they want to use in recruiting. The applications are available on the website so sometimes people just apply for what they are interested in and the commissioner from that district is notified when an application comes in. <https://www.anokacounty.us/formcenter/administration-21/anoka-county-committee-appointments-application>

**O:** Commissioners solicit names from their acquaintances or from their personal contacts.

**8. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?**

**A:** Unsure at this time.

## **II. Accountability of County Government**

**A. Describe how the County engages with the public in setting budget priorities and tax levies.**

**A:** The county does not engage with the public in setting budget priorities and tax levies although a public Truth in Taxation hearing is held before the final tax levy is adopted each year. Anyone wanting to influence and understand the county budget should attend the committee meetings where the budget is listed as an agenda item. The philosophy is that policy makers (commissioners) make policy and the policy directs the managers to lead the staff to accomplish the goals.

**C:** The county does not engage the public directly on the budget other than through input each commissioner receives from constituents contacting or interacting with them through calls, emails or at public events and places.

**B. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with Policy initiatives**

**A:** They may attend county committee meetings to observe. Comments may be made at those meetings.

**C:** The public may attend committee meetings and comments are allowed at the beginning. Many policy changes come from county staff who bring recommendations to the appropriate committee. Commissioners

often focus on the committees they are appointed to, so they have to look at details provided by other committees and review reports at Board meetings to follow all policy changes.

**O:** In essence, for policy initiatives, the public may not speak at a Board meeting. The press may post the policy, citizens show up at the meeting to state opinions then learn they may not speak at the meeting even though a vote is held on the issue publicized. This exact situation occurred to a member of the ABC League. She shared her experience, a discussion was held at LWV-ABC meetings, and an Observer Corps was begun to follow Anoka County to learn how policies are made, where they are made, and how the public might impact the decisions made.

### **1. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the policy?**

**C:** No. Agendas have not always been available before meetings to inform citizens and committee members that a policy change may be discussed. However, that has been improving with the new administrator.

**O:** If the public has signed up to receive e-mail updates on meetings, they can receive advance notice of the policy if it is noted on the agenda. However, since comments must be made before the item is discussed, it may not be clear how the policy will be viewed or altered by the committee.

### **2. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the county has one or two options or before?**

**C:** When a committee decides on a major project, such as a park upgrade, public comments have been permitted, but that has been at the end of the process. In the past, public comments were allowed at the conclusion of a meeting and comments might be about a project being discussed. Now, comments must be made at the beginning of a meeting before projects are discussed. The Highway Department is the only department that seeks neighborhood input before a project is constructed. They used to have the hearing after the project was completely planned. Now public input can affect a highway project because design work is not complete. Input may result in alterations.

**O:** The public is more interested in policies and projects than the county commissioners seem to realize. Some policies impact the environment, services and operations that impact residents. Projects impact individuals as well because the project may be near homes, affect use of parks, preservation or destruction of natural resources, availability or location of services, availability or access to highways, trails or transit, availability or quality of trails, waterways, libraries, natural resources, judicial services, ease of obtaining government licenses, methods to pay fees and taxes, how and where voting may be conducted, availability of safety and emergency services and much more. Citizens do care and have opinions on a wide range of county services and projects.

### **3. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**W:** The highway department page provides updates on information sessions where the public may receive project information and provide comments. Postcards are mailed to an impacted area providing the times and ways public can provide input. Whether other departments do this, it is not easily found.

<https://www.anokacounty.us/4065/Highway-Projects>. Anyone may subscribe to highway and construction project updates on the cited page. The Parks Department has updates on its web pages about current and future projects and recently sought input on at least one plan, see: <https://www.anokacountyparks.com/plan-your-parks>.

**C:** Everything is decided at committee meetings, but public input is not encouraged. Meeting notices are posted online, and agendas list the topics. The County doesn't do things the way a city may. Public input is more common at the city level.

**O:** The only way the public is notified is if they have subscribed to e-mail updates about meetings. Since minutes are not published, you must attend these meetings to learn about policy initiatives. You may then comment at the beginning of a subsequent meeting after learning about the initiative.

#### **4. Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on policy implementation and outcomes?**

**C:** The County does projects—it doesn't really do policy changes. Again, they are not like cities which do ordinances, TIFs and the like.

**O:** The public can ask questions at the beginning of a committee meeting, but they are not assured of a response. The county publishes a quarterly newsletter to share news; it is mailed to each household. The local newspapers sometimes cover new policies.

### **C. Describe how the county generally engages with the public for input on a project?**

#### **1. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**C:** Most projects are through the highway department, and they communicate with the public, whether it is soon enough or not is uncertain. Recently, the parks department planned mountain bike trails and they held open houses for nearby residents to get input. This was also done for another bike trail through the Chain of Lakes.

**O:** No, as there is no specific reach out to the public until a project is funded through a grant, or design work is nearly complete. The public can engage if they are willing to attend committee meetings, closely following posted agendas to anticipate projects.

#### **2. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**

**C:** Usually before receiving funding, there's a plan to find funding and that's when the county seeks public input, then changes can be made.

**O:** If the public is willing to attend the various committee meetings, they can engage in the process before the project begins through questions. Many problems are hidden or disguised unless you understand the acronyms and the complex presentations. This is true in particular when talking about large financial projects, such as the cost of a new county jail.

#### **3. How is the community notified and/or asked for input**

**C:** A neighborhood notice is sent out within a certain distance, the affected area, of the project. This is for highway department projects.

**O:** Occasionally, the public may be notified of a public hearing, with no information beforehand about the details of the project. Details come out at the regular meeting where public input is not allowed. Notices are received through online subscription. Notices are also published on a bulletin board at the county. On one occasion, the public notice of the hearing was posted against the wall. The public is never asked for input on the project.

**D. Describe specifically how the County engages with the public in connection with each of these types of projects:**

**1. Parks**

**a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**W:** Input sought through a posted online survey for a future project. See:

<https://www.anokacountyparks.com/plan-your-parks>

Results of previous input and final plans posted on another project on this page too.

**C:** The public can come to parks staff or the committee and ask for upgrades such as they did for Kordiak Park, where a gazebo was requested. Residents also came to the committee seeking lights for the dog park at Bunker Lake Park. The county staff talked to neighbors, such as those near the dog park, to see if the new lights will be a problem.

**O:** In recent past, input was not actively sought but park users could email comments and talk to parks staff when problems arose, or they had suggestions.

**b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-thirds completed or before?**

**W:** New online post found: "Anoka County Parks would like to engage current park users and residents that are unfamiliar with the park system to assist in future planning efforts. In collaboration with the Metropolitan Council, Anoka County Parks will be engaging the community through various outreach efforts to ensure that park amenities reflect the changing community needs. Projects that are open for public feedback will be listed on this page as they become available." <https://www.anokacountyparks.com/plan-your-parks>

**C:** There is always involvement before implementation, but often a project is at least 2/3 planned before the public is brought in.

**c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**W:** Online survey posted regarding a future project. <https://www.anokacountyparks.com/plan-your-parks>

**C:** Notices are mailed to addresses identified as being in the affected area.

**O:** This outreach on the website is new and not well-known or publicized. If the public attends a Parks Committee meeting, they may comment up to two minutes before the agenda items are considered. Parks Committee agendas go out four-to-five days before the meeting.

## **2. County Roadways**

### **a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**W:** The highway department page provides updates on information sessions where the public may receive project information and provide comments. Postcards are mailed to an impacted area providing the times and ways public can provide input. Comments made are summarized and posted under a project.

<https://www.anokacounty.us/4065/Highway-Projects>. Anyone may subscribe to updates on this page.

**O:** To some extent, they will hold open houses to get input on multiple versions that have been drawn up, but other times, the open house is held to share what is drawn up and coming.

### **b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-thirds completed or before?**

**C:** There is always involvement before implementation, but often a project is at least 2/3 planned before the public is brought in.

**O:** Often when it is quite far along or ready to be done.

### **c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/4065/Highway-Projects> Residents may subscribe and follow projects and submit online comments or call staff.

**C:** Postcards are mailed to a certain area surrounding a project with notice of open houses and information sessions and during Covid, with Zoom meeting information.

**O:** If there is a community open house, there will be a public notice. Otherwise, the public can follow project updates in the weekly-updated web page from the Highway Department. Currently, hybrid open houses are held allowing both in-person and Zoom opportunities to learn about projects and provide input.

## **3. Transit**

### **a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**O:** Transit is a subset of the Transportation Department, and it regularly conducts citizen surveys on topics and potential projects. There are discussions of reducing rail service and it is uncertain if the public is aware of this.

### **b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**

**O:** Survey input happens early in the process, and many transit projects engage the public in activities.

### **c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**O:** Usually, by public notice or through friendly community actors.

#### **4. County Buildings (libraries, office buildings, jails, maintenance facilities)**

##### **a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**A:** If a new jail is to be built, it will be because of state determinations that the current one cannot be used because it doesn't meet standards. Then State Law determines a jail should be located in the county seat. The policy makers would make the decision about building a jail or alternatively, sending prisoners to other county jails.

**O:** No. There is not a formal process to involve or receive public comments about buildings.

##### **b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**

**A:** Commissioners make the policy decisions about building projects.

**O:** I don't think the public is engaged at any point.

##### **c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**O:** Through the local press, if it is aware, or social media.

### **III. Relationships with Met Council and other levels of Government**

#### **1. How does the County engage with Met Council?**

**W:** Discussions between staff of the County and Met Council are referenced in the most recent Comprehensive Plan of Anoka County. See:

<https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/20991/Anoka-County-Comp-Plan-Feb-2020?bidId=>

One commissioner serves on the Met Council Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) providing a strong connection between the commissioners and Met Council with transportation project funding.

<https://www.anokacounty.us/documentcenter/view/26412>

**A:** County staff speak regularly with Met Council staff when the Met Council is disbursing funds or grants to the County. For example, this occurs regarding housing vouchers issued by the Met Council. Currently, County staff is talking with the Met Council, through the Regional Rail Authority [all Commissioners serve on this], about the funding and operations of the commuter rail North Star Line. At the beginning of Covid-19 there were discussions about reducing mass transit service (rail service) to reduce costs as ridership had declined. There are discussions on road funding as the Met Council distributes federal road funds to counties, serving as the regional planning authority. The distribution of funds is based on criteria the Met Council sets. There are regular discussions about funding of transportation in the Metro area and County at TAB meetings. There are discussions also with park staff and the Met Council because of funds received for regional park system management and grants for projects.

County Commissioners seldom interact with or see Met Council representatives but do speak with Met Council staff on topics of mutual interest or concern. Occasionally, a Met Council employee or representative may attend a quarterly meeting of Anoka County Elected Officials. [These have been cancelled the past two years.]

**C:** One commissioner serves on the TAB (Transportation Advisory Board of the Met Council). This Board works with the Met Council on transit, including the North Star rail line, and on road funding priorities. Federal grants come through the Met Council for transportation and regional parks. Met Council representatives are always invited to the quarterly Anoka County Elected Officials meetings and the Commissioner never recalls seeing one in attendance.

**O:** After the interview, the observer contacted and informed the area Met Council Rep about the commissioner's observations and provided each with contact information from the other. The representative claims he never was invited. One could research whether any have been held since the Governor appointed this representative.

## **2. Does the Met Council involve the County in its initial planning?**

**A:** The Met Council staff does not seek input from the county as they begin initial planning. This is a complaint by the county. It seems they focus a lot on the urban core and transit and not on roads and bridges relied on by cities outside that core.

**C:** The Met Council is about 60% through their planning process before they talk to the county.

## **3. Identify policy areas where the County is subject to Metropolitan Council control or direction**

**W:** See Anoka County's Comprehensive Plan and resolution adopting the plan at:

<https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/20991/Anoka-County-Comp-Plan-Feb-2020?bidId=>

Plan's references to park plans, funding from the Met Council is found in the plan, parks section, pages 7, 11, 19, 36 and more. The Highway planning section of this Comprehensive Plan similarly covers funding from the Met Council, use of grants and timelines for anticipated projects. Transit funding also comes from the Met Council as referenced in the Comp Plan. Also see: <https://www.anokacounty.us/2404/About-Us>

**A:** Although the Comprehensive Plan of the County must be updated and approved by the Met Council before it can be adopted [occurs every ten years], it is not as extensive as for cities where zoning occurs. Anoka County is not involved in zoning land.

Federal transportation funds come to counties through the Met Council as distributions, based on criteria set by the Met Council. The Met Council also allocates park funds to regional parks systems, based on formulas. These funds include capital and operating funds for both transportation and parks. Then there are grants that are distributed for transportation and parks through an application process.

**C:** Parks, transportation, and transit. The regional solicitation funds for roads and bridges have no conditions attached other than the date the project must be implemented. Projects have to qualify for the money and then the county may seek additional or matching funds from the states and sometimes a city.

**O:** Adoption of a Comprehensive Plan by counties, every decade as required by Minn. Stat. 473.864, requires extensive interaction between the staffs of the County and Met Council as well as policy decisions by the Commissioners. The acceptance of a plan occurs over an extended time period. Updates to this plan must meet with approval by Met Council staff and be voted on favorably to be approved by the Metropolitan Council. The Plan is a very extensive planning document with goals, funding, short-term and long-term plans.

Grant-supported projects are more likely to be funded with matching county funds than projects without grants. This may be viewed as a control by the Met Council who sets the grant parameters.

**4. What kind of funding does the County get from Met Council and under what conditions? What does the County do if the funding doesn't sync with its vision?**

**W:** Comprehensive Plan for 2040 references Met Council as a source of funds for parks, roads, and transit.

**A:** As stated above, funding for many county activities comes from the Met Council through grants which have specific requirements set by the Met Council. Parks, transit, and roads are the most recognized areas where funding and grants from the Met Council require staff of each to work together based on mutual goals. Acceptance of the grants from the Met Council involves policy decisions by commissioners of whether their priorities align with those of the Met Council enough to determine to budget to use county funds to match the grants and accept operational expenses after the grant project is completed. The expansion and upgrade of highways and trails within the county involve many policy decisions related to population growth which may be viewed differently by each political entity, opportunities by either agency to capture additional funds from other levels of government and weighing out competing needs when there is local political pressure regarding safety hazards and public demands.

**C:** County officials often go directly to state and federal elected officials to seek funds for important projects that improve public safety such as funds to expand and update State Highway 10 or upgrades on or near I-35W.

**5. Are there meetings between the Board as a whole and the Met Council? If so and if these are not part of regular Board meetings, how is the public notified? Are these meetings recorded and accessible to the public?**

**W:** None listed.

**A:** No.

**C:** No.

**6. How often does the Board of Commissioners meet with the State legislative delegations from your part of the region?**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/5990/Anoka-County-Legislative-Delegation-Information-PDF?bidId=>

**A:** Anoka County Commissioners speak regularly with Minnesota legislators as well as congressional representatives as there are many unfunded highway projects the commissioners seek state and federal grants to construct.

The county publishes a list of the state delegation with contact information. [Referenced above.]

**C:** After our legislative platform is developed, legislators are invited to a meeting. Rarely do they show up, so the commissioners meet with them individually.

## **7. Does the County Board develop an annual legislative platform?**

**C:** Yes. The Commissioners each develop their positions, meet as the Inter-Governmental Community Relations Committee to review. The initiatives and priorities come from all committees and areas where commissioners work. A scoring system is used to determine the highest priorities. A work session is held to determine the top priority. Transportation and Highway 10 has been the top priority for the last few years. Workshops are open to the public. They can subscribe to notices of our meetings online.

## **8. How is the platform made available to the public?**

**W:** <https://www.anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/8832/2021-Anoka-County-Legislative-Platform-PDF>

## **9. Is the public kept informed of progress made on the legislative platform during the session? If so, how?**

**W:** Subscription to updates on platform available: <https://www.anokacounty.us/list.aspx>

**O:** Press releases are common on topics of public interest such as procuring highway funding. For example, articles in a publication in Elk River and another in Anoka cover funding of highway 10 upgrades.

## **10. How does the County interact with cities and townships in the county?**

**W:** A staff person is designated as “Director of Community and Governmental Relations,” with contact information posted: <https://www.anokacounty.us/1044/Intergovernmental-Relations>

**A:** Administrators of the county and cities meet quarterly to exchange information. The County Economic Development Director works with city economic development staff on an ongoing basis through a number of committees and then holds quarterly meetings as well with city economic development directors.

**C:** Mostly through county staff meeting or communicating with city staff.

**O:** Communications occur between staff of the county and cities as needed, for example between department heads and city managers or the county manager and city managers. For example, when a county project or activity may impact a local community, communications between staff would increase to ensure sharing of vital information on road closures and disruptions. When there are policy issues, the discussions are brought to elected officials, generally at work sessions. These may involve the design of a road upgrade, for example. Website updates provide information for city officials as well, such as on Covid-19 grants on the Economic Development page of the website.



# CARVER COUNTY

## County Responses in RED

### I. Visibility of County Government

#### Describe the County Board and its meeting structure.

- Do not need names of Board Members only their affiliation with the County, such as: Districts Represented
- Meeting Schedule
- Link to the website

#### Carver County Board Structure

##### Structure:

- County is divided into five (5) Districts, with one County Commissioner for each District

##### County Board Members:

District 1: Gayle Degler – Vice Chair Elected in 2002 – Term expires in 2024	Salary/2019 \$76,344
District 2: Tom Workman – Elected in 2002 – Term expires in 2024	\$76,044
District 3: Matt Udermann – Elected in 2020 – Term expires in 2024	\$76,044
District 4: Tim Lynch – Chair – Elected in 2004 – Term expires in 2022	\$77,244
District 5: John Fahey – Elected in 2020 – Term expires in 2024	\$76,044

DISTRICT	COMMISSIONER	COMMITTEES	TERM
1	Gayle Degler - Vice Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties—Board of Directors</li> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties—General Government Policy Committee</li> <li>• CAP Agency—Board of Directors</li> <li>• Community Leaders (Eastern)</li> <li>• County Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Requestor</li> <li>• Courts Committee</li> <li>• Joint Ditch #1, #2, #21, #24</li> <li>• Law Library Board</li> <li>• <b>Library Board—Liaison</b></li> <li>• Lower Minnesota River Watershed—Liaison</li> <li>• MELSA</li> <li>• Metropolitan Emergency Services—Executive Board</li> <li>• <b>Minnesota Extension Committee</b></li> <li>• Mosquito Control District</li> <li>• Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek Watershed—Liaison</li> </ul>	2002-2024
2	Tom Workman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties—Transportation Policy Committee</li> <li>• <b>Carver County Arts Committee</b></li> <li>• Community Leaders (Eastern)</li> <li>• Joint Ditch #4, #21</li> <li>• Legislative Committee</li> <li>• Mental Wellness Facility Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Metro Alliance for Health Families Joint Powers Board</li> <li>• Metro GIS Policy Board</li> <li>• Minnehaha Creek Watershed District—Liaison</li> <li>• Minnesota Inter-County Association</li> </ul>	2002-2024

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority</li> <li>Mosquito Control District</li> <li>Regional Hauler Licensing Board</li> <li>Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek Watershed—Liaison</li> <li>Southwest Corridor Transportation Coalition</li> <li>Suburban County Representative</li> <li>Transportation Advisory Board</li> </ul>	
3	Matt Udermann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carver County Leaders and Community Leaders (Eastern)</li> <li><b>Carver County Library Board</b></li> <li><b>Carver County Arts Committee</b></li> <li>County and Union Leaders Group</li> <li>Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC)</li> <li>AMC Health and Human Services Policy Committee</li> <li>AMC Voting Delegate</li> <li>Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)</li> <li>Mobility Management Board (SmartLink)</li> <li>Lower Minnesota River Watershed</li> <li>Joint Ditch #5, #22</li> </ul>	2020-2024
4	Tim Lynch - Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Association of Minnesota Counties—Environment &amp; Natural Resources Policy Group</li> <li>Carver County Leaders</li> <li>County and Union Leaders Group</li> <li>Courts Committee</li> <li>Fair Board Liaison</li> <li>Joint Ditch #1, #4, #5, #21, #22, #24</li> <li><b>Metal Health Advisory Committee</b></li> <li><b>Minnesota Extension Committee</b></li> <li><b>Park Commission—Liaison</b></li> <li>Suburban County Representative</li> <li><b>Water Management Organization</b></li> </ul>	2004-2022
5	John Fahey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Association of MN Counties Public Safety Policy Committee</li> <li><b>Carver County CDA</b></li> <li>Joint Ditches #1, #2, #3A, #4, #5, #6, #21, #22, #24, #28</li> <li>Legislative Committee</li> <li><b>Carver County Planning Commission</b></li> <li>Southwest Corridor Transportation Coalition</li> </ul>	2020-2024

- Are seats elected in staggered terms? YES

- Is the job of commissioner considered part time?

There is no formal part or full-time status definition for the County Commissioner position.

#### Carver County Board Meeting Schedule:

- Board Meetings are the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of the month
- Work Sessions are the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month

#### Questions for Interviews:

How do County Boards and/or Committees define work other than regular meetings?

What is the difference if any between the following:

- Work session, briefing, study session, workshop
- Are these sessions recorded and/or available to the public

Work sessions are for information only or to seek Board direction on an issue. No votes are taken.

Work session agendas are posted on our website and the Boardroom is open to allow the public to attend in person.

**Are there any county committees in which the Commissioners are the only members?**

They do serve as “Carver County Health Board” and the “Carver County Regional Rail Authority” and when those meet, they adjourn or recess as the County Board and reconvene as the “Carver County Health Board” or “Carver County Regional Rail Authority.” The actions they are asked to take are included on the agenda and minutes are taken. I have attached the September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting packet that may help explain their roles better.

## **1. Carver County Board Notifications**

### **Carver County Notifications**

- Public can sign up for County Board Agendas and Minutes Updates on the county website
- Public can view the County Board Meeting Calendar on the county website

## **2. Are County Board meetings of the whole recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?**

### **Carver County Board Meetings**

- Public can watch the County Board Meetings live
- Public can access and watch the recordings of the County Board Meetings and Workshops on the county website
- Public can access County Board Agenda, Minutes, Public Comments on the county website

## **3. Are County Board committee meetings recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?**

- Questions 4 & 5 are trying to get to the issue of “transparency”
- The essential information we want to learn is, “How accessible are minutes and agendas?” to determine how transparent the counties are.
- If there are other ways you find or do not find transparency in county operations, this is something the study would like to know.

### **Carver County Board is very transparent.**

- All agendas and minutes are located on the website and easily accessible on the website
- All meetings and workshops are recorded and easily accessible on the website.
- Archived Board video recordings can be viewed on the [County's Board of Commissioners video channel](#).

## **4. Are County Board work sessions or workshops recorded by audio or video?**

- Carver County Board Meetings and Workshops are recorded (audio & video) and available on the county website.

Board meetings are recorded and available on our website. Work sessions are not recorded as the Boardroom is open for the public to attend.

## **5. Does the County Board develop an annual legislative platform? If yes, then:**

- How is the platform made available to the public?
- How does the County Board report to the public on progress made on its legislative platform during the session?

Issues updates are sometimes placed on the Board agendas and articles are written for the local papers.

### Carver County Does have a Legislative Platform

- Each year, the Carver County Board of Commissioners and staff puts together a list of state legislative priorities that will assist the County in providing better services to residents.
- The Legislative Platform is easily accessed on the county website

## 6. List the county advisory committees and/or boards (i.e.: planning commission) to which the County Board makes appointments.

- Describe the Committees/Boards reporting to the County Board, including as appropriate:
  - Committee Name & Structure
  - Member Types in the Committees (if available), not to include the names of the members
  - Meeting Schedule;
  - Link to the website if available

### Carver County Boards and Commissions

Citizen Advisory Committee	Purpose	Meeting Schedule	Terms & Membership
Arts Committee	Responsible for reviewing artwork at all county facilities (except libraries and museum) to ensure that they follow county policy	The arts committee will review artwork prior to installation and community concerns regarding displayed artwork will be addressed by the committee	Two Carver County Commissioners; Representative from the Arts Consortium of Carver County; and two community members appointed by the County Board.
Board of Adjustment	Board issues variances to the County's zoning ordinance, waives restrictions on non-conforming uses and hears appeals on zoning decisions of an administrative official.	monthly on the first Wednesday at the Government Center at 7:00 p.m.	Appointments are for three-year terms.
Community Development Agency	establishes County housing and community development policy and administers related programs	Meetings are held monthly on the third Thursday at 5:00 p.m. in Chaska, Carver County CDA Offices	Appointment is for a five-year term
Library Board	Members are fiduciary officers of Carver County who govern and set policy for the library system, represent the library to the community and the community to the library. They obtain funding for library service and promote the use of library resources in the community. (Governed by MN Statues 134.)	second Tuesday of each month at an assigned library branch.	Board members are appointed for three-year terms.
Mental Health Advisory Board	Committee advises the County Board and the Community Social Services Department on services relating to Mental Health and Mental Illness.	Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m.	Types of appointments are citizens, consumers, parents of consumers and providers. Appointments are for three-year terms.

Minnesota Extension Committee	Committee develops and evaluates programs; selects personnel; evaluates performance of personnel; develops budget and public relations programs	Meetings are held at the Extension Office a minimum of six (6) times per year.	Appointments are for three-year terms.
Park Commission	advises the County Board on acquisition, development, operation, and management of the park system.	Meetings are held monthly on the second Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. at Baylor, Lake Minnewashta Parks, and the Cologne Public Works Headquarters Building	Appointments are for three-year terms
Personnel Board of Appeals	Board advises County Board on disputes/grievances arising out of terms and conditions of employment as provided in County Personnel Regulations.	Meetings are held on an as needed basis.	
Water Management Organization	Committee will work with staff to make recommendations to the County Board on matters relating to the water plan.	Meetings are held monthly on the last Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.	
Planning Commission	Advises County Board on planning issues, the comprehensive plan, and makes recommendations on applications for conditional use permits, rezoning and plats.	Meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday at the Government Center at 7:00 p.	Appointments are for three-year terms. County ordinance prohibits any person who has derived a substantial portion of income from real estate development, during the past two years, from serving on the Commission.

## Carver County Committees and Boards that report to the County Board

### A. Arts Committee

- Function:  
Reviews artwork prior to installation at all county facilities to assure appropriateness
- Membership:  
2 County Commissioners  
1 Rep from Arts Consortium of Carver County  
2 Community members
- **Membership Terms:** Advisory committee terms are three years.
- Meeting Schedule:  
Meetings are Ad Hoc
- **Meeting Notices & Minutes:** No meeting notices but summaries are prepared and approved by the Committee.
- **Meetings Recorded:** No

### B. Board of Adjustment

- Function:  
Board issues variances to the County's zoning ordinance, waives restrictions on non-conforming uses and hears appeals on zoning decisions of an administrative official.
- Membership: **How appointed?** – Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:

- Appointments are three (3) year terms
- Meetings Schedule:  
First Wednesday of the month
- Meetings Held via:  
Typically held in person, during COVID meetings have been via conference call
- Meeting Notices & Minutes:  
Agendas, minutes, and public hearing notices are available on the county website. Agendas and times are subject to change without prior notice.
- Meeting Recorded: No

#### C. Community Development Agency

- Function:  
The Agency establishes County housing and community development policy and administers related programs.
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:  
Appointment is for a five-year term.
- Meetings Schedule:  
Meetings are held monthly on the third Thursday at 5:00 PM
- Meetings Held:  
Chaska, Carver County CDA Offices.
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Meeting notices and minutes are posted on CDA website
- Meetings Recorded: No

#### D. Library

- Function:  
Members are fiduciary officers of Carver County who govern and set policy for the library system, represent the library to the community and the community to the library. They obtain funding for library service and promote the use of library resources in the community. (Governed by MN Statutes 134.)
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:  
Board members are appointed for three-year terms.
- Meetings Schedule:  
Meets on the second Tuesday of each month
- Meetings Held via:  
At an assigned library branch
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Agendas and minutes are posted in each library and on the library webpage.
- Meetings Recorded: Yes

#### E. Mental Health Advisory Committee

- Function: Committee advises the County Board and the Community Social Services Department on services relating to Mental Health and Mental Illness.
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:  
Appointments are for three-year terms.
- Meetings Schedule:  
Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 4:00 PM
- Meetings Held via: Currently Webex meetings held due to Covid
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Agendas and minutes are prepared and posted on Mental Health LAC webpage.
- Meetings Recorded: No

#### F. Mental Wellness Facility Advisory Committee

- Function:  
The Steiner-Kelting Mental Wellness Facility Advisory Committee advises the Carver County Board of Commissioners on the development of the Steiner-Kelting Mental Wellness Facility and makes recommendations on the expansion of the building, security protocols, services offered, and programming of the facility. Initial work of the committee will include oversight of the RFP for selection of a service provider and input into the service provider selection process.
- Membership: How Appointed?
- Membership Terms:
- Meetings Schedule:
- Meetings Held via:
- Meeting Notices & Minutes
- Meetings Recorded:  
This committee has completed its work since the Facility recently opened and will sunset in 2022.

#### G. Park Commission

- Function:  
Commission advises the County Board on acquisition, development, operation, and management of the park system
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:  
Appointments are for three-year terms
- Meetings Schedule:  
Meetings are held monthly on the second Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. at
- Meetings Held:  
Baylor Lake Minnewashta Parks and the Cologne Public Works Headquarters Building, (since Covid meeting were held virtual and in the summer months at one of the parks)
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Agenda and minutes prepared and posted on Parks website
- Meetings Recorded: No

#### H. Personnel Board of Appeals

- Function: Board advises County Board on disputes/grievances arising out of terms and conditions of employment as provided in County Personnel Regulations.
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:  
Meetings are held on an as needed basis
- Meetings Schedule: As needed
- Meetings Held via: In person
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Notices and minutes are prepared, notices posted on County website as well as on a bulletin board in a public area of the Government Center.
- Meetings Recorded: No

#### I. Planning Commission

- Function:  
Commission advises County Board on planning issues, the comprehensive plan, and makes recommendations on applications for conditional use permits, rezoning and plats.
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list. The Carver County Township Association also names an appointment to the Planning Commission.
- 
- Membership Terms:  
Appointments are for three-year terms.

County ordinance prohibits any person who has derived a substantial portion of income from real estate development, during the past two years, from serving on the Commission.

- Meetings Schedule:  
Meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday  
Meetings Held via: Government Center at 7:00 PM
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Agendas/minutes are posted on the Land Management webpage. Public hearing notices are published in the County's legal newspaper.
- Meetings Recorded: Audio recorded

#### J. University of Minnesota Extension

- Function:  
Committee develops and evaluates programs; selects personnel; evaluates performance of personnel; develops budget and public relations programs.
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:  
Appointments are for three-year terms.
- Meetings Schedule:  
Meetings are held at the Extension Office a minimum of six (6) times per year.
- Meetings Held via: In person
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Agendas/minutes prepared but not currently posted on website
- Meetings Recorded: No

#### K. Water Management Organization

- Function:  
This Committee will collaborate with staff to make recommendations to the County Board on matters relating to the water plan
- Membership: How Appointed? Interested individuals can apply and the Board selects an appointment from that list.
- Membership Terms:
- Meetings Schedule:  
Meetings are held monthly on the last Tuesday of the month at 6:00 PM
- Meetings Held via virtual during the pandemic, just switched back to in person and are offering a hybrid of virtual/in person, have not determined if this will be standard practice.
- Meeting Notices & Minutes Agendas/minutes posted to WMO advisory committee website
- Meetings Recorded: Previous recordings were only used internally

#### Interview Questions

- Describe the process that the County Board uses for recruiting and appointing members to its advisory committees and boards.  
Vacancies are posted on the County's website and Board members are also given a list of vacancies and will seek out interested residents. Those members that are eligible to reapply are sent an application inviting them to reapply if interested.
- Which advisory committees and boards meetings videotaped or audio-recorded? How can residents access these recordings? Most of the advisory committees are not videotaped, the Library Board audio tapes their meetings and they are available on the library website. The Planning Commission audio tapes their meetings and are available upon request from Land Management.
- Are the Agendas published and pertinent documentation
  - Is this information available and easily accessed? See above information for each committee.

#### [Carver County Board Operating Rules](#)

- Which Advisory Committees are subject to Open Meeting Laws?

- All meetings of the Carver County Board of Commissioners and other Committees and Boards and Commissions are subject to the Open Meeting Law (Minn. Stat. Chap. 13D).
- Unless otherwise stated, all regular meetings of the County Board will be convened at the Carver County Government Center.
- **Special/Emergency Meetings**
  - The Carver County Board may establish a special or emergency meeting. Procedures to schedule a special or emergency meeting shall be in accordance with Minn. Stat. Chap. 13D.
- **Closed Meetings:** The County Board may by motion convene in closed session for the purposes of transacting business.
  - Business which may be considered in closed session are as follows.
  - In accordance with the attorney/client privilege;
  - To consider strategy for labor negotiations;
  - To consider real estate negotiations;
  - To consider security measures;
  - Or as otherwise required or permitted by the Minnesota Open Meeting Law.

#### **Adjourned or reconvened Meetings**

- May be held at any specific time, date and place the Board may adopt without additional notice.
- However, the time, date and place must be publicity specified by the Board prior to adjourning the meeting in which the time, date and place are established.
- The County Board may schedule work sessions, retreats, forums, or additional meetings.
- A schedule of such meetings shall be maintained in the County Administration Office.
- Work sessions and other informal meetings of the Board, not regularly held, shall be subject to the same notice requirements of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law.

#### **Preparation and Distribution of County Board Agenda**

- The County Administrator shall prepare the agenda and supporting material for each regular and special meeting.
  - Members of the Board may direct that an item be placed on the agenda by informing the County Administrator.
  - The County Administrator shall include an item on the agenda if a member directs that the item be placed on the agenda at least three (3) days prior to the meeting for which the agenda is to be prepared.
  - Copies of the agenda and supporting material shall be made available to the County staff, public and media as appropriate.
  - A distribution list shall be maintained in the County Administration Office.
- **How is the public notified of these meetings?**
- Members of the public who are interested in following issues considered by the Board may register their name and address with County Administration for placement on the agenda distribution list.

Complete Board meeting packets are posted to the County's website. Citizens can receive an email notification when the Board meeting agendas have been posted if they sign up through the County's website. Currently no citizen has requested an agenda be mailed to them. Newspaper editors are emailed a copy of the Board's meeting packet the Thursday before the meeting.

#### **Advisory Committees**

- The County Board appoints individuals to various boards, committees, or commissions, (hereinafter referred to as Committees) which have been established by the County Board or pursuant to Minnesota Statute.
- Authority for establishment of the committees is prescribed in Minnesota Statutes and in Board Policy.
- County Administration will maintain a complete list of committees and their underlying source of creation.
  
- Advisory Committees or Boards do not establish county or department policy, determine budget, or resource allocations, or direct the operations of the department.
- These remain the sole responsibility of the County Board.
- Advisory Committees perform their duties and responsibilities as delegated by the County Board, they report to the County Board, and are under the County Board's jurisdiction.
- Committees are established to serve a variety of functions.
- The fundamental purposes for utilizing Committees in support of County government are:
  1. To involve members of the public in the decision-making process.
  2. To meet requirements of state law.
  3. To ask residents to help define community standards and norms.
  4. To provide technical expertise in certain areas.
  5. To serve as advocates for the County.
  6. To provide an independent sounding board for issues, ideas, and policy matters.

#### **Appointment to Committee Process**

- An open appointment policy governs the process for recruiting applicants to committees.
- The actual appointments are made by the County Board.
- Unless mandated statutorily, appointments to the extent possible will be made by commissioner district.
  
- The Board will use discretion in this area and instances may occur when appointments will not follow district boundaries due to the target group the committee represents, availability of applicants, or other factors.
- The Carver County Board will attempt to select those candidates who will best represent the county and the committee's needs.
- When a vacancy exists due to resignation or other reasons, the Board will follow the open appointment process.

#### **Appointment Terms**

- For maintaining uniform length of terms, the new appointee's partial term will be assumed to be a full term regardless of actual time remaining in the unexpired term.
- Unless mandated statutorily, the County Board has standardized the length of term and number of terms each member to serve.
- The length of term is 3 years and the maximum number of consecutive terms each member may serve is three (3).
- The Board's Township appointment to the Planning Commission shall serve after the expiration his/her term until a successor is appointed and qualified.

## II. Accountability of County Government

### 1. How do elected County Board members engage with various stakeholders and the public (i.e.: town hall meetings)?

- What is meant by “engage the public”?
- Is it signing up for things, and saying where to send emails?
- At what time does the county reach out to the public for input on a project?
- Is it when it’s two-thirds completed or before?

Board members will attend city and township meetings as their schedule allows or if requested. New releases are sent to the newspapers on various projects and services throughout the year. The County’s Website is also continuously updated to provide the public with information.

#### Citizen Participation

- The public is invited and encouraged to attend and participate in County Board meetings.
- All approved minutes of Board meetings are published in the official county newspaper and agendas and minutes are available on the County website at [www.co.carver.mn.us](http://www.co.carver.mn.us).

#### Audience/Citizens Requests

- The County Board prefers all business matters initiated by citizens coming before them to first be reviewed by staff and scheduled for discussion on the appropriate agenda.
- If an individual seeks to appear before the County Board, he/she should notify the County Administration Office of his/her intention and the issue to be presented.
- Staff will confer with the individual, address the issue and, if necessary, schedule the issue accordingly on the appropriate agenda.

#### Audience Participation at Board Meetings

- To the extent possible, interested citizens shall notify the County Administrator of their interest to speak at the meeting and the issue to be discussed.
- The County Administrator will notify the Chair.
- To encourage efficiency and early resolution of issues, the County Board recommends that citizens first contact staff to try to resolve matters before coming formally to the County Board meeting.
- Questions directed to the Board may not be answered immediately, however, whenever possible, all appropriate questions will be responded to in a timely and effective manner by the Board and/or County staff.
- For citizens who desire to discuss issues which are not on the agenda, every regular Board meeting has a Public Comments section.

### 2. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with projects related to:

- a. Parks
- b. County Roadways
- c. Transit
- d. County Buildings (libraries, office buildings, jails, maintenance facilities)
  - When in the planning process is the community engaged?
  - How is the community notified and/or asked for input?
  - Is the community engaged in the process early enough to have input on the project?
  - When the county has one or two options, when is the community asked for input?

News releases are prepared and distributed to the newspapers throughout the year to keep the public informed on projects and services. The County’s Website is also continuously updated to provide the public with information. If the Board is required to hold a public hearing, notice of that public hearing

**is published in the County's legal newspaper. All meetings of the Board discussing any topics are open to the public.**

### **Carver County Advisory Committees**

Carver County includes but not limited to nine (9) Advisory Committees whose members are comprised of citizens who have knowledge of the subject matter.

1. Arts Committee
2. Board of Adjustment
3. Library Board
4. Mental Health Advisory Committee
5. Minnesota Extension Committee
6. Park Commission
7. Personnel Board of Appeals
8. Planning Commission
9. Water Management Organization

### **Carver County Public Works**

- 2021 Capital Improvement Plan Map
- Five (5) year Plan for Road and bridge construction
- 2021 Highway Preservation Plan

### **2040 Comprehensive Plan – with the Metropolitan Council**

- A comprehensive plan is a guiding document used to help shape the growth of the County over the next 20 years.
- Countywide policies for land use, transportation, water resources, parks and trails are all included in the plan.
- The goal is to create a unified vision for Carver County from today through 2040.

### **3. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with Policy initiatives.**

- When in the planning process is the community engaged?
- How is the community notified and/or asked for input?
- Is the community engaged in the process early enough to have input on the policy?
- When the county has one or two options, when is the community asked for input?

**A variety of methods are used including news releases and public meetings. We have a variety of advisory committees that report to the County Board. All meetings of the Board discussing any topics are open to the public and available electronically.**

### **4. Prior to the release of a project/program, what steps are taken to assure there is opportunity for the public to provide input early in the conception or planning process?**

**See the above response.**

### **5. Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on project implementation and outcomes?**

#### **Interview Questions**

- What circumstances call for public hearings?
  - When are public hearings typically scheduled?
  - What procedures have changed during the pandemic?
  - What procedures are likely to continue after the pandemic has subsided?
- Public hearings are required for any Ordinance changes or to adopt a new Ordinance.
  - Public hearings are usually scheduled at 9:00 am as part of the Board meeting.

- The public is allowed to submit comments via hard copy, voicemail, email or participate in the meeting virtually.
- The ability of citizens to participate in a meeting virtually was added due to the pandemic.

### **III. Relationships with Met Council and other levels of government**

#### **1. How does the County engage with Met Council?**

According to articles located on the Carver County website, the county has received funding from the Met Council for variety of programs and services, such as; sanitary sewer lines, funding for highway 12, regional parks, improving emergency services, purchasing additional park land; transit, mosquito control, veteran's services, solid waste management, recycling etc.

#### **2. Identify policy areas where the County is subject to Metropolitan Council control or direction.**

#### **3. What kind of funding do you get from Met Council and under what conditions? What does the county do if it doesn't sync with its vision?**

#### **4. Are there meetings between the Board as a whole and the Met Council? If yes, how is the public notified of these meetings? Are these meetings recorded?**

#### **5. Does Met Council involve the County in its initial planning**

#### **6. How often do Board of Commissioners meet with the State legislative delegations from your part of the region?**

#### **7. How does the County interact with cities and townships in the county?**

- We are engaged with the Met Council, our legislative delegation, and our cities and townships in a variety of ways.
- There are numerous policy issues that intersect with these groups ranging from public works projects to criminal justice issues.
- A wide variety of meetings are scheduled and arranged to discuss these topics throughout the year and the majority of these are open to the public.

### **Conversation with Carver County**

#### **Transparency**

1. How does the county notify and involve its citizens in planning
  - Direct Mailing to citizens of concerns or projects within their neighborhood.
  - Website: There is a web page entitled "Projects," with a map of where the projects are located. By clicking the point on the map, you can get a description of the project.
  - Citizens may subscribe to be notified via email about projects in planning and undertaken
2. Open Meetings
  - All meeting agendas are posted three (3) days prior to the meeting
  - Agendas may be accessed via the website or can be sent directly to a citizen via email subscription
  - County is diligent in assuring they comply with the MN Open Meeting Statute.
  - County Attorney oversees the Open Meeting process and notifications
  - County assures that any time three (3) or more Commissioners are present, this event/meeting is posted three (3) days in advance.
3. Relationship with the Metropolitan Council
  - County is/has been opposed to the current form of Met Council Government

- They believe the Council should be made made-up of elected officials
  - Feel that they provide feedback, but the feedback goes unheard
  - Frustration due to perceived “scope creep” in what the Met Council has undertaken, such as Equity
4. Pandemic Changes
- There have been many “silver linings” events
  - The pandemic has created opportunities for greater transparency and participation in county government
  - County reported that they have moved at lightning speed to increase technology needed for citizens to participate in government
  - Pandemic has reshaped county government for the better, increased speed and efficiency
5. Committees
- The county has deliberately limited the number of committees.
  - They feel that this provides efficiency and improves the delivery of information and outcomes.

County said that are interested in the results of our studies and open to suggestions for improvement.

Follow Up

**Questions & Answers call 10/9/21**

Dave,

You and your commissioners were so helpful, but we are finishing our research and have a couple of questions that were either not found or unclear on the County's website. We would be very appreciative of your responses to the following questions. I do not need extensive answers and if it's on your website and I missed it, I apologize.

1. Aside from the County Board, are there any other committees or advisory boards that consist of ONLY the commissioners

Each of the Board members serve on various outside Committees to represent the County's interests. Examples are the Association of Minnesota Counties, the Minnesota Inter-County Association, Metropolitan Emergency Services Board, as well as County committees such as the Planning Commission, Fair Board, etc. A complete list of these committee assignments is available upon request.

2. Is the public invited to participate in the development of the county budget?
3. Are public comments permitted during the development of the budget?
4. Is the public invited to participate in the development of policy initiatives?
5. Are public comments during the development of policy initiatives?
6. Is the public involved in determining the need for county building projects?
7. Are the planning documents for proposed county buildings available to the public?
8. Are public comments permitted during the planning phase of proposed county building development(s)?
  - Since questions 2-8 are similar, answers are below:
  - County preliminary budget discussions, policy initiatives or proposed buildings, are all discussed with the full Board at either a work session or at Board meetings that are open to the public.
  - The specific items to be discussed are included on the Board's meeting agenda that is available to the public.
  - Background information related to budgets, buildings, etc. is often included as part of the packet posted to the County's website.
  - Citizens can also request additional information.
  - Each December, before the annual budget is approved for the following year, a formal evening meeting is scheduled to allow the public to comment on the proposed budget.
  - Time is set aside at each Board meeting for public comments on any issue.
  - Public comments that relate to a specific item on the agenda are heard when that agenda item is discussed.
  - Citizens can also participate in the Board meetings virtually or submit emails/voicemails to be shared at Board meetings.
  - Prior to an item being approved by the Board, County Departments may, at times, schedule open houses to solicit public input (i.e., road alignments/projects).
  - Another recent example is the proposed “no wake” ordinance, the Board approved the draft as well as a period for public comment before holding the public hearing to formally adopt.

# DAKOTA COUNTY

**Key: W: Website - A: Administrator - O: Observation**

**Dakota Researcher(s): Lisa Scribner, Thana Ross**

**Respondent(s):** Please link answers to websites whenever possible. Also, please note what information you were able to find on the website versus what you had to ask the county for.

## I. Visibility of County Government

### A. County Board

Board Operating Rules 2021.pdf

#### 1. List Board Members and their districts.

**W:** [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Board of Commissioners](#)

DISTRICT	COMMISSIONER	COMMITTEES	TERMS
1	Mike Slavik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Association of Minnesota Counties Extension Committee</li><li>• Association of Minnesota Counties Board of Directors</li><li>• Association of Minnesota Counties District X</li><li>• Association of Minnesota Counties General Government Policy Committee</li><li>• Cannon River One Watershed One Plan Committee</li><li>• Dakota Communications Center Board of Directors</li><li>• Dakota County Community Development Agency</li><li>• Dakota County Legislative Liaison</li><li>• Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority</li><li>• Great River Rail Commission</li><li>• Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board</li></ul>	2013-2022
2	Kathleen A. Gaylord Board Vice Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dakota County Law Library Board (chair)</li><li>• Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority</li><li>• Facility Operations Advisory Committee for Thompson Park Center (chair)</li><li>• Great River Rail Commission (alternate)</li><li>• Greater MSP Economic Development Partnership</li><li>• Minnesota Inter-County Association (chair)</li><li>• Transportation Advisory Board – Metropolitan Council</li></ul>	2003-2022
3	Laurie Halverson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Association of Minnesota Counties Health and Human Services Policy Committee</li><li>• Dakota County Community Development Agency Board</li><li>• Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority – Secretary</li><li>• Facility Operations Advisory Committee for Thompson Park Centers</li><li>• Metro Alliance for Healthy Families Governing Board</li><li>• Metropolitan Library Service Agency Board</li><li>• Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Commission</li><li>• Minnesota Inter-County Association Board</li></ul>	2021-2024

4	Joe Atkins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties District X</li> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties Public Safety Policy Committee</li> <li>• Dakota Broadband Board (alternate)</li> <li>• Dakota County Legislative Lead</li> <li>• Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority</li> <li>• Facility Operations Committee for Thompson Park Center</li> <li>• Metropolitan Emergency Services Board Executive Committee</li> <li>• National Association of Counties Telecommunications and Technology Committee</li> <li>• State Community Health Services Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Suburban County Work Group on Regional Issues</li> </ul>	2017-2024
5	Liz Workman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties Board of Directors (alternate)</li> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties District X (alternate)</li> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties Environment &amp; Natural Resources Policy Committee</li> <li>• Dakota Broadband Board</li> <li>• Dakota County Legislative Liaison</li> <li>• Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority (chair)</li> <li>• I-35W Solutions Alliance Board (chair)</li> <li>• Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Commission (chair, executive committee)</li> <li>• Regional Solid Waste Hauler Licensing Board</li> <li>• Suburban County Work Group on Regional Issues</li> </ul>	2009-2024
6	Mary Liz Holberg Board Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association of Minnesota Counties Transportation and Infrastructure Policy Committee</li> <li>• Dakota County Board/Court Policy Committee</li> <li>• Dakota County Communications Center Board of Directors (alternate)</li> <li>• Dakota County Community Development Agency</li> <li>• Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority</li> <li>• I-35W Solutions Alliance Board (alternate)</li> <li>• Metro Alliance for Healthy Families Governing Board (alternate)</li> <li>• Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (alternate)</li> <li>• Metropolitan Emergency Services Board Executive Committee (alternate)</li> <li>• Suburban County Work Group on Regional Issues</li> <li>• Transportation Advisory Board-Metropolitan Council (alternate)</li> <li>• Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (alternate)</li> </ul>	2015-2024

7	Mary Hamann-Roland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dakota County Community Development Agency Board</li> <li>• Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority – Vice-Chair</li> <li>• Dakota-Scott Workforce Development Board</li> <li>• Metropolitan Emergency Services Board</li> <li>• Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Commission</li> <li>• Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board</li> </ul>	2021-2024
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2. Are their terms staggered?

W: Yes

3. What are their salaries?

W: Nothing current found. Budget total for all county staff is listed

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/BudgetFinance/2021>

Dakota. \$85,869 info from Linda Krefting's email to the County Study leads

<https://www.lcc.leg.mn/legsalarycouncil/reports/LSC-report-3-23-21-final.pdf>

**What is the salary of the Commissioners?**

**A: Commissioner Salary: \$86,728**

**4. Are they considered part-time?**

W: Nothing found.

**A: Yes**

**5. Do they hold town meetings, Facebook sessions or the like?**

W: Information on meetings is found on the main page of the Government site [Home](#) > [Government](#) >

**A: Yes**

**6. How do they make themselves available? Do they make clear how to contact them? How do they do that?**

W: Commissioner E-mail addresses & phone numbers are here: [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Board of Commissioners](#)

A: Multiple ways - as a group, the commissioners hear comments from the public either in-person or over Zoom at formal meetings. For a public project there are define public engagement processes, open house both in-person and virtual. Comments are collected on-line. Since COVID, the county is using Virtual Open Houses for residents to learn about projects and comment on them. (This is an example of a "Covid Keeper" - something that will continue in the post-Covid world)

Dakota County Residential Survey - a scientific survey of all residents completed every 3 years.

Sources of information for the public includes neighborhood postcards for small, local projects, County Newsletter 2x/year, Board meetings can be attended in-person or via Zoom for the public to observe or speak to the Board.

County pushes information out on social media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter, Next-door). Individual commissioners email newsletters that constituents can sign up for, personal Facebook pages

**7. Does the Board have a Code of Ethics?**

W:

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/BoardMeetings/Budget/WorkshopsMtgMaterials/OperatingRulesandGuidelines.pdf> page 16

## B. Board Meeting Structure

### What is the Board Meeting schedule?

W: [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Commissioner Meetings](#) The Board of Commissioners meets twice a month on Tuesdays at 9 a.m.

### Are Board meetings recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?

W: [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Commissioner Meetings](#) There are links on this page to view the meeting, see minutes, etc.

A: Audio and video recordings are archived

### 3. Is there a time slot at Board meetings for public comment?

W: Agendas for most meetings, accessible from the online board calendar. To make any comments, please email: [countyadmin@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:countyadmin@co.dakota.mn.us).

If you wish to speak to an agenda item or an item not on the agenda, please notify the Clerk to the Board via email at [CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us)

Emails must be received by 7:30am Tuesday, September 21, 2021.

Instructions on how to participate will be sent to anyone interested.

### What is the Board work or study session schedule?

W: [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Commissioner Meetings](#) > [Workshops](#)

### 5. Are these sessions recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?

W: Presentation documents are available,

A: Audio is kept but not video. Meetings are viewable by Zoom as the meeting is occurring.

### 6. Is there a time slot at work or study sessions for public comment?

W: No

A: Workshops and "Committees of the Whole" yes, limited to 5 minutes at the start of the meeting. If a resident showed up for a study session, they wouldn't be turned away but there is no formal time set aside for comments.

### 7. Do Commissioners also have other briefings, workshops, or the like?

W:

A: Commissioners might attend town/city council meetings or be part of multi- county committees; or there are emergency meetings like at the start of COVID. Also, mentioned there are meetings between Commissioners, mayors, county, and city administrators on a regular basis

A: Commissioners might attend town/city council meetings or be part of multi- county committees

### 8. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?

W:

A: Board meetings are accessible via in-person, on Zoom, live streaming and they are recorded for later viewing. Likewise for emergency meetings. However, for the 3 Committees of the Whole (Physical Development, Community Services, Government and Policy) - the public can attend in person or Zoom into the meeting but only an audio recording is archived.

### 9. List Board Committees, which Commissioner chairs, and which Commissioners serve on each.

W: Committee appointments are listed on each Commissioners information page.

**10. Is there a time slot at committee meetings for public comment?**

**W:** To make any comments, please email [countyadmin@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:countyadmin@co.dakota.mn.us)

**A:** Workshops and “Committees of the Whole” yes, limited to 5 minutes at the start of the meeting. If a resident showed up for a study session, they wouldn’t be turned away but there is no formal time set aside for comments

**11. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?**

**W:** Agendas, minutes, and meeting materials are available to view on the website

**A:** Board meetings webcast and archived; mayor/city manager/Commissioner meetings are audio taped and not archived; Workshop audio captured and Zoom video during meeting, and not archived.

There are no recordings of the CAC meetings (Citizen Advisory Committee). The agendas are posted, and then minutes are posted following the approval at the next meeting.

**12. When are public hearings typically scheduled that are separate from regular meetings and what circumstances call for them?**

**W:** No info

**A:** Emergency meetings as needed;

**13. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?**

**W:** No info

**A:** — Virtual Open Houses with on-line comments

Within the Community Corrections Dept, they moved away from in-person therapy and training groups and switched to all Virtual sessions.

This worked especially well for tech-savvy juveniles.

They participated more in the sessions, were more open during the discussion, and attended more often (maybe partly attributable to not having to find transportation).

This was more challenging for tech-challenged adults so it is more likely this will continue for juveniles and *maybe* a hybrid option for adults— child and teen check-ups...previously had to come in-person the number of “no-shows” was really high.

With virtual visits, the no-show rate dropped drastically.

— more options to submit documents electronically vs hard-copy

— drop off boxes and kiosks so paperwork can be dropped off without entering the building

— with electronic documents, county staffers can do more work remotely

**B. Public Notification**

**1. How is the public notified about County Board meetings, committee meetings, work sessions or any briefings or workshops?**

**W:** [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Commissioner Meetings](#)

**A:** Email - if they have opted into the email subscription and updated on the website. There must be a 3-day public notice

**2. How is the public notified when a meeting time or location is changed after notice is published?**

**W:**

**A:** Email - if they have opted into the email subscription and updated on the website. There must be a 3-day public notice

### 3. How may the public obtain agendas and minutes?

W: [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Commissioner Meetings](#). Agenda and Minutes are posted on the website.




### C. Appointed Commissions and Advisory Committees

#### 1. List the Commissions and Advisory Committees to which the Board makes appointments, their purpose, how many serve on each and their terms?

Dakota County

\*Dakota County Lists the Members of these committees, unlike other metro counties

Citizen Advisory Committee	Purpose	Meeting Schedule	Terms & Membership
Community Development Agency Board	The Community Development Agency (CDA) Board directs and sets policy to provide housing opportunities for low and moderate income families and seniors through programs ranging from rental assistance to home ownership and housing rehabilitation to community development.	Third Tuesday of the month at 3:30	8 members; 1 citizen/district and 1 at-large (public housing participant)  Term - 3 Year
Dakota-Scott Workforce Development Board	The Dakota-Scott Workforce Development Board provides guidance for and exercises oversight with respect to activities for the Job Training Programs in Dakota and Scott counties.	Third Friday of the month at 7:30 AM	27 Members representing the public and private sectors  Term - 2 Years
University of Minnesota Extension Committee	Partnership with the <a href="#">University of Minnesota</a> , assists in approving programs, establishing budget, and selecting and evaluating professional staff to improve the quality of life and enhance the economy and the environment through education, applied research, and the resources of the University of Minnesota.	Bi-monthly; 3rd Thursday; 7 p.m.	9 members 1 citizen/district 2 at-large youth  Limited to three consecutive terms.
Library Advisory Committee	The Library Advisory Committee has the following responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and make decisions on disputed material</li> <li>Advise the Library Director in the development of public programming for library services</li> <li>Develop recommended annual work plans for the committee</li> <li>Review and make recommendations on long-range plans for the library</li> <li>Accept gifts of up to \$500 for public library purposes</li> </ul>	Every other month; 2nd Thursday; 5:30 p.m.  <a href="#">Meeting schedule, agenda, and minutes</a>	9 members 1 citizen/district 2 at-large youth Appointed by the Dakota County Board of Commissioners. Limited to three consecutive terms.  Term - 2 Years

Personnel Board of Appeals	The Personnel Board of Appeals provides the County Board with an impartial and knowledgeable analysis of facts concerning appeals filed by employees or job applicants.	Full-day or half-day hearings as needed	4 members; all members are at-large  Term - 3 Years
Planning Commission	The Planning Commission reviews environmental and natural resource proposals and makes recommendations to the County Board; considers conditional use permit requests for actions which will affect shoreland and floodplain areas in the county; reviews planning and program proposals which relate to the county's comprehensive plan; and discusses trails and other transportation issues.   <a href="#">Planning Commission Bylaws</a>	Monthly or as necessary; 4th Thursday; 7 p.m.  <a href="#">Meeting schedule and agendas.</a>	14 members; 2 citizen/district  Term - 1 Year
Public Art Citizen Advisory Committee	The Public Art Citizen Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the county board on pieces of art to be placed in county public buildings using criteria and a process approved by the county board.	Monthly; 2nd Tuesday; 5:30 p.m.  <a href="#">Meeting schedule, agenda, and minutes</a>	11 members 1 citizen/district 2 at-large 2 at-large youth  Limited to three consecutive terms.
Special Board of Appeal and Equalization Board	The Special Board of Appeal and Equalization hears appeals from property owners regarding property valuation or classification, which will be the basis for real estate taxes and may change any valuation or classification which in its opinion is incorrect.   <a href="#">Rules of Procedure for Special Board of Appeal and Equalization</a>   <a href="#">Notice regarding Special Board of Appeal and Equalization</a>	Monday, June 7, 2021	7 members; 1 citizen/district  Term - 2 Years
Zoning Board of Adjustment	The Zoning Board of Adjustment evaluates and makes decisions on variance requests and appeals pertaining to the shoreland and floodplain management regulations in township areas; its decisions are the final administrative decision by the county.	Irregular; meets only as needed; Thursday; 7 p.m.	Three members, including a member of the Planning Commission, and one alternate; all members are at-large Term - 2 Years

**W: Some are listed here:** <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/CAC> **(Citizen Advisory Committees)**

Under the tab for each committee there is information about purpose, members, terms, etc. (In scrolling through these, I noticed that one of our LWVDC members is on the Special Board of Appeal and Equalization)

**Others are here:** <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/PublicEntities> (other Authorities and Boards)

These pages usually direct you to web pages outside of the Dakota City Gov't site.

## **2. What is their meeting schedule?**

**W:** See the web page listed above for the Cit Adv Committees. Others are harder to find.

[Home > Government > Other Public Entities > Dakota County School Districts](#)

**O:** Each Public Entity and Advisory Committee has a web page for info meeting times, minutes of meeting, participant of committees.

## **3. Are they subject to the Open Meeting Law?**

**W:**

**A: This covers all meetings in Dakota County**

Open meeting law applies to a quorum or more members of the governing body at which members discuss, decide, or receive information as a group on issues relating to the official business of that governing body. So, it does not include meetings such as the manager/mayors meetings. It does include County Board of Commissioners meetings and Committee of the Whole meetings. It also includes various advisory committees identified in Policy 1015, which states:

### Public Meeting Requirements

The following citizen advisory committees, and any of their subcommittees, are subject to all requirements of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D:

Dakota-Scott Workforce Development Board  
Library Advisory Committee  
Planning Commission  
Special Board of Appeal and Equalization  
Zoning Board of Adjustment

The committee staff liaison ensures compliance with the Open Meeting Law for the committees, and any of their subcommittees, listed above.

Meetings of the following citizen advisory committees, and any of their subcommittees, although not subject to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, will be open to the public:

Extension Committee  
Public Art Citizen Advisory Committee

The committee staff liaison provides reasonable public notice for meetings of the committees listed above.

## **4. Is the public notified about their meetings and hearings and if so, how?**

**W:** [Home > Government > Other Public Entities](#), <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/CAC>

**O:** Each Public Entity and Advisory Committee has a web page for info on meeting times, minutes of meeting, participant of committees.....

## 5. How are minutes and agendas accessed?

W: > [Government > Other Public Entities](https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/CAC), <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/CAC>

## 6. Which advisory committees and boards meetings are videotaped or audio-recorded? How can residents access these recordings?

W: Nothing on the website indicating audio and video is available for advisory committee meetings

A: **Board meetings are audio and video taped and then archived.**

## 7. Describe the process the County board uses for recruiting and appointing members.

W: see Thana's note below

A: Committee vacancies might be posted on the website or on social media. For vacancies that are designated for specific districts, it is typical for the commissioner of that district to reach out to constituents to fill the vacancies by asking them personally.

The Board must vote to appoint these volunteers to the various committees however, it is rare for there to be multiple candidates for a vacant seat.

O: Filling committee vacancies did not seem to be a high priority

W/O (Thana): I used the search function to search for "vacancies" and found this related to the citizen advisory committee vacancies. Wouldn't have found it without the search function. As a Dakota County resident, I've don't recall seeing any recruiting efforts for citizen advisory committees. <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/CAC>

## II. Accountability of County Government

A. Describe how the County engages with the public in setting budget priorities tax levies.

C. Describe how the county generally engages with the public for input on a project?

A: Public engagement is a critical aspect in ensuring that all Dakota County government services are performed efficiently, effectively and in a responsive manner. Dakota County strives to ensure that the proper level of public engagement is realized in all projects. To identify this proper level of engagement, the County utilizes a public engagement process tool that is standardized across the organization and results in consistent approaches and outcomes. If a project scores a 1-3 a public engagement plan must be created. The levels of engagement and what each entails in terms of description and specific examples can be seen in the table below.

W: <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/HomeProperty/Tax101/ProposedTaxes>

The County, cities and school districts hold public hearings to receive comments on the proposed taxes. During the hearing, the taxing jurisdiction will give a budget presentation followed by a public comment and question period

B. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with Policy initiatives.

W:

A: Dakota County Residential Survey - completed every three years and gives the county good information about public priorities.

O: It appears that public comments are asked for with projects the city undertakes

### 1. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project

W: [Home > Government > Public Engagement](#). Public engagement is a critical aspect in ensuring that all Dakota County government services are performed efficiently, effectively and in a responsive manner.

Dakota County strives to ensure that the proper level of public engagement is realized in all projects. To identify this proper level of engagement, the County utilizes a public engagement process tool that is standardized across the organization and results in consistent approaches and outcomes. If a project scores a 1-3 a public engagement plan must be created. The levels of engagement and what each entails in terms of description and specific examples can be seen in the ....

*Inform and Listen. Explain, educate, or gather information. Public meeting with information presentation and collection of comments.*

## **2. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the county has one or two options or before?**

W: [Home > Government > Public Engagement](#). Dakota County values the input of its residents on all county projects. To make sure we are including the right people in the discussion, the county creates a public engagement plan for all projects. Also, on many of the committees, there are slots for citizens to be members of the committees.

## **3. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

W: [Home > Government > Public Engagement](#). Dakota County values the input of its residents on all county projects. To make sure we are including the right people in the discussion, the county creates a public engagement plan for all projects. Also, on many of the committees, there are slots for citizens to be members of the committees.

## **4. Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on policy implementation and outcomes?**

W:

A:

### [Dakota County Community Engagement Module](#)

## **D. Describe specifically how the County engages with the public in connection with each of these types of projects:**

**A: Variations to public engagement seems to be more dependent on the scope of the project rather than the type of project. A small roadway resurfacing project that is going to happen no matter what, would involve informing the nearby neighbors that it is going to happen.**

A larger project such as adding a new park feature or a complex transportation system change that would elicit high levels of interest would be part of a long-range Master Plan, with public engagement opportunities built-in at various stages along the way.

Information would be pushed out to the residents via social media, County website, open houses, County Newsletter, presentations at mayor or township meetings.

Public feedback and County Residential Survey Data is given to the project designers to incorporate into the design while weighing contradictory priorities and budget constraints.

### **1. Parks**

a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?

W:

O: **My understanding from the website is that the public engagement process starts with community input from the beginning of this process**

**To help identify community needs and desires for recreation, interpretation, natural resource restoration, and natural resource management within the park**

**To build new and strengthen existing relationships with stakeholders and project partners.**

To build new relationships with County residents and provide opportunities for them to help shape plan recommendations

**b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-thirds completed or before?**

**W:**

**O: it is early on in the public engagement process**

**c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**W: The same Public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

**A:**

## **2. County Roadways**

**a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**W: The same Public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

**b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**

**W: The same public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

**c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**W: The same Public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

## **3. Transit [Follow-up with administration on this section]**

**a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**W:**

**O: The same public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above. Also, from the 2040 Comprehensive plan opportunities for residents and agencies to contribute to transportation plans, studies, and projects.**

**b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**

**W: The same public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

**c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**W: The same public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

## **4. County Buildings (libraries, office buildings, jails, maintenance facilities)**

**a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

**W: The same public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

**b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**

**W: The same public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

**How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

**W: The same public engagement process is used for this area. The public is allowed to have input as stated above.**

### **III. Relationships with Met Council and other levels of Government**

**1. How does the County engage with Met Council?**

**W:**

[https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/CAC/Planning/PCMeetingMaterials/Dakota County Comprehensive Plan Recommendation on Submittal to Metropolitan Council 10-25-18.pdf](https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/CAC/Planning/PCMeetingMaterials/Dakota%20County%20Comprehensive%20Plan%20Recommendation%20on%20Submittal%20to%20Metropolitan%20Council%2010-25-18.pdf)

**2. Does the Met Council involve the County in its initial planning?**

**W: ?**

**A: No**

**3. Identify policy areas where the County is subject to Metropolitan Council control or direction.**

**W: ????**

**A: Transportation and parks and recreation issues are most important for discussions with the Met Council**

**O:** Knowledge that the Council controls the flow of federal money to local units through its power of review should encourage cooperation from the 1976 Metropolitan Land Use Planning Act. The Act, which is implemented by the Council,<sup>2</sup> requires each governmental unit within the seven-county metropolitan area to adopt an individual comprehensive plan consistent with the Council's metropolitan system plans in the areas of transportation, airports, waste control, and recreational open spaces." This has been updated to the Thrive MSP 2040 goals

**4. What kind of funding does the County get from Met Council and under what conditions?**

**W:** Comprehensive Plan for 2040 references Met Council as a source of funds for parks, roads & transit.

**A:** Met Council distributes funding (some capital and some operational support funds) from state and federal dollars that come to them with strings attached; those conditions are still in effect when it gets to the county regarding Met Council relationships, the Dakota County Board's legislative platform supports more county representation on the Met Council with a particular concern for smoothing the transitions when a new governor/administration is elected. And that when TAB allocates federal funds, it's not clear that suburban interests were considered

**What does the County do if the funding does not sync with its vision?**

**W:** nothing found

**A:** When Met Council funding comes with priorities that are different from County priorities (e.g., funding for bike trails and greenways), Dakota County must find additional funding for its priorities.

**5. Are there meetings between the Board as a whole and the Met Council? If so and if these are not part of regular Board meetings, how is the public notified? Are these meetings recorded and accessible to the public?**

**W:** Don't know

**A:** No. The Met Council representative for Dakota County used to meet with the Board at least once a year but that has not happened in the past 2-3 years

**6. How often do Board of Commissioners meet with the State legislative delegations from your part of the region?**

**W:** not found

**A:** Typically, weekly when the legislature is in session, plus at least 2 other times during the year (prior to and after the legislative session). Noted that there seems to be a close working relationship between the County and the County's state legislators.

**7. Does the County Board develop an annual legislative platform?**

W: <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/Board/Pages/legislative-platform.aspx>

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/Board/Documents/2021LegislativePriorities.pdf>

**8. How is the platform made available to the public?**

W: **On the website** It is on the Dakota County website, but a person would have to know to look for it. It doesn't show up for the casual user.

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/notices/Pages/legislative-platform-dec-15.aspx>

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/Board/Documents/2021LegislativePriorities.pdf>

**9. Is the public kept informed of progress made on the legislative platform during the session? If so, how?**

W: see link above for quarterly legislative updates.

O: It appears that the board has regular quarterly meetings with the legislative people

**10. How does the County interact with cities and townships in the county?**

W: Don't know

A: Dakota County Managers' Association includes all the city managers and the County Manager. The city mayors meet regularly with the county manager

-One commissioner meets regularly with the township boards and assisted the townships on how to utilize CARES funding

-The County provides programming and updates annually for the Township Association

-Joint Powers organizations and shared governance with cities and townships for various entities including the Dakota Communications Center which operates the 911 system, the County Sheriff Dept, Public Health, school districts and there are generally good relationships between the County and the cities/townships

**Idea for a "Best Practice"**

A comment at the end of our interview indicating that a 'best practice' might be for all county governments to have meetings with mayors, city administrators, township administrators and county administrative people for issues that pertain to all groups

# HENNEPIN COUNTY

County: Hennepin

Researchers: Linda Krefting, Maureen Scaglia, Nikki Marie Coler

Respondent(s):

- Office of the Clerk to the Board (email exchange)
- District 1 Commissioner Jeff Lunde (interview)
- Anna Schmiel, Policy and Communications Aide to Commissioner Lunde (email, interview)

Answers to study questions are based on material from the Hennepin County website, responses from the Office of the Clerk to Board, exchanges with Commissioner Lunde and Anna Schmiel of his staff, watching meetings, subscribing to County updates, commissioner newsletters, and some personal experiences.

## 1. Visibility of County Government

### a. County Board

List Board Members and their districts.

1. Jeff Lunde. <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/1st-district>
2. Irene Fernando. <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/2nd-district>
3. Marion Greene, Chair  
<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/3rd-district>
4. Angela Conley. <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/4th-district>
5. Debbie Goettel, Vice Chair.  
<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/5th-district>
6. Chris LaTondresse. <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/6th-district>
7. Kevin Anderson. <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/7th-district>

#### i. Are their terms staggered?

Yes—Districts 2,3,4 elected in 2018; 1,5,6,7 elected 2020

#### ii. What are their salaries?

\$113,566

<https://www.lcc.mn.gov/legsalarycouncil/reports/LSC-report-3-23-21-final.pdf>

### 3. Are they considered part-time?

No – they are considered full-time due to the hours put into the position & any benefits they receive or are offered from Hennepin County with a full-time status position.

### 4. Do they hold town meetings, Facebook sessions or the like?

Individual Commissioners may hold them. From recent newsletters: Lunde (1, FB event, driveway conversations), Conely 4 (popup tables & popsicles at parks), Goettel (5 city/community festivals/festivities/events), LaTondresse 6 (coffees, attending public events), and Anderson (7, town halls, coffees).

Commissioner Goettel at a recent Penn Fest indicated she prefers city/community festivals/festivities/events believing being out amongst the people allows for more open conversations with constituents than events like open houses, etc.

5. How do they make themselves available? Do they make clear how to contact them? How do they do that?

<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government#leadership>

Each Commissioner has a page on Hennepin County Leadership with contact information—phone and email—for the Commissioner and two staff members. The Stay Connected tab on each Commissioner’s leadership page includes newsletters and a sign up to receive newsletters/updates.

Commissioners also make themselves available by in person or personal appointments through their scheduling assistants.

6. Does the Board have a Code of Ethics?

[https://library.municode.com/mn/minneapolis/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=COOR\\_TIT2AD\\_CH15ETGO](https://library.municode.com/mn/minneapolis/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_TIT2AD_CH15ETGO)

Yes, the Board of Commissioners have a Code of Ethics – it is the same standard for anyone in Minneapolis Government. Please see Chapter 15 of the provided link above.

B. Board Meeting Structure

1. **What is the Board Meeting schedule?**

Generally, the Board and committees meet Tuesdays at 1:30. Order of committees varies. The annual schedule PDF is available at

<https://www.hennepin.us/-/media/hennepinus/your-government/leadership/documents/board-meeting-calendar-current.pdf>

Information on upcoming meetings and agendas is available at <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/county-board-meetings>

2. **Are Board meetings recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

Yes. Links to watch live via Microsoft Teams and for closed captioning as well as to prior meeting recordings and documents are at

<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/board-videos>.

During a budget hearing, Commissioner Conley wondered about going back to having meetings live on cable tv with replay at a later day/time. Commissioner Lunde agreed that being on cable would be good.

3. **Is there a time slot at Board meetings for public comment?**

Yes, 30 minutes, during Covid comments can be recorded prior to the meeting and are played during the meeting. Information on participating:

<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/board-videos>

During a recent public hearing live calls would have been accepted but no calls were received. A window was provided for submission of written comments.

4. **What is the Board work or study session schedule?**

The Board has “briefings” which are generally held Thursdays at 9 or 10 am in the county Board Room. Briefing dates and agendas are available by contacting Laura Hoffman at 612-348-0863 or email [laura.hoffman@hennepin.us](mailto:laura.hoffman@hennepin.us). Briefings are included on the pdf of monthly meetings

<https://www.hennepin.us/-/media/hennepinus/your-government/leadership/documents/board-meeting-calendar-current.pdf>

No votes are taken, nor decisions made during Briefings. They are for informational purposes. During Covid meetings have been virtual via Microsoft teams.

A September 23rd briefing focused on the census and redistricting with the state demographer and HC staff member on the tight calendar redrawing commission districts and which districts will be on the 2022 ballot (2, 3, & 4 whose terms expire in Dec. 22; any of the other districts if district population changes by 5% or more with redistricting), and how previous HC redistricting has been handled.

**5. Are these sessions recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

Briefings have been recorded since Hennepin County began meeting remotely and are accessible to the public upon request.

**6. Is there a time slot at work or study sessions for public comment?**

Public Comment is not allowed during board briefings. These are informational in nature.

**7. Do Commissioners also have other briefings, workshops or the like?**

Commissioners do have other types of briefings: Closed Legal Briefings, Closed Labor & Closed Security.

**8. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

They are not accessible to the public.

**9. List Board Committees, which Commissioner chairs, and which Commissioners serve on each.**

All commissioners serve on each committee.

Committees & Chairs are:

1. Administration, Libraries and Budget (Goettel, 5)
2. Health and Human Services (Conley, 4)
3. Intergovernmental. (Green 3 & Lunde, 1)
4. Public Safety (Lunde, 1)
5. Public Works (Anderson, 7)

**10. Is there a time slot at committee meetings for public comment?**

Yes. During Covid comments can be recorded prior to the meeting. Information on participating:

<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/board-videos>

Recorded comments are played during the Administration Libraries and Budget Committee meetings.

**11. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public?**

Yes, the committee meetings are recorded by audio and video. Links to watch live via Microsoft Teams are available at: <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/board-videos>.

**12. When are public hearings typically scheduled that are separate from regular meetings and what circumstances call for them?**

Hennepin County does not have separate public hearings.

**13. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?**

Current cover procedures are described at <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/county-board-meetings>

Covid procedures are subject to change due to transitioning to hybrid work model and future decisions made by the County Board of Commissioners and County Administration.

## Public Notification

### 1. How is the public notified about County Board meetings, committee meetings, work sessions or any briefings or workshops?

A pdf Annual Calendar and upcoming Board, committee meetings, and hearings can be found on the Board Meeting page <https://boardmeetingmaterials.hennepin.us/#meetings>.

Briefing dates and agendas are available by contacting Laura Hoffman at 612-348-0863 or email [laura.hoffman@hennepin.us](mailto:laura.hoffman@hennepin.us).

Individuals can subscribe to obtain board meeting notifications and other information by email or text at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNHENNE/subscriber/new>.

Social media also includes alerts on Board meetings.

### 2. How is the public notified when a meeting time or location is changed after notice is published?

Currently, due to the remote meetings, if there is a change the public would be notified on the board meeting page. Please see the link here: <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/board-videos>

Public Hearings are generally posted 14 days before the date of the hearing. Special Board meetings are usually posted within a week's notice depending on advancement of the notification. All other Board/Committee meetings are adopted at the beginning of the year and can be found on the site's annual calendar. The website would also be updated to reflect the changes.

### 3. How may the public obtain agendas and minutes?

The Board Meeting page has links to agendas and minutes for Board and Committee Meetings <https://boardmeetingmaterials.hennepin.us/#meetings>.

Minutes for the specified date for Committee Meetings are included in the agendas.

Minutes for the Board Meetings are included in the following Board Meeting agenda. The public can also find news releases on significant board actions and subscribe to receive these releases at <https://www.hennepin.us/media/news-releases>

## C. Appointed Commissions and Advisory Committees.

### 1. List the Commissions and Advisory Committees to which the Board makes appointments, their purpose, how many serves on each and their terms?

Table below addresses these issues and was developed from:

[https:// www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards](https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards)

### 2. What is their meeting schedule?

See table

### 3. Are they subject to the Open Meeting Law?

Each advisory board has its own policy. Any meeting where a quorum of county board members may be in attendance is noticed according to statute.

From: [https:// www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards](https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards)

Hennepin County Citizen Advisory Boards: Purpose, Meeting schedule, Terms & Members

<a href="#">CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARDS</a>	Purpose	Meeting Schedule	Terms & Membership

<a href="#">Adult Mental Health</a>	advise, advocate, monitor, evaluate services on serious mental illnesses	3rd Thurs. 1:30 pm	3 yr. term, 23 member from Consumers, family members, providers, at large
<a href="#">Capital Budgeting Task Force</a>	Assisted by staff recommends annual capital budget and 5-yr improvement plan	Usually 10/year, mostly June-Aug	4 yr. term for at-large members, 11 members—HC Commissioners each apt 1 (term is at pleasure of appointer), Bd apt 4 at-large Chair designated by BD
<a href="#">City Planning Commission-MPLS</a>	Long-range planning; development, zoning, capital improvements	Approx. every other Monday, 4:30 pm	2 yr. term, 10 members—4 legal MPLS. voters apt by mayor with council approval, Mayor & reps for HC Bd, City Council (2), School Bd, Park Bd
<a href="#">Community Action Partnership</a>	Anti-poverty agencies working to identify causes of poverty, advance economic well-being of those with least resources	Usually monthly, 4th Thursday @ 6:30 pm	2 yr. term for public sector members, 21 members: 3 HC Commissioners or designees, 2 MPLS Council members or designees, 2 suburban or rural HC elected officials, 7 low-income individuals, 7 private sector representatives (business or community)
<a href="#">County Extension Committee</a>	UMN County Extension program budget, work plan, promotion	usually quarterly, 3rd Wed @ 10	3 yr. for at-large members, 9 members: 2 of HC Bd, County auditor, 6 at large apt by HC Bd
<a href="#">Human Resources Board</a>	Establish rules for classified service for Bd approval; conduct investigations	Usually monthly, 1st Wed @ 1 pm	4 yr. term, 7 members apt by HC Bd
<a href="#">Library Board</a>	Long-range plan, annual budget, library director, collection content, operating rules, goals & initiatives for Friends of HC Libraries	Usually monthly, 3rd-4th Wed @ 5:30	3 yr. term, 11 members apt by HC Bd
<a href="#">Lower MN River Watershed District Bd</a>	Develop, adopt, review Overall Plan	Monthly, 3rd Wed @ 7 pm	Staggered 3 yr. terms, 5 members; HC apt 2; 1 each Carver, Dakota, Scott

<a href="#">Mental Commitment Attorney Panel Advisory Bd</a>	Oversee operations of panel of attorneys providing representation for those petitioned for commitment; appoint panel annually	meet at least annually	2 yr. term, 5 members: 1 rec by HC Bar Assoc., 2 from rec by mental health advisory groups, 2 citizens at least 1 an attorney
<a href="#">Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Bd</a>	Manage & protect water resources: programming, research, monitoring, outreach recognizing relationships between natural & built environments.	2nd & 4th Tuesdays @ 7 pm	Staggered 3 yr. term, 6 members: HC Bd apt 5; Carver Bd 1
<a href="#">Nine Mile Creek Watershed Bd</a>	Develop water management plan identifying improvement projects, reviews permit proposals	monthly, 3rd Wed @ 7 pm	3 yr. term, 5 members apt by HC Bd; municipalities may nominate
<a href="#">Race Equity Advisory Council</a>	Advise the HC Bd and Admin on vision/strategies to reduce racial disparities and advance equity	monthly, 3rd Thurs @ 6 pm & as needed	2 yr. term, 15-23 members: 1 apt by each HC Commissioner; others by open admissions process.
<a href="#">Riley-Purgatory- Bluff Creek Watershed Bd</a>	Preparation/implementation of plan for water and related land resources; review and permit private & government projects.	Monthly, 1st Wed @ 7 pm	3 yr. term, 5 members: 4, HC Bd apt 4; Carver Bd 1
<a href="#">Three Rivers Park District Board of Commissioners</a>	Approve and set levy. HC Bd reviews and comments.	Monthly Bd usually meeting 3rd Thurs. @ 5 pm. Study sessions usually 1st Thurs @ 9 am	4 year term for appointed members, 7 members: 2 apt by HC Bd, 5 elected from HC districts outside MPLS
<a href="#">Workforce Innovation &amp; Opportunity Act Bd</a>	Propose, study, develop & evaluate strategies to increase private-sector employment opportunities for economically disadvantaged persons.		3 yr. term, 19 members: Private business-10, workforce-4, education & training-2, government & economic development-3

**4. Is the public notified about their meetings and hearings and if so, how?**

Upcoming meetings are listed on the Citizen Advisory Board page

[https:// www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards](https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards)

**5. How are minutes and agendas accessed?**

Minutes for some could be found by searching the County website, but not all; didn't find agendas. Minutes and agendas are maintained by the citizen advisory boards according to their individual requirements.

**6. Which advisory committees and boards meetings are videotaped or audio- recorded? How can residents access these recordings?**

The listing for an upcoming meeting, when the public is invited, includes link to watch live via Microsoft Teams on the Advisory Board Meetings tab of the Citizen Advisory Board webpage [https:// www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards](https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards).

Any recordings for these meetings are maintained by the individual advisory boards.

**7. Describe the process the County board uses for recruiting and appointing members.**

The process is described on the Citizen Advisory Board page [https:// www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards](https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/citizen-advisory-boards) Individuals can sign up to receive notification of openings and openings are listed on the Citizen Advisory Board page which also details the application process. Individuals should check the listing for the committee of interest for appointment criteria, apply either online or by phone. After applying, applicants are advised of next steps by the Clerk of the Board. Applicants deemed eligible are offered the opportunity to pre-record an interview statement to be played at a scheduled committee meeting.

**8. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?**

During Covid interviews with Advisory Board applicants have been pre-recorded interview and this process is expected to continue as they provide a better customer experience and reduce possible implicit bias.

## **II. Accountability of County Government**

**1. Describe how the County engages with the public in setting budget priorities and tax levies.**

The Budget webpage provides a brief description of process and link to most 2021 budget book with greater depth plus a link to sign up to receive updates.

[https:// www.hennepin.us/your-government/budget-finance/budgets](https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/budget-finance/budgets)

Public hearings on the proposed budget take place from Sept-Nov. "Truth in Taxation" requires the maximum levy set by Sept 30 with notices sent to the public in November.

Public comments are taken at each Budget Committee meeting and the December Board meeting at which budget is adopted.

In late August, the budget page was updated to add the proposed 2022 budget and the schedule for hearings on budget issues was added the Board Meetings webpage.

Proposed 2022 budget: <https://www.hennepin.us/-/media/hennepinus/your-government/budget-finance/documents/2022-budget-book-9-15-2021.pdf>

The sequence of hearings on the operations and capital budgets included: the Administrator's proposed budget; Human Services & Public Health; Disparity Reduction; Public Works; Health;

Capital Budget; Law, Safety & Justice; Operations; Administrator & Commission amendments (2); County Board approval of budget/levy at regular Dec. 14 Board Meeting

A press release following the Sept 14 presentation of the County Administrator's proposed 2022 budget, including a 3.5% levy increase, was posted to the board actions page.

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNHENNE/bulletins/2f14e64>

Executive summary statements for separate components of the budget were added to the budget page prior to the hearing for that component.

**C. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with Policy initiatives.**

A Projects/Initiatives webpage provides links to information on 18 specific areas.

<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government#projects-initiatives>.

Details provided on a specific project understandably vary due to the nature of the project: typically, the need/vision, partners, activities, and contacts. Information on some projects seemed dated

1. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the policy?
2. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the county has one or two options or before?
3. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?
4. Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on policy implementation and outcomes?

The intent is to involve the community from the beginning. Engagement teams are assigned to an initiative to develop and implement an outreach process. The outreach methods used depend on the nature of the issue or project and audience(s) to be reached. Implementation and outcomes are issues that appear in Board meeting documents, media releases on board actions, social media posts, and newsletters and email updates from individual Commissioners.

During the handful of meetings watched, engagement plans were discussed. Commissioners encourage/applaud development of engagement capacity stretching beyond existing procedures to better reach relevant communities.

Just an example: the consent agenda for the 9-28-21 Board Meeting authorized up to \$1,680,000 of American Rescue Plan funds for engagement staffing, services, and programs as part of the COVID19 pandemic response.

Meeting agendas, minutes, press releases, social media posts, executive summaries on budget components (posted to the Budget page during budget hearings <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/budget-finance/budgets>), and commissioner newsletters and outreach contain information on implementation and outcomes.

**C. Describe how the county generally engages with the public for input on a project?**

- Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?
- When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?
- How is the community notified and/or asked for input?
- Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on policy implementation and outcomes?

Hennepin County engagement on projects is similar to engagement on policy. The intent is to include public input from the beginning and throughout the project, engagement teams develop and implement plans to do so, additional communication on implementation and outcomes would be available via meeting agendas, minutes, press releases, social media posts and individual commissioners' newsletters and outreach.

**D. Describe specifically how the County engages with the public in connection with each of these types of projects:**

- a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?
- b) When in the planning process is the community engaged?
- c) Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?

d) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?

## 1. Parks

Residents/Recreation webpage <https://www.hennepin.us/residents#recreation> provides information for parks, golf, biking and walking with a link to Three Rivers Parks District. The Three Rivers Park District was established in 1957 by legislation and is governed by 7 commissioners, 5 elected by suburban Hennepin County Districts, 2 appointed by the Hennepin County Board

<https://www.threeriversparks.org>. Individuals can sign up for a variety of Three Rivers newsletters and alerts, including Board agendas, minutes, and schedule changes.

Three Rivers has a future developments webpage <https://www.threeriversparks.org/page/future-developments>. Planning Department responsibilities include developing “a public engagement process to gather input and ideas from community members, partners and other stakeholders” for each project. There are links to the 2040 Plan, master plans for current parks and trails projects, and current construction projects.

## 5. County Roadways

a) **Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**

b) **When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**

c) **How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

Residents/Transportation includes a Roads & Bridges tab <https://www.hennepin.us/residents#transportation> with information on current construction; specific studies and future projects; road and bridge maintenance with link to sign up for road, bridge, and trail updates.

The current construction listing notes that other road projects and projects near roads in your area may be led by MNDOT, your municipality or utility companies.

The studies and future project listing indicate where MNDOT or municipalities are partners. 5-year Capital Improvement Budgets provide early information on projected road projects.

The 66th Street Project (Co. Hwy. 53) provides an example of a county-city project.

Richfield's overall policy on streets is called "Sweet Streets" and came about with citizen inputs, then Transportation Commission & City Council approval.

So, when the county announced it was time to redo 66th Street, there was a basic plan for what it should include. Hennepin County has standards also. Initially, the County & City engineers came up with options. A company was hired to help generate citizen input. At least 3 open houses were held, each with a slightly different format. Both county & city staff were present. Citizens were informed about the open houses through mailings, info on websites, newspapers, etc. Since the best option determined by city staff, open houses, etc. was the removal of homes on the south side of 66th Street, everyone knew about it and were calling/emailing/talking to city council members. There were city council meetings where citizens were given opportunities to provide input. Finally, the city council voted to approve the final design, removing the houses along 66th Street. Of course, some people complained about never receiving notice, but it was their own fault. As I observed the process, I would say that city & county staff worked very well together in a respectful manner.

Bottom line, for road projects, the county has basic standards but then allows the city to determine the final design. There was plenty of opportunity for city staff, elected officials, commission and citizen

input. The open house process for input was one that is used by Richfield on almost all projects, not just for roads. Other cities may do things differently.

Even shorter: Depending on the project, the county works with all entities involved. In conjunction/cooperation with the other entity (entities) citizen input is requested and analyzed. Final decisions are made by both the county and the entity (ex. city).

## **6. Transit**

- a) **Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**
- b) **When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**
- c) **How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

An overview of Hennepin County funded transit is provided on the transit information webpage: <https://www.hennepin.us/transit>. The Investments tab on that page provides links for information on existing transit ways, those under construction (Green and Blue light rail), and those under study (streetcar proposal). The webpage for the Regional Rail Authority has information/links on its transit activities: <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/rra>

Lunde in our talk and his newsletters describes his active outreach regarding the Blue Line —driveway talks with groups of 5-25 about the project and how those talks have influenced decisions being made. These were also covered in a recent Star Trib Sunday piece on the Blue Line.

## **1. County Buildings (libraries, office buildings, jails, maintenance facilities)**

- a) **Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?**
- b) **When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?**
- c) **How is the community notified and/or asked for input?**

Capital Improvement Budgets contain information relevant to building projects.

Your Government/Facilities <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government#facilities> provides general information on all types of facilities. The Libraries tab <https://www.hennepin.us/residents#libraries> includes a link to the Hennepin County Library website <https://www.hclib.org> where a locations tab includes a link building projects page <https://www.hclib.org/about/building-projects> with links to specific projects. The current projects are maintenance at 2 libraries with details limited to dates for closure and expected reopening.

## **III. Relationships with Met Council and other levels of Government.**

### **1. How does the County engage with Met Council?**

Contact between the Hennepin Co. Board and Met Council are project based and the number of committees varies.

Board members meet with the Met Council Chair to discuss planning.

Commissioners are appointed to serve on Committees with the Met Council.

### **2. Does the Met Council involve the County in its initial planning?**

Yes

3. **Identify policy areas where the County is subject to Metropolitan Council control or direction.**  
Defined by state statute. Example: Only the Met Council can operate Public Transit.
4. **What kind of funding does the County get from Met Council and under what conditions? What does the County do if the funding doesn't sync with its vision?**  
Grants and co-investments in projects. Sometimes, \$ also go from the County to Met Council, such as light rail costs.  
A Study Committee document dated 9-5-20 indicates that Met Council affects county access to federal funding for transit/roads projects, big components of the county budget.
5. **Are there meetings between the Board as a whole and the Met Council? If so and if these are not part of regular Board meetings, how is the public notified? Are these meetings recorded and accessible to the public?**  
Individual County Commissioners meet with the Met Council.
6. **How often do Board of Commissioners meet with the State legislative delegations from your part of the region?**  
On an as needed basis. Priorities are adopted and followed during the session. Reports from meetings are made to the Board at public meetings. Strategies are kept private.
7. **Does the County Board develop an annual legislative platform?**  
Yes, both state and federal. In addition to establishing the platform the Intergovernmental Committee also considers requests for Hennepin County to take positions on specific pieces of legislation during a session.
8. **How is the platform made available to the public?**  
Intergovernmental webpage has links to HC's state and federal legislative priorities for each of the last three years: [https:// www.hennepin.us/your-government/open-government/intergovernmental-relations](https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/open-government/intergovernmental-relations). Also provided are links to pdf fact sheets on key issues: housing, mental health, disparity reduction, criminal justice reforms, and child well-being.
9. **Is the public kept informed of progress made on the legislative platform during the session? If so, how?**  
The platform is board approved and the board receives progress reports, so board meeting agendas, minutes and recordings keep the public informed.  
[https:// boardmeetingmaterials.hennepin.us/#meetings](https://boardmeetingmaterials.hennepin.us/#meetings).
10. **How does the County interact with cities and townships in the county?**  
**Many capital budget projects are listed as partnerships between county and city.**  
  
There are no townships in Hennepin County. Commissioners regularly interact with cities in their district. Relationships with local government are extensive and highly varied. Some programs deal directly with cities, others serve clients. Commissioner LaTondresse (6) reported updating city council at a recent meeting—pictures included. Commissioner Lunde works with city elected officials on budget and alignment of county with cities in District 1. At the Disparity Reduction budget hearing, Commissioner Lunde noted with appreciation that County staff had been working on DEI with small cities in the district that lacked needed expertise.

# RAMSEY COUNTY

## CMAL County Government Study Questionnaire

*County: Ramsey*

*Researcher(s): Joann Ellis, Karen Schaffer*

*Respondent(s): John Sigveland, Director of Communications and Public Relations; Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk and Director of Administrative Services*

*Please link answers to websites whenever possible*

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### I. Visibility of County Government

#### A. County Board

1. List Board Members and their districts.

W:

Nicole Joy Frethem (District 1)

Mary Jo McGuire (District 2)

Trista MatasCastillo (District 3)

Toni Carter (District 4)

Rafael E. Ortega (District 5)

Jim McDonough (District 6)

Victoria Reinhardt (District 7)

2. Are their terms staggered? O: YES

3. What are their salaries? W: Effective January 1, 2020, Commissioner salary was \$97,102; Chair salary \$100,138. The policy is to increase commissioner salaries by the same amount of the general increase for county employees in the previous year.

4. Are they considered part-time? O: no.

5. Do they hold town meetings, Facebook sessions or the like?? O: DEPENDS ON INDIVIDUAL COMMISSIONER

6. How do they make themselves available? Do they make clear how to contact them? How do they do that? W: Commissioner contact information is clearly available on commissioners' pages on the Ramsey County website. Email, phone, Twitter, or Facebook.

7. Does the Board have a Code of Ethics. W: None could be found on the website. A: Yes. County Administration provided CMAL with pdf a copy of the Code of Ethics, which is part of Ramsey County's Administrative Code. The Code of Ethics applies to County employees and County officials alike. The Administrative Code is part of the County's intranet for County employees and officials, not available to the general public.

#### B. Board Meeting Structure

1. What is the Board Meeting schedule?

W: The County Board meets every Tuesday except the 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 9:am.

2. Are Board meetings recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?

W: They are recorded on video. Previous meetings (2015-present) may be accessed on the county website.

3. Is there a time slot at Board meetings for public comment?

W: No, except during budget process.

4. What is the Board work or study session schedule?

W: The Board conducts workshops following the Board meetings.

5. Are these sessions recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?

W: They are video recorded and available on the county website.

6. Is there a time slot at work or study sessions for public comment?

O: No.

7. Do Commissioners also have other briefings, workshops, or the like?

O: Individual commissioners hold community meetings from time to time.

8. Are these recorded by audio or video?

O: they are not recorded.

9. List Board Committees, which Commissioner chairs, and which Commissioners serve on each.

A: there are 2 committees of the whole: budget and legislative.

They meet only occasionally. The Ramsey County Board also meets as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Regional Railroad Authority.

10. Is there a time slot at committee meetings for public comment?

O: No.

11. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?

W: all Board and Board committee meetings are video recorded and posted on the County website.

12. When are public hearings typically scheduled that are separate from regular meetings and what circumstances call for them? O: Public hearings are noticed on the County website, social media, and county email newsletter subscribers. Public hearing schedules are driven by state statute.

13. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?

## **C. Public Notification**

1. How is the public notified about County Board meetings, committee meetings, work sessions or any briefings or workshops?

W: County website. Members of the public may also subscribe to the County eNewsletter and subscribe to an email update regarding the County Board schedule.

2. How may the public obtain agendas and minutes?

W: agendas are on the website. Minutes of any given county board meeting may be found in the subsequent county board meeting packet.

## **D. Appointed Commissions and Advisory Committees**

1. List the Commissions and Advisory Committees to which the Board makes appointments, their purpose, how many serve on each and their terms?

W:

a. Capital Improvement Citizens Advisory Committee. Advises the county board on priorities regarding proposed capital expenditures, development, and adoption of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Up to 14 members. Meets, generally, the first Thursday of the month from 7:30-9:00 am. Agendas and minutes are available on the county website. The meetings are not audio or video recorded. Not stated whether appointees serve any particular term.

b. Disabled Veterans Rest Camp Board. Members must be veterans. This board directs operation of the camp which is adjacent to Big Marine Lake. Other organizations also make appointment to this Board. Members serve 2-year terms.

c. Personnel Review Board. Hears disciplinary appeals by veterans related to employment.

- d. Corrections Advisory Board. Advises and consults on corrections policy initiatives, including the comprehensive plan for Ramsey County correctional programs. Makes recommendations to the county board.
- e. Extension Service Committee. Encourages individuals and organizations to make the best use of activities in the areas of agriculture, horticulture, home economics, 4-H, and related subjects.
- f. Food and Nutrition Commission. Appointed jointly by Ramsey County and St. Paul. Focuses on matters relating to the planning and policy, promotion of, access to and education regarding safe, affordable nutritious foods and the assessment of local food delivery systems. There are 14 members, who serve 3-year terms, limited to 2 consecutive terms. Terms are staggered. Meetings are open to the public.
- g. Library Board. Governs the suburban library system. There are 7 members. Meets the third Wednesday at 6:30 pm. Meetings are open to the public. Agendas and minutes are on the county website.
- h. Parks & Recreation Commission. Advises the County Board regarding planning, developing, and operation of parks, trails, open space, and recreation areas. Meets the second Wednesday at 6 pm. Meetings are open to the public; Meeting minutes are on the county website.
- i. Children's Services Review Panel. Represents children who need protective services who are under state guardianship probation, among others. Examines policies and procedures of the child protection system. Makes reports to the County Board and Minnesota Department of Human services. Meets the second Thursday of the month from 4:30-6:60 pm. Meetings are open to the public. Meetings dates are on the county website. Minutes are not available on the website.
- j. Adults Services Committee. Represents needs and issues for older adults at risk of abuse or neglect and persons ages 19-60 with major physical or neurological disability.
- k. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee. Represents individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and makes recommendations to the Social Services and the County Board. Meets the second Monday from 4-6 pm. Meetings are open to the public. Minutes are not available on the website.
- l. Low Income Committee. Represents individuals and families who need help meeting basic needs for food, shelter, and clothing. Meetings are currently suspended. O: This committee has been disbanded.
- m. Children's Mental Health Advisory Council. Represents families with a child who is emotionally disturbed or severely emotionally disturbed, has an organic brain disorder or other clinically significant disorders. Meets the third Thursday of the month from 4:30-6:30 pm. Meetings are open to the public. Minutes are not available on the website.
- n. Adult Mental Health Advisory Council. Advocates for adults with mental illness and reports to the County Board. Meets the third Tuesday of the month from 5:30—7:30 pm. Meetings are open to the public. Minutes are not available on the website.
- o. Chemical Health Committee. Represents low income adolescents and adults whose drug or alcohol use creates situations where they are not capable of managing themselves. Meets the second Wednesday of the month from 2-3:30 pm. Meetings are open to the public. Minutes are not available on the website.
- p. Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County. Sets local strategic direction and local oversight for public workforce system. Its 33 members represent business, labor, community-based organizations,

education, economic development, and the public sector. Appoints are made by the County board and the city of St. Paul. Members serve 2-year terms.

- q. Community Health Services Advisory Committee (joint with St. Paul). Advises the County and the City on public health programs and services, participates in policy development, determines community health needs, and engages in public health advocacy. Meets the first Wednesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

- 2. What is their meeting schedule?
- 3. Are they subject to the Open Meeting Law?
- 4. Is the public notified about their meetings and hearings and if so, how?
- 5. How are minutes and agendas accessed?
- 6. Which advisory committees and boards meetings are videotaped, or audio-recorded? How can residents access these recordings?  
W: None of them appear to be audio or video recorded.
- 7. Describe the process the County board uses for recruiting and appointing members.  
W: There is an application form on the county website.  
Current vacancies are posted on the County website.
- 8. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?

## II. Accountability of County Government

- A. Describe how the County engages with the public in setting budget priorities and tax levies.

W: The County website includes extensive materials related to the budget process. It includes videos of county manager budget presentations, including one to the County Board and another to the community, where there was an opportunity for individuals ask questions and make comments. The proposed budget materials include information on property value trends and community indicators. The material is in Spanish, Hmob, Somali and Karen, as well as English.

- B. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with Policy initiatives.

- 1. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the policy?  
A: Yes.
- 2. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the county has one or two options or before?  
A: County policy initiatives have a long development period, as much as 5 years, during which the public may be engaged. Such policy initiatives start with a decision by the County Board at a county board meeting.
- 3. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?  
A: The County communicates through various social media, with employees, with St. Paul district councils, civic communicators, clients, beat reporters. There is a County eNewsletter to which members of the public may subscribe. The public may also subscribe to email updates from the county regarding parks, libraries, road construction, county board agendas, yard waste, and tax forfeit land auctions.
- 4. Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on policy implementation and outcomes?  
W: An outcomes dashboard together with various data sets may be found in the “Open Ramsey County” section of the county website.

- C. Describe how the county generally engages with the public for input on a project?

- 1. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?  
A: Yes.

2. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?

A: at the beginning.

3. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?

W: There is an important page on the County website “Projects and Initiatives.” This page highlights various County projects and plans across departments. At the present time, this page highlights the County’s strategic Plan, the comprehensive plan, the Transforming Systems Together initiative, economic development initiatives, transportation and inter-model initiatives, criminal justice reform, redistricting, homelessness, immigration/refugee issues, solar resources, Summerlands, and urban agriculture. Although this page does explicitly include links for public comment, it does provide a lot of information that residents could use in order to make public comment.

D. Describe specifically how the County engages with the public in connection with each of these types of projects:

1. Parks

- a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? A: Yes. The County invites the public to provide input any time that it addresses updating Regional Park Master Plans. There is also a Parks Department email newsletter to which members of the public may subscribe.

- b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before? A: the public has an early opportunity for engagement.

- c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?

PW: parks Department offers a subscription to a departmental email update, where public participation opportunities (among other information) may be found.

2. County Roadways

- a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? A: Yes. Road and bridge projects are planned out in the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process. Current projects are listed and described on the Projects and Initiatives Page of the County website. And there is an email newsletter from the Transportation Department to which members of the public may subscribe.

- b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before? A: Before.

- c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input? O: the County does local outreach in connection with road projects, by community surveys and communication to property owners in the vicinity.

3. Transit

- a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? O: Transit services are provided by the Metropolitan Council, which uses fare box receipts, federal funds, state-provided funds, and funds provided by Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority.

- b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before? Community engagement in transit projects is managed by the Metropolitan Council. The Regional Railroad Authority does community outreach and project analysis at the front end of potential transit projects. Then the County hands the project over to the Metropolitan Council for implementation.

- c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input? O: Information on the website; community meetings and surveys; installation of information kiosks and signage.

4. County Buildings (libraries, office buildings, jails, maintenance facilities)
  - a) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? O: Yes. Community surveys on library projects are important.
  - b) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before? O: well before.
  - c) How is the community notified and/or asked for input? O: Community surveys; community meetings and open houses.

## **II. Relationships with Met Council and other levels of Government**

1. How does the County engage with Met Council?

A: Annually the County Board meets with the Met Council Chair and Regional Administrator, their key staff and sometimes other Council members. There are ad hoc presentations to the County Board by Met Council staff in workshop format. County staff collaborate regularly with Met Council staff on housing, transit, parks, environmental services, transportation, demographics, and GIS.
2. Does the Met Council involve the County in its initial planning?

A: Yes.
3. Identify policy areas where the County is subject to Metropolitan Council control or direction. Housing, transportation, Transit, Parks, Environmental Services.
4. What kind of funding does the County get from Met Council and under what conditions?

A: The County receives funding from Met Council for parks, environmental services. What does the County do if the funding doesn't sync with its vision?
5. Are there meetings between the Board as a whole and the Met Council? If so and if these are not part of regular Board meetings, how is the public notified? Are these meetings recorded and accessible to the public?

W: since these meetings are with the county board, they are recorded and posted on the website.
6. How often does the Board of Commissioners meet with the State legislative delegations from your part of the region?

A: Occasionally. Individual commissioners also meet with legislators.
7. Does the County Board develop an annual legislative platform?

W: The County annually adopts a federal and a state legislative platform. The current platforms and some previous ones are available on the county website.
8. How is the platform made available to the public?

W: State and federal legislative platforms are posted on the county website.
9. Is the public kept informed of progress made on the legislative platform during the session? If so, how?

A: Progress is discussed as part of County Board meetings and the Legislative Committee of the Whole.
10. How does the County interact with cities and townships in the county?

A: The County provides law enforcement services directly to many cities in the county. It provides a joint 911 center for all cities. It provides election services to most cities. County staff and city staff work together on capital projects. There is also a unique partnership between the public health departments of the City of St. Paul and Ramsey County.

# SCOTT COUNTY

## CMAL Scott County Government Study Questionnaire

County: *SCOTT*

Researcher(s): *Thana Ross, LWV Dakota County; Lesley Hauser, LWV Dakota County (Scott County Resident)*

Respondent(s): *Barb Weckman Brekke, Scott County Commissioner; Lezlie Vermillion, Scott County*

Administrator

*Please link answers to websites whenever possible.*

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### I. Visibility of County Government

#### A. County Board

1. List Board Members and their districts. Web:

- [Barb Weckman Brekke](#), District 1
- [Tom Wolf](#), District 2
- [Michael Beard](#), District 3
- [Dave Beer](#), District 4
- [Jon Ulrich](#), District 5

2. **Are their terms staggered?** W: NO

3. **What are their salaries?** W: \$72,306

Source: [Legislative Salary Council Report 3/31/2021](#)

Was not able to find the salary on the County website

4. **Are they considered part-time?** Commissioner: YES

5. **Do they hold town meetings, Facebook sessions or the like?** C: NO

6. **How do they make themselves available? Do they make clear how to contact them? How do they do that?** W: PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL LINK ARE ON THEIR STAFF DIRECTORY PAGES

7. **Does the Board have a Code of Ethics?** W: THERE IS A CODE OF ETHICS INCORPORATED IN THE "2021 OPERATING RULES AND GUIDELINES:

<https://www.scottcountymn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14805/2021-Operating-Rules-and-Guidelines>

\*\*\* It is notable that the relevant **County Organizational Values** are highlighted for every decision the Board makes (the relevant values are listed with each action item in the Board Packet). These Values carry weight when Board members are scoring projects for priority:

**Customer Service:** We will deliver government services in a respectful, responsive, and solution-oriented manner

**Communication:** We will always be clear about what we're doing and why we're doing it

**Collaboration:** We will work with partners - communities, schools, faith groups, private business, and non-profit agencies - to see that services are not duplicated but rather are complimentary, aligned, and provided by the partners who can deliver the service most effectively

**Stewardship:** We will work proactively to make investments, guided by resident input, which will transform lives, communities, and government

**Empowerment:** We will work with individuals and families to affirm strengths, develop skills, restore hope, and promote self-reliance

**Resiliency:** We will foster public preparedness and respond when families and communities face health and safety emergencies

**Innovation:** We will take informed risks to deliver services more effectively and will learn from our successes and failures

## **B. Board Meeting Structure**

1. What is the Board Meeting schedule? W: First & third Tuesdays of the month at 9AM
2. Are Board meetings recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?  
W: VIDEO RECORDINGS OF THE BOARD MEETINGS ARE AVAILABLE VIA A SCOTT COUNTY YOUTUBE CHANNEL. THEY ARE ALSO LIVE STREAMED.
3. Is there a time slot at Board meetings for public comment?  
W: CITIZENS MAY ADDRESS THE BOARD FOR UP TO FIVE MINUTES ON TOPICS NOT ON THE AGENDA. IT APPEARS THAT THOSE WHO WISH TO SPEAK BEFORE THE BOARD MUST ATTEND THE MEETING IN PERSON. I DID NOT SEE A LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF CITIZENS WHO MAY SPEAK AT A PARTICULAR BOARD MEETING.  
<https://www.scottcountymn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14805/2021-Operating-Rules-and-Guidelines>  
C: ARE CITIZENS ALLOWED TO COMMENT ON SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS DURING THE BUSINESS PART OF THE MEETING? Generally, no.
4. What is the Board work or study session schedule?  
W: DATES ARE LISTED ON THE WEBSITE.
5. Are these sessions recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?  
W: THERE ARE NO VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDINGS OF THESE MEETINGS BUT THE PUBLIC IS INVITED. AGENDAS ARE POSTED
6. Is there a time slot at work or study sessions for public comment? Administration: NO
7. Do Commissioners also have other briefings, workshops, or the like?  
W: COMMISSIONERS EACH PARTICIPATE IN A NUMBER OF COMMITTEES, BUDGET WORKSHOPS, CITY COUNCIL AND TOWNSHIP MEETINGS, AND ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA COUNTIES MEETINGS  
OTHER? PLEASE DESCRIBE EXAMPLES OF WORKSHOP TOPICS FROM A RECENT BOARD AGENDA. W: Open Library, Housing, UTMP, Plan to End Homelessness, Update Trunk Hwy 169/ Trunk HWY 13, Marystown Road Study
8. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?  
W: THESE ARE AVAILABLE BY VIDEO ON THE SCOTT COUNTY WEBSITE
9. List Board Committees, which Commissioner chairs, and which Commissioners serve on each. W: 2021 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS: <https://www.scottcountymn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14804/2021-Committee-Assignments>
10. Is there a time slot at committee meetings for public comment? A: No. But informally, any visitors might be asked to introduce themselves and their reasons for being there
11. Are these recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them?  
W: THERE ARE VIDEO RECORDINGS FOR SOME RECENT MEETINGS. SOME APPEAR TO BE INCORPORATED INTO REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS. With digging, I found video recordings exist for: Board of Adjustment, Ditch Board, Parks Advisory Commission, Planning Advisory Commission, Prior Lake/Spring Lake Watershed District Board, Scott Watershed Planning Commission (WPC), Scott County Delivers SEE SEPARATE GRID FOR DETAILS: "Citizen Advisory Boards, Commissions, & Committees"
12. When are public hearings typically scheduled that are separate from regular meetings and what circumstances call for them? W: Public Hearings  
From time to time, the County Board conducts formal public hearings. In addition to those required by law, the County Board may hold public hearings on matters of business when it decides that such hearings are in the best interest of the public or issues under consideration. The order of business for public hearings generally follows this procedure.
  1. Presiding officer opens the hearing and states the purpose.
  2. Brief description of issue by County staff or other appropriate persons.
  3. Presentation, if applicable, by affected or interested persons.
  4. Open discussion by members of the general public.
  5. Discussion by the County Board.

6. Public hearing closed by Chair.

7. Decision of the County Board.

At any time during the process, the County Board may address any questions as deemed appropriate. The County Board may alter the public hearing procedure as needed to assure that the hearings are conducted in an orderly, fair, and expeditious manner, including establishing reasonable time limits of five to ten minutes for speakers individually or on each side of the issue before the Board. Rules adopted for public hearing procedures are intended to promote an orderly discussion, to give every person an opportunity to be heard, and to ensure that no individual is embarrassed by exercising the right to free speech.

All comments by members of the public shall be made at the microphones and individuals making comments shall first give their name and address. This is required for an official record of the public hearing. Members of the public interested in addressing the County Board are requested to sign in and make it known at the appropriate time that they wish to speak

Source: <https://www.scottcountymn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14805/2021-Operating-Rules-and-Guidelines>

13. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?

C: & A: Yes, EXAMPLES:

- Requiring appointments for County services allows customer service employees to make better use of their time and saves customers' time (e.g., driver's license and ID renewal,
- Allowing permits to be completed on-line using e-signatures; saves time and paper
- Telemedicine option for certain mental health services; some clients prefer this option
- Curbside pickup at libraries will continue
- Waivers of in-person meetings in order to maintain eligibility for some benefits

#### **C. Public Notification**

1. How is the public notified about County Board meetings, committee meetings, work sessions or any briefings or workshops? W: REGULAR BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS ARE LISTED ON THE WEBSITE FOR THE YEAR AHEAD; AND ALSO LISTED IN THE "SCOTT SCENE" NEWSPAPER WHICH IS MAILED TO EVERY RESIDENT 4 TIMES PER YEAR (AND ALSO AVAILABLE ON-LINE). MEETING AGENDA IS AVAILABLE APPROXIMATELY A WEEK PRIOR AND THE COMPLETE MEETING PACKET IS AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT LEAST A DAY PRIOR TO THE MEETING. THOSE ON THE EMAIL LIST GET THEIR NOTIFICATIONS APPROXIMATELY 10 DAYS TO TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE MEETINGS
2. How is the public notified when a meeting time or location is changed after notice is published? C: CHANGES ARE POSTED ON-LINE AND COMMUNICATED THROUGH THE EMAIL NOTIFICATION SUBSCRIPTIONS
3. How may the public obtain agendas and minutes? W: ALL ARE EASILY AVAILABLE ON THE SCOTT COUNTY GOVERNEMENT WEBSITE AND EASY TO SEARCH FOR. THOSE INTERESTED MAY ALSO SIGN UP ON THE SCOTT COUNTY WEBSITE TO BE ON AN EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST

#### **D. Appointed Commissions and Advisory Committees**

1. List the Commissions and Advisory Committees to which the Board makes appointments, their purpose, how many serve on each and their terms? W: SEE SEPARATE GRID FOR DETAILS ("Citizen Advisory Boards, Commissions, & Committees")
2. What is their meeting schedule? W: SEE SEPARATE GRID FOR DETAIL: "Citizen Advisory Boards, Commissions, & Committees"  
One must subscribe in a different WEB location to receive notices of meeting dates and agendas for •County Board, •Ditch Board, •Community Health Board, and •Regional Rail Authority. The link to subscribe for this is listed in multiple places throughout the website.
3. Are they subject to the Open Meeting Law?

W: All meetings of the Scott County Board of Commissioners and Board Committees are subject to the Open Meeting Law. While Board workshops are subject to the Open Meeting Law (Minnesota Statutes §13D.01), no formal action is taken; and the workshops are not televised or recorded

Source: <https://www.scottcountymn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14805/2021-Operating-Rules-and-Guidelines>

4. Is the public notified about their meetings and hearings and if so, how?

W: There is a page on the website: <https://scottcountymn.gov/agendacenter>

Those interested can subscribe to an email distribution list for some committees

Some meetings are also listed in the “Scott Scene” newspaper that is mailed to all residents

5. How are minutes and agendas accessed?

W: One must subscribe in a different web location to receive notices of meeting dates and agendas for •County Board, •Ditch Board, •Community Health Board, and •Regional Rail Authority. MINUTES AND AGENDAS ARE EASY TO ACCESS ON THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT WEB PAGE

6. Which advisory committees and boards meetings are videotaped or audio-recorded?

How can residents access these recordings? W: THOSE WHICH ARE RECORDED ARE AVAILABLE ON THE COUNTY WEBSITE. SEE SEPARATE GRID FOR DETAILS: “Citizen Advisory Boards, Commissions, & Committees”)

7. Describe the process the County board uses for recruiting and appointing members.

C: COMMITTEE VACANCIES ARE LISTED IN THE “SCOTT SCENE” NEWSPAPER MAILED TO ALL RESIDENTS 4 TIMES PER YEAR. VACANCIES ARE ALSO LISTED ON THE SCOTT COUNTY GOVERNMENT WEBSITE. Observer: The process is somewhat muddled because a committee member’s term might be ending (indicating that there might be a vacancy) but that person can be reappointed to that position. Our researcher noted that she had applied for vacancies but never received a response. Scott County Administrator Vermillion said she would follow up on this.

W: Recruitment and Selection:

1. A vacancy notice for all committees/boards for which the County Board makes appointments shall be posted on the County’s website, [www.scottcountymn.gov](http://www.scottcountymn.gov) and published in the SCENE. In addition, a press release shall be forward to all area news media on an annual basis in October of each year and as otherwise needed. The notice shall indicate the function of the committee, number of members, length of term, meeting schedule, number of probable vacancies in the coming year, and any specific requirements of a particular membership. This annual October press release is to cover all vacancies anticipated for the coming year. Subsequent press release(s) may be forwarded to the news media as unexpected vacancies and mid-term resignations occur throughout the year.

2. Such Notices of Citizen Appointment shall indicate that all persons interested in service on these committees/boards shall contact the Scott County Administrator’s Office or their Commissioner to obtain an Application for Citizen Advisory Committee/Board Appointment or register on the County’s volunteer website ([www.scottvolunteers.com](http://www.scottvolunteers.com)).

3. All submitted applications will be retained on file in the Office of the Administrator. Only those applications received in the previous twelve (12) months will be considered by the County Board unless a previous applicant has notified the County Administrator's Office of their continued interest. An application may be requested from an incumbent in a position who is qualified to serve another term but is not a requirement. Incumbents interested in serving another term should so notify their commissioner.

4. At least sixty (60) days prior to the expiration of appointment's term, each Commissioner shall be advised of the pending vacancies and attendance record of individuals whose terms are expiring should those incumbents be eligible for reappointment. The Commissioner shall consider the reappointment of those individuals at that time. Should the Commissioner determine that the individual(s) merit reappointment, they will be contacted to determine if they wish to seek reappointment, if they have not already made such wishes known to their commissioner.

5. Prior to the expiration of the appointee’s term, the Commissioner shall make a recommendation on appointment(s) for committees/boards to the County Board for vacancies in his/her Commissioner District. Such recommendations will be made from applications on file in the office of the County

Administrator, qualified candidates known to the Commissioners and incumbents (if eligible for reappointment). Each Commissioner reserves the right to determine the means of selection of an appropriate individual based on judgment, training, experience, interest, and ability to function effectively on the committee/board. Although not required, it is recommended that the applicants be interviewed.

6. Nominations and appointments shall be made by the County Board.

Source: <https://www.scottcountymn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14805/2021-Operating-Rules-and-Guidelines>

7. Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent?

W: e.g., from Scott County 2021 Legislative Priorities document: *“Support making select COVID-19 Health and Human Service waivers/modifications permanent including those which allow virtual visits in place of face to face.”*

C/A: Yes, EXAMPLES:

- Requiring appointments for County services allows customer service employees to make better use of their time and saves customers’ time (e.g., driver’s license and ID renewal,
- Allowing permits to be completed on-line using e-signatures; saves time and paper
- Telemedicine option for certain mental health services; some clients prefer this option
- Curbside pickup at libraries will continue
- Waivers of in-person meetings in order to maintain eligibility for some benefits

## II. Accountability of County Government

A. Describe how the County engages with the public in setting budget priorities and tax levies.

W: [2021 Proposed Budget slides from 12/3/2020](#) Unable to find a finalized budget C/A: Scott County respondents noted that Scott County is one of “the most tax-averse counties in the Midwest.” Therefore, the county Board and administration recognizes that funding projects and infrastructure with increased tax levies will be met with strong resistance. The Board and Admin staff is under heavy pressure to find alternative funding sources, ensure least costly options, and maximize efficiency.

A Citizen Survey is completed every 3 years. This provides the Board and administration with statistically significant results by ensuring a large and random sample of resident opinions.

In addition, public input is solicited via Open Houses and a Virtual Town Hall called ["Speak Up, Scott County"](#) where residents can share their opinions and read other residents’ opinions.

Depending on the topic, a small number of responses are posted or, in the case of a question related to a transportation sales tax, approximately 700 responses were posted.

Respondents noted that public input is well meaning but comments are often not realistic or relevant. They do appear to make an honest effort to engage with residents and obtain feedback.

D. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with Policy initiatives.

5. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the policy? (Or is the policy planning done before sending the priorities to the public?)

W/C/A/O: THERE IS A CLEAR EFFORT TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC EARLY AND OFTEN

6. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the county has one or two options or before?

W/C/A: IF POSSIBLE, EFFORTS ARE MADE TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC BEFORE DECISIONS ARE NARROWED DOWN. RESPONDENTS NOTED THAT IN SOME CASES, FOR EXAMPLE, DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH LAND IS AVAILABLE FOR AN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT, OPTIONS MAY ALREADY BE CONSTRICTED.

WITH A POLICY OR INITIATIVE, THE OPTIONS HAVE RESTRICTIONS BASED ON STATE OR FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

7. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?

W/C/A: Notices are placed in the “Scott Scene” newspaper delivered to all residents 4 times per year. Public input is solicited via Open Houses and a Virtual Town Hall called ["Speak Up, Scott County"](#) where residents can share their opinions and read other residents’ opinions.

8. Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on policy implementation and outcomes?

C/A/W: County staff uses a Continuous Quality Improvement process called “Scott County Delivers” to report results back to the Board and the public. Immediately after a Board Meetings there are multi-departmental discussion sessions scheduled to present costs and outcomes for initiatives.

[Scott County Delivers Web page](#)

W: What is "Scott County Delivers? "Scott County Delivers" is the next logical step in the "Delivering What Matters" continual improvement cycle, basically looking at our data at the **service**, not the department, level. This next step allows everyone to see our services through the spectrum of programs, processes, and departments that contribute to our desired outcomes,...helping to deepen the understanding of what is working well, and where we can concentrate our efforts on making improvement

Materials and Videos: Since January 2017, the Scott County Delivers presentations have been made before the Scott County Board of Commissioners as part of its regular agenda, typically on the third Tuesday of each month (with some exceptions), and is televised just like any regular meeting. Scott County Delivers materials are available prior to the Board Meeting. A video presentation of the session will be available after the meeting. [Most Recent Materials](#) In the Agenda Center, to access the materials, click on the “Download” button and select “Agenda.” To view the video presentation, click the “Media” link.

(THE LINK ABOVE TAKES A PERSON DIRECTLY TO THE “SCOTT COUNTY DELIVERS” AGENDAS AND VIDEOS

To receive notification of Scott County Delivers materials, [please register online](#).

- E. Describe how the county generally engages with the public for input on a project?

C/A /W/O: THERE IS A CLEAR EFFORT TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC EARLY AND OFTEN - [2022 – 2026 Capital Improvement Program submittal request letter](#) 4/16/2021

[2021 – 2025 Capital Improvement Program](#) Approved 12/15/2020 Describes the CIP process as follows on page 5: The CIP process begins in late spring with requests to cities, townships, and County departments to update, modify, or add to the adopted CIP.

--April/May Initial request from the cities, township, and staff for the upcoming CIP

--June/July Staff working on prioritizing requests, adjusting estimates, and preparing draft CIP

--September County Board reviews draft CIP and sends back to cities/townships for final review

--October/November Final draft preparation

-- November/December Final adoption of CIP as part of the annual budget process

On Page 7: The following criteria are utilized by the CIP Governance team in prioritizing projects:

- Utilization of the County’s results maps (does the project support the public’s vision of a safe, healthy, and livable community)
- Federal, State or Regional mandate
- Leverage Outside Funding
- **Citizen Survey Priorities**
- Employee Survey Priorities
- County Strategies/Division Business Plan Support

- 4.Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? (How much planning is completed before reaching out to the public?)

C/A/W/O: THERE IS A CLEAR EFFORT TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC EARLY AND OFTEN  
5. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?

C/A: IF POSSIBLE, EFFORTS ARE MADE TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC BEFORE DECISIONS ARE NARROWED DOWN. RESPONDENTS NOTED THAT IN SOME CASES, FOR EXAMPLE, DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH LAND IS AVAILABLE FOR AN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT, OPTIONS MAY ALREADY BE CONSTRICTED. WITH A POLICY OR INITIATIVE, THE OPTIONS MAY HAVE RESTRICTIONS BASED ON STATE OR FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

6. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?

C/A/W: Notices are placed in the “Scott Scene” newspaper delivered to all residents 4 times per year. Public input is solicited via Open Houses and a Virtual Town Hall called ["Speak Up, Scott County"](#) where residents can share their opinions and read other residents’ opinions.

F. Describe specifically how the County engages with the public in connection with each of these types of projects:

5. Parks

From pages 95-96: Scott County Board of Commissioners adopted seven value statements as part of their strategic planning in December of 2019. These value statements in partnership with their objectives provide direction to all County Departments in establishing priorities. The Scott County Planning and Resource Management Division helps meet these strategic initiatives through:

- Stewardship: Working proactively to make investments guided by resident input, which will transform lives, communities and government by:
  - focusing on our residents’ priorities in both capital and operations
  - delivering projects in the planned year
  - utilizing an operations plan to maintain our precious assets
  - utilizing regional parks fund for acquisition
- Collaboration: Working with partners – communities, schools, faith groups, private business, and non-profit agencies – to see that services are not duplicated but rather are complimentary, aligned and provided by the partners who can deliver the service most effectively by:
  - working with Three Rivers Park District to deliver service to our residents by:
    - == Common identity and “one-stop shopping” for all regional parks in Scott County
    - == New outdoor recreation opportunities
  - == Shared expertise/shared resources
  - planning with staff and officials from the cities, townships, other counties, and state and federal agencies
  - working with the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District and other partners to enhance the delivery of natural resources management of parklands
  - utilizing the Parks Advisory Commission
  - exploring new partnerships to provide outdoor recreation opportunities
- Communication: Always being clear about what we’re doing and why we’re doing it by:
  - utilizing different forms of communication to reach more residents --o providing project updates and information
  - providing programming updates and information
  - providing information on strategic investment decisions
- Innovation: Taking informed risks to deliver services more effectively and will learn from our successes and failures by:
  - resource sharing to meet peak resource needs
  - cross training of staff
  - providing professional development opportunities

- trying different programs and opportunities for our residents
- Customer Service: Delivering government services in a respectful, responsive, and solution-oriented manner
  - one stop shopping by utilizing Three Rivers Park's customer service line
  - including all interested parties in neighborhood meetings through the design process

From Page 97

The following is the typical process used for gathering public input for developing the annual PIP:

- ☐ March Staff develop draft PIP with input from regional park and legacy decisions
- ☐ July Parks Advisory Commission input
- ☐ Aug./Sept. Workshop with County Board
- ☐ Sept. Circulate draft PIP to local agencies for comments
- ☐ Nov. Summarize comments and prepare final PIP
- ☐ Dec. CIP presentation and County Board Adoption

d) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? W/O: THE PARKS DEPARTMENT IS VERY VISIBLE ON ITS WEB PAGES AND IN THE "SCOTT SCENE" REGARDING WHAT IT IS DOING AND OFFERING MULTIPLE METHODS FOR RESIDENTS TO PROVIDE INPUT.

e) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?

W/O: The Scott County Parks Advisory Commission is very visible in the "Scott Scene" and on the Scott County Websites. Multiple methods for contacting and communicating with staff are provided as well as detailed information regarding how residents can provide input or public comments for Advisory Commission meetings.

C/A: IF POSSIBLE, EFFORTS ARE MADE TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC BEFORE DECISIONS ARE NARROWED DOWN. RESPONDENTS NOTED THAT IN SOME CASES, FOR EXAMPLE, DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH LAND IS AVAILABLE FOR AN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT, OPTIONS MAY ALREADY BE CONSTRICTED. WITH A POLICY OR INITIATIVE, THE OPTIONS MAY HAVE RESTRICTIONS BASED ON STATE OR FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

f) How is the community notified and/or asked for input?

W/O: Links to agendas, minutes, commissioners' names/districts, and ways to provide input is available on the Scott County Web page: [Scott County Parks Advisory Commission](#) Comments and input are welcomed by the Parks Commission.

## 6. County Roadways

d) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?

W: Page 13 The following is the typical process used for gathering public input for developing the

Annual TIP. (In 2020 local solicitation did not occur due to COVID-19, anticipated 2021 State Aid revenue impacts and the constrained fund balance of the road and bridge fund.)

- April/May Distribute project solicitation letters/guidelines
- May/June Local agencies submit potential projects
- June Review/Committee scores submitted projects
- Sept CIP/TIP Workshop with County Board
- Sept Circulate draft TIP to local agencies for comments
- Nov Summarize comments and prepare final TIP
- Dec County Board Adoption

C/A: THE COUNTY HOSTS TOWN HALLS/FEEDBACK SESSIONS AS WELL AS ON-LINE COMMENTS VIA THE "SPEAK UP, SCOTT COUNTY" VIRTUAL FORUM

- e) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before? C/A: IF POSSIBLE, EFFORTS ARE MADE TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC BEFORE DECISIONS ARE NARROWED DOWN. RESPONDENTS NOTED THAT IN SOME CASES, FOR EXAMPLE, DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH LAND IS AVAILABLE (e.g., there might not be room for a double-diamond highway interchange) FOR AN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT, OPTIONS MAY ALREADY BE CONSTRICTED. OPTIONS MAY BE RESTRICTED BASED ON STATE OR FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS
- f) How is the community notified and/or asked for input? C/A: Notices are placed in the “Scott Scene” newspaper delivered to all residents 4 times per year. Public input is solicited via Open Houses and a Virtual Town Hall called ["Speak Up, Scott County"](#) where residents can share their opinions and read other residents’ opinions.

## 7. Transit

- d) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? (How much planning is completed before reaching out to the public?) W: Page 13 The following is the typical process used for gathering public input for developing the Annual TIP. (In 2020 local solicitation did not occur due to COVID-19, anticipated 2021 State Aid revenue impacts and the constrained fund balance of the road and bridge fund.)

- April/May Distribute project solicitation letters/guidelines
- May/June Local agencies submit potential projects
- June Review/Committee scores submitted projects
- Sept CIP/TIP Workshop with County Board
- Sept Circulate draft TIP to local agencies for comments
- Nov Summarize comments and prepare final TIP
- Dec County Board Adoption

C/A: EARLY ENGAGEMENT VIA TOWN HALLS, THE ON-LINE FORUM AND NOTICES IN THE “SCOTT SCENE” ARE USED AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE TO KEEP THE PUBLIC INFORMED

THE RESPONDENTS NOTED THAT TRANSPORTATION OPEN HOUSES ARE PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TO HOST BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY RESTRICTIONS INVOLVED REGARDING HOW THE FUNDING CAN BE USED – e.g., LOCATION OR TYPE OF ROADWAY, TIMING OF FUNDING, ETC.

- e) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before? C/A: IF POSSIBLE, EFFORTS ARE MADE TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC BEFORE DECISIONS ARE NARROWED DOWN. RESPONDENTS NOTED THAT IN SOME CASES, FOR EXAMPLE, DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH LAND IS AVAILABLE FOR AN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT, OPTIONS MAY ALREADY BE CONSTRICTED. THE OPTIONS MAY HAVE RESTRICTIONS BASED ON STATE OR FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS OR HOW THE FUNDING MAY BE USED. TRANSIT OPTIONS ARE ALSO INFLUCED BY THE MET COUNCIL
- f) How is the community notified and/or asked for input? C/A: Notices are placed in the “Scott Scene” newspaper delivered to all residents 4 times per year. Public input is solicited via Open Houses and a Virtual Town Hall called ["Speak Up, Scott County"](#) where residents can share their opinions and read other residents’ opinions.

## 8. County Buildings (libraries, office buildings, jails, maintenance facilities)

- d) Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? W: From page 120: Scott County Facilities Department

The Scott County Facilities Department is responsible for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of buildings and facilities for Scott County. The department works with County staff, cities, townships, and adjacent counties to plan for, maintain and operate our facilities to meet the public need.

Scott County Board Values: Scott County Board of Commissioners updated their value statements as part of their strategic planning in December of 2019. These value statements in partnership with their objectives provide direction to all County Departments in establishing priorities.

The Scott County Facilities Department helps meet these values by:

- Stewardship: Working proactively to make investments guided by resident input, which will transform lives, communities, and government
- Collaboration: Working with partners – communities, schools, faith groups, private business, and non-profit agencies – to see that services are not duplicated but rather are complimentary, aligned and provided by the partners who can deliver the service most effectively
- Communication: Always being clear about what we're doing and why we're doing it
- Customer Service: Delivering government services in a respectful, responsive, and solution-oriented manner
- Innovation: Taking informed risks to deliver services more effectively and learning from our successes and failures

#### Building Capital Improvements

Scott County operates approximately 880,871 square feet in office buildings, correctional facilities, training facilities, dispatch, maintenance, parking facilities and storage facilities. Most of the County's facilities are relatively new from a building standpoint or have been renovated in the past 25 years. With that in mind, as these facilities age, we need to have in place an adequate fund for regular and preventative maintenance.

Our buildings recently had a space and use analysis completed to help plan for our long-term capital needs. We have implemented an asset management tool that includes maintenance requests, space planning and inventory including long-term capital needs. A better long-term planning process will stabilize requests for building maintenance and capital projects.

#### 2021 Highlighted Projects

- Finish Government Center East Construction
- Justice Center & Government Center West Renovations
- GCE/JC Data Room Split AC Units (part of renovations)
- MRTS Elevator Modernization
- Radio Tower HVAC Upgrade
- RTF Carpet

C/A: OPEN HOUSES/TOWN HALLS ARE OFFERED BUT RESPONDENTS NOTED THAT THEY GET VERY LITTLE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ON THESE TYPES OF PROJECTS

- e) When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before? C/A: AN EFFORT IS MADE TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC EARLY AND AT REGULAR INTERVALS THOUGH ENGAGEMENT IS USUALLY LIMITED
- f) How is the community notified and/or asked for input? C/A: Notices are placed in the "Scott Scene" newspaper delivered to all residents 4 times per year. Public input is solicited via Open Houses and a Virtual Town Hall called ["Speak Up, Scott County"](#) where residents can share their opinions and read other residents' opinions.

### III Relationships with Met Council and other levels of Government

11. How does the County engage with Met Council?

C/A: Respondents note that engagement between the County and the Met Council is limited and that much of the Met Council function is managed by staff. They don't feel there is added value or incentive to being more involved.

There is engagement during the development of the Comprehensive Plan

With TAB, however, there is a lot of involvement regarding transportation policy and the use of federal funds.

12. Does the Met Council involve the County in its initial planning? C/A: No

13. Identify policy areas where the County is subject to Metropolitan Council control or direction.

C/A: Met Council, for example, controls where federal funding is used for highway development.

Federal studies show that Scott County lacks principal highways and needs expansion. Met Council limits funds for Scott County to pursue expansion.

Met Council's plans for parks funding are different from what Scott County feels it needs. The example they used was Met Council's goals and metrics/conditions for increasing park usage by certain demographics – even though the number of people who fit those demographics in rural Scott County are quite small and very difficult for Scott County to draw in – means County effort and Met Council funds are being used in a less-than-efficient manner. They don't feel they are able to use these transportation or parks funds to the benefit the greatest number of people.

14. What kind of funding does the County get from Met Council and under what conditions? What does the County do if the funding doesn't sync with its vision? C/A: The respondents specifically called out funding for parks and transportation as being out of sync with its own vision based on the Met Council funds being distributed with conditions attached related to what Scott County must do to get them and how they can be used. They feel that there isn't much Scott County can do to obtain funds from Met Council because of these conditions. They turn to other resources for soliciting funds.

15. Are there meetings between the Board as a whole and the Met Council? C/A: No

If so and if these are not part of regular Board meetings, how is the public notified?

n/a

Are these meetings recorded and accessible to the public? n/a

16. How often do Board of Commissioners meet with the State legislative delegations from your part of the region? C/A: Respondents feel they have a closer relationship with their state legislators vs Met Council. The entire Board meets yearly with the legislative delegates who represent Scott County.

17. Does the County Board develop an annual legislative platform? W: YES

(2021 Legislative Priorities planning meeting was on the Nov 2020 meeting agenda)

[Scott County 2021 Legislative Priorities](#) Document

Side notes regarding one of Scott County's Legislative Priorities:

Scott County's 2021 legislative priority regarding reformation of the Metropolitan Council runs counter to CMAL's Metropolitan Council Position as it was updated in 2019.

C/A: Scott County advocates for local elected officials to make up at least part of the Metropolitan Council. They support Met Council as a Regional Planning authority but do not support Met Council being the providers/operators for transit, transportation, parks, etc.

18. How is the platform made available to the public?

W: Scott County website – under the COMMISSIONERS tab (See link above under #7)

19. Is the public kept informed of progress made on the legislative platform during the session? If so, how?

C/A: Respondents note that updates on the legislative platform are difficult to make during the legislative session as results can't be measured until the session is wrapped up in its final hours. After the session is concluded, progress on the County's legislative platform is done at a Board meeting that can be attended in person, viewed live on camera, or afterwards via the County's YouTube channel.

20. How does the County interact with cities and townships in the county?

C/A: County staff interacts regularly with city/township leaders and their staff. Cities and County share joint funding for certain highway projects. County Board members meet at least quarterly with the mayors in their districts and attend City Council or township meetings and Open Houses. The County Board meets monthly as part of SCALE and is a major way that the County interacts with its cities, townships, regional entities, school districts and tribal communities. This is also a primary source for creating a legislative platform and obtaining funds through alternative sources.

W: SCALE – Scott County Association for Leadership and Efficiency <https://www.scaleinfo.org/> Regarding Scott County Legislative Efforts, “In addition to shared research and cooperative legislative efforts, SCALE members also benefit from the presence of a lobbyist who represents the interests of both the SCALE organization as well as individual member entities. Indeed, it was through such coordinated efforts that SCALE has been able to secure over \$5 million for renovations, improvements, and enhancements to the Regional Training Facility as well as over \$1 million for a mental health Intensive Residential Treatment Services facility, which will be opening in Savage in the near future. Even no less important but smaller-scale efforts have helped SCALE members advance economic development, transportation, flooding mitigation, and park initiatives on a regular basis. This cooperative effort is estimated to bring over \$50,000 in value to the SCALE entities. Since 2003.” [SCALE Membership](#) County Board, Cities, Townships, school districts, tribal communities, transit, and regional entities

[The SCALE Charter](#)

## UNIFIED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LAND USE, AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN CHARTER

### What is the SCALE Unified Plan?

The project includes preparation of a vision for economic development in Scott County, a county-wide review and synthesis of the land use and transportation systems plans of all cities and unincorporated areas of the County, and integrated land use and transportation plan for all the members of SCALE. The overarching goal of the SCALE Unified Plan effort is to develop a county-wide economic development, integrated land-use, and transportation strategy to achieve a vision of employing 50 percent of the county’s labor force within the county by 2030. It also recognizes the SCALE members are part of a regional and world economy and our efforts must recognize how those forces effect and enhance our competitive position. The Unified Plan will provide valuable information to project partners including the county, its cities, the SMSC and townships as they make day to day economic development, land use, and transportation decisions to improve economic development opportunities.

### Scott County Citizen Advisory Boards, Commissions & Committees

Committee	Purpose	Meeting Schedule	Membership	Agenda/ Minutes	Comments
<a href="#">Board of Adjustment</a>	The purpose of the Board of Adjustment is to issue <a href="#">variances</a> from the terms set forth in the County Zoning Ordinance. The Board of Adjustment is responsible for holding all public hearings on variance requests as required by State Statute. The Board of Adjustment also hears and decides appeals from any	6:30 PM 2nd Monday of each month, as needed	The Board of Adjustment consists of 7 members - 1 from each Commissioner District, and 2 at-large members.  Commission members serve 1-year terms with no term limit.	Agendas are available prior to meetings. Minutes are available following approval. YouTube video available for most meetings <a href="#">Most Recent Meeting Agendas</a>	

	order, requirement, decision, or determination made by administrative officials charged with enforcing the <a href="#">Zoning Ordinance</a> .		<a href="#">online application form</a>		
<a href="#">Board of Equalization</a>	This Board provides a fair and objective forum for property owners to appeal their valuation or classification.			Appears to be inactive – last met in 2013.	Has it been incorporated into Special County Board of Appeals?
<a href="#">Community Corrections Advisory Board</a>	Did not find agendas or minutes	7:30 a.m. 4th Thursday of every other month	The Board is comprised of law enforcement, corrections staff, judges, attorneys, social services personnel, educators, and citizens. There are five citizen members, 1 from each Commissioner District. Advisory Board members are appointed to serve two-year terms and are eligible to serve three terms. (Two people's terms expired Dec 2020 – no update – one vacancy is noted elsewhere on the web site) <a href="#">application form online</a> or contact Cara: <a href="mailto:cmadsen@co.scott.mn.us">cmadsen@co.scott.mn.us</a> or at 952-496-8169. Persons of color and from various ethnic groups are encouraged to apply.	Did not find agendas or minutes	
<a href="#">Community Development Agency</a>	The mission of the Scott County Community Development Agency (CDA) is to invest in possibilities to live and work in Scott County, with a vision to pursue opportunities for economic growth, develop pathways	2nd Tuesday of each month	There are five members of the Community Development Agency: one from each Commissioner District. Board Commissioners serve five-year	Must go to a different website for board meeting agendas and minutes. The Scott County CDA website must be searched for separately.	

	for residents to have affordable homes, and co-operate with communities to design achievable goals that support all people's lives.		terms, with no term limits. <a href="#">Online Citizen Committee Application</a>	<a href="https://scottcda.org/board-information/">https://scottcda.org/board-information/</a>	
<a href="#">Community Health Board</a>	Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §145A.10, the <a href="#">County Commissioners</a> periodically meet as the Community Health Board. The Community Health Board is charged with: -Establishing local public health priorities based on an assessment of community health needs and assets; and -Determining the mechanisms by which the Board will address the local public health priorities established.			Agendas are available prior to meetings. Minutes are available following approval. <a href="#">Most Recent Agendas and Minutes</a> but need to subscribe to them	Did not find agenda or minutes: must subscribe in a different location to receive notices of these items for Community Health Board,
<a href="#">Ditch Board</a>	Makeup of the committee is not stated, nor is the purpose of the committee.	Most recent meeting in Feb 2021 – approved minutes for meeting in 2017.	Makeup of the committee is not stated, nor is the purpose of the committee.	Agendas appear to be posted but no minutes posted. Video is on the YouTube channel, but it's not obviously referenced on the Ditch Board link.	Must subscribe in a different location to receive notices of these items for Ditch Board,
<a href="#">Extension Committee</a>	In partnership with the University of Minnesota, the Extension Committee assists in formulating programs, establishing budgets, and selecting and evaluating professional staff to improve the quality of life and enhance the economy and the environment through education, applied research, and the resources of the University of Minnesota.	5:15 p.m. Wednesday evenings The Extension Committee meets five times per year.	There are seven citizen members of the Extension Committee: one from each Commissioner District, and two youth at-large positions. The members serve three-year terms and are eligible to serve three consecutive terms. One youth-at-large vacancy noted <a href="#">Online Citizen Committee Application</a>	Unable to find agendas or minutes	
Farm Advisory Board				Has archived agendas and minutes on the Agenda Center page but nothing since 2015.	This board may be defunct

<a href="#">Human Services Resource Council</a>	The Human Services Resource Council supports the County's mission to advance safe, healthy, and livable communities through citizen focused services. The Resource Council advises and makes recommendations to the County Board and to the Department relative to public health and social services needs of the community and County residents. The role of the committee is to make recommendations concerning the annual budget of the Health and Human Services Division and to advise the County on human services. The Resource Council was formed pursuant to Minnesota Statute 402.03	6 p.m. The 3rd Monday quarterly	The Resource Council has 15 members (pursuant to statute). There are 3 representatives from each Commissioner District. Members serve 2-year terms and are eligible to serve 3 terms.	Agendas are available prior to meetings. Minutes are available following approval. <a href="#">Most Recent Agendas and Minutes</a> are available to download	
<a href="#">Law Library Board</a>	<p><a href="#">Minnesota Statutes Chapter 134A</a> provides for the establishment of county law libraries. It also states that "use of the library shall be free to the judges of the state, state officials, judges of the district, municipal, county, and conciliation courts of the county, city and county officials, members of the bar, and inhabitants of the county." Governance: Chapter 134A authorizes the creation of a law library board of trustees.</p> <p>The purpose of the Scott County Law Library's Board of Trustees is to govern and maintain the operation of the Scott County Law Library and to promote the best use of the law library resources for judges, officials, members of the bar and inhabitants of the county.</p>	The meetings of the Scott County Law Library Board are determined and scheduled by the Board of Trustees Meetings are open to the public. Please call the Law Library (952-496-8713) for the next meeting date and location. Meetings appear to take place 1-2 times per year.	<p>The Scott County Law Library is administered by a three-member Board of Directors. How are the Directors chosen? Volunteers? Legal expertise?</p> <p>The Honorable Rex Stacey</p> <p>Scott County Commissioner Barbara Weckman Brekke</p> <p>Assistant Scott County Attorney Jody Kieser Kisting</p>	Minutes are available to download  <a href="https://www.scottcountymn.gov/1515/Law-Library-Board">https://www.scottcountymn.gov/1515/Law-Library-Board</a>	

<a href="#">Library Board</a>	The five member Scott County Library Board of Advisors determines the policies of the library system. The board conducts a variety of responsibilities to ensure that the library operates from a solid and trusted foundation shaped by the community it serves. As a team, the Advisory Board works together to assess customer input, encourages innovation and creativity, fosters thoughtful and strategic discussions about opportunities and challenges, and supports the library staff. As individuals, Advisory Board members use their personal and professional interests, expertise, and connections to raise the library's profile in the community and support the library's long-term vision. .	Meetings are the third Thursday of every month at 5:30 pm at various libraries (the schedule is listed on the website). All meetings are open to the public.	The Board is appointed by the Scott County Board of Commissioners	Meeting Agendas and Minutes are available on-line from 2018 to present. Except for <u>minutes</u> from the 2 meetings to date in 2021 Meetings are currently being held on ZOOM	
<a href="#">Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board</a>	The Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers provides technical reviews on land development proposals; coordinates its water management responsibilities with local units of government; and furnishes information to local units of government and the public about protecting the district's special natural resources. The Board has one citizen that represents Scott County. This representative must reside within the Watershed District, which includes portions of Shakopee, Savage, Jackson Township, and Louisville Township.	7 p.m.  3rd Wednesday of every month	Members serve 3-year terms: Current members are from Hennepin (2) – (one vacancy), Scott, Carver – (one vacancy), and Dakota Counties. How are members selected? Volunteer? Expertise?	meeting agendas/minutes on a separate webpage; found by googling separately  <a href="https://lowermnriverwd.org/">https://lowermnriverwd.org/</a>	From the Scott County Gov site: "For information about the <a href="#">Lower Minnesota River Watershed District</a> Board of Managers, please contact Linda Loomis at 763-545-4659. ^Link appears to be broken
<a href="#">Mental Health Local</a>	The Mental Health Local Advisory Council is a subcommittee of the	4 p.m.	It appears to currently have 16 members Anyone with an interest in	5 meetings in 2019. No agendas or minutes have been posted on the <a href="#">Most</a>	

<a href="#">Advisory Council</a>	<a href="#">Human Services Resource Council.</a> Are there other subcommittees?	4th Tuesday of each month	mental health services may apply. Consumers or family members of consumers of mental health services, adults who received mental health services as children or adolescents, and representatives of Scott County's minority population are encouraged to apply. <a href="#">Online Citizen Committee Application</a>	<a href="#">Recent Agendas and Minutes</a> page since 2019 and meetings did not happen monthly at that time. 5 meetings in 2019.	
<a href="#">Orderly Annexation Board</a>					Schedule of meetings and make-up of the Board are not listed. Some agendas/minutes are listed but it's difficult to follow the flow from one meeting to the next
<a href="#">Parks Advisory Commission</a>	The purpose of the Parks Advisory Commission is to provide leadership and direction to staff and elected officials in the areas of parks, trails and open space planning and implementation. Commissioners advise on program priorities and planning for parks, trails and open space, and review and recommend proposed annual work plans and budgets. The Commissioners represent the citizens of Scott County and as such, serve as community ambassadors	6:00 PM 1st Wednesday of the month  <b>Due to COVID-19, the Scott County Parks Advisory Commission will be holding online meetings unless otherwise noted.</b> Individuals who wish to provide public comments related to the	There are 7 members who are appointed by the Board of Commissioners: 1 from each Commissioner District, and 2 at-large members. The members serve 1-year terms, with no term limit. Plus, Board Liaison	Good information about how to provide public comment!!! Appear to be on the County YouTube page Agendas are available prior to meetings. Minutes are available following approval. <a href="#">Most Recent Agendas and Minutes</a> Detailed Board Packet/agenda is available for download. Appear to be posted the morning of the meeting.	

		meeting can do so by contacting Patty Freeman, Parks Program Manager <a href="mailto:pfreeman@co.scott.mn.us">pfreeman@co.scott.mn.us</a> by 4:00 PM on the day of the meeting. Comments can be read at the meeting by staff or other accommodations can be made to participate during the meeting.			
<a href="#">Personnel Board of Appeals</a>	The Personnel Board of Appeals is responsible for making findings and reporting to the County Board upon the filing of an appeal by an applicant, employee, or appointing authority under certain circumstances.	The Personnel Board of Appeals meets on an as-needed basis	There are three at-large citizen representatives on this Board. Members are appointed for three-year terms. There are no term limits <a href="#">Online Citizen Committee Application</a>	Did not find any agendas or minutes	
<a href="#">Planning Advisory Commission</a>	The <b>purpose</b> of the Planning Advisory Commission is to review all applications for conditional and interim use permits, land subdivisions, and ordinance amendments and make recommendations to the County Board. The Planning Advisory Commission is responsible for holding all public hearings on these applications as required by State Statute. The Planning Advisory Commission is also responsible for reviewing and recommending any	6:30 p.m. The 2nd Monday of each month	The Planning Advisory Commission consists of seven members – one from each Commissioner District, and two at-large members. Commission members serve one-year terms with no term limit.	Agendas are posted prior to meetings. YouTube recordings are available. Minutes are available following approval	

	comprehensive plan updates and official controls to the County Board.				
<a href="#">Prior Lake/Spring Lake Watershed District Board</a>	The Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District Board of Managers provides technical reviews of land development proposals; coordinates its water management responsibilities with local units of government; and furnishes information to local units of government and the public about protecting the district's special natural resources.	6 p.m.  2nd Tuesday of each month Prior Lake City Hall	Members must reside within the Watershed District. If you are interested in applying to be a future member of the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District Board of Managers, complete the <a href="#">online application form</a> or contact Cara at <a href="mailto:cmadsen@co.scott.mn.us">cmadsen@co.scott.mn.us</a> or at 952-496-8169.	<p>Google for a separate web page to find agendas, dates of meetings, or minutes: <a href="https://www.plslwd.org/districtoverview/meetings/archived-meeting-minutes/">https://www.plslwd.org/districtoverview/meetings/archived-meeting-minutes/</a></p> <p>Board of Managers meetings are open to the public. Please feel free to join us for future Board meetings. If you cannot attend, PLSLWD Board <b>meetings are broadcast live</b> on the PLTV local television channel (Mediacom cable system on Channel 808 or Nuvera television on Channel 15). The meetings are rebroadcast on local TV – the schedule can be found <a href="#">here</a>. You can also view past meetings on the district's <a href="#">YouTube page</a>.</p> <p><b>Board workshops</b> are held before the Board meeting and are also open to the public. Workshop start time varies but generally starts at 4:00 or 4:30, check the meeting <a href="#">agenda</a> in the Board meeting materials packet for the start time.</p> <p>The monthly Board meeting and</p>	

				occasional special meeting announcements are posted at the district office and sent to the designated mailing list. Email pdronen@plslwd.org to be added to the mailing list. Public hearings are announced in the Public Notices section of the <a href="#">Prior Lake American</a> newspaper.	
<a href="#">Regional Rail Authority</a>	The Scott County Regional Rail Authority was formed pursuant to Minnesota Statute §389A.04. The purpose of the Regional Railroad Authorities Act is to provide a means for municipalities, with state and federal aids as may be available, to allow for the preservation and improvement of local rail service for agriculture, industry, or passenger traffic. It also encourages the preservation of abandoned rail right-of-way for future transportation uses.	Meetings appear to be yearly	The Regional Rail Authority consists of the five <a href="#">County Commissioners</a> .	Agendas prior to 2021 are publicly available and appear to be posted about 5 days prior to the meeting. No separate minutes are posted	Must subscribe in a different location to receive notices of these items for the Regional Rail Authority
Regional Training Facility Board				Agendas for quarterly meetings are available through 2020. Nothing in 2021? Is this still an active Board? Not listed on the Committees page.	
<a href="#">Scott - LeSueur Joint Ditch Board</a>		Appears to meet every 4 years. Or as needed?	The members of the Board are not publicly listed.	One Agenda from 2019 is available. Three agendas from 2015. Minutes from Sept 2015 adopted the minutes from December 2011.	The Board is listed on the current, Scott County gov website.
<a href="#">Scott Watershed Planning</a>	The WPC gives oversight on policy issues; budget, plan, and program priorities; advisory support	4:00 PM The 4th Monday of the month	The Scott Watershed Management Organization	Agendas are usually posted about 5 days prior to meetings. Minutes are publicly	<b>The procedure for providing comments or questions to</b>

<a href="#">Commission (WPC)</a>	for the Scott WMO Board; utilizes and implements the Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan	County Board Room 200 4th Avenue W Shakopee, MN 55379	(WMO) Watershed Planning Commission is a 7-member Commission. District coverage includes 1 representative from the Shakopee Basin/Prior Lake Spring Lake area, 1 from Credit River, 1 from Southwest, 2 from Sand Creek (because of its large area) and 2 at-large members. Members serve 3-year terms and are eligible to serve 3 consecutive terms.  Future members: fill out and submit the <a href="#">application online</a> or contact Cara at	available through August 2020. Video recordings are available from 2018, 2019, and the 1 <sup>st</sup> part of 2020. Video from 2021 is on the YouTube page but you'd have to know to go to the YouTube page to find it. <a href="#">Most Recent Agendas and Minutes</a>	<b>the meeting are listed, as are directions on how to join the meeting by Zoom are listed.</b>
<a href="#">Solid Waste Advisory Committee</a>	This Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Scott County Board of Commissioners as it relates to solid waste management. Additionally, the Committee assists in the development, implementation, and annual update of the Solid Waste Management Plan to improve recycling efforts in Scott County	Meets twice a year, or more if necessary	The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) is a legislatively required committee consisting of two citizen representatives, eight representatives from municipalities within the County, four representatives from the solid waste industry, and the Program Manager for Environmental Services. <a href="#">application online</a>	Did not find any public agendas, meeting dates, or minutes	
Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission	The Vermillion River Watershed manages water resources in a 335-square-mile area that includes all or part of 20 cities and townships, including Elko New Market and New Market Township in Scott	The WPC typically meets on the second Wednesday of each month (except	Members must reside within the Vermillion River Watershed which, in Scott County, includes the City of Elko New Market	Agendas, and minutes are listed in a separate website at the following link: <a href="http://www.vermillionriverwatershed.org/">http://www.vermillionriverwatershed.org/</a>	Information about the Commission is listed in a separate website at the following link:

	<p>County. It is governed by a Joint Powers Board that consists of two Dakota County and one Scott County Commissioner. The Watershed Planning Commission is a formal citizen advisory group that advises the Joint Powers Board regarding its duties, which include guiding implementation of the watershed management plan, developing an annual work plan/budget, and recommending action regarding disputes that occur pursuant to the Joint Powers Agreement</p>	<p>November), at 4 p.m. in Conference Room A at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center in Farmington. During the COVID-19 pandemic, following CDC and MDH guidance, meetings are held virtually on Zoom and/or telephone. See the calendar or agenda for a link to each meeting.</p>	<p>and New Market Township.</p>	<p><a href="#">about-us/planning-commission/</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.vermillionriverwatershed.org/about-us/planning-commission/">http://www.vermillionriverwatershed.org/about-us/planning-commission/</a></p>
<p>Scott County Delivers</p>	<p>"Scott County Delivers" is the next logical step in the "Delivering What Matters" continual improvement cycle, basically looking at our data at the <b>service</b>, not the department, level. This next step allows everyone to see our services through the spectrum of programs, processes, and departments that contribute to our desired outcomes, helping to deepen the understanding of what is working well, and where we can concentrate our efforts on making improvement.</p>			<p>Agendas are on-line. Video recordings available.</p>	<p>Who coordinates these presentations? Is resident input included? Invited?</p>

# WASHINGTON COUNTY

Researcher(s): Amy Mino, Martha Micks, Heather Mockler

Respondent(s):

## I. Visibility of County Government

### A. County Board

List Board Members and their districts.

District 1	Fran Miron - fran.miron@co.washington.mn.us
District 2	Stan Karwoski - Stan.Karwoski@co.washington.mn.us
District 3	Gary Kriesel - gary.kriesel@co.washington.mn.us
District 4	Wayne A. Johnson (Vice Chair) - Wayne.A.Johnson@co.washington.mn.us
District 5	Lisa Weik (Chair) - lisa.weik@co.washington.mn.us

<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/108/County-Board>

- Are their terms staggered? **Yes.**
- What are their salaries?
- **This information does not seem to be readily available on the website. \*\$70,720**
- Are they considered part-time? **This information does not seem to be readily available on the website.**
- Do they hold town meetings, Facebook sessions or the like? **If they do, I did not find information regarding times and dates of such events.**
- How do they make themselves available? Do they make it clear how to contact them? How do they do that? **Email and phone contacts are available on each commissioner's web page.**

Website also provides a **Request Tracker** for frequently asked issues.

<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/requesttracker.aspx>

- Does the Board have a Code of Ethics? **Not exactly. They list a presiding Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values. The Values include Ethics. Listed below.**
  - **Ethical: to ensure public trust through fairness, consistency, and transparency.**
  - **Stewardship: to demonstrate tangible, cost-effective results and protect public resources.**
  - **Quality: to ensure that services delivered to the public are up to the organization's highest standards.**
  - **Responsive: to deliver services that are accessible, timely, respectful, and efficient.**
  - **Respectful: to believe in and support the dignity and value of all members of this community.**
  - **Leadership: to actively advocate for and guide the County toward a higher quality of life.**

## Washington County Board Meeting Structure

- What is the Board Meeting schedule? **Most Tuesdays at 9:00 am.**
- Are Board meetings recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public? **They are webcast live as well as recorded and made available on the website. The public is invited to attend and participate in the meetings. There is a "Comments from the Public" section of the meeting agenda when residents in the audience can share their concerns about subjects not on the meeting agenda.**
- Is there a time slot at Board meetings for public comment? **Yes.**
- What is the Board work or study session schedule? **Board workshop meetings are listed on the calendar. A workshop meeting might be scheduled at the point of adjournment of a regular Board meeting, which, according to the calendar, seems to be held on the third Tuesday of the month.**

- Are these sessions recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public? The sessions are broadcast and recorded for future viewing. The archive went back to 2021, but web streams weren't available that far back. Web streams did go back several years, though, and were accessible for viewing. <https://www.co.washington.mn.us/1777/County-Board-Meeting-Webstream>  
A-Workshops are open to the public and are informal. Meetings are not recorded, as no votes or action is taken. It is for commissioners to ask questions and the public may give input. Decisions are made at the Board meeting.
- Is there a time slot at work or study sessions for public comment? No.
- Do Commissioners also have other briefings, workshops, or the like? Yes, but these do not seem to be a regularly scheduled meeting.
- Are these recorded by audio or video? How may the public access them? Yes, available on the website: <https://www.co.washington.mn.us/1777/County-Board-Meeting-Webstream>
- List Board Committees, which Commissioner chairs, and which Commissioners serve on each. Attached list at the end of study.
- Is there a time slot at committee meetings for public comment? Yes.
- Are these recorded by audio or video? How may they be accessed by the public? They are recorded and can be streamed from the website.
- When are public hearings typically scheduled that are separate from regular meetings and what circumstances call for them? Public Hearings are held but what particular circumstances call for a Public Hearing is unclear.
- Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent? Changes made to the meeting and agenda procedure during COVID are not specified on the websites. County government meetings are taped and archived online, so available regardless of the COVID pandemic.
- C. Public Notification
  - How is the public notified about County Board meetings, committee meetings, work sessions or any briefings or workshops? All meetings date and times are listed on the website for the county through the County Calendar as well as on the web stream archival page.

<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/1777/County-Board-Meeting-Webstream>

The public can also sign up for emails or text messages notification for individual government business. Public Hearings notices are published ten days prior to the hearing in the official county newspaper, Oakdale – Lake Elmo Review.

<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/calendar.aspx?CID=14>

- How is the public notified when a meeting time or location is changed after notice is published? A-It's very rare when a meeting is changed or cancelled. County follows all requirements for notice of meetings. Would post notices on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Next Door, and the County website if there was a change. The County Sheriff may also post it on their own page.
- How may the public obtain agendas and minutes? On the website.

<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/283/Agendas-and-Minutes>

- D. Appointed Commissions and Advisory Committees
  - List the Commissions and Advisory Committees to which the Board makes appointments, their purpose, how many serve on each and their terms? All information in the table should be considered a direct quote of the Washington County website.

What is their meeting schedule? Listed in table.

- Are they subject to the Open Meeting Law? **Not specified.**
- Is the public notified about their meetings and hearings and if so, how? **Normally scheduled meetings are listed on the website with the committee information. "For more information, contact Alyssa Soderlund in the Office of Administration at 651-430-6015."**
- How are minutes and agendas accessed? **Unclear**
- Which advisory committees and boards meetings are videotaped or audio-recorded? How can residents access these recordings? **Do not seem to be available from the website.**
- Describe the process the County board uses for recruiting and appointing members. **"The board recruits members through the open appointment process and makes appointments to represent each commissioner district when possible." Vacancies are listed on the website until filled.**
- Are there any Covid related changes that may be made permanent? **Not specified. A-Some changes in office space may be made as some can work remotely.**

## II. Accountability of County Government

1. Describe how the County engages with the public in setting budget priorities and tax levies.  
[co.washington.mn.us](http://co.washington.mn.us) → Property and Taxation (located in a list on the left hand side) → Property Tax (located in a colored box on the right of front page) → Proposed Property Tax Notices (drop down menu)

According to the Washington County website, residents receive a proposed tax assessment mid-November. Meetings for each city are held throughout December for residents to address any questions or concerns. A calendar of the dates and times is provided. In addition, a spreadsheet listing each city and tax obligations for the last five years is also provided. The tax evaluation process is described but is confusing if this is the first time a person is visiting the site. Not all the terms are defined. Several charts are provided breaking down the accounting numbers for the different cities for tax burden, but again terms and groupings are not defined nor explained.

2. Describe how the County engages with the public in connection with Policy initiatives.  
Residents have the option to sign up with an email address or a phone number to receive updates related to particular departments, Board of Commissioners, Parks, MOVE, etc. Afterwards, it seems to be up to the resident to attend the meetings to hear about the plans for the cities or address concerns. Occasionally, the county sends out surveys to seek community input, but this is done after the plans have been narrowed to a few choices vs a dialogue about all possibilities.
3. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the policy?  
**A-No longer having newspaper reporters at the meetings has been detrimental to the public. It is more difficult to engage the public to volunteer to serve on advisory boards. When there is a hot topic, the public gets energized and knows how to get the word out to have input into the policy. But annual budget meetings rarely have people show up.**

When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the county has one or two options or before?

**A-It varies.**

- E. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?  
**The County has a quarterly newsletter that is sent to residents.**
- F. Are there procedures in place for communicating with the public on policy implementation and outcomes?  
**A. It varies**
- G. Describe how the county generally engages with the public for input on a project?  
Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?  
**The Board will hold evening meetings when there is a meeting of public interest.**

- H. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?  
Depends on the project.
- I. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?  
Newsletter, social media Facebook, Twitter, and Next Door
- J. Describe specifically how the County engages with the public in connection with each of these types of projects:  
Parks:  
There is a separate Parks and Open Space Commission that provides an opportunity for citizens to get involved.
- K. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?  
How is the community notified and/or asked for input?  
County Roadways:  
listed under Public Works; includes list of future projects. Public engagement not clear.
- L. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?
- M. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?  
Transit
- N. Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project?  
The County reached out early to determine the feasibility for Highway 36 transit.
- O. When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?  
They were engaged at the beginning of the feasibility study and throughout the process.
- P. How is the community notified and/or asked for input?  
Newsletter, social media. Public engagement increased when the public meeting was recorded, so the public could view when able and then submit their comments.
- Q. County Buildings (libraries, office buildings, jails, maintenance facilities)  
Does the County reach out to the public early enough for it to have input on the project? When in the planning process is the community engaged? Is it when the project is two-third completed or before?  
How is the community notified and/or asked for input?

### III. Relationships with Met Council and other levels of Government

1. How does the County engage with the Met Council?  
A: The County works closely with the Met Council in two primary areas: transportation and regional parks. The Comprehensive Plan for the county has to be submitted every 10 years.
2. Does the Met Council involve the County in its initial planning?  
A: Met Council has involved the County in the planning for Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (opening in 2025).  
Met Council reached out to the residents with a 15%-30% design engagement to determine routes and stations and then with 60% design. Outdoor events held along the corridor to get public engagement.

3. Identify policy areas where the County is subject to Metropolitan Council control or direction.  
 Transportation and regional parks. A county commissioner serves on the Met Council Transportation Advisory Board (TAB).  
 The Comprehensive Plan for Washington County has to be approved by the Met Council.  
 Met Council and County were unable to agree on development of a service center at the end of the Gold Line which the County wanted, but it didn't happen
4. What kind of funding does the County get from the Met Council and under what conditions? What does the County do if the funding doesn't sync with its vision?  
 A: The parks funding is formulaic. County acquires park land and Met Council reimburses 75% of the cost for the land.
5. Are there meetings between the Board as a whole and the Met Council? If so and if these are not part of regular Board meetings, how is the public notified? Are these meetings recorded and accessible to the public?
6. A: No. One Met Council member Sue Vento reaches out to the county: to both its administration and county commissioners.
7. How often do Board of Commissioners meet with the State legislative delegations from your part of the region?  
 A: They meet annually and sometimes more often. Relationships are improving.
8. Does the County Board develop an annual legislative platform?
9. How is the platform made available to the public?  
 A: It's on the County's website and copies of the platform are provided to the libraries.
10. Is the public kept informed of progress made on the legislative platform during the session? If so, how?  
 Quarterly newsletter??
11. How does the County interact with cities and townships in the county?  
 A: County commissioners do a lot of visits with the towns. They meet on a quarterly basis with the townships. City administrators, Economic Development Directors are sent by the cities and townships send their city clerk or treasurer.

#### List of County Committees:

##### Washington County

- [Audit Advisory Committee](#)
- [Community Corrections Advisory Board](#)
- [Community Development Agency](#)
- [Groundwater Advisory Committee](#)
- [Historic Courthouse Advisory Committee](#)
- [Finance Committee \(Chair Weik\)](#)
- [Law Library Board](#)
- [Library Board](#)
- [Library Park Association \(Chair Weik\)](#)
- [Parks and Open Space Commission](#)
- [Planning Advisory Commission](#)
- [Personnel Committee](#)
- [Plat Commission](#)
- [Regional Railroad Authority](#) (Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Karwoski)
- [University of Minnesota Extension Advisory Committee](#)
- [Workforce Development Board](#)

## Washington County Advisory Committees

Audit Committee	Oversees the county's internal audit function (Internal Controls, Legal Compliance, and Financial Reporting)	1 County Board chairperson or commissioner designee, 1 county administrator, and 2 citizens; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Quarterly or as needed
Board of Adjustment & Appeals	Administrative Appeals by the Zoning Administrator with respect to the that Washington County Development Code, Issuances of Variances, and Official Map	5 members who are not elected officials or County employees; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meetings are normally held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 5 pm or as needed
CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Citizen Advisory Committee	"To develop strong urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons."	11 voting members and 2 ex-officio members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meetings are held at least four times annually or as needed
Child Protection Citizen Review Panel (CRP)	"To facilitate citizen participation and provide opportunities to play an integral role in ensuring that federal, state, and county child protection systems protect children from abuse and neglect and meet the permanency needs of children."	7 members, term length: 2 years; term limit: 3	Meets at least once every three months. Written notice of the place, date, and time of the regularly scheduled meetings is sent or emailed to the panel members, one week prior to the meeting. Meeting agendas are sent with the meeting notice.
Community Corrections Advisory Board (CCAB)	"Actively participates in the formulation of the comprehensive plan for the development, implementation, and operation of community-based correctional programs including, but not limited to, preventive or diversionary correctional programs; probation;	18 members; Term length: 2 years; term limit: 3	Meets six times a year in the months of January, March, May, August, October, and December

	and community corrections centers and facilities for the detention or confinement, care, and treatment of persons convicted of crimes or adjudicated delinquent."		
Community Development Agency (CDA)	"To undertake certain types of housing and redevelopment activities in Washington County."	7 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 2	Meets on the third Tuesday of each month
Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program Committee (FHPAP)	"Washington County is a place where homelessness is prevented, days of homelessness are minimized, and repeat homelessness is eliminated through the innovative efforts of our local governments, nonprofits, faith-based organizations and citizens."	9 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meetings are held at least monthly at times and places designated by the Department of Community Services
Groundwater Advisory Committee (GWAC)	<p>"1. To advise the county on the development, content, implementation, and periodic review and revision of the county's groundwater management and protection plan</p> <p>2. To consider the relationship of the Groundwater Plan with watershed plans and any other local plans upon which the Groundwater Plan may have an impact</p> <p>3. To assist the Department of Public Health and Environment in the development of an annual groundwater work plan."</p>	15 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meets quarterly or at the call of the chair
Historic Courthouse Committee (HCH)	"To review current operation and long-range plans of the Historic Courthouse building use and restoration within the context of the mission statement adopted by the Washington County Board of	14 members; term length: 2 years; term limit: 3	Meets at least quarterly and more frequently if deemed necessary by the council.

	Commissioners for the Historic Courthouse.”		
Law Library Board	Not specified	Size: Not specified; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Not specified.
Library Board	“To provide public library services to Washington County residents who live outside of Stillwater and Bayport, which operate city libraries.”	Size: 8 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meets on the fourth Monday of January, March, May, July, September, and November at 6:30pm.
Mental Health Advisory Committee ((Local Advisory Committee) LAC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To review, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding the local mental health system</li> <li>2. Annually arrange for input from the regional treatment center review board regarding coordination of care between the regional treatment center and community-based services</li> <li>3. Annually arrange for input from local system of care providers regarding coordination of care between services</li> <li>4. Identify for the County Board the individuals, providers, agencies, and associations to receive information on predictors and symptoms of emotional disturbances, where mental health services are available in the county, and how to access the services</li> </ol>	Size: 25 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 2	Meets every two months or at such times and places as designated by the department. Normally meets the second Tuesday of the month.
Parks and Open Space Commission (POSC)	To bring citizen perspective to the operation of the Washington County Parks.	Size: 14 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meets on the third Thursday of each month. However, this schedule may be amended to suit the convenience of the members.

Personnel Board of Appeals (PBA)	The Personnel Board of Appeals makes findings and reports to the County Board within 30 days of the filing of an appeal by an applicant, employee, or department head within certain circumstances.	Size: 3 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meets upon the call of its chair of the Human Resources director.
Planning Advisory Committee (PAC)	To promote the proper planning and development of Washington County.	Size: 10 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meets once each month on the fourth Tuesday of the month. However, this schedule may be modified as commission business dictates.
University of Minnesota Extension Committee (MNEXT)	To discern the particular needs of the county and to implement a program fulfilling the goals of the people of the county and of the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service. County Extension work includes educational programs and services provided by Extension agents in the areas of agriculture, economic and human development, community leadership, and environment and natural resources.	Size: 9 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meets four to six times annually at the call of the chair. Normal meeting dates are the third Thursday in the month from 5 to 7 pm.
Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake	<p>To administer and furnish relief and welfare services as well as to provide certain recreational facilities to people who have served or are presently serving in the Armed Forces of the United States and to their immediate families as defined under current Veterans Administration guidelines.</p> <p>This board also maintains, manages, operates, and administers any and all property now owned or hereafter acquired for the use, benefit, and best interest of all veterans. It also receives, acquires, holds, owns,</p>	Size: 2 members; term length: 2 years; term limit: 3	The annual meeting is held in January at the Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake, 11300 180th Street North, Marine on St. Croix, Minnesota, 55047, or a meeting place directed by the board. The officers of this corporation are elected at the annual meeting. During May 1 to September 30, this board meets the first and third Thursday of each month at the Veterans Rest Camp. During October 1 to April 30, meetings are held once a month at various legion posts.

	leases, manages, sells, and disposes of property of every kind, granted by the laws under which it is incorporated.		
Watershed Districts	To carry out conservation of the natural resources of the state through land utilization, flood control and other needs based upon sound scientific principles for the protection of the public health and welfare and provident use of natural resources.	Size: n/a; term length: 2 years; term limit: n/a	Not specified.
Workforce Development Board	To determine the most effective designation of administrative entities, grant recipients, and program operators for the Workforce Service Area, with the exception of Job Service as the administrative entity and grant recipient for Wagner-Peyser, Veterans' Title 38 Programs, and Unemployment Insurance funds.	Size: 19 members; term length: 3 years; term limit: 3	Meets 10 times per year. Additional meetings may be called upon the determination of the WDB.

#### Association of Minnesota Counties

- Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee
- Local Government Water Roundtable Advisory Committee
- Agricultural & Rural Development Advisory Committee
- Extension Committee
- Transportation Policy Committee
- Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing Policy Subcommittee

<a href="#">East Central Regional Juvenile Center</a> (Alternate) <a href="#">East Metro Strong Board</a> , Co-Chair Karwoski <a href="#">Gold Line Management Committee</a> Gold Line Executive Change Control Board Gold Line Joint Powers Board <a href="#">Greater MSP</a> <a href="#">Great River Rail Commission</a> <a href="#">Lake Elmo Airport Advisory Commission</a> <a href="#">Lower St. Croix Watershed Policy Committee</a> , Chair Miron <a href="#">Mental Health Advisory Council</a>	<a href="#">Metropolitan Emergency Services Board</a> , Chair <a href="#">Metropolitan Mosquito Control District</a> (Alternate) <a href="#">Minnesota Inter-County Association</a> <a href="#">Metropolitan Emergency Services Board</a> <a href="#">Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)</a> <a href="#">Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board</a> <a href="#">Minnesota Inter-County Association</a> <a href="#">National Association of Counties</a> <a href="#">Environment, Energy &amp; Land Use Steering Committee</a> <a href="#">Ramsey / Washington Recycling &amp; Energy Board</a> , Vice Chair Miron <a href="#">Rush Line Corridor Task Force</a>
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