

Chatham County Board of Commissioners Roles and Expectations

COMMISSIONERS' EXPECTATIONS OF EACH OTHER
Support one another as public servants
Respond to constituents (and share communications and response amongst board/chair)
Work a problem to find solution
Conduct office in accordance with the School of Government policies and training provided to commissioners and in accordance with the oath of office
Do not dump on staff; be mindful of their workloads
Allow one another sufficient time to express an opinion
Show respect for one another, especially in public settings.
Keep each other informed on issues as it pertains to the full board
Reach out to constituents of all demographics
Listen, not to respond, but to hear
Show up to meetings prepared
Keep discussions on topic
Respect inherent value of all opinions Refrain from side comments and do not belittle others' opinions.
Refrain from making assumptions
Discuss rationale for decisions on votes
Actively work to build consensus
Be mindful of commitment to represent the WHOLE county, not just district, income bracket, one organization, race; get broad input.

Procedural
Communicate clearly; speak into the microphone
After the agenda is published, notify the county manager and clerk of any emergency voting items as soon as possible.
Use County email for communication
Conduct Annual Review of the County Manager

EXPECTATIONS OF CHAIRPERSON

Anything that commits the Board is subject to full Board review

Encourage all board members to recognize and follow expectations for board members

Keep meetings on track and moving

Help facilitate conversations among board members

Liaise with the County Manager

Transcend commissioner role to provide leadership and work through conflicts

Maintain control of meetings and use the gavel when appropriate

Assure public input

Manage commissioners' meetings in a way that allows for everyone to be heard and not monopolize

Participate in the discussion after everyone else has had their say, but do participate

Communicate with individual board members to share info and facilitate work of the board

Set the agenda and bring up issues and concerns

Speak for the board/county for formal events and emergencies

Ask speakers to speak into the microphone

EXPECTATIONS OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Have close communication with the chair on board matters

Have input on the agenda and bring up issues and concerns

Be as familiar with the agenda as the chair

Be prepared to conduct the meeting and know the agenda items

EXPECTATIONS OF COMMITTEE LIAISONS
Be the liaison, not an advisor; be there to listen and communicate back to the full board
Bring reports back to full board for all committees they sit on
Provide or recommend issues that might be relevant for committee consideration
Provide assistance when requested by the committee
Do not run the meetings, but act as the conduit to get info between the board and committee
Request for more direction to go to full board if policy issue
Direction comes from the full board, not just liaison
Be a conduit to and from committee to Board and share appropriate information. Any request to have the committee do work should come from the full board, not from member/liasion. Any request by the advisory committee to pursue a policy should be brought back to the full board.
For boards where you serve as a voting member representing the county (OPC, BOH, etc.), commissioner should reflect the views of the full Board of Commissioners.
Liaisons will report back on policy making boards and provide updates from advisory boards.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

Communicate to all board members when one board member has asked a question

Questions without policy implications do not have to be sent to all

Be diligent and prompt

Motivate and direct staff

Keep the BOC apprised of county developments (emergent issues)

Coordinate the budgeting process

Carry out full board directives; do not act on directives from one commissioner if there are significant policy implications

Communicate often on emergencies and important issues

Provide suggestions and guidance when appropriate

Provide the same information to all BOC members

Minimize surprises to the board

Work to implement BOC goals; helpful if goals are discussed formally

Provide insight and direction on issues as experience and knowledge allow

Supervise county staff

Communicate frequently and effectively with members of the BOC, town managers, and superintendent of schools

Facilitate Annual Review of the County Manager

COUNTY MANAGER EXPECTATIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The board should consult with the manager before major policy decisions, not at the meetings without a heads up (no surprises!)

Unexpected Requests at BOC meetings should be referred to staff for review

The manager reports to the full board, not one member

Request agenda items through the clerk with lead time for staff review and analysis

Request staff work through the manager and the manager will request through department heads

It is ok to ask department heads for information directly, please copy the County Manager

Ask when you get or have questions about how departments operate or projects they're involved in

EXPECTATIONS OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY
Seek out implications of ordinance changes
Be diligent on details of law
Provide unbiased legal advice
Provide timely follow-up and progress reports on legal matters
Provide support for the board chair to manage BOC meetings, i.e. procedure
Advise on legal issues, even if we do not ask
Help members ascertain legal grounds on issues that might arise or are being considered

COUNTY ATTORNEY EXPECTATIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Please provide full information when asking for legal advice/questions
Do not share confidential information outside of closed sessions
The BOC has agreed that if one commissioner goes to the attorney, the attorney will respond to all if the commissioner asks or agrees, unless the attorney has an ethical obligation to do so.
Do your best not to surprise the attorney in public.
Identify and discuss possible conflicts or ethical issues in advance.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE CLERK TO THE BOARD
Conduct the public input roster at the regular meetings
Take accurate minutes
Be responsive to informational questions
Communicate to all board members when one member asks a question
Provide timely reports and distribution of information
Find details as requested or point to appropriate records; research if needed
Send out Weekly Update
Track committee updates for BOC reports

CLERK TO THE BOARD EXPECTATIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Clerk is in service to the full board, not individual elected officials
Clerk is also in service to the entire organization and residents
Check email in a timely manner (every couple of days at a minimum)
Include chair, vice-chair and county manager on requests (ex. agenda items)
Use county email for all county business