



Duties and Responsibilities of Elected County Officials

Notie H. Lansford, Jr.
Extension Economist

Elected County Officials

By Oklahoma law, there are nine county offices where the officials responsible for the offices are elected by the eligible voters within the county. The elected officials are three county commissioners, a county clerk, a county assessor, a county treasurer, a county sheriff, a court clerk, and a district attorney. The district attorney is elected by the voters from one or more counties within a district. Statutory law establishes the county or counties comprising a district.

Each elected officer serves a four year term in office. The terms stagger where every two years at the November general election there are ballots for several county offices. The schedule of election years is outlined in Table 1.

Except for the county treasurer, all elected officials are sworn into office the first Monday of January following the general election held in November of the previous year. County treasurers are sworn into office the first Monday of July following the general election held in November of the previous year.

Board of County Commissioners

There are three county commissioners' districts in every county in Oklahoma. The districts are approximately equal in population and numbered as district one, two and three. A county commissioner is elected by the electors within a district to serve on the board of county commissioners. The board of county commissioners is the chief administrative body for the county. Many citizens perceive a county commissioner as mainly being responsible for maintaining and constructing the county roads and bridges. While these are important duties required by the office, a county commissioner, as a member of the board, is also responsible for setting and administering policies for the county.

The board of county commissioners is required by law to hold, at the county seat, a regular meeting on the first Monday of each month to transact county business. The agenda might include

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legal, personnel and fiscal matters. In practice, more frequent meetings are held and an agenda is posted in advance within the courthouse. The board of county commissioners' business meetings are open to the public.

By law, the commissioners must act as a board when entering into contracts or other agreements affecting the county's welfare. Thus, actions taken by the board are voted on and approved by a majority of the commissioners.

The board of county commissioners has legal powers when acting in the county's welfare. Among the powers granted by law are the authority to:

- Sell or purchase public land or buildings for the county.
- Call a county bond election for approving a public project or creating a special district.
- Incur public indebtedness in the county's name.
- Implement an economic development program for the county.
- Purchase security contracts known as a blanket bond to insure all county officers and employees for any loss to the county when carrying out their duties.
- Approve the warrants for payments of claims for equipment or supplies purchased or leased by the county, and the warrants for the county payroll.
- Receive and approve all bids on major purchases or construction projects.
- Authorize and maintain an inventory of all the property owned or leased by the county which exceeds \$500 in value.
- Audit the accounts of the county officers.
- Develop minimum personnel policies for the county employees with the approval of a majority of all the elected county officers.
- Designate and publish each year (in conjunction with the county excise board) the holidays on which the county offices may close.

Table 1. Schedule of Election Years.

Office	Election Years		
County Commissioner, District 1	2010	2014	2018
County Commissioner, District 2	2008	2012	2016
County Commissioner, District 3	2010	2014	2018
County Assessor	2010	2014	2018
County Treasurer	2010	2014	2018
County Clerk	2008	2012	2016
County Sheriff	2008	2012	2016
Court Clerk	2008	2012	2016
District Attorney	2010	2014	2018

* Beginning in the election year 1990, the term of office for the three county commissioners was staggered. Following the 1990 election, the District Two County Commissioner served six years in office for only one term, then resumed a four-year term after the 1996 general election.

THE GENERAL ELECTION FOR COUNTY OFFICERS IS HELD IN NOVEMBER OF THE SCHEDULED ELECTION YEAR.