



# OCEANA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## *"County Government Works"*



A guide to Elected and Appointed Offices and Boards and Commissions

### **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Denny Powers, Chairperson  
Robert Walker, Vice-Chairperson

James Brown  
Larry Byl  
Dean Gustafson  
Andrew Sebolt  
Martha Meyette

*Produced by the Oceana County Administrator/Fiscal Officer  
May 2011, Revised March 2017*

OCEANA COUNTY GOVERNMENT OFFICES	Elected or Appointed	If Appointed, Board or Person that Provides Oversight	Description of Services/Duties
Administrator/Fiscal Officer	Appointed	Board of Commissioners	Direct budget development and monitoring; purchasing, building operation and maintenance; personnel, and collective bargaining. Assist the Board in defining administrative and policy alternatives. Effective administration relies on building and maintaining cooperative relationships with the various department heads (elected and appointed) under the scope of resources available.
Airport	Appointed	County Administrator	The pattern for establishing and operating airports in Michigan is varied. Counties own and operate some of them. In other places cities operate the local airport. And in a few instances, combinations of local government operate airports through airport authorities. Counties that own and operate their own airports must establish a three-person committee to constitute the "county airport committee." But the County Board has two basic approaches for selecting the members-- the board may appoint three county commissioners to serve as the airport committee or it may designate the county road commissioners to be the policy and administrative oversight body for the airport operations.
Animal Control	Appointed	County Administrator	Prior to 1972, animal control was primarily a township or city program. In 1972, the legislature allowed Boards of Commissioners to adopt ordinances to establish an animal control agency. The County Board may assign the animal control agency to any of the county departments or make it a separate department. Animal Control Officers must have not less than 100 hours of instruction as prescribed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture.
Board of Commissioners	Elected		The governing body and major policy approval center for County government. However, its responsibilities are not all encompassing. Power of the County Board is limited as there are other county agencies and boards that, while part of the county, are rather independent. You can think of County government not as a government but as a "collection of governments". We have a 7 member Board.
Building Department	Appointed	County Administrator	The purpose of this office is to administer the state construction code. The county is required to provide building code enforcement in those parts of the county where townships and cities do not provide their own enforcement.

Circuit Court	Elected	Chief Judge	Circuit Courts are Michigan's major trial courts -- courts of general jurisdiction. Oceana and Newaygo Counties make up 27th Judicial Circuit Court. Operating costs are shared with the state. A number of County personnel are required to assist the courts. The County Clerk, for example, is the clerk of the court. The Court Clerk duties involve maintaining case files, bonds and other documents. Clerking the court also involves accounting for the revenues and fees. The Sheriff and his deputies are another group of county employees who serve the court as they must attend sessions of the court when requested to do so by the Judge. Deputies also are process servers.
Circuit Court Probation/Parole	Appointed	State	This is a State office that provides probation/parole services in Oceana County with administrative support provided by the County.
County Clerk	Elected		Files and maintains all vital records including birth, death, and marriage certificates. Also, maintains the County's General Ledger. The County Clerk serves as the chief election officer and clerk of the Jury Board.
County Road Commission	Elected	Board of Road Commissioners	County Road Commissions are administrative agencies that manage a large proportion of roadways in Michigan. They are important policy making bodies that control large sums of money, most of which come from the State
County Treasurer	Elected		Receives all moneys from whatever source they may be derived. Treasurers may not make payments except upon an order of the Board of Commissioners signed by the Clerk and chair of the Board. Accountability is emphasized. Treasurers may only deposit funds in banks designated by the County Board. Other duties include property tax administration, distributing and reconciling taxes collected; handling delinquent tax accounts; operating a delinquent tax revolving fund; sale of dog licenses; serving on the apportionment commission.

District Court	Elected	District Judge and Magistrate	Michigan's District Court system was established in 1968 & is a court of limited jurisdiction and is the first level of court for both civil and criminal actions. The entire justice of the peace system was abolished in 1968. District Court has jurisdiction when the amount in controversy is not greater than \$25,000. Many municipal ordinances and even state laws now classify violations as civil rather than criminal infractions and district courts have jurisdiction over such civil infractions. District Court jurisdiction also extends to garnishment of wages; abatement of nuisances, housing disputes; and other disputes involving property such as foreclosure on mortgages and land contracts. The general rule regarding venue is that the cases will be processed in the district court covering the geographical area in which the event occurred. District Courts handle misdemeanors that are punishable by fines and/or imprisonment of up to one year. District Court serves as the traffic bureau and small claims court.
Drain Commission	Elected		Drain Commissioners are responsible for planning, developing and maintaining surface water drainage systems. They must administer the state drain code. The Oceana County Drain Commissioner is also charged with soil erosion and sedimentation control
Economic Development	Appointed	EDC Board	The EDC is an agency that initiates economic development projects. Its central purpose is to encourage business activity, industrial development, job formation and a growing taxbase
Emergency Management	Appointed	County Administrator	The Emergency Management Department is responsible for developing, implementing, and maintaining emergency management programs, plans, policies, and procedures with the goal of reducing injury and loss of life, property, or environment in Oceana County as a result of an emergency or disaster. The department works in all aspects of emergency management programs including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. In addition, this office provides a coordination role in Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activations.
Emergency Medical Services	Appointed	County Administrator	Oceana County went from a "paid" volunteer service in the 1970's and 1980's to a full-time advanced life support service in 2001. The most common source of financing is voter-approved special millage

Equalization Department	Appointed	County Administrator	The duty of the equalization department is ensure that all assessors within the County are properly reflecting the taxable properties and values in the respective assessing units. In addition, the department may be charged by the board to assist local assessing officers in developing and maintaining accurate property descriptions, to identify, list and evaluate properties for tax purposes, and to develop and use uniform valuation standards and assessing techniques.
Friend of the Court	Appointed	Circuit Judge	The FOC is a major administrative arm of the Circuit Court Family Division. FOCs enforce court orders, collect child support payments, disburse those funds to recipients. Other responsibilities relate to visitation orders investigating the well-being of the children involved and other matters.
Juvenile Court	Elected	Probate Judge	Juvenile Justice services of the family division of circuit court varies considerably from county to county. In Oceana County, juvenile court employees deal with the following individuals: any child under 17 years of age who have violated a law or who is uncontrollable; any child under 17 years of age who has come to the attention of the court because of an inappropriate home environment; and, any child less than 18 years of age whose parents neglect or refuse to provide proper or necessary support.
MSU Extension	Appointed	District Coordinator	MSU Extension extends the resources of Michigan State University to the people of Michigan through educational programs in the broad areas of agriculture and natural resources, children, youth and families and community and economic development. MSU Extension serves both a rural and an urban clientele with programs that tap the resources of five MSU colleges and 19 academic departments.
Probate Court	Elected	Probate Judge	Probate Judges have non-juridical duties such as appointment of county members to the State boundary commission that deals with issues of annexation and incorporation. The Probate Judge appoints the citizen member to the county allocation board. Probate Courts have always been courts of limited jurisdiction and become even more so with the court reforms. The Probate Judge oversees the execution of wills and administration of estates; has jurisdiction over the administration of trust proceedings; appoints guardians and conservators and resolve contested matters regarding estates or wards; make judgments on petitions seeking the commitment of persons having mental illness.

Prosecuting Attorney	Elected		<p>The County Prosecuting Attorney's Office represents the People of the State of Michigan in all proceedings in the courts of Oceana County. The Prosecutor will review the investigations of all local and state police and decide if enough evidence exists to pursue criminal actions in a court of law. The Office also represents the Department of Human Services in proceedings to protect the welfare of children. In matters relating to the establishment of paternity, the Office represents the state to identify paternity and establish an order for support of children. The Office also represents the County in legal matters.</p>
Register of Deeds	Elected		<p>This office is the repository for the official records of real property in the county. The title of the office suggests that it registers or records property deeds. That much is true. What the title leaves out is that registers record, in addition, everything that affects the quality of the deed. A lender records the mortgage with the register of deeds as a formal notice to anyone that the mortgage is an obligation or lien against the property.</p>
Sheriff	Elected		<p>The office of Sheriff is an elected office, constitutionally mandated in the State of Michigan. The Sheriff serves a 4-year term of office with the duties and powers of the Office provided by law. The Sheriff is first and foremost a peace officer charged with enforcing the laws of the State of Michigan and for the preservation of public peace within the County. Included in this list are: Establishment, maintenance and operation of the County Jail; Execution of orders, judgments and civil process of the Courts as well as Court Security; Patrol and traffic services on the county roads; Executive duties on the County Concealed Weapons Board; Enforcement of local marine safety; Recovery of the drowned bodies; Enforcement of county and local ordinances; Maintaining local criminal records.</p>
Technology Coordinator	Appointed	County Administrator	<p>This is a salary-exempt position of the supervision of the County Administrator. Coordinates local computer network activities, evaluates and recommends PC applications programs and operating systems and maintains programs for PCs and PC/mainframe cooperative applications, installs and monitors software programs and updates, maintains servers within the County and troubleshoot any problems that other county employees are unable to resolve.</p>

Transfer Station/Recycling Center	Appointed	County Administrator	The transfer station is used for the County's recycling needs. They are open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9am - 3pm. You can take items from small household goods to tires, television, and refrigerators.
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COMMISSIONS/BOARDS appointed by Board of Commissioners or Board Chair	# OF MEMBERS	Terms of Office	DESCRIPTION
Board of Canvassers	5	3 years	The role of the Board of Canvassers is to certify the counting of ballots and the tallying of votes
Board of Public Works	5	3 years	Generally public water and sewer systems are the domain of cities and villages. However, Oceana County partnered with the City of Hart in order to allow them to issue bonds for its sewer expansion project
Building Authority Board	5	3 years	The County Building Authority Board's primary responsibility is to oversee and direct financial investments and bonds of building projects
Construction Board of Appeals	9	5 years	This Board hears appeals made with respect to building, electrical, plumbing and mechanical code enforcement
Department of Human Services Board	3	3 years	The Oceana County DHS Board is established in accordance with Public Act 280 of 1939, commonly referred to as the Public Welfare Act. One member is appointed by the State DHS Director and 2 members are appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The DHS Board has complete control of the County funds appropriated to it. Funds are primarily used for emergency services not covered by other funding sources. The DHS Board is also responsible for the enactment of policies affecting the operations of the County Medical Care Facility.
District #10 Board of Health	Chair appointment of 2 Commissioners plus 1 alternate	1 year	The District #10 Health Department is a joint venture between 10 counties and was established to provide public health services to the 10 county region. Oceana County appoints 2 of 20 members.
District Extension Council	2	3 years	The Council's purpose is to identify the needs and wishes of its citizens on which to base educational programs
Economic Development Corporation	13	6 years	The Oceana County EDC was organized and incorporated pursuant to Act 338, Public Acts of 1974, as amended, to alleviate and prevent conditions of unemployment; assist and retain local industries and commercial enterprises; to strengthen and revitalize the economy of the County and State
Housing Commission	5	5 years	Created by Ordinance to address unsanitary and unsafe inhabited dwelling accommodations in Oceana County. Develop safe, affordable housing where needed.



Jury Board	3	6 years	Appointed by Board of Commissioners, upon the recommendation of the Circuit Court Judges for six year terms. The Jury Board is composed of three members, no more than two of whom can be members of the same political party. The Jury Board is required in counties having a population of less than 2,000,000. The Jury Board shall select from the current voter registration list, or books, the names of persons to serve as jurors and to perform such other duties and functions as mandated by statute to select jurors. Receives per diems.
Land Bank Authority	7	1, 2 or 3 years	Fosters the public purpose of returning property which is in a non-revenue generating, non-tax producing status to effective utilization status in order to provide housing, new industry and jobs for citizens. The authority shall meet from time to time, at least annually, and the presence of three members shall constitute a quorum.
Lakeshore Regional Entity	1	Annual Chair Appointment of a County Commissioner	It is the mission of Lakeshore Regional Entity (LRE) to assist and guide every person and community in need of substance abuse services. They will accomplish this mission by developing and maintaining systems that support recovery and by coordinating high quality services. LRE will be welcoming, innovative and cooperative, and will respect the dignity of those who they serve...and those with whom they serve.
Local Emergency Planning Committee	27	1 year	Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) were established by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), which include emergency planning and community right-to-know requirements. The purpose of the LEPC is development, training and testing of the hazardous substances emergency response plan for the community.
Parks and Recreation Commission	10	3 years	Formed pursuant to PA 261 of 1965. The first priority of each member shall be to represent and advocate what is best for the parks owned by the County of Oceana.
Planning Commission	9	3 years	Authorized by PA 33 of 2008, Michigan Planning Enabling Act to assist in coordinated and harmonious development of Oceana County.
Senior Resources Board	1	3 years	Senior Resources of West Michigan, an Area Agency on Aging serves the counties of Muskegon, Oceana and Ottawa to provide a comprehensive and coordinated system of services designed to assist in maintaining the independence, dignity and quality of life for the elderly and act as an advocate for them by advancing causes or issues that are vital to their welfare

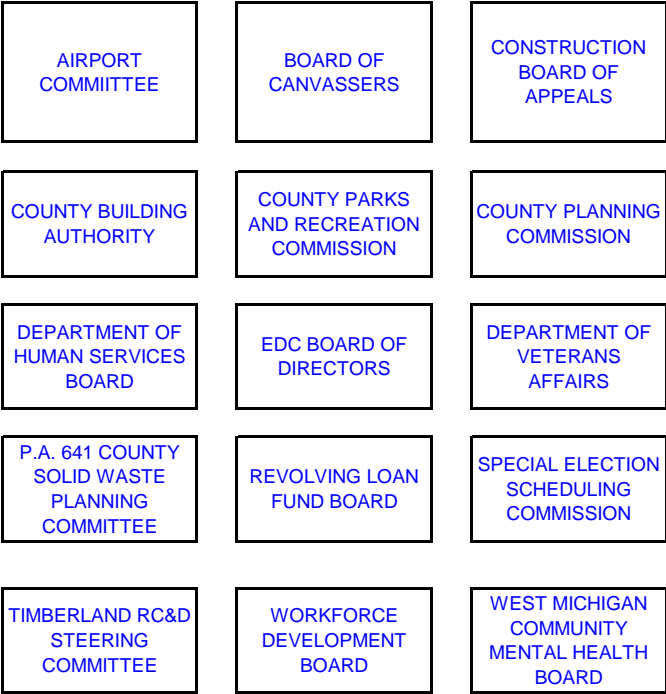
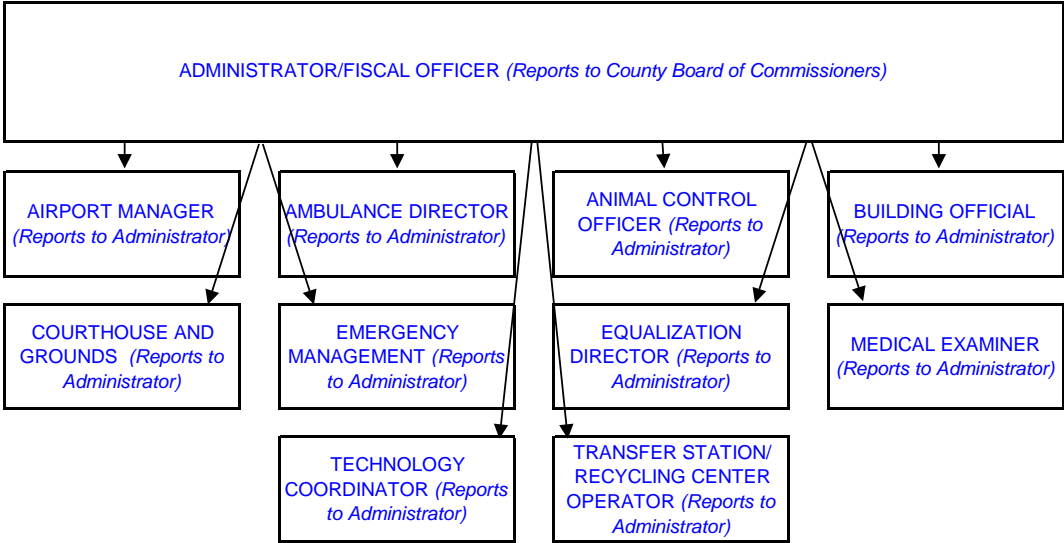
Veterans Affairs Committee	5	3 years	The county department of Veterans Affairs shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as shall be necessary in carrying out the provisions of Act 192 of 1953 and any and all other benefits to which veterans may be entitled as prescribed by the county department of veterans affairs.
West Michigan Community Mental Health System Board	5	3 years	WMCMHS was formed by the consolidation of the Lake County, Mason County, and Oceana County Community Mental Health Boards in 1996 and operates under the provisions of the Mental Health Code, being Sections 330.1001 - 330.2106 of the <i>Michigan Compiled Laws</i> . Its mission is to ensure customer-centered and resource-sensitive solutions to the behavioral health problems and needs of individual citizens from the three counties in its service area and to enhance the overall behavioral health status of the three-county community.
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission	2	Annual Chair Appointment of County Commissioners	The WMSRDC is a federal and state designated regional planning and development agency. WMSRDC operates programs in economic development, transportation, homeland security, environmental planning, community development, information & communications, and others.
Workforce Development Board	3	1, 2 or 3 years	The Muskegon/Oceana Workforce Development Board's mission is to coordinate and deliver customer focused, quality, comprehensive workforce development, and employment and training services.

# OCEANA COUNTY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

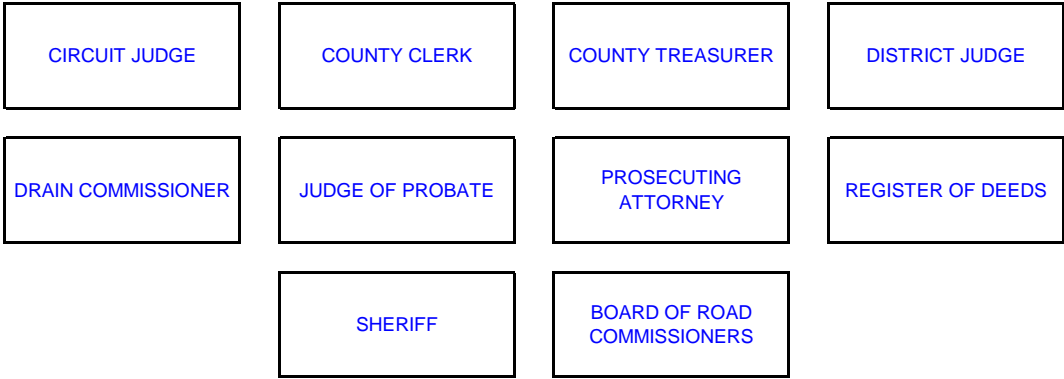
**OCEANA COUNTY  
BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS**

**APPOINTED OFFICIALS**

**APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**



**ELECTED OFFICIALS**



**OCEANA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT/REAPPOINTMENT  
TO SERVE ON COUNTY ADVISORY BOARDS/COMMITTEES**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Airport Committee                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Muskegon/Oceana CAAP Board                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Control Advisory Board           | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and Recreation Commission                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Canvassers                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning Commission                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Public Works                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Road Commission                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction Board of Appeals           | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Resources Board                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Health and Human Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Affairs Committee                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development Corporation        | <input type="checkbox"/> West Michigan Community Mental Health Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Commission                      | <input type="checkbox"/> West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jury Board                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Commission                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Bank Authority                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Development Board                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Emergency Planning Committee      |   |

Please check the box (es) of the Board/Committee you are interested in serving on.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary) Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)

What special experience, education or interest do you have for serving on each of the board(s)/ committee(s) you selected? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What other boards/committees do you currently serve on or have served on in the past?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return completed application to:

Oceana County Administrator  
100 State St., Suite M-4, Hart, MI 49420  
or email to: [rsobie@oceana.mi.us](mailto:rsobie@oceana.mi.us)

Your application will be kept on file in the County Administrator's Office for a period of one year. If you have any questions regarding the boards/committees, please refer to our website [www.oceana.mi.us](http://www.oceana.mi.us)