

**Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners  
Policy and Procedures  
for Application, Appointment and Conduct of  
Citizen Appointments to Board & Committees**

**1. APPLICATION**

This policy applies to appointments made and all persons appointed to the following public bodies: any board, commission, committee or authority to which appointments are made by the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners. This policy does not apply to members of the Board of Commissioners.

**2. ELIGIBILITY**

**2.1 Residency and Registered Voter**

All persons who are residents of and registered to vote in Grand Traverse County are eligible for appointment, except as provided by law and unless prohibited by law or a resolution authorizing the creation of the public body, or rules governing the public body.

**2.2 Limitation on Number of Appointed Positions**

A person may concurrently serve in no more than two County appointed positions, as long as no two positions create an incompatible public office under MCL 15.181 *et seq.* These limitations do not include service on sub- or ad-hoc committees which serve as an advisory committee to the primary board to which the eligible citizen is appointed.

**2.3 Limitation on Number of Years of Service**

A person is ineligible for appointment if, on the date the new term of office is to begin, that person has served on the same board, commission, committee or authority for which appointment is sought for more than 12 consecutive years. This policy may be waived by a majority vote of members elected and serving on the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners where enforcement would be detrimental to the functioning of that board, commission, committee, or authority.

**3. VACANCY; APPLICATION; SELECTION PROCESS**

**3.1 Vacancy**

Upon expiration of a term of office, resignation, death or any other circumstance under which a vacancy occurs, the following procedure shall be used to fill the vacancy:

3.1.1 County Administration shall verify any special requirements of the position and determine if there are known, qualified applicants and notify those persons of the vacancy;

3.1.2 County Administration shall post the vacancy on the County's website, advertise the vacancy in appropriate local media, and notify any individuals or groups with specialized knowledge related to the public body's area of concern of the vacancy;

3.1.3 The Board of Commissioners may choose to have the entire Board of Commissioners perform interviews. Alternatively, if the Board of Commissioners

chooses not to perform interviews, then the Board Chair shall appoint an ad-hoc committee to review applications and conduct necessary interviews to recommend or appoint one or more candidate(s);

3.1.4 Except when the Board of Commissioners chooses to have the entire Board of Commissioners perform interviews, County Administration shall schedule an open meeting pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act (MCL 15.261 *et seq.*) with the ad-hoc committee who will, at that meeting or at another scheduled meeting, make recommendations for appointment(s) to the Board of Commissioners.

3.1.5 When the Board of Commissioners chooses to perform interviews, the Board shall determine whether the interviews shall be conducted at a regular board meeting or special board meeting called for that purpose.

## **3.2 Application**

3.2.1 Individuals interested in applying for appointment shall complete an Application for Appointment and submit it to County Administration. Applicants will also be required to sign a Consent to Perform Background Investigation form. Background checks will be completed by the Human Resources Department and if a record is found, a summary report will be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners to be included with the application. Applications for Appointment are available for download on the County's website and may be requested from the County Administration Office. Completed Applications for Appointment may be submitted in person, by fax or by email to County Administration or on-line.

3.2.2 All Applications for Appointment received shall remain on file and active for vacancies occurring for one year from the date received. It is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure a current application is on file for any vacancies they may be interested in filling.

3.2.3 Ninety days prior to a term's expiration, current appointees whose terms are expiring, shall be sent an Application of Appointment and letter asking if they wish to seek re-appointment.

3.2.4 All Applications for Appointment must be received at least 10 calendar days prior to the meeting of the committee charged with recommending an applicant to fill the vacancy under consideration, unless otherwise authorized by that committee.

## **3.3 Selection**

3.3.1 All applicants will be interviewed by an ad hoc committee of the Board of Commissioners or the entire Board of Commissioners in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section 3.1 of this policy. If an ad-hoc committee is appointed, the ad hoc committee will forward its recommendation on to the full board for consideration. The ad hoc committee or Board of Commissioners (when the full Board is conducting interviews) may question applicants about all matters contained in their Application for Appointment, and any other matters considered relevant, including Background Investigation information.

3.3.2 The following factors may be considered in selecting appointees. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list and the Board of Commissioners may consider any factor they deem relevant to the position under consideration:

- (1) The applicant's background, expertise, and interest in particular areas, such as knowledge of the subject which is addressed by the board on which there is a vacancy;
- (2) The applicant's current employment and whether this would complement the appointment or create a potential reoccurring conflict of interest;
- (3) Eligibility as outlined in Section 2 of this policy;
- (4) Recognition of some vacancies which may require a specific appointment to adhere to a board composition outlined by the statute, ordinance or resolution creating the board, commission, committee, or authority;
- (5) Geographic representation of the members of the public body where geographic representation may be significant;
- (6) Any criminal record disclosed in the application or information contained in the background check.
- (7) Any other factor(s) the committee or the Board of Commissioners determines to be significant.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT**

- 4.1 When an ad-hoc committee is appointed, upon conclusion of its business, the ad-hoc interviewing committee shall forward its recommendation(s) for appointment(s) and the application(s) of the individual(s) recommended to the Board of Commissioners for approval.
- 4.2 Upon final approval by the County Board of Commissioners, County Administration shall send a letter of notification to the chairperson of the appropriate board, commission, committee or authority and any county department head who reports regularly to the public body. County Administration shall also send a letter of congratulations and welcome to the successful applicant(s) from the Board Chairman, together with information regarding their appointment (i.e., resolution of appointment, copy of the Open Meetings Act, notification of requirements for OMA/FOIA training, etc.).

#### **5. ORIENTATION, TRAINING AND CONDUCT OF APPOINTEES**

##### **5.1. Orientation**

Each board, commission, committee, or authority is encouraged to provide an orientation and/or training by its department head, chairperson or designee.

## **5.2.Materials**

Each board, commission, committee, or authority shall provide at a minimum the following items to all new appointees to the public body:

- (1) Any rules or bylaws of the public body.
- (2) All policies and procedures specifically related to the public body.
- (3) Names and contact information for all members and staff of the public body.
- (4) Information about eligibility and processing of claims for per diem and mileage.

## **5.3 Open Meetings Act/FOIA Training**

County Administration will schedule at least one training annually for appointees and staff which will include information on the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act. The training may also include relevant county policies or procedures, state laws relating to public meetings and records, and ethics guidelines relevant to public bodies. All appointees shall attend at least one training session within the first 90 days during their first term of appointment.

## **5.4 Conduct of Appointees**

### **5.4.1. Attendance at Meetings**

Persons appointed to public office are expected to attend all meetings of the public body they represent except for good cause. The public body may excuse absences related to extraordinary circumstances, such as illness. If excessive absenteeism occurs, excused or otherwise, which is detrimental to the functioning of the public body, it shall be the responsibility of the committee chairperson to notify his or her public body. The public body will determine if a request will be submitted to the Board of Commissioners for further action regarding attendance. All Boards, Commissions, Committees & Authorities shall keep attendance logs and provide an annual report to the Board of Commissioners.

### **5.4.2 Follow All Applicable Laws and Rules**

Appointees shall follow all applicable state and federal laws, including the Michigan Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act and all County policies and procedures, including the County Ethics Policy.

**5.4.3.** All appointees shall provide County Administration with contact information for use by the County and the public.

**5.4.4** Appointees may sign policy acknowledgements, ethics statements, conflict of interest disclosures, etc. as part of their appointment service as they deem reasonable; however, unless otherwise required by state or federal law, and recognizing the appointees' First Amendment rights (U.S. Const. amend. 1), appointees should avoid signing documents containing statements of loyalty to any particular organization or interested party that is inconsistent with the appointee's representation of the best interest of taxpayers of Grand Traverse County and the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners.

## **6. AMENDMENT AND WAIVER**

This Policy may be amended, suspended, or rescinded only if approved by a majority of the members of the Board of Commissioners elected and serving. Motions passed contrary to this Policy by a majority of the members of the Board of Commissioners elected and

serving shall constitute such a suspension of this Policy, in whole or in part. This Policy shall remain in effect until rescinded or amended. Any amendment to this Policy shall take immediate effect unless otherwise stated by the Board of Commissioners at the time of adoption.

4<sup>th</sup> Amendment Adopted this, 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2024.

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**Rob Hentschel, Chairperson,  
Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners**