Dallas County Boards & Commissions
(Partial List)

Zoning Commission

Duties and Responsibilities: The Dallas County Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for reviewing preliminary plats, final plats, conditional use permits, zoning changes, zoning ordinance changes/amendments, comprehensive plan changes/amendments, and other planning and development issues. The Dallas County Board of Supervisors appoints the members of the nine-person commission. Planning and development issues brought before the Planning and Zoning Commission are reviewed and given a recommendation of approval or denial to the Board of Supervisors. The Planning and Zoning Commission also reviews Conditional Use Permits and makes a recommendation to the Board of Adjustment.
The Planning and Zoning Commission approves a schedule for all regular meetings for the coming year in December. All meetings are open to the public and must have a quorum, 5 out of 9 commissioners present, in order to take any official action. Special meetings may be called by request of the commission. All regularly scheduled meetings begin at 5:00 PM.

Board of Adjustment

Duties and Responsibilities: The Dallas County Board of Adjustment is a five-member board whose members are appointed by the Dallas County Board of Supervisors. The Board of Adjustment is a quasi-judicial body given the authority under the Code of Iowa to make special exceptions to the Dallas County Zoning Ordinance. The Board of Adjustment also reviews and approves or denies conditional use permits, approves or denies variance requests, and hears appeals and petitions of any property owner aggrieved by the decisions of the Director of Planning and Development. The Board of Adjustment meets on demand.

Board of Health

Duties and Responsibilities: The purpose of the Board of Health, as a legal component of local governmental structure is to:

1. Assume full legal authority and responsibility for the operation of the Public Health Nursing Agency and the Environmental Health Agency.
2. Be responsible for establishing and promoting the Public Health Nursing Program and Environmental Health Agency.
3. Oversee personnel action recommended by Administrators.
4. Act as County Nursing Advisory Board and appoint agency administrators.
5. Oversee the management of fiscal affairs of the agencies and appoint persons to serve on the Budget Committee.
6. Adopt and periodically review written policies.
7. The Board of Health will meet at least quarterly.

The Dallas County Board of Health shall consist of five (5) members, appointed by the Dallas County Board of Supervisors, at least one of whom shall be a physician licensed in Iowa as defined by law. All members appointed shall serve a period of three (3) years, with terms to be staggered.

The Board of Health will meet at least quarterly. The place, date, and time of regular meetings will be determined by the board and shall comply with the provisions of open meetings law as found in The Code of Iowa. Special meetings may be called as needed by the chairperson or by any three board members. At least 24-hour notice shall be given of special meetings except in case of emergency. “Special meetings may be conducted by phone as approved by the chair or any 3 board members”. A quorum shall be three (3) members or more.

Conservation Board

Duties and Responsibilities: The County Conservation board to consist of five bona fide residents of the county. The members first appointed shall hold office for the term of one, two, three, four, and five years respectively, as indicated and fixed by the board of supervisors. Thereafter, succeeding members shall be appointed for a term of five years, except that vacancies occurring otherwise than by expiration of term shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired term. When a member of the board, during the term of office, ceases to be a bona fide resident of the county, the member is disqualified as a member and the office becomes vacant. Members of the board shall be selected and appointed on the basis of their demonstrated interest in conservation matters, and shall serve without compensation, but may be paid their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

Three members of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The board shall hold regular meetings. Special meetings may be called by the president, and shall be called on the request of a majority of members, as the necessity may require. The county conservation board shall have the power to adopt bylaws, to adopt and use a common seal, and to enter into contracts. The county board of supervisors shall provide suitable offices for the meetings of the county conservation board and for safekeeping of its records. Such records shall be subject to public inspection at all reasonable hours and under such regulations as the county conservation board may prescribe. The board shall annually make a full and complete report to the county board of supervisors of its transactions and operations of the preceding year. Such report shall contain a full statement of its receipts, disbursements, and the program of work for the period covered, and may include such recommendations as may be deemed advisable.

The county conservation board shall have the custody, control, and management of all real and personal property heretofore or hereafter acquired by the county for public museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, county forests, county wildlife areas, and other county conservation and recreation purposes and is authorized and empowered:

1. To study and ascertain the county's museum, park, preserve, parkway, and recreation and other conservation facilities, the need for such facilities, and the extent to which such needs are being currently met, and to prepare and adopt a co-ordinated plan of areas and facilities to meet such needs.
2. To acquire in the name of the county by gift, purchase, lease, agreement, exchange, or otherwise, in fee or with conditions, suitable real estate within or without the territorial limits of the county for public museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, forests, wildlife, and other conservation purposes and for participation in watershed, drainage, and flood control programs for the purpose of increasing the recreational resources of the county. The natural resource commission, the county board of supervisors, or the governing body of any city, upon request of the county conservation board, may transfer to the county conservation board for use as museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, play fields, tennis courts, skating rinks, swimming pools, gymnasiums, rooms for arts and crafts, camps and meeting places, community forests, wildlife areas, and other recreational purposes, any land and buildings owned or controlled by the department of natural resources or the county or the city and not devoted or dedicated to any other inconsistent public use. In acquiring or accepting land, due consideration shall be given to its scenic, historic, archaeological, recreational, or other special features, and land shall not be acquired or accepted unless, in the opinion of the board, it is suitable or, in the case of exchange, is suitable and of substantially the same value as the property exchanged from the standpoint of its proposed use. An exchange of property approved by the county conservation board and the board of supervisors is not subject to section 331.361 subsection 2.
3. The county conservation board shall file with the natural resource commission all acquisitions or exchanges of land within one year.
4. To plan, develop, preserve, administer and maintain all such areas, places and facilities, and construct, reconstruct, alter and renew buildings and other structures, and equip and maintain the same.

5. To accept in the name of the county gifts, bequests, contributions and appropriations of money and other personal property for conservation purposes.
6. To employ and fix the compensation of a director who shall be responsible to the county conservation board for carrying out of its policies. The director, subject to the approval of the board, may employ and fix the compensation of assistants and employees as necessary for carrying out this chapter.
7. To charge and collect reasonable fees for the use of the parks, facilities, privileges and conveniences as may be provided and for admission to amateur athletic contests, demonstrations and exhibits, and other noncommercial events. The board shall not allow the exclusive use of a park by one or more organizations.
8. To operate concessions or to lease concessions and to let out and rent privileges in or upon any property under its control upon such terms and conditions as are deemed by it to be in the public interest.
9. To participate in watershed projects of soil and water conservation districts and the federal government and in projects of drainage districts organized under the provisions of chapter 467c and chapter 468, subchapter 1, parts 1 through 5, and subchapter 11, parts 1, 5, and 6, for the purpose of increasing the recreational resources of the county.
Any agreement for such participation by or with a board of supervisors or trustees concerning drainage districts shall be in writing, shall be duly adopted by a resolution of the board of supervisors or trustees and shall be spread in its entirety upon the permanent records of the drainage district or districts affected.
10. To furnish suitable uniforms for the director and those employees as the director may designate to wear uniforms, when on official duty. The cost of the uniforms shall not exceed three hundred dollars per person in any year. The uniforms shall at all times remain the property of the county.

The County Conservation Board may make, alter, amend or repeal regulations for the protection, regulation, and control of all museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, and other property under its control. The regulations shall not be contrary to, or inconsistent with, the laws of this state.

A county conservation board may establish an Iowa's county beautification program to encourage the prevention and cleanup of litter in public areas of the county. The county conservation director shall prepare and implement the program which is designed to employ persons from fourteen years of age to eighteen years of age in a six-week summer program. The program may include public informational activities, but shall be directed primarily toward encouraging and facilitating involvement in litter prevention and cleanup. The program shall also include weekly instruction on safety in the workplace while employed with an Iowa's county beautification program. Financial assistance for an Iowa's county beautification program may be received through the county conservation account pursuant to section 455A.19. County matching funds shall not be required for eligibility for funding an Iowa's county Beautification program.
2. A county conservation board shall coordinate its Iowa's county beautification program with the county engineer or director of the county secondary road department and with the district highway engineer of the state department of transportation. The respective county and state highway authorities, within time and budgetary limitations, shall cooperate with the county conservation board in implementing the litter program in regard to the rights-of-way of primary and secondary roads when requested by the county conservation board.

For further information go to: http://www.co.dallas.ia.us/conservation/Admin/Admin_Chapter350.html

Township Trustees

Duties & Responsibilities: In townships where trustees are elected**,** trustees shall be elected biennially and serve a term of four (4) years. In townships where trustees are appointed the county board of supervisors shall fill the offices by appointment as the terms of the incumbent trustees expire.

Trustees must meet twice a year and all township meetings must be public meetings.

Trustees are responsible for resolving fence disputes.

Trustees must keep township records for a specific period of time. The base requirement is five (5) years. Resolutions, board proceedings, records and documents relating to public bonds must be kept for at least eleven (11) years; resolutions, board proceedings, records and documents relating to real property must be kept permanently.

Financial statements must be prepared by trustees on or before September 30 of each year. The statements must show all receipts and disbursements of money levied by each category of levy, the current public debt of the township and the June 30 balance of each separate reserve fund held by the township. This statement or a summary must be posted by the county auditor in the building of the auditor. The county treasurer must withhold payments to the township if this requirement is not met.

Trustees are empowered to condemn, purchase and pay for out of the general fund or the specific fund voted for such purpose and enter upon and take lands within such territorial limits of the township for the use of cemeteries, community center or playgrounds.

Cemetery tax funds may be used for the maintenance and support of cemeteries located within a township. Trustees may appoint day and or night watchmen for a cemetery, sell cemetery lots, improve and adorn the cemetery grounds, enclose and construct avenues within the cemetery.

Township Clerks

Duties and Responsibilities: In townships where clerks are elected, at the general election in the year 1990 and every four (4) years thereafter… one (1) township clerk shall be elected to hold office for a term of four (4) years.

A township clerk shall keep a record of all the proceedings and orders of the trustees and all of the acts done by the township clerk and perform such other acts as may be required by law. Township records shall be kept by the clerk for at least five (5) years.

Some townships may have access to ISU Publication PM 1928 "The Township Trustee and Clerk Reference Manual"

Red indicates Term Expires 12-31-2014
Blue indicates Term Expires 12-31-2016
Dallas County Township Trustees and Clerks

Adams

Julie Turner, Clerk
Jim Turner
Steve Cochran
Terry Hoy

Adel

Van Vanburen, Clerk
Bill James
Karen Smith
Jenny Felt

Beaver
(Need one more trustee)
Mike Hansen, Clerk
Randy Scott
David Luett

Lincoln

Elta Summerson, Clerk
Jim Thompson
Randy Schuhardt
Robert Safely

Linn

Yolanda Keeran, Clerk
Kurt Keeran
Ed Swinger
Gary Smith

Spring Valley

Brent Halling, Clerk
Keith F. Killmer
Steve Greiman
Jerry Allen

Boone
(Need Clerk)
Kathy Hancock
Judy Boston
Tom Bell

Colfax

Sandy Trent, Clerk
Ed Cumings
Dan Jones
Joseph Berg

Dallas

Bill Kempf, Clerk
Joel Heinz
Pat Summerson
Dennis Trometer

Des Moines

Ginny Harkin, Clerk
A James Barclay
Rita Ridler
Joe Tiernan

Grant

Sam Spellman, Clerk
Bill Knoll
Mike Smith
Mark Ellerman

Sugar Grove

Michelle Fox, Clerk
Justin Rowe
Barbara Lewczak
Matthew Fox

Union

Albert Neuman, Clerk
Russell Horn
Ronald Godwin
Marvin Coulter

Van Meter
David Felt, Clerk
Scott Wright
George Robison
Ron Gebhardt

Walnut

Wayne Erdman, Clerk
Richard Petersen
Thomas G. Barrett
Joseph Stork

Washington

Steve Hick, Clerk
Marty Bennett
Tim Andrews
Roger Belgarde

Archives Council

Duties and Responsibilities: An Archive Records Council (Council) is established to assist and advise the various county records custodians in the retention, preservation, and destruction of records, to annually or more frequently report to the Board of Supervisors as to the status of records archive recommendations for procedural improvements.

The Council shall consist of not less than five (5), and no more than nine (9) Council members appointed by the Dallas County Board of Supervisors. The term of a Council Member shall be for a period of 3 years, except for the initial terms which shall consist of 1 Council Member for 1 year term, 2 Council members for 2 year terms, and 2 Council Members for 3 year terms.

The Council shall, as a minimum, include:
An elected county Official or designee (deputy of department head)
A member of a local genealogical or historical organization
A private citizen
Additionally, the State Of Iowa, through the Office of the State Records and Archives may appoint a member of such office as a member of the County Council.

Council Members shall serve without compensation or salary. The Board of Supervisors may determine to reimburse Council Members for extraordinary expenses.

The Council shall advise and assist county records managers and records custodians. The Council shall report the status of records management at least annually to the board of supervisors. The Council shall recommend policies and procedures regarding records retention, preservation, and destruction to the Board of Supervisors. If the County maintains employees for the purpose of county archives management, including an Archives manager, the Council shall assist and advise the County Archives Manager or other employees. The Council may establish more detailed duties and responsibilities, and procedures for the Council to follow, and may recommend that the Board of Supervisors ratify such additional detail by resolution.

For further information read County Ordinance Chapter 9 "Destruction & Retention of Public Records" on the Board of Supervisors web page.

Eminent Domain

"Eminent domain," often called "condemnation," is the legal process by which a public body (and certain private bodies, such as utility companies, railroads, redevelopment corporations and some others) are given the legal power to acquire private property for a use that has been declared to be public by constitution, statute or ordinance.

The "condemnor" is the public or private body having the legal power of eminent domain. The "condemnee" is the owner of the private property sought to be taken.

Under the United States constitution, private property may be taken by eminent domain so long as the taking is for a public purpose and the condemnor pays just compensation.

The "public purpose" is the use defined in the constitution, statute or ordinance. "Just compensation" is the "fair market value" of the property and any consequential damages. The "fair market value" is the current value of land and improvements, based on what price the property would bring if the owner did not have to sell and the buyer did not have to buy.

To use the power of eminent domain, the condemnor must be authorized, by statute or ordinance, to take the property for a specific public purpose. The condemnor must also try to buy the property from the property owner by good faith negotiation.

The condemnor must make an unqualified offer to buy. Only after the condemnor and the property owner cannot agree may the condemnor bring the matter to local circuit court by filing a Petition in Eminent Domain.

The petition must be served on the property owner and a date set for a hearing on the petition. At the hearing, the condemnor must prove to the judge (no jury is allowed at this stage) that it carried on good faith negotiations but was unable to agree on a price with the property owner. The condemnor must also prove to the judge that the property is to be taken by the condemnor for a public purpose as defined in the particular constitution, statute or ordinance.

After the judge has heard the evidence presented by the condemnor, and any objections by the property owner, the judge will decide whether the condemnor may proceed.

Duties & Responsibilities: If so, the judge will appoint three disinterested property owners to be "**condemnation commissioners**." These disinterested parties are selected from an annual list submitted by the Board of Supervisors. The list is comprised of at least 28 residents. The list must contain at least seven (7) in each of the following:

Owners or Operators of Agricultural Property

Owners of City Property

Licensed Real Estate Persons

Persons with Knowledge of Property Values

(Bankers, Insurance Agents, Appraisers, Auctioneers)

They must view the property and they may interview the condemnor and the property owner. They may also hold informal hearings at which the condemnor and the property owner may present their opinions of value. Information supplied at this stage of the legal proceedings may not be used in later proceedings, which may include a jury trial to determine value.

The condemnation commissioners then give their opinion of the fair market value. This is known as the "award." After the award by the condemnation commissioners, both the condemnor and the property owner may file "exceptions" to the amount of the award if they disagree with the amount. These exceptions must be filed within ten (10) days after they receive notice from the court that the award has been made in a certain amount. In the exceptions, either party may ask for a trial by jury to decide the size of award.

Property owners should employ lawyers to represent them at the proceedings because the matter before the court must be carried on as any other suit for damages. Attorneys who are experienced in representing property owners in eminent domain cases are available. The property owner's interest should be protected, to make sure that fair market value is paid for the taking of the property and that all other damages caused to the property owner are compensated.

Local Housing Trust Fund Board

Duties and Responsibilities: The mission of the Local Housing Trust Fund is "to provide and expand safe and affordable housing to low income residents of Dallas County." The Board also oversees and allocates funds that are received by the Trust Fund. Other duties include: Monitoring the performance of operations and activities, preparing annual reports and accounting for the Trust Fund's activities, overseeing duties and performances of those employed by or acting on behalf of the Trust Fund and nominating Board Members and electing of officers.

Each member of this fifteen (15) member board is a person whose occupation, position or experience in Dallas County broadly represents the community. Currently there are two (2) Attorneys, one (1) Certified Public Accountant, a City Building Official, a Bank Officer, a Developer , City Council Members from various cities within Dallas County as well as private citizens that reside within Dallas County.

Civil Service Commission

Duties & Responsibilities: There are 3 members to this commission. Two (2) members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors and one (1) member is appointed by the County Attorney. Appointees to this commission shall be a resident of Dallas County for at least two (2) years. The term each appointee serves is six (6) years.

Commissioners shall serve without compensation and no more than two (2) shall be from the same political party. Commissioners shall hold no other elected or appointed offices.

The commission shall hold at least one meeting annually and all meetings must be public meetings. The commission may adopt and amend as necessary rules which specify in which examinations are to be held as well as how appointments, promotions, transfers, reinstatements, demotions, suspensions and discharges are to be made.

The commission shall certify to the County Sheriff a list of ten (10) names of persons examined that have passed test requirements. Such tests shall be designed and prepared by the director of the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy.

Some of the test requirements include: Percentage on the Police Officer Selection Test, Physical Agility Testing, Education Level, Military Experience, Work Experience, Specialized Law Enforcement Training and a Clear Criminal History Record.

Commission members may also hear and determine appeals or complaints regarding the allocation of positions of employment and rejection of those persons certified to the sheriff for appointment.

For further information please refer to Iowa Code Section 341A.6

Aging Resources Advisory Council

Aging Resources serves as an advocate with and for older citizens in this planning and service area. Aging Resources partners with government officials, providers of services, senior citizen organizations and individual elders in establishing educational, legislative, and action programs to improve the quality of life of elders.

The mission of Aging Resources is to lead, advocate, and serve as well as plan and coordinate resources in the provision of the services to older persons in central Iowa, their families, caregivers, or representatives enabling elders to lead independent, meaningful, and dignified lives in the least restrictive environment.

Duties & Responsibilites: The Advisory Council meets 6-7 times per year on the 2nd Thursday of every other month. The Council's main objective is to advise the Agency on meeting the needs & future needs of elders along with suggesting services to meet those needs. The council also looks at local community resources & will advise on how to maximize those resources to better serve the needs of the local elder community.

Historic Preservation Commission

Duties & responsibilities: a. The Commission shall consist 5 members who shall be residents of the County and serve a term of 3 years without compensation. Members shall demonstrate a positive interest in historic preservation, possessing interest or expertise in architecture, architectural history, history, archaeology, or closely related disciplines.

The Commission shall meet at least three (3) times a year, elect a Chairman to preside over all Commission meetings and elect a Secretary who shall be responsible for maintaining written records of the commission's proceedings. The commission may proceed at its own initiative or upon a petition from any person, group or association. The Commission shall maintain records of all studies and inventories for public use.