

**ROUTT COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

TITLE Board of County Commissioners Governing Principles	Date of First Approval August 24, 2010
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT Board of County Commissioners	Date Last Revised March __, 2022

Purpose One: To describe adopted and agreed upon governing principles related to operations and management of Routt County business and County Commissioner conduct.

Purpose Two: To set forth practice standards for each County Commissioner when participating in Board meetings, functions, and activities including all matters related to Routt County business.

Purpose Three: To agree upon the County Manager’s role in the management of County operations and the relation to the Board.

Department(s) Affected: County Commissioners and all County Departments.

I. Definitions:

A. The “Board” refers to the Routt County Board of County Commissioners. The Board is a group of three different individuals all strong willed and inherently committed to the County and its progression forward. Each Commissioner has put substantial effort and personal vesting into the opportunity to serve as a County Commissioner and be a public servant. Each Commissioner brings varied backgrounds and perspectives, and works collectively on the Board to lead Routt County through their elected term. Each Commissioner individually has little to no authority or influence but provides their abilities to the collective Board.

B. “C.R.S.” refers to the Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended from time to time.

II. This policy is applicable to the present Board and shall be reviewed and considered for re-adoption after every Commissioner re-election cycle, after a new Commissioner is appointed to the Board, or after hiring a new county manager.

III. Governing Principles and Board Responsibilities. The Board will lead the County toward the performance desired by the citizens and in the best interests of the County as a whole.

A. The Board will approach its duties with an emphasis on an outward and forward-looking vision, strategic leadership, and making decisions that affect the County as a whole.

B. The Board will direct the organization by providing broad policy and administrative direction that reflects the Board’s goals in the best interests of the County. While the

Board is the ultimate authority of County policies and has ultimate budget authority, it will be open to considering policy initiatives from citizens, other elected officials, and County staff members.

- C. The Board will identify impacts to the County and identify resources to address those impacts while providing broad direction to County staff in support of County initiatives and policies.
- D. Board decisions will be made from informed positions with full awareness of its stewardship obligation to its constituents. In order to govern effectively, it is essential that Commissioners conduct themselves with discipline including, but not limited to, thorough preparation and attendance at Board meetings, focus on policy making principles and role clarification, and self-monitoring of policy adherence.
- E. The Board will exercise a high degree of accountability to citizens and other governmental/non-governmental entities and Routt County government. Measures of accountability include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Maintaining governing principles and practices that serve the interests of Routt County.
 - 2. Identification of goals, strategies, outcomes, and impacts (financial and otherwise).
 - 3. Clear and functional policies, resolutions, regulations, and ordinances resulting from the Board's legislative and administrative roles.
 - 4. Direct communication between the Board and County Manager as to delegation of authority, limits of that authority, progress monitoring, and reporting to the Board.

IV. Board/Commissioner Conduct. The Board will only be able to function and operate in an effective way if its individual Commissioners conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the governing principles set forth above. The Board shall emphasize the following functional principles and practice standards as individuals and as a Board when conducting Board meetings and/or participating in any meeting where Routt County business is at issue:

- A. Core Values. The Board will adhere to the Routt County Core Values: Trust, Integrity, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Fiscal Responsibility.
- B. Fairness. Objectivity and openness will extend to citizens, staff members, and fellow Commissioners and are essential ideals to making effective and enduring decisions. Therefore, the Commissioners will abide by the following practice standards:
 - 1. Respectfully listening to all sides of an issue. The obligation to listen does not equate to an obligation to agree or act as requested.

2. Objectively consider concerns or opportunities brought to the Board.
 3. Provide impartial and just treatment without favoritism or discrimination.
- C. Transparency. Open and transparent governing is essential to building and/or maintaining trust with the public. Therefore, the Commissioners will abide by the following practice standards:
1. Avoiding even the perception of violations of the Open Meetings Law by ensuring that all decisions of the Board concerning public business and discussions on such decisions will occur during properly noticed public meetings.
 2. Making relevant, accurate, and timely information regarding County fiscal policies, goals, services, and decisions that impact the public available to citizens.
 3. Encouraging access to the Board.
 4. Maintaining records such that they are open to public scrutiny, including electronic mail and electronic records.
- D. Respect. The Board is committed to respecting all individuals including citizens, staff members, and fellow Commissioners. Therefore, the Commissioners will agree to the following practice standards:
1. Understanding that respect comes in many forms and make every effort to show respect for others verbally and non-verbally.
 2. Minimizing disruptions when individuals speak.
 3. Avoiding judgmental and disparaging comments or tone of voice.
 4. Avoiding speaking over individuals.
 5. Allowing for respectful disagreement.
 6. Listening carefully and attempting to understand the perspectives of others.
 7. Making every attempt to work through interpersonal conflict in a constructive and effective manner.
 8. Encouraging Commissioners to voice their individual opinions.
- E. Ethics. As public officials, the Commissioners will hold themselves to a high standard of honesty and integrity. Therefore, the Commissioners will abide by the following practice standards:

1. Being committed to high standards of ethics and adherence to the laws of the State of Colorado.
 2. Represent the interests of the County as a whole. This standard supersedes any conflicting interest, including personal interests or interests of third-party groups or memberships.
 3. Prohibit nepotism or any form of favoritism.
 4. Avoid any form of conflict of interest but disclose such conflict if it exists.
- F. Communication. To be effective as elected officials, the Board must communicate clearly and completely at all times. In order to enhance communication among the Board, staff members, and citizens, the Commissioners will abide by the following practice standards:
1. Being truthful, open, and direct while still maintaining the principles of respect set forth herein.
 2. Providing full disclosure in communications among Commissioners. This includes disclosure of information received from citizens by individual Commissioners. Disclosures should occur at the next public meeting when possible. It is understood that some citizens may request confidentiality and, in situations where confidentiality is warranted, the Commissioner receiving the information will disclose the general nature of the meeting.
 3. Addressing issues and responding to requests in a timely manner by agreeing on a response time when possible.
 4. Ensuring that there will be no Board communications among Commissioners that indicate opinions or positions outside of a public meeting.
 5. Electronic mail or interoffice messages will only be used to share information to fellow Commissioners with no narrative that would imply the beginning of dialogue among Commissioners or express individual opinions or positions.
 6. Discussions concerning collaborative drafting of letters for Board signature shall only occur during properly noticed public meetings.
 7. Materials received by a Commissioner acting on behalf of the Board will be forwarded to the remaining Commissioners and County Manager as soon as practicable and any discussions of said materials will occur during properly noticed public meetings.
- G. Miscellaneous. In the best interests of Routt County, the Commissioners are committed to the following practice standards:

1. Commissioners shall not individually represent the Board or act in a representative capacity of the Board unless granted specific authority to do so.
 2. A Commissioner who votes in the minority is encouraged to explain their dissenting vote and must respect the legitimacy of the majority decision and support the decision as official action of the Board.
 3. Commissioners accept and respect each Commissioner's individuality, supporting each other by capitalizing on individual strengths, working together as a team, and utilizing each Commissioner's expertise to accomplish the goals of the Board and Routt County.
 4. Information flow within Routt County is important, thus, Commissioners and all affected parties should have all the information that is important to them whenever possible.
 5. Individual Commissioners may wish to send letters of support or opposition to a particular cause or action. The Board agrees that those letters are acceptable if the letter specifically states that the position taken is solely attributable to the individual Commissioner. The Board's standard letterhead may not be utilized for such letters.
 6. Commissioners may not attempt to exercise individual authority over County operations except as explicitly delegated by the Board.
 - a. The Board's interaction with the County Manager, staff members, the press, or any other entity must recognize the lack of authority that any individual Commissioner or group of Commissioners has over the County or staff members except when explicitly authorized by the Board in a public meeting.
 - b. Commissioners may not intentionally coerce or intimidate County employees or interfere with their duties or authority.
 - c. Individual Commissioners may be assigned specific roles in developing County Manager and County Attorney performance evaluations subject to review and approval by the Board.
- V. Role of County Manager. Routt County has adopted the Commission-Manager form of governance to provide guidelines for the separation of administrative and legislative functions, increase efficiency, and supplement the functions of elected officials.
- A. The Board has the authority to create the office of county manager pursuant to C.R.S. § 30-11-107. On November 13, 2001, the Board adopted Resolution Number 2001-087 confirming the creation of the county manager position.
 - B. County Manager Responsibilities. The Board, which is ultimately accountable to citizens, makes policy decisions and establishes County policies and overall County direction in collaboration with the County Manager and department heads. The County Manager is

charged with implementing the policies while managing resources and operations. The policies, direction, and goals of the Board instruct the County Manager to achieve certain results while permitting the County Manager to act within acceptable boundaries of reasonable prudence and discretion. The County Manager shall have the following responsibilities:

1. The County Manager provides administrative support to the Board and keeps the Board informed of issues impacting or potentially impacting County operations and financial health.
 - a. The County Manager serves as the link between the Board and departments and staff members.
 - b. The County Manager ensures that the County will have administrative procedures to promote effective and efficient communication to the Board.
 - c. No individual Commissioner has authority over the County Manager. Information may be requested by individual Commissioners but if such request, in the County Manager's judgment, requires a material amount of resources or is in conflict with other policies or directives, the County Manager may ask for Board action on the request. Only decisions of the majority of Commissioners are binding on the County Manager.
2. With the exception of the County Attorney, the County Manager shall have authority over all appointed department heads and their staff members.
3. The County Manager supervises, and controls day-to-day functions and management decisions required to carry out the objectives of the Board and commits to keep the Board informed of functions, decisions, and actions required to carry forward the Board objectives.
 - a. The County Manager protects against any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, unethical, imprudent, or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional standards.
 - b. The County Manager shall not cause nor allow the County's assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or put at risk.
 - c. The County Manager protects County property, staff members, and citizens against conditions that are unsafe, unfair, or undignified.
 - d. The County Manager ensures that there are adequate plans in place to protect the County, its staff members, and its citizens during emergencies or disasters including prevention, response, and recovery.
 - e. The County Manager plans for and implements Board objectives.
 - f. With respect to strategic planning for projects, services, and activities with a fiscal impact or the ongoing condition of the County's fiscal health, the County Manager protects the programmatic or the fiscal integrity of Routt County government.
4. The County Manager administers County operations consistent with reasonable interpretation of Board direction or County policies.

- a. The Board may change its policies from time to time and express limits upon the County Manager's delegation authority. So long as any particular delegation is in place, the Board will respect and support the County Manager's decisions.
 - b. It may, at times, be in the best interests of the County to waive adopted Board policies. The County Manager shall request Board approval for any policy waiver unless such authority was previously granted in writing.
 - c. The County Manager shall apprise the Board of any deviation from County policy or Board direction as soon as practicable.
 5. The County Manager exhibits the highest degree of professional conduct toward the Board, staff members, external entities, and all citizens including, at a minimum, adherence to the standards of conduct described in this policy as applicable to the Board.
- C. County Manager Performance. Organizational performance within the scope of the County Manager's authority is the general measurement of the County Manager's performance.
1. Specific measurements of the County Manager's performance may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Achievement of Board goals and directives.
 - b. Adherence to Board policies.
 - c. Appropriate management of departmental operations within the County Manager's scope of authority.
 - d. Proper supervision of staff members within the County Manager's scope of authority and appropriate administration of personnel policies.
 - e. Communication with the Board.
 2. Performance measurements may be obtained by any method the Board deems appropriate.
 3. The Board will conduct formal, annual performance evaluations of the County Manager to include a summation of performance criteria as agreed upon by the Board. The Board Chair will lead the evaluation process.

Waiver Authority, if any: None.