



**Manual ~ Policy Procedure**

*for the*

**Adams County, Indiana**

**Board of  
County Council**

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This Manual Adopted: December, 2018

Revised:

Reviewed:

**Vision:**

Fiscal integrity through responsible leadership, planning, resource management and investment.

**Mission Statement:**

The Adams County Council is the legally constituted fiscal body of Adams County government. In keeping with a public trust, Council members shall justly and faithfully discharge their duties and responsibilities in support of sound fiscal management; pass ordinances and resolutions for the taxation and appropriation of money for County operation.

Council shall also endeavor to create a welcoming environment for public and employee participation in their decision making process; support reasonable and equitable compensation schedules and benefit packages for employee retention and promotion; encourage a spirit of cooperation with the Board of County Commissioners, Department Managers and those who present to Council in matters of their review and approval.

## **Introduction to County Council Manual**

In 2017, the Adams County Council affirmed that a reference manual, that was both educational and instructional, be made available to its members. In addition to its use for newly elected members it should serve as a reference tool in the Council's future endeavors in effective leadership in understanding roles, responsibilities and duties in governing as a County Council member.

### **Membership**

The Adams County Council is composed of seven members each of whom serve 4 year terms of office. Four members, one each representing Districts 1,2,3 and 4 are elected in Non Presidential Election years and 3 At Large members elected in Presidential Election years. Residency restrictions apply only to representatives of Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4; an At Large representative must reside in Adams County. In addition, candidates seeking office must be eligible and meet the legal requirements of and for the office of a Council County Council member.

From time to time, for various reasons, vacancies on the Council may be created. In those instances a Caucus of the departed official's political affiliation will determine his/her replacement.

This public office has no term limits. However, no member may hold more than one lucrative or appointed office.

Once an elected official takes office they are officially a public officer. As a public officer they are held to a higher standard of moral and ethical behavior, remain free of official misconduct and conflict of interest and understand the laws governing their action.

### **Powers**

The Home Rule law enacted in 1980 grants Indiana Counties all the powers needed for effective operation of government as to local affairs while denying Counties certain powers reserved only to the State.

## **Responsibilities**

Beginning in 2008, the County Council was given the responsibility of reviewing the budgets of all civil taxing units within the County prior to their fiscal body adopting the unit's budget.

## **Meetings**

Meetings are governed by the "Open Door Law" (Public Meeting) and require Public notice of the date, time and place and items to be discussed at least 48 hours before the meeting (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays). Executive meetings, allowed as prescribed by law, are to be convened with caution and are generally only used for legitimate reasons.

All meetings are conducted under the Robert's Rules of order with the President of the Council voting only to break a tie vote.

Monthly meetings are convened on the second Tuesday of the month beginning at 8:30 am and are held in the Council/Commissioner's room at the Adams County Complex building.

Election of officers, Council's President and Vice President, is held annually at the January meeting. The County Auditor serves as Secretary to the Council.

The County Council conducts annual budget hearings in September with work sessions covering 3-4 days.

In addition to their appointed duties and responsibilities Council members are expected to serve in a voluntary capacity as representatives to the various Departments and committees of Adams County Government. Renewable appointments are made annually in January and are 1 year in duration.

## **Need to know**

Multiple and varied sources of funding support the operation of County Government. In addition to Property Taxes, fees, Assessments and permits the County Council is authorized by statute to levy additional taxes. The following list of taxes, and their common acronyms, will serve to acquaint members in understanding their implementation and limited use. Not all of these listed are in effect as some are not available for our use.

**COIT County Option Income Tax** Is imposed initially at 0.2% for residents and 0.05% for all others, and then increases by 0.1% every year thereafter until the rate is 0.6%. Rate on non- residents is 3/4 percent of the tax rate imposed on residents. When the rate equals 0.6%, the COIT Council then may pass an ordinance to increase the rate again, and if so the rate automatically increases by 0.1% each year until it reaches 1.0%

**CAGIT: County Adjusted Gross Income Tax**

COIT and CAGIT are mutually exclusive.....Counties may not adopt both.

**CEDT: County Economic Income Tax**

The sum of COIT and CEDT rates cannot exceed 1%.

**LOIT: Local Option Income Tax** is available to local officials and can be used for levy replacement, Public /safety, and local property tax replacement that can be spread to all property, all residential, or only homesteads.

**TIF: Tax Incremental Finance** fees are generated in confined areas and can be used only in the confined areas for specific and prescribed purposes.

**RESOLUTION:** A Resolution is a pre-written statement of policy or legislative action taken by a Board of a corporate, political, or governmental governing body.

**ORDINANCE:** An Ordinance is an official form of legislative action, whereby a Board of a political or governmental governing body adopts a local law.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Adams County Department of Corrections operates on a "fiscal year" budget and a wage and salary schedule prescribed by another State agency.

**COUNCIL MEMBER**

Dennis Bluhm

Stan Stoppenhagen

Cory Sprunger

Yvette Weiland

Tony Mellencamp

Steve Bailey

John Schultz

**2019 BOARD ASSIGNMENTS**

Health Board

Economic Development Corporation

Health Insurance Meetings

Community Corrections Board

IT Committee

Dispatching Services Committee

Emergency Management Board

County Job Classification Appeals Board

County Job Classification Appeals Board

Bi-County

Communications Committee

Planning Commission Board

Solid Waste

## **Robert's Rules of Order**

*An abbreviated guide for effective management for Public meetings:*

The President of Council shall serve as the Chair for conducting all meetings; the Vice President shall serve in the President's Absence.

Four (4) members present shall constitute a quorum.

A quorum is required to conduct the official business of the Adams County Council. (All meetings are governed by the Indiana Open Door Law).

The Chair shall exercise authority in conducting the matters brought before the Council in terms of subject, time and presenters.

Members voting on issues brought before the Council shall be by "motion"; lacking a "Second", a motion shall die. A motion is passed by a majority vote.

Voting may be by voice, roll call or show of hands; the chair shall vote only to break a tie. A member may abstain in voting when there is a matter of direct personal or monetary interest in the outcome of the vote in question or where some other conflict of interest exists or may exist in determining the outcome of the vote.

A copy of the "Robert's Rules of Order" is available in the Council/Commissioner's room. It shall be the authoritative reference to clarify questions of governance and orderly procedure in the management and conduct of all public meetings and Executive sessions.