

Winneshiek County



APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

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**This booklet was compiled
by members of the League of Women Voters
in consultation with Winneshiek County officials.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Winneshiek County.....	2
County Government.....	3
Selection and Appointment to Boards/Commissions.....	4
How to Apply.....	5
Application Form.....	6
Learning About Boards and Commissions.....	8
Self-Assessment.....	9
General Procedures.....	10
How to Handle a Motion.....	10
Meeting Minutes.....	11
Open Meetings.....	12
Winneshiek County's Appointed Boards and Commissions.....	13
Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities Citizen Advisory Board.....	14
Pioneer Cemetery Commission.....	16
Planning and Zoning Commission.....	16
Board of Adjustment.....	18
Board of Health.....	19
Winneshiek County Historical Preservation Commission.....	19
Conservation Board.....	20
Judicial Magistrate Commission.....	21

Civil Service Commission.....	22
Commission of Veterans Affairs.....	24
Board of Review.....	25
Conference Board.....	25

Winneshiek County

APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Introduction

Citizen boards and commissions are established primarily by the Iowa Code, and in some cases, by local ordinances, to meet the needs of the community. Most boards and commissions are created to meet ongoing needs and continue to exist for as long as they provide assistance to the county board of supervisors and other elected officials at the county level. The structure, duties, and responsibilities of these bodies vary depending on each one's specific purpose or mission. All have one feature in common, however—they were established to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Winneshiek County. By serving on one of these bodies, county residents have an opportunity to join with local government and administrative staff to ensure that the needs of all county citizens are served.

Serving on a board or commission is a significant and meaningful way to participate in civic life. As a member, you can share your expertise while directly participating in shaping your community. Many people choose to serve on boards and commissions as a means of gaining new skills, sharing diverse viewpoints, or to “step out of a comfort zone.” Some might also choose to utilize their seats as a means to attain higher leadership positions, appointed or elected.

Winneshiek County is looking for diversity of experiences and skills on its boards and commissions. Most often, a person is appointed to a board or commission because of a particular skill, interest, or expertise. Others may have a general background in a subject, such as health care or the environment, and be selected to serve on a board with responsibilities related to that subject.

Specific expertise is not a requirement to apply for all boards and commissions. Do not hesitate to get more information about a board or commission that interests you. Use this booklet as a guide, contact a Winneshiek County Supervisor (563-382-2370) or the County Auditor (563-382-5085), or check out the county's website at www.winneshiekcouny.org for more detailed information.

Winneshiek County

Winneshiek County is named after the chief of the Winnebago Indians. Winneshiek was adviser to the War Chief Black Hawk.

In 1847 the early settlers asked for the organization of the county. On April 7, 1851 elections were held and the county seat, Decorah, was voted upon.



The county seat remains in the historic courthouse at 201 W. Main St. in Decorah. The cornerstone of the present courthouse was laid August 22, 1903 and the building was occupied in November, 1904.

County Government

winneshiekcounty.org

Winneshiek County is administered by a board of supervisors.

The Board of Supervisors consists of five members, serving four years each on a staggered calendar.

The Board of Supervisors is the policy-making body of the county.

It's duties include planning construction and maintenance of the secondary road system; levying taxes to raise the revenues for county purposes; appointing members to various county boards and commissions; and receiving the reports of county officials.

The Board of Supervisors meets Mondays in the courthouse at 9:30 a.m., on occasional Wednesdays and other days as needed.

Contact person is the supervisor serving as chair.

563-382-2370

Selection and Appointment to Boards / Commissions

In general, all board or commission members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Selection criteria varies depending upon the purpose, mission and requirements of each body. The following characteristics, however, are common to all board or commission members:

- **An interest in the board's/commission's area of concern**
- **The ability and willingness to work**
- **The ability to work with other people in a tactful and cooperative manner**
- **The time to carry out the board's/commission's duties/responsibilities**
- **A community point of view**

Prior to accepting a position on a board or commission, citizens should be aware of that body's meeting schedule to ensure they will be able to make the necessary time commitment. Citizens who accept a position on a board or commission also accept responsibility for committing a portion of their time to preparing for meetings.

How to Apply to Serve on a County Board or Commission

The application for all appointed county boards and commissions is on the county website at

winneshiekcounty.org

and also appears on the next two pages of this booklet.

Interested citizens may complete and submit an application for any of the boards/commissions at any time. Applications can be submitted online, or an applicant may copy and complete the application attached and turn in to the County Supervisors at the courthouse, or at the County Auditor's office. Applications are kept on file at the Auditor's office for one year and are reviewed when openings are available.

Also, when there is a vacancy on a board or commission, notice is given to the public via local media. At such times, new applications received and those on file are considered to fill the open position/s.

APPLICATION FORM FOR WINNESHIEK COUNTY BOARD/COMMISSION

Please Return To:

Winneshiek County Board of Supervisors, 201 W. Main St., Decorah, IA 52101 Phone: (563)382-2370 Fax: (563)387-4083 Website: www.winneshiekkounty.org

Application For: _____ **(Board/Commission)**

Date _____ **E-Mail Address** _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ **Fax Number** _____

Business Phone _____ **Cell Phone** _____

This form assists the Board of Supervisors in evaluating the qualifications of applicants for appointment to a board or commission. State law requires political subdivisions to make a good faith effort to balance most appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils according to gender by January 1, 2012 and each year thereafter.

Female

Male

Place of employment and position (and/or activities such as hobbies, volunteer work, etc., that you feel may qualify you for this position): _____

The following questions will assist the Board of Supervisors in its selection.

How much time will you be willing to devote in this position?

Interest in Appointment: Describe in detail why you are interested in serving on a county board or commission. Include information about your background that supports your interest.

6

Contributions you feel you can make to the Board/Commission.

Direction/role you perceive of this Board/Commission:

In lieu of/in addition to the above, do you have any comments to add that may assist the Board of Supervisors in its selection?

Please provide two references who may be contacted on your qualifications for this position.

Name	Address	Phone Number	E-mail	Relationship
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I certify that there is nothing that would prohibit me fro serving on this board or commission.

Signature_____ **Date**_____

YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE RETAINED IN OUR FILES FOR ONE YEAR

Learning About Boards and Commissions

Learning all you can about boards and commissions is critical to making a decision to commit to serve. You want to fully understand the function, purpose, and mission of any board or commission before seeking an appointment.

Contact the County Auditor's office or log onto winneshiekcounty.org to obtain more information and descriptions of the county's various boards and commissions.

Review the board's/commission's meeting minutes, strategic plans, annual reports, or newsletters.

Attend a meeting of the board/commission or an event they sponsor to form an impression of how the body operates.

Talk to current members serving or those who have served in past on the board/commission. This is perhaps the best way to learn what commitment is expected or needed as part of an appointment. You can find lists of those currently serving on the county website at winneshiekcounty.org, click "Auditor," then "Additional Info," then "Financial Report," or go directly to www.winneshiekcounty.org/auditor_additionalinfo.html.

Serving on a board or commission is a

significant and meaningful way to participate in civic life.

8

Self-Assessment

It may help to take a self-assessment of your experiences, interests, qualities and strengths that you have to offer your community.

What are your skills and work experiences?

What volunteer experiences have you had?

What is your education or training?

What honors or awards have you received?

What compliments or feedback from others do you hear about yourself?

From your responses above, select any that pertain to a board or commission that exists in your community and/or that interests you.

What descriptive qualities below do you possess?

Analytical	Flexible	Organized
Calm	Goal-Oriented	Reliable
Confident	Innovative	Resourceful
Cooperative	Knowledgeable	Self-Directed
Creative	Leader	Self-Motivated
Decisive	Well-Connected	Team Player
Fair	Logical	Tolerant

Reflecting on these experiences, qualities, skills and interests will help

strengthen your application to the selected board or commission and help you explain how you will be an asset. Also identify and be ready to offer a name or names of people who could serve as a reference for you in the application process, if needed.

General Procedures

Most board/commission meetings follow rules and procedures contained in Robert's Rules of Order and the established rules and procedures in the body's by-laws (if there are by-laws). In addition, the following procedures help in conducting business in a timely and productive manner:

- Start the meeting on time with a roll call
- Focus on issues at hand
- Follow agenda and order of business
- Follow rules and/or by-laws for public participation
- Allow time at end of meeting to review and evaluate meeting progress and decisions.

How to Handle a Motion

- Address the chair
- Get recognition
- Make a motion (Say "I move . . .")
- Second the motion
- Clearly state the motion
- Discuss the motion
- Restate the motion

- **Vote on the motion**
- **Announce the results**

10

Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes are public documents that are written by an appointed secretary from among the members on the board/commission. To maintain uniformity, keep these points in mind:

- **Write what is done; summarize what is said**
- **Write minutes in third person and use past tense**
- **Begin all minutes with the name of the board/commission, the date, the location, time of day, and members present**
- **State whether the meeting is regular or special**
- **List the chairperson of the meeting, and the secretary**
- **State whether the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved or dispensed with (approved without reading)**
- **Write out all main motions, including both those adopted and those denied**
- **State the name (at least last name) of the person making a motion and the person seconding the motion**
- **Record sustained and overruled points of order and appeals**
- **Summarize reports of committees, work groups or staff**
- **Record all appointments of committees and election of delegates**
- **Record the number of votes on both sides during formal voting**
- **During roll call vote, state the name of each person and their vote**
- **Record the time of adjournment**

- **The recording secretary signs the minutes.**

11

Minutes are approved at a subsequent meeting at which time corrections may be made.

Always keep personal opinions of praise or criticism out of these public documents.

A signed copy of meeting minutes is filed with the city clerk and available for public review.

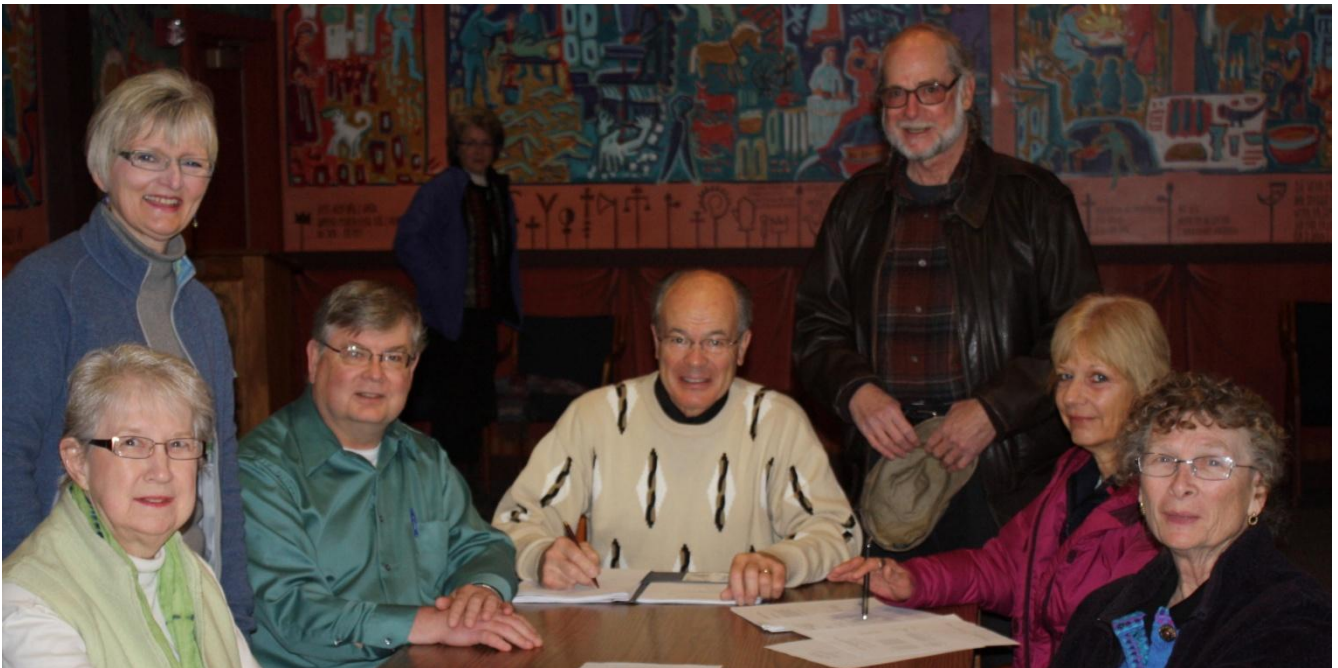
Open Meetings

All meetings of boards/commissions are open to the public, unless a closed meeting is needed and rules for such are followed. The Code of Iowa outlines rules for closed meetings.

Notice of all meetings is given at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. The notice must give the time, date, place of meeting, and tentative agenda. If 24-hour notice cannot be given, the reason must be stated in the minutes.

Members of a board/commission must consult applicable rules or codes of law regarding conflict of interest, liability, gifts and/or purchasing. The board/commission chair, County Auditor, or County Attorney can be consulted to answer questions or provide needed clarifications.

**Winneshiek County's Appointed
Boards and Commissions**



***Winneshiek County is looking
for diversity of experiences
and skills on its***

boards and commissions.

13

Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities

Citizens Advisory Board

The MH/DD Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) meets the second Wednesday of each month at 3:30 p.m. at Northeast Iowa Behavioral Health in Decorah (meeting time/location subject to change each year).

The board consists of nine (9) members who are people with disabilities, family members or guardians of people with disabilities, and members of the general public. Appointments are made by the County Supervisors upon recommendation from the Central Point of Coordination Administrator (CPC) and the CAB. Members serve three-year staggered terms.

The Central Point of Coordination Administrator's office is located in the courthouse annex. Phone number is 563-387-4144.

The board is established to review the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the Winneshiek County Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Services Management Plan, hereafter referred to as the MH/DD Management Plan. The MH/DD Management Plan describes how persons with disabilities receive appropriate, high quality services and supports within the financial limitations of federal, state, and county resources. The CAB acts in an advisory capacity on all matters relating to the MH/DD Management Plan, subject to any guidelines established in state law.

Working in cooperation with the CPC Administrator . . . the CAB shall review and comment on:

- 1) The scope of community-based services and supports to be covered through . . . the MH/DD Management Plan,

2)The criteria used to determine consumer eligibility for county-funded services . . . ,

14

3) The process for enrolling consumers . . . ,

4) The policies for the use of waiting lists and the provision of emergency services,

5) Guidelines for authorizing consumer services that promote the use of flexible, individualized services and supports, offer consumer choice, identify consumer rights and responsibilities, and the process for . . . appeal . . . ,

6) Plans to inform the public about the MH/DD Management Plan . . . ,

7) The quality assurance process to evaluate the responsiveness and efficiency of the county's managed care service system . . . ,

8) Proposed changes in the services provided . . . ,

9) The rate setting procedures and service system expenditures utilizing . . . data to identify ways to make the county funded services . . . more cost-efficient,

10) The development of the annual MH/DD Management Plan, including public comment . . .



Pioneer Cemetery Commission

The Pioneer Cemetery Commission meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the old Winneshiek County jail building, next to the courthouse. Summer meetings are sometimes held at a cemetery.

The commission has nine (9) members appointed by the County Supervisors. Each serves a 3 year staggered term.

The commission assumes jurisdiction and management of pioneer cemeteries. Its mission is to identify, protect, preserve and maintain these cemeteries and the monuments in them.

A “pioneer cemetery” is defined as a cemetery where there have been twelve or fewer burials in the preceding fifty years. The maintenance and repair of all cemeteries under the jurisdiction of the county, including pioneer cemeteries, are paid from the county general fund. The maintenance and improvement program for a pioneer cemetery may also include restoration and management of native prairie grasses and wildflowers.

Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the large courtroom of the county courthouse, *IF* there are agenda items to discuss, and/or items that would require an application.

A meeting can be called by the Zoning Administrator, the chairman of the P&Z commission, or by 4 members of the commission. (During 2010 the P&Z met 8 times).

An “application” is a form used to initiate certain types of zoning actions and to gather information to assist the acting authority in the decision-making process. Applications are used for a number of options that comply with the ordinance, but may or may not require additional actions.

16

The commission consists of nine (9) members appointed by the County Supervisors. Staggered terms are served for five years.

In the event of the absence from the county or in the incapacity of a member, the County Supervisors may appoint a substitute who serves as a member of the Commission, with the same powers and authority as the regular member, until such regular member has returned.

The county zoning ordinance has the following purposes:

- 1) To support and promote the creation of orderly land development patterns consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in the Winneshiek County Comprehensive Plan.**
- 2) To protect the agricultural interests of Winneshiek County.**
- 3) To protect and encourage the maintenance and operation of the “family farm.”**
- 4) To provide for the compatibility of different land uses and the most appropriate use of different land throughout Winneshiek County.**
- 5) To facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage,**

schools, parks and other public requirements.

- 6) To enhance the beauty of the natural resources of Winneshiek County.**
- 7) To increase the economic resources of the county by making the area more attractive to industry.**
- 8) To protect the public health, safety, comfort, convenience and general welfare.**
- 9) To protect the natural environment.**
- 10) To encourage cooperation between private and public sectors and to establish conservation measures that would be beneficial to Winneshiek County.**

Board of Adjustment

The Board of Adjustment meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. in the large courtroom of the courthouse.

The board consists of five (5) members appointed by the County Supervisors for terms of five years. The County Supervisors may remove members of the board from office for cause upon written charges and after public hearing. The County Supervisors fill vacancies for the unexpired term of the member.

The Board of Adjustment has the following powers and duties:

- (1) To hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by an administrative official in the enforcement of this chapter or of any Ordinance adopted pursuant thereto.**
- (2) To hear and decide special exceptions to the terms of the Ordinance upon which such Board is required to pass under**

such Ordinance.

- (3) To authorize upon appeal, in specific cases, such variance from the terms of the Ordinance as will not be contrary to the public interest, where owing to special conditions a literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship, and so that the spirit of the Ordinance shall be observed and substantial justice done.**

Board of Health

The Board of Health meets the second Wednesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. at the Smith Building in Decorah. There are five (5) members who serve three year terms and who are appointed by the County Supervisors.

The board oversees the Winneshiek County Public Health Agency.

Winneshiek County Public Health is a Medicare/Medicaid certified home health agency. The staff of WCPH is charged with preserving and maintaining the health of the community by offering health education programming and health promotion clinics, such as immunizations and blood pressures. The agency monitors the health status of the community through disease surveillance, investigation and follow-up. They work with Environmental Health to ensure that residents have safe water and clean sanitation. Staff consists of registered nurses and home care aides who enable clients to remain in their own homes for as long as safely possible. Nurses provide assistance with medication teaching and set-up, dressing changes, etc. Home Care Aides offer personal care.

Winneshiek County Historical Preservation Commission

The Historical Preservation Commission meets the second Saturday of each month at 8:30 a.m. at Vesterheim Museum in Decorah.

Nine (9) members comprise the commission, all appointed by the County Supervisors.

The main office is located in the Courthouse annex in Decorah. The secondary office is located in the basement of the Decorah Public Library.

The commission's mission is to protect, collect, preserve and promote the written, oral and tangible items of historical importance to Winneshiek County and to cooperate with other organizations to accomplish common goals.

19

Conservation Board

The Conservation Board meets at Lake Meyer Park near Ft. Atkinson the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. (meeting schedule may vary).

There are five (5) members who serve 5 year staggered terms. Members are appointed by County Supervisors.

Office Location:

Lake Meyer Park, 2546 Lake Meyer Road, Fort Atkinson, Iowa, 52144

Contact Information:

Phone: (563) 534-7145

Fax: (563) 534-7144

Email: conservation@neitel.net

The purpose of the board is to provide the public with wide-ranging



opportunities for quality outdoor recreation while wisely managing our natural resources and encouraging land stewardship through natural history and environmental education programming.

Winneshiek County has over 20 public areas that are available for hiking, biking, hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, bird watching and other forms of outdoor recreation.

Judicial Magistrate Commission

A magistrate appointing commission is established in each county. The commission shall be composed of the following members:

- a.* A district judge designated by the chief judge of the judicial district.
- b.* Three members appointed by the Board of Supervisors for six- year terms and each sixth year thereafter.
- c.* Two attorneys elected by the attorneys in the county.

If for some reason only one attorney is able to be elected, the County Board of Supervisors shall only appoint *two* commissioners (see *b*, above); if no attorney happens to be elected, the Board of Supervisors shall only appoint *one* commissioner (see *b*). The point is to maintain a balance of attorneys/judge (*a* and *c*), and non-attorney/judge members (*b*).

The Board of Supervisors shall not appoint an attorney or an active law enforcement officer to serve as a commissioner.

A member of a magistrate appointing commission shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of official duties.

A member of a county magistrate appointing commission shall not be appointed to the office of magistrate, and shall not be nominated for or appointed to the office of district associate judge, office of associate juvenile judge, or office of associate probate judge. A member of the commission shall not be eligible to vote for the appointment or nomination of a family member, current law partner, or current business partner.

Learning all you can about boards and commissions is critical to making a decision to commit to serve. Talk to current members or those who have served in past on the board/commission.

Civil Service Commission

Meetings of the Civil Service Commission are called when there is a civil service position (sheriff's deputy) that needs to be filled.

The civil service commission is composed of three (3) members. Two members are appointed by the County Board of Supervisors and one by the County Attorney. Appointees to the commission shall be residents of the county for at least two years immediately preceding appointment, and shall be electors. Terms of office are six years; however, the initial members of the commission shall be staggered.

Not more than two commissioners shall be members of the same political party. Commissioners hold no elective or other appointive public office during their terms of appointment to the commission. Commissioners serve without compensation but are reimbursed for necessary expense and mileage incurred in the actual performance of their duties.

The commission has the following powers and duties:

- 1. To adopt, and amend as necessary, rules that specify the manner in which civil service examinations are to be held and appointments, promotions, transfers, reinstatements, demotions, suspensions, and discharges are to be made.**
- 2. To administer practical tests designed to determine the ability of persons to perform the duties of the position for which they are seeking appointment.**

3. To conduct and prepare annual investigations and reports concerning the effectiveness of, and compliance with, the rules adopted by the commission, and . . . to inspect all departments, offices, and positions of employment covered.

3. To conduct informal hearings concerning matters contemplated in Iowa Code Chapter 341A.

22

4. To hear and determine appeals or complaints respecting the allocation of positions of employment . . .

5. To arrange, compile, and administer competitive tests to determine the relative qualifications of persons seeking employment in any class of position . . .

6. To certify to the county sheriff when a vacant position is to be filled, on written request, a list of the names of the persons passing the examination.

7. To keep such records as may be necessary for the proper administration of this chapter.

8. To classify deputy sheriffs and subdivide them into groups according to rank and grade . . .

9. To purchase all necessary supplies, enter into contracts, and do all things necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

10. To keep records of the service of each employee in the classified service.

Commission of Veterans Affairs

The Commission of Veterans Affairs meets the third Thursday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the office of Veterans Affairs, bottom floor of the courthouse in Decorah. Office phone number is 563-382-5786.

The commission consists of five (5) persons. If possible, each member of the commission is a veteran of a different military action. Members of the commission are appointed by the Board of Supervisors to staggered three-year terms. A member of the commission shall receive twenty-five dollars or a greater amount as established by the Board of Supervisors for each month during which the member attends one or more commission meetings and shall be reimbursed for mileage the same as a member of the board of supervisors.

At the monthly meeting the commission determines who is entitled to benefits and the probable amount required to be expended. The commission meets annually to prepare an estimated budget and certify the budget to the board of supervisors. The board may approve or reduce the budget for valid reasons shown. The board's decision is final.

It is unlawful for any county board of supervisors or any county commission of veteran affairs to place the administration of the duties of the county commission of veteran affairs under any other agency, or to publish the names of the veterans or their families who receive benefits under the provisions of Chapter 35B of the Iowa Code.

The commission is responsible for the interment in a suitable cemetery of the body of any veteran, or the spouse, surviving spouse, or child of the person, if the person has died without leaving sufficient means to defray

the funeral expenses. The commission may pay the expenses in a sum not exceeding an amount established by the board of supervisors.

The Board of Supervisors may appropriate moneys for training an executive director or administrator and for the expenses for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, medical benefits, and a funeral for indigent veterans, as well as for their indigent spouses, surviving spouses, and minor children not over eighteen years of age, who legally reside in the county.

Board of Review

The Board of Review meets at the county courthouse (courtroom) every year, during the month of May, for 2 to 15 days, on average.

The board is appointed for all assessments made by the County Assessor. A board of review may act only upon written protests which have been filed with the board of review between April 16 and May 5, inclusive.

The board consists of five (5) members who serve six-year terms. Reappointments are staggered. As nearly as possible this board includes one licensed real estate broker and one registered architect or person experienced in the building and construction field. At least one member of the board is a farmer. Members are residents of the assessor jurisdiction.

A member shall not at the same time serve on either the conference board or the examining board, or be an employee of the assessor's office.

Conference Board

The Conference Board meets at the county courthouse, usually January and February. Can meet anytime as needed.

The board consists of the mayors of all incorporated cities in the county whose property is assessed by the County Assessor, one representative from the board of directors of each high school district of the county, who is a resident of the county, said board of directors appointing said representative for a one-year term and notifying the clerk of the conference board as to their representative, and members of the Board of Supervisors.

The chairperson of the Board of Supervisors acts as chairperson . . . In any action taken by the conference board, the mayors of all incorporated cities . . . constitute one voting unit, . . . one representative from the board of directors of each high school district of the county shall constitute one voting unit . . . and the County Board of Supervisors shall constitute one voting unit, each unit having a single vote and no action shall be valid except by the vote of not less than two out of the three units. The majority vote of the members present of each unit shall determine the vote of the unit. The Assessor shall be clerk of the conference board.

***For more information about county boards
and commissions, log onto***

winneshiekcounty.org

or contact the chair of the county

Board of Supervisors at

563-382-2370

or the County Auditor at

563-382-5085.

