THE ROLE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR/COORDINATOR

Kelsey Baker, Swift County Administrator
Molly O’Rourke, Washington County Administrator
Rebecca Young, Stevens County Coordinator
Ryan Krosch, Nicollet County Administrator
County Structure

- Variety of management structures in counties
- 69 counties have either an administrator or coordinator
- 18 counties with an Auditor/Treasurer, Manager, or other position
Role of Coordinator

Created by MN Statute 375.49:
• Manages the affairs of the county which the Board has authority over;
• Update the Board on the financial condition of the county
• Make recommendations about county affairs to the Board
• Serve as clerk of the Board
• Ensure Board actions are executed
• Initiate and present a proposed annual budget to the Board for its consideration
Role of Administrator

Created by MN Statute 375A.06:

• Hire, manage, suspend, and remove county personnel
• Execute all orders of the Board and laws of the state required to be enforced through the county board
• Provide for county purchases
• Prepare and submit to the county board a proposed annual budget and long-range capital expenditure plan
• Recommend measures for adoption to the Board
• Keep the Board fully advised as to the financial condition and needs of the county
Coordinator & Administrator Differences

**Administrator**
- Manages and directs department heads
- Oversees county administrative functions
- Responsible for budget development and execution
- Coordinates short and long-term strategic planning
- Manages the county’s risk management programs

**Coordinator**
- Peer of department heads
- Provides guidance to department heads on county administrative functions
- Manages budget process and assures operations are executed
- Collaborates with department heads on short and long-term strategic planning
Counties Modify Positions

Administrators and Coordinators may have different job duties depending on how their county structures the position. Examples of special job duties:

• Human resources responsibilities
• County clerk duties
• Combined with other positions like Auditor/Treasurer or Engineer

Important to talk with your administrator or coordinator to learn specifics of their position.
Administrators & Coordinators Do Not...

Help carry agendas for individual commissioners
  • They do execute what the majority wants

Win popularity contests
  • They do have to make tough and consistent decisions that will upset some staff and citizens

Want more “power”
  • It's not about “power”, it's about everyone carrying out their defined role
• **Manage and Lead Others** - Implement the organization’s vision and mission into the day-to-day business. Guide, direct and influence others to do the same.

• **Apply Essential Business and Professional Skills** - Manage human, financial and informational resources in a manner that instills public trust; and accomplishes the organization’s mission.

• **Build Effective Work Relationships** - Excel at building partnerships and fostering teamwork. Work collaboratively within and across organizational boundaries to achieve common goals.

• **Provide High-Quality Service** - Identify customer expectations and respond appropriately to their needs.

• **Understand County Business** - Develop a broad understanding of overall county functions and the relationship between functions.
Professional Associations

• Minnesota Association of County Administrators (MACA)
  • Affiliate organization of AMC
• Pathways
  • AMC program for new county administrators and coordinators
• ICMA, MCMA
Effective Board & Administrator Relationships

• Open and consistent communication
• Define and respect each others roles and responsibilities
• Fairness – equity in treatment of elected officials
• Maintain confidentiality