



**village of
Benzonia**

Boards & Commissions Recruitment Guide

April 2024

Last Amended _____



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Recruitment Guide

General Information

The Village of Benzonia presents this Recruitment Guide to provide interested individuals with information about the various opportunities that are available to serve the community. All Board and Commission members serving in Village of Benzonia are tasked with supporting or advising community leaders and elected officials on key policies and decisions within the Village as well as the extended community.

The Village has long academic roots, a rich and colorful history, it is community-driven and has strong family values. The founders knew people would be attracted to this wilderness, these beautifully forested lands with pristine views of the surrounding lakes and rivers, this “good place”. - excerpt from the Master Plan Vision Statement

Development Review Bodies

Village Council: The Village Council is the legislative and policy-making body for the Village government. The Village President and other Council roles are elected positions. The Village Council also serves as the **Zoning Board of Appeals for the Village.**

Planning Commission: The Planning Commission is largely responsible for the Village master plan, zoning ordinance and reviewing special land use development projects. Members are appointed by the Village president to 3 year terms. The Planning Commission also has administrative role. This means that they are permitted or required by statute or ordinance to conduct formal reviews and issue administrative decisions. These decisions are then sent to the Village Council as official recommendations.

Committees: Advisory Committees may be occasionally formed and are made up of Village residents, business owners and/or other Community leaders to help guide the planning commission on various projects and help implement identified tasks from the master plan. The Village is actively seeking volunteers for this role. Typically, advisory committees would have a work agenda in place for a calendar year during which it undertakes a few projects of their choosing - as influenced by tasks identified in the master plan. The Advisory Committee(s) make recommendation or report to the Planning Commission.

The Village Council is responsible for making the final decisions on most issues or topics, but it will look to these groups for advice, background information, and analysis. As the elected body, the Village Council has discretion to accept advice in full, in part, or not at all.

Meeting Schedules

Village Council: The first Monday of the Month (the next Monday if it falls on a holiday) at 6pm.
Planning Commission: The third Thursday of the Month at 6:30pm. (or as posted)

All meeting are held at the Village Office at 1276 Michigan Avenue.

When a large public meeting is expected the Village typically will hold the meeting at the Benzonia Township Hall or the Benzonia Public Library. The public meeting announcement are to be noted accordingly.

Special Meetings

Special meetings are scheduled as required. Special meetings are posted as required in the paper, on the Village website or at the Village Office.

Recruitment Guide

Interested in Applying?

All Village residents are invited to apply for appointment to the Village's Council, Commissions and Committees. The Village prioritizes and understands the importance of educating individuals interested in serving during the recruitment process. It is recommended that prospective members review the desirable knowledge and skills listed for each position in addition to reviewing the work responsibilities and time commitment details for the position before applying. Eligibility to apply and serve on a board or commission varies based on bylaws and authorizing legislation.

Prospective applicants interested in applying to a Village Council, Commission or Committees position are welcomed to either contact the Village Office or stop by and visit the Village Office (key contact info below) to first find out if there are any vacant positions. Feel free to reach out to any of the staff listed below, all will be happy to answer questions.

Key Contact Information

VILLAGE OF BENZONIA:

PO Box 223
1276 Michigan Ave.
Benzonia, MI 49616
Phone: 231-882-9981
Email: benzonia9981@att.net

Office Hours:
Thursday, 10 am - 3 pm
Saturday, 9 am - 12 pm
or call for an appointment.

Clerk: Maridee Cutler
villageofbenzonia.clerk@gmail.com

Treasurer: Toni Flynn
benzonia9981@att.net

Superintendent: Chris Pritchard (Hours of Operation: 6:00 am - 2:30 pm)
Ph. 231-871-0204

Zoning Administrator: Sara Kirk (By Appointment)
zoning.villageofbenzonia@gmail.com

Appointment Process

Appointment Process

When terms expire and/or upon notification of a board or board resignation, openings for the position will be advertised by the Village Clerk in the local newspaper, through the Village website, and/or via social media. The Village Clerk will gather new applications and contacts all applicants on file to confirm whether they are still interested in serving on that board. After gathering and verifying applications, the Village Clerk will forward them to the Village President and/or Council.

For Appointed officials: Appointments made by the Village President with the consent of Council, the Village President shall notify Council of his or her desired appointees in writing in advance of the Village Council meeting at which he or she desires to make the appointments.

For Elected officials: Elected officials in the Village include the Village President and Village Council Members

1. Those interested persons in vacant council positions will be directed to the Village Clerk for specific information regarding election procedures and requirements.
2. In the event of a mid-term elected official vacancy, public notices of the vacancy will be posted in a local newspaper, on the Village website and social media. Applications will be forwarded to the Village President for consideration and placement on the next regular Council meeting.

Term of Service

Each board and commission has different terms of service based on their bylaws and authorizing legislation. Typically boards and commissions will serve three year terms, this is found in the zoning ordinance or bylaws.

Reappointment

All members of commissions or boards whose terms are set to expire must submit a request in writing to the Village Clerk. The written request will confirm the board or commission member's interest to continue or discontinue service. Member are eligible for reappointment at the discretion of the Village Council. Reappointments are not automatic.

Resignation

Any board member that intends to resign must forward a letter to their board or commission chair, who will then forward that letter to the Village Clerk. The resignation letter will then be forwarded to the Village Council for their acceptance. If a board or commission member resigns before their term expires, a replacement member will be appointed via the process listed above to serve the remainder of the term.

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Member Expectations

General Expectations & Responsibilities

- To attend all regularly scheduled meetings;
- To use parliamentary procedure to conduct and participate in meetings;
- To make recommendations to the Township Board as required by law upon request;
- To refrain from any act that constitutes a conflict of interest;
- To follow the operating rules and bylaws the board or commission has established;
- To review all relevant materials and come to the meetings prepared to discuss the issues;
- To work cooperatively with other commissions when there are areas of common interest or overlap in responsibilities;
- To abide by the provisions of the Open Meetings Act;
- To understand that the commitment of appointment is an on-going process that involves a long-range interest in the community; fairness, common sense, honesty, good moral character; and knowledge of the Township, its people, its customs and its ordinances.

Qualities of Effective Members

- Work within a team framework of compromise and exchange;
- Shows courteous behavior and respect to other board members, Township Staff, and members of the general public;
- Separate people from the issues when conflict arises;
- Focus on mutual interests and shared goals;
- Look for compromises and work to understand diverse perspectives;
- Examine one's own approach to dealing with conflict and be open about concerns where there is room for compromise;
- Strive to problem-solve based on collaboration rather than simply making a decision.

Village Council

Role Title:

Village Council Member

Appointment Type:

Elected Official

General Statement of Duties:

The Council is an elected body and consists of the President and six trustees. The Council's duty is to legislate as a whole and consider the health, welfare and safety of the citizens that elect them by establishing fiscally sound budgets, policies and procedures to do so. The President of the Council serves as the chief executive officer and not only presides at each meeting but also votes on each question.

Our Village Council is the legislative body of Benzonia. The Council Trustees also serve as the Zoning Board of Appeals. These elected officials, along with the Village President, make the policy decisions which protect the health, safety, and welfare of our community.

Meetings:

First Monday of the Month (the next Monday if the first Monday falls on a holiday), at 6pm at the Village Office.

Orientation Materials:

An orientation packet will be provided by the Village.

Examples of Work Performed: The following tasks are typical examples of the work performed by an appointee holding this position. The list is not all inclusive and does not include all of the tasks relevant to this position.

- Be appointed to a committee and oversee tasks required and report to Council as needed;
- Read and interpret staff, applicant, and consultant reports and plans, ordinances, maps, legal opinions, and other technical data;
- Speak or otherwise communicate with commissioners, staff, applicants, and the public;
- Attend training courses and seminars.

Desirable Knowledge, Abilities, and Skills (Recommended, But Not Required):

- Basic understanding of the General Law Village as established by the State of Michigan. *The Handbook of General Law Village Officials*, is available through the Michigan Municipal League.
- Ability to communicate through email.
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with staff and the general public.
- Ability to listen and maintain professionalism with other commissioners, staff, and the public.
- Willingness to learn!

Recruitment Guide

Planning Commission

Role Title:

Planning Commissioner

Appointment Type:

By the Village Council; Three (3) Year Terms

General Statement of Duties:

The Commission reviews and approves site plans, approves temporary land uses, and recommends special land uses and zoning ordinance amendments to the Village Council.

Members of the Planning Commission are required to attend training in planning and zoning - 6 hours per member are required per year. The Planning Commission is responsible for overseeing the Village's Master Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan among other important planning documents.

Meetings:

Third Thursday of the month; 6:30 p.m.; Village Office (special meetings as required)

Orientation Materials:

An orientation packet will be provided by the Village.

Examples of Work Performed: The following tasks are typical examples of the work performed by an appointee holding this position. The list is not all inclusive and does not include all of the tasks relevant to this position.

- Read and interpret staff, applicant, and consultant reports and/or plans.
- Speak or otherwise communicate with commissioners, council members, staff, applicants, and the public.
- Read and interpret plans, ordinances, maps, legal opinions, and other technical data.
- Attend training courses and seminars.

Desirable Knowledge, Abilities, and Skills (Recommended, But Not Required):

- Basic understanding of building construction or engineering, land use planning, real estate, development, or law.
- Ability to communicate through email.
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with staff and the general public.
- Ability to listen and maintain professionalism with other commissioners, staff, and the public.
- Willingness to learn!

Zoning Board of Appeals

Role Title:

Zoning Board of Appeals Member

Appointment Type:

By the Village Council; Three (3) Year Terms

Members of the ZBA shall be composed of three (3) members of the Village Council: An employer or contractor of the Village Council may not serve as a member of the ZBA.

General Statement of Duties:

To hear appeals and make decisions necessary for the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance.

Members of the ZBA are required to attend training in planning and zoning. The training can be concurrent with training required for either the Village Council or Planning Commission. The Village will make every effort to provide or support training that is conducive to the member's schedule. As a part of training every member is expected to review the Village of Benzonia Zoning Ordinance, Village Master Plan, The Michigan Zoning and Enabling Act and the Michigan Municipal League's Zoning Board of Appeals Handbook.

Meetings:

Special meetings, as required.

Orientation Materials:

An orientation packet will be provided by the Village.

Examples of Work Performed: The following tasks are typical examples of the work performed by an appointee holding this position. The list is not all inclusive and does not include all of the tasks relevant to this position.

- To hear and decide appeals of administrative decisions made in implementing the zoning ordinance.
- To hear and decide requests for variances from the strict terms of the zoning ordinance.
- Interpret the provisions of the zoning ordinance

Desirable Knowledge, Abilities, and Skills (Recommended, But Not Required):

- Ability to perform site inspections.
- Willingness to research zoning issues and stay up to date on current issues.
- Basic understanding of building construction or engineering, land use planning, real estate, development, or law.
- Ability to listen and maintain professionalism with other commissioners, staff, and the public.
- Willingness to learn!

Recruitment Guide

Various Committee Roles

From time to time planning commission will seek to form subcommittees to help guide and provide input in order to complete action items identified in the master plan. The following is an example of various subcommittees that have previously been identified, these may change with needs of the Village.

Role Title:

Subcommittee Member (Design Subcommittee, etc.)

Appointment Type:

By the Planning Commission - volunteer only.

General Statement of Duties:

Subcommittees would ideally have 4-5 members plus at least one member of the planning commission who would be responsible to report any recommendations/progress to the planning commission.

Meetings:

Special meetings, as required.

Orientation Materials:

An orientation packet will be provided by the Village.

Examples of Work Performed: The following tasks are typical examples of the work performed by volunteers holding this position. The list is not all inclusive and does not include all of the tasks relevant to this position.

- Implement action list items from the Master Plan (as directed by the Planning Commission)
- Meet with community members, organize additional volunteers

Desirable Knowledge, Abilities, and Skills (Recommended, But Not Required):

- Basic understanding of building construction, design, architecture, marketing, community development and/or outreach.
- Ability to communicate through email and clearly and effectively with staff and commission or council members.
- Ability to listen and maintain professionalism with other commissioners, staff, and the public.
- Willingness to collaborate and learn!

please fill of the application and return to the Village Clerk (mail or email), applications will be kept on file FOR UP TO 6 MONTHS. You should expect to be contacted within 2 weeks to determine if your skill set is needed at the present time. If you don't hear from us within 2 weeks please contact the Village office or Zoning Administrator. We encourage you to follow up again in 6 months.

DESIRED APPOINTMENT - COUNCIL, COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE:

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

STREET ADDRESS:

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE AS A COUNCIL MEMBER ON A COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE?

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE ANY COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN:

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR SKILLS, TALENTS AND KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU WOULD BRING TO THE TABLE:

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT AND TIME COMMITMENTS?

WHAT IS YOUR EDUCATION AND TRAINING BACKGROUND?

WHAT SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENTS OR GOALS DO YOU HAVE IN MIND FOR THE VILLAGE?