

Welcome to
Hawkfest!

This is **your** local government



Hebron JSA 2021



Greetings!

My name **Brooklynn**

and I went to **Texas Girls State** last year. As secretary of JSA, I wanted to share some of the information I learned. It's more government than it is politics, but understanding one can provide insight to the other.

Junior State of America (JSA) is a bipartisan government and politics club focused on the education and involvement of high schoolers in their local community.

1

Municipal Government

Home Rule v. General Law cities and what it all means

General Law Cities are cities that have less than 5,000 people in population. They are not permitted to adopt a charter.

Home Rule Cities are cities that have a population of more than 5,000 people. They are able to adopt their own charters with an election.



Forms of **Municipal Government**

- Mayor-Council Form

- Weak Mayor

- An elected mayor w/ limited authority & budget oversight
 - A large council elected by districts
 - City department heads appointed by council

- Strong Mayor

- Council is elected at large, by district, or a combination
 - An elected mayor w/ power to:
 - appoint & remove most department heads
 - Veto power for mayor
 - Is responsible for preparation of budget for council approval

Mayor Council Form can either have a strong or weak mayor, though Strong Mayor is more common.

Lends itself to political manipulation because there is no one solely responsible. The mayor lacks control over their administration.

Mayor must act as a politician and an administrative head. Easy to get into a gridlock between the council and mayor.

Houston, Pasadena, and Texas City use a strong mayor plan!



Forms of **Municipal Government**

- ◉ Council-Manager Form
 - A council is elected
 - Council
 - Makes policy and exercises all legislation
 - Employs a professionally trained city manager
 - Manager
 - Must prepare a budget and present
 - Responsible for the city's administrative, appoints and can remove department heads
 - Mayor (a ceremonial position)

Owes their position to the council, but arguably has the most power in running the city.

Carrollton, Lewisville, and Frisco all use Council-Manager municipal governments!



Members of the Municipal Government

Council

- Elected by district
- legislates

Treasurer/Financial Officer

- May be elected or appointed
- Receives and keeps money belonging to city & makes payments

Attorney

- Employed by city to represent or defend it in court
- Can employ other attorneys to help out

Police Department

- Chief of police: goal to prevent crime and arrest offenders
- City can provide protection for policeman if they are discharged

Fire Department

- City council has power to provide for a department

Health Officers

- Appoints a health officer and health inspectors

2

County Government

The administrative government of the state



Roles of the **County Government**

- Execute state laws
- Collect state taxes
- Administer justice for the state
- Maintain jails
- Issue marriage and other licenses
- Record deeds, wills, mortgages, marriage licenses and other documents
- Assess property for taxation
- Collect taxes and expend funds
- Build and repair roads, bridges, drains, etc.
- Administer elections
- Care for the poor
- Protect the health of individuals in the community
- Establishing parks hospitals, and airports
- Providing forest-fire/other fire protection
- Other activities in relation to agriculture, conservation, water, and sewage systems

Yes, this is a LOT! The county and city share some similarities, though. They both rely on tax revenue to fund their goals.



County Gov. Positions Pt. 1

County Judge

- Full voting member of the county court
- Head of civil defense & disaster relief
- Head of county welfare
- In counties w/ pop. less than 225,000:
 - Preps budget w/ auditor or clerk

County Commission(ers)

- Election related *everything*
- Establishes a courthouse & jail
- Appoints county health officer and minor officials
- Builds/repairs county roads
- Determines county tax rate
- Adopts budget
- Administers welfare service
- Provides for hospitals
- Divides county into justice of the peace precincts
- May establish libraries, parks, & other public works



Feature: Dallas **County Judge** Clay Jenkins

Remember this guy? He was constantly on the news doing COVID press briefings in the spring and summer. Now you know why: he's not a *judge* judge, but a county judge which is a different ordeal!

See this video from May 5th - [County Judge in ACTION](#)



County Gov. Positions Pt. 2

County Attorney

- Legal advisor to county and precinct officers
- Represents the state in criminal cases in county and justice courts

County Clerk

- Acts as clerk of the Commissioners Court
 - Keeps minutes of meetings
- Recorder of all legal documents and instruments on record at the courthouse
- Issues marriage (and other) licenses

County Treasurer

- Chief financial officer
- Receives and payouts all county funds
- Makes quarterly reports to provide updates on the treasury
- Must also do a monthly report



County Gov. Positions Pt. 3

Sheriff

- Law enforcement officer
- Executive officer of the county
- Serves warrants, writs, processes, subpoenas, etc.
- In charge of county jail and care/custody of inmates

Constable

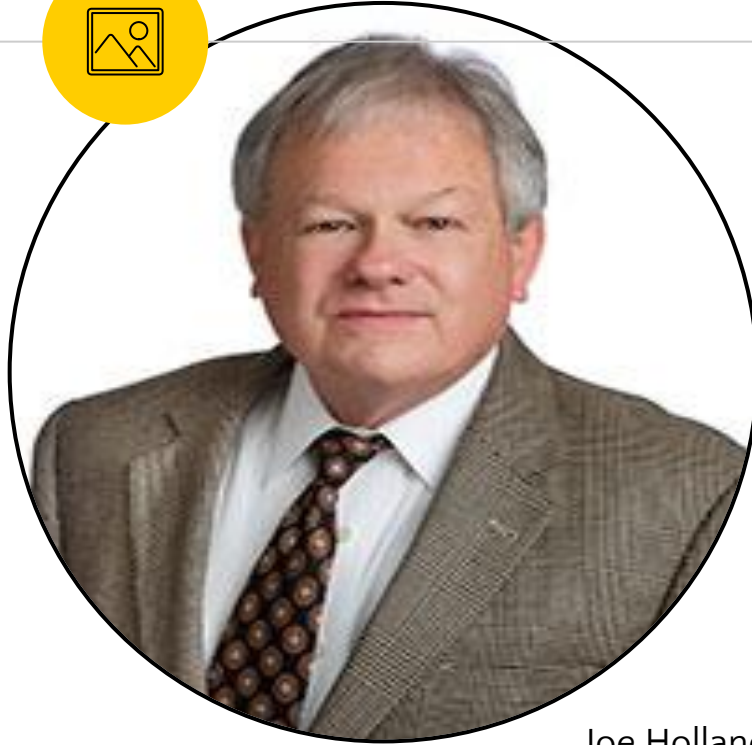
- Elected for each judge precinct
- Serves processes
- Attends court
- Peace officer

District Clerk

- Keeps records of district court(s)
- Only in counties with a pop. greater than 8,000

Tax Assessor-Collector

- Assesses and collect property taxes
- Registers motor vehicles
- Issues certificates of title
- Responsible for voter registration



Joe Holland, Justice of the Peace
Denton County, Precinct 1

Pt.4 **Justice of the Peace**

- Elected for each precinct
 - Population determines number of precincts
- Presides over justice court (criminal misdemeanor)
- Small claims court (civil matters not exceeding \$10,000)
- May issue warrants, administer oaths, and perform marriages

3

But... why?

How is this information useful to us high schoolers and members of the Hebron community?

Local government will always be relevant, so here are some brief takeaways we want you to have received from this presentation!



♪ the more you know ♪

Get Involved

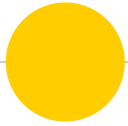
- Attend a city council meeting
- Contact the right official with questions or concerns
- Visit these buildings and offices
- Explore interesting opportunities offered through your local government

Be Aware

- Know the names or the positions when they are mentioned in the local news
- Know when important decisions are being made that could affect you and your family
- Keep exploring other parts of local government

Spread the Word

- Share this information with your friends!
- Talk to people around you about how the system works



Thank you for your time!

We hope you enjoyed learning about some of the ways local governments function and hope that it helps you feel more connected to your city and community!

Sincerely,
Hebron JSA