

BENTON COUNTY CHARTER

The League of Women Voters believes that:

1. The County assessor be appointed by the Board of Commissioners rather than being elected;
2. The County sheriff be a nonpartisan office rather than a partisan one;
3. The Charter Review Committee be required to hold public hearings on all recommendations and present them to the voters.
4. The LWVC supports a Benton County Charter that meets the following criteria:
 - A. Provides a basic framework of government.
 - B. Is brief, clear and flexible enough to provide for changing needs of the county.
 - C. Provides for orderly change.
 - D. Clearly assigns authority and responsibility.
 - E. Ensures that related activities are grouped together.
 - F. Separates legislative from administrative powers.
 - G. Provides for a representative government responsive to the will of the people.

To best meet these criteria, the League believes that the Board of Commissioners should focus on policy formation, liaison with state and regional government agencies, and communication with the citizens of Benton County. A County Manager should have primary responsibility for administration. In particular, the Benton County Charter should specify the duties, responsibilities and qualifications of a professional County Manager. At a minimum, the County Manager should: a) be the chief administrative officer of the County, b) be the reporting authority for all appointed department heads, c) have responsibility for all personnel functions and d) serve at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners. (#4 adopted May 31, 2000).