A Brief Look at Chisago County History

Chisago County was established in 1851, seven years before Minnesota became a state. The county seat, first at Taylors Falls, moved to Chisago City in 1865 and to Center City in 1875. The wood-frame courthouse built at Center City in 1876 stood at the site of the new Government Center until 1990 when it was moved to Taylors Falls.

The St. Croix River which forms the county’s eastern boundary brought the earliest settlers to the area. The Dakota and Ojibway were largely gone when the first white settlers appeared. Europeans arrived from the north as early as 1680. French fur traders following the same route southward from Lake Superior established trading posts along the river as far south as Taylors Falls in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the late 1880s the first sawmills were built along the St. Croix. The logging industry boomed into the twentieth century.

Among the first permanent settlers was a party of Swedes who traveled upriver from Illinois in 1851 and established a colony at Center City. This colony was made famous by Swedish writer Vilhelm Moberg in his novels the *Emigrants*, *Unto a Good Land* and *The Last Letter Home*.

Farming, begun in the 1850s, was a focus until the 1890s when vacationers discovered the county’s bountiful lakes and rivers. Today it is the beauty of the Dalles of the St. Croix, its park system and abundant recreational areas that bring visitors to the county.

*By Lloyd Hackel*
**DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Chase Burnham</td>
<td>651-213-8830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Commissioners</td>
<td></td>
<td>651-213-8830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>John Keefe</td>
<td>651-213-8550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>Janet Reiter</td>
<td>651-213-8400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditor-Treasurer</td>
<td>Bridgitte Konrad</td>
<td>651-213-8500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Administration</td>
<td>Kathleen Karnowski</td>
<td>651-213-8650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Management</td>
<td>Scott Sellman</td>
<td>651-775-9973 or 651-213-6313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension Services</td>
<td></td>
<td>651-277-0151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartland Express Transit Director</td>
<td>Paul Smith</td>
<td>763-689-8130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Renee Kirchner</td>
<td>651-213-8866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHS - Human Services</td>
<td>Robert Benson</td>
<td>651-213-5600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Hazardous Waste Facility, North Branch</td>
<td></td>
<td>651-237-0912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks Services</td>
<td>Joseph Tart</td>
<td>651-674-2345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorders</td>
<td>Amy Chavez</td>
<td>651-213-8350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health/Nursing</td>
<td>Courtney Wehrenberg</td>
<td>651-213-5200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works/Highway</td>
<td>Joe Triplett</td>
<td>651-213-8700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>Janet Converse</td>
<td>651-213-8580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheriff</td>
<td>Brandon Thyen</td>
<td>651-257-4100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Services</td>
<td>Bryan Brown</td>
<td>651-213-5600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning/Environmental</td>
<td>Kurt Schneider</td>
<td>651-213-8370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HRA-EDA Executive Director**

Located in North Branch ......................................................... 651-674-5664

---

**CHISAGO COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS**

**District #1** (213-8831)
- Chris DuBose, Vice Chairman
- 313 North Main St
- Center City, MN 55012
- 651-208-6054

**District #2** (213-8832)
- Rick Greene
- 37655 Oriole Avenue
- North Branch, MN 55056
- 651-583-2513

**District #3** (213-8833)
- George McMahon
- 27720 Woodland Drive
- Chisago City, MN 55013
- 651-257-2701

**District #4** (213-8834)
- Ben Montzka, Chair
- P.O. Box 307
- Wyoming, MN 55092
- 651-464-8515

**District #5** (213-8835)
- Mike Robinson
- P.O. Box 23
- Rush City, MN 55069
- 320-358-3223

---

**City Offices**

**Center City** .............................................................. 651-257-5284
- Box 245, 300 N. Center Avenue, Center City, MN 55012

**Chisago City** ............................................................ 651-257-4162
- Box 611, 10625 Railroad Ave, Chisago City, MN 55013

**Harris** ................................................................. 651-674-7546
- Box 111, 43970 Ginger Avenue, Harris, MN 55032

**Lindstrom** ............................................................... 651-257-0620
- 13292 Sylvan Ave, Lindstrom, MN 55045

**North Branch** ............................................................ 651-257-8113
- Box 910, 6408 Elm St, North Branch, MN 55056

**Rush City** ............................................................... 320-358-4743
- Box 556, 325 S. Elliot, Rush City, MN 55069

**Shafer** ................................................................. 651-257-4679
- 17656 303rd Street, Shafer, MN 55074

**Stacy** ................................................................. 651-462-4486
- 30955 Forest Blvd, Stacy, MN 55079

**Taylors Falls** .......................................................... 651-465-5133
- 637 First Street, Taylors Falls, MN 55084

**Wyoming** ............................................................... 651-462-0575
- Box 188, 26855 Forest Blvd, Wyoming, MN 55092

---

**Township Offices**

**Amador** ................................................................. 651-583-3108
- 3747 Park Trail, Almelund, MN 55012

**Chisago Lake** ........................................................... 651-257-6906
- Box 649, 12400 316th Street, Lindstrom, MN 55045

**Fish Lake** ............................................................... 651-674-7709
- 2170 Brunswick Road, Harris, MN 55032

**Franconia** ............................................................... 651-890-9009
- Box 175, 25156 St. Croix TRL N, Shafer, MN 55074

**Lent** ................................................................. 651-462-3009
- 33155 Hemingway Ave., Stacy, MN 55079

**Nessel** ................................................................. 320-396-2702
- 49205 Acacia Trail, Stanchfield, MN 55080

**Rushseba** ............................................................... 320-358-3543
- 51445 Forest Blvd., Rush City, MN 55069

**Rush City** ............................................................... 651-583-2168
- 18259 St Croix Trail, Shafer, MN 55074

**Sunrise** ............................................................... 651-674-6046
- Box 933, 41259 Oak St, North Branch, MN 55056