

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY, WISCONSIN

# FINANCE DIRECTOR



## EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT



# FINANCE DIRECTOR COUNTY OF SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN

## THE POSITION IN BRIEF

The Finance Director is a key member of the County's management team in a financially stable organization. The Finance Director oversees a department of 17 employees and performs complex work involving all County financial operations including fiscal planning, budgetary controls, and cost studies. In concert with the County Administrator, the Director develops and manages combined general and enterprise fund budgets of \$182 million.

## THE COMMUNITY

The area's recorded history of European exploration dates back more than 300 years. There are many theories as to how Sheboygan got its name, but the one most likely indicates Sheboygan was a Chippewa word meaning "passage or waterway between the lakes." French explorers Jean Nicolett (1635), Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette (1643) were considered the first Europeans to experience the shores of Sheboygan. In 1699, Father St. Cosme landed at a Pottawatomie village at the site of the Sheboygan River.

When the European settlers first came, there were probably about 1,000 Native Americans living in the county, composed mainly of Pottawatomies, Chippewas, Ottowas, Winnebagoes and Menominees. Their villages and camps were clustered on the bank or shore of practically every lake or stream, with the largest villages situated along the shore of Lake Michigan. After this territory began to interest the pioneers, treaties were made with the Native Americans.

[Sheboygan County](#) was originally established in 1838. Over time, Sheboygan County grew and prospered as immigrants established homes, farms, and businesses. Manufacturing and a strong work ethic remain the backbone of Sheboygan County's economy.

Sheboygan County is located with easy access to Interstate Highway 43 and is strategically located one hour north of Milwaukee and one hour south of Green Bay. At 515 square miles of land area, the County is comprised of 15 towns, 10 villages, and three cities. The County is bordered by Lake Michigan to the east and Kettle Moraine State Forest to the west. The cities, villages, and towns that comprise Sheboygan County offer an enviable and affordable lifestyle amid beautiful settings and outdoor recreation options

The County is served by [General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee](#), [Green Bay Austin Straubel International Airport](#), and operates its own municipal facility with international service capabilities, the [Sheboygan County Memorial Airport](#).



## A SNAPSHOT OF SHEBOYGAN COUNTY'S DEMOGRAPHICS AND AMENITIES:

Population - **118,034**

Average age of **41.6** years old

White **80%**, Asian **12%**, African American **3%**,  
Hispanic Origin or other races **4%**

Median household income - **\$62,188**

Median value of a Sheboygan home - **\$182,600**

Sheboygan area residents have access to several major medical systems located in the area including **Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center and St. Nicholas Hospital**.

Distinguished institutions of higher learning are within a short drive from the county including the [University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee](#), the [University of Wisconsin – Green Bay](#), including a [campus](#) in nearby Manitowoc as well as the [University of Wisconsin – Green Bay, Sheboygan Campus](#), [Lakeland University](#) and [Concordia University Wisconsin](#).

Technical colleges in the area include [Lakeshore Technical College](#) with a campus serving more than 10,000 students.

The County is host to [Road America](#) and top-rated golf courses bringing an influx of seasonal visitors and residents.

Additional demographic and other Sheboygan-area information can be found:

- [Someplace Better](#)
- See [Visit Sheboygan](#) for exciting overviews.
- [Sheboygan Area Economic Development Corporation](#) which features an [economic profile](#) about the county.



## COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN SHEBOYGAN

The Board of Supervisors is the governing body of the county. Twenty-five supervisors each represent one of the 25 districts within the county. Supervisory elections are conducted in the April general election of even-numbered years. Supervisors serve two-year terms. The County Board of Supervisors elects its own Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Executive Committee. The Board Chairperson conducts the County Board meetings and is the chief elected official of the county. The County Administrator, as the chief administrative officer, serves as the main point of contact between staff and the County Board. The Finance Director reports to the County Administrator.

There are eight standing committees of the County Board. In addition to the Board of Supervisors, there are six independently-elected officials, including a Clerk of Circuit Courts, County Clerk, District Attorney, Register of Deeds, Sheriff, and Treasurer.

Sheboygan County is recognized as a leader in providing responsive and cost-effective local government. The annual budget supports 19 departments, 825 employees, hundreds of contracted service providers and more than 200 programs. The County's programs and services include maintaining the safety of highways and roads, law enforcement, protecting and enhancing natural resources, providing birth certificates and marriage licenses, land records, and critical health and human services for the mentally ill, elderly, physically disabled, children, and the financially poor. The County also operates an airport and long-term care facility and provides the facilities for the UW-Green Bay, Sheboygan campus.

An overview of County services can be found [here](#).

## THE FINANCE DIRECTOR POSITION

The mission of the Finance Department is to effectively and efficiently safeguard and account for the County's financial resources and to provide financial services in support of all County departments. The Finance Department includes 17 employees and is responsible for all County financial operations including: budgeting, internal and external financial reporting, payroll, AP and AR, internal auditing, debt and cash management, investments, internal controls, collections, forecasting, and financial policies and procedures.

The primary function of the Finance Director's position is to assume responsibility for all accounting, financial management system-related activities within the County and to supervise personnel performing the County financial functions while ensuring adherence to policies and procedures in regard to all financial activities. The Director is responsible for the department's activities, and among the 17 department employees, the Director's direct reports include the Deputy Finance Director, an Auditor/Analyst, a Purchasing Agent, and an Administrative Assistant.

The last Finance Director retired after eight years of service to Sheboygan County. She is, however, staying on as a project manager for the county's new ERP implementation.

Here are links to the most [recent annual report](#) and the [FY2023 Budget](#). The Department's latest annual report can be found [here](#).





## SHEBOYGAN COUNTY'S MISSION, VISION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The **mission** of Sheboygan County is to provide courteous, responsive, efficient, and effective services to those we serve.

The **vision** of Sheboygan County is to be recognized as a leader of responsive and cost-effective local government.

The **guiding principles** of Sheboygan County are to:

- Provide leadership.
- Be dedicated to the concept of democratic local government.
- Maintain a constructive, objective, and creative attitude.
- Maintain a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.
- Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships.
- Recognize that the chief function of local government is to serve the best interest of all citizens.
- Improve the quality and image of public service.
- Encourage regular communication between citizens and county officials.
- Emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public.
- Treat colleagues and staff with respect and courtesy.
- Foster problem-solving and continuous learning in the work environment.
- Train and empower staff to attain high standards of professionalism.
- Actively seek shared services opportunities with local, state, and federal agencies.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In an environment that seeks excellence, and with a County Board dedicated to strong intergovernmental and business relationships, the new Finance Director will be faced with a number of challenges and projects that offer exciting opportunities. They include:

**New Leadership.** The next Finance Director will join new leadership for the County. The County Board anticipates finalizing the hiring of a new County Administrator in February 2023, following the governor's appointment of the 24-year incumbent to serve as the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. In addition, the County will be bringing on-board a new HR Director in the Spring. All told, and with the finance position in play, County officials are excited to welcome a brand-new management team bringing fresh ideas to the organization.

**Financial condition and intergovernmental considerations.** The County is in excellent financial shape as evidenced by the County's equalized value of \$12.7 billion, a strong bond rating, a healthy unassigned fund balance, and significant borrowing capacity, particularly as future needs are on the horizon. Over the last ten years, the average annual levy increase has been just 1.22%. The county's debt is at lowest in decades.

In 2017 the County adopted a half cent sales tax. The ordinance established a Transportation Fund in which all sales tax revenues are to be used for highway roadwork and highway capital equipment. In addition, and unique among Wisconsin counties, is the sharing of those sales tax receipts to all local municipalities within the County.

As it concerns the fund balance, the County Board adopted a policy to maintain an unassigned fund balance of 5% to 10% of total county expenditures, less capital project expenditures. Eight years ago, the Finance Committee further refined the policy such that the General Fund unassigned fund balance be maintained at a minimum of 15% and a maximum of 30% of total governmental fund expenditures less capital project expenditures. Currently, the unassigned fund balance is approximately 30%



The County's approach to its allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds provides keen insight to the manner of how the County approaches fiscal matters. Sheboygan County is eligible for \$22.4 million and has until December 31, 2024 to obligate the ARPA funds.

To establish a process that facilitated community input and engagement, the County established six ARPA Taskforces in August 2021 to assess and develop recommendations to help address key local concerns and opportunities. The ARPA Taskforces met over the course of six months, and submitted the final reports linked below:

### APRA TASK FORCES

- [Affordable Housing](#)
- [Behavioral Health & Crisis Response](#)
- [Broadband Development](#)
- [Childcare](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Workforce Development](#)





In addition to the County allocation, new grant announcements are continually made from state or federal agencies. The County Administrator's office maintains a [comprehensive list of grants](#), and formed a grant oversight committee to communicate these opportunities.

The County has established a timeline to make decisions regarding both [internal](#) County department recommendations and [external](#) ARPA Taskforce recommendations. Here is an October 2022 [summary](#) of Sheboygan County's ARPA action to date and next steps.

Like all Wisconsin municipalities, however, the County's finances are tested by various parameters guiding the generation of new sources of revenues, as well as State of Wisconsin tax levy limits. The next Finance Director can expect to work closely with the County Administrator and the elected officials on seeking out new sources of revenue as well as continuing to find ways to deliver County services most efficiently and effectively. With these factors in mind, the next Finance Director can expect to play a crucial role in maintaining the County's solid financial standing.

**New ERP Implementation.** The County is in the middle of redoing its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, a conversion that started in March 2020. It is projected to be completed in early 2024. The County is migrating from its old JD Edwards system to Tyler Technologies' Munis. The retired Finance Director is managing the project, and has agreed to stay on until the conversion is complete. The new Director's comfort with, and a working knowledge of ERPs, will be particularly important.

**Long-range financial planning.** Among a number of major facilities, Sheboygan County operates a municipal airport, a County jail, and a nursing home. These facilities, in particular, will require management's attention in the foreseeable future.

For instance, the County Board and County Sheriff have been engaged in early discussions about the county's jail, as well as alternative approaches to incarceration. Sheboygan County's issues are mirroring national conversations about aging and over-populated facilities, stressed staffing, and increased numbers of offenders. For the County, upgraded corrections facilities are preliminarily pegged at \$20 – 30 million.

Other examples include an examination of the County's airport facilities, its capital needs, and its management, currently outsourced. In an area that has a strong presence of firms that serve national and international markets, Sheboygan County's facilities need to meet the corporate interests with these facilities.

The County owns and operates one nursing facility, having previously owned and managed a total of three. The Rocky Knoll Health Care Center is licensed and certified as a Skilled Nursing Facility. Operating under both state and federal regulations the Center is certified to provide services under both Medicare A and B, Medicaid and the Veterans Administration Programs. In addition to taking a critical look at the capital needs of the facility, attention toward employee recruitment and retention will also be required, as the labor market – particularly crucial for workers who can easily find higher pay within the area's robust private sector – is vulnerable.

With the application of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, Rocky Knoll and the County's Human Resources Department are striving to tackle workforce challenges by offering higher wages, along with new recruitment and retention initiatives, including tuition reimbursement and student loan repayment programs. Still, ARPA funds are transient, and the challenges will be on-going. The next Finance Director can expect to work closely with the County Administrator in developing a strategy that will close up to a one-million-dollar gap between the wage boosts provided through ARPA funding and on-going salaries that need to remain competitive.

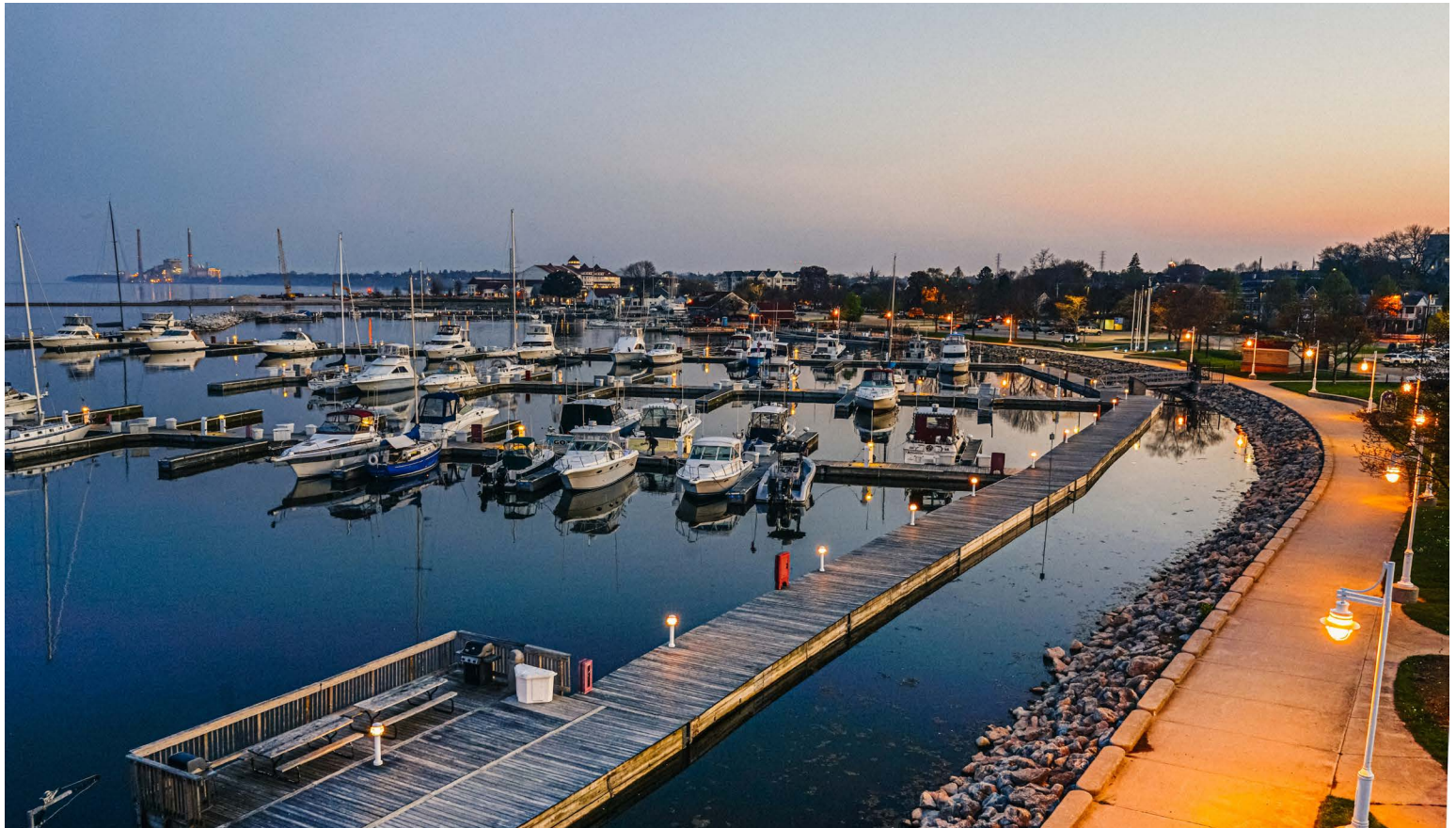
**Sheboygan Business Climate.** The number of privately-held, locally-owned companies that compete on a national and international platform is unprecedented in a Wisconsin county the size of Sheboygan County. For example, the County is home to businesses including Kohler Company, Bemis Manufacturing, Sargento Foods, Johnsonville Sausage, and Acuity Insurance, to name a few. A more comprehensive list of the County's top employers can be found [here](#).

Many of these companies' executives are deeply civic-minded and involved in economic development interests, subscribing to the thought, "a rising tide

lifts all boats." For instance, Sheboygan County's housing market, reflecting national trends, needs more workforce housing, along with a complement of other housing options. To help address that issue as it arose in the stakeholder conversations held in conjunction with the work of the ARPA Fund Taskforces previously mentioned, a number of Sheboygan-based companies obligated millions of dollars of their corporate earnings to stimulate housing developer interest in the area.

Likewise, the municipalities within the County have an acute understanding of the relationships their local businesses have to the area's economic robustness. They, too, are involved in assuring a vigorous and participatory approach to economic development.

Sheboygan businesses and local governments, in partnership with the Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation, form a special triad of interests to move forward a strategy to assure long-term, and successful, financial sustainability. In support of the County Administrator, the next Finance Director can expect to have a hand in cultivating and maintaining these important relationships.







## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

### Education and Experience

- A Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, economics, business or public administration or related field; a Master's degree and/or CPA is ideal, but not required.
- At least seven years of progressively responsible management experience in fiscal administration; previous government experience, or demonstrable skills in governmental fund accounting preferred.
- Working knowledge of financial management/ERP systems.
- Supervisory experience.
- A thorough knowledge of municipal accounting, budgeting, auditing, purchasing, debt management, and internal controls. Be detailed-oriented, while possessing the ability to keep an eye on the County's bigger picture and strategic initiatives.
- Knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles and GASB fluency.
- A commitment to keeping abreast of changes and emerging issues with respect to municipal finance.
- Knowledge in the alternatives for capital improvement financing; possess an understanding about the issuance of debt instruments for capital improvements and economic/community development.
- Possess a strong ability to evaluate revenue sources with a goal of increasing and diversifying revenue income; be knowledgeable on emerging trends in alternative revenue sources.
- Knowledge of financial application software including ERP and HRIS systems.





## MANAGEMENT STYLE AND PERSONAL TRAITS

- Have complete personal and professional integrity, gaining respect and inspiring the trust and confidence of subordinates, co-workers, and elected and appointed officials, as well as the general public.
- Be a clear and concise communicator, including the ability to actively listen.
- Be a collaborative and decisive leader, one who has the ability to distill information and ideas from a variety of sources and make timely decisions.
- Be able to present complex technical information to any audience in a manner that is understandable and jargon-free.
- Have a genuine passion for public service from both an internal, department standpoint and for service to the community; be devoted to customer, community, and departmental service.
- Be creative in solving problems, encouraging, and empowering employees to find new and better ways to get work done, while also applying, maintaining and respecting the regulatory framework that guides the delivery of municipal services.
- Be a positive and flexible team builder who is committed to the well-being of the staff; be a manager who both defends his/her staff when appropriate and holds the team accountable.
- Have an open, friendly personality and communication style and a calm demeanor; be one who can establish trust quickly with others. Have a sense of humor when appropriate to the circumstances.
- Be proactive and willing to keep the County Administrator and County Board apprised of the state of the County's finances, major activities and/or operations of the Department in a consistent and timely manner, passing on both good news and bad news in a tactful, self-confident and professional manner.





## COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND CULTURE

The starting salary is \$110,000 - \$135,000 +/- DOQ, plus exceptional benefits. The County is part of the Wisconsin Retirement System.

The organization prides itself on its commitment to customer service and teamwork. Staff has a lot of daily interaction with one another and report strong interdepartmental and intergovernmental relations.

The County Board possesses a strong respect for the staff's work. Among themselves, elected officials are collegial and respectful of differing perspectives and points of view.

## HOW TO APPLY

Candidates should apply by February 27, 2023 (open until filled) with resume, cover letter and contact information for five work-related references to [www.GovHRjobs.com](http://www.GovHRjobs.com) to the attention of Lee Szymborski, Senior Vice President, GovHR USA, 630 Dundee Road, #225, Northbrook, IL 60062. Tel: 847-380-3240. Sheboygan County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



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