

**GENERAL RULES OF GOVERNMENT**  
**BUFFALO COUNTY, WISCONSIN**  
**(Effective April 18, 2018)**

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THE GOVERNING BODY

**THE COUNTY BOARD:** The County Board is composed of fourteen (14) supervisors elected from fourteen (14) supervisory districts within the County. Each supervisor is elected to a term of two (2) years at an election to be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in April in even-numbered years and shall take office on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in April of that year.

As legally constituted by law, this body shall be known as the “Buffalo County Board of Supervisors”, herein after referred to simply as the County Board, to be inclusive of all recognized committees of the County Board.

## **RULES OF BUSINESS**

### **RULE 1- ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

- (a) The County Board shall meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of April following the election of the County Board (even numbered year), for the purpose of organizing and other general business of the County Board in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 59.11(1)(c), or as that Statute may be revised, amended or renumbered.
- (b) It shall be opened by the County Clerk or designee and then presided over by one of its own members, who shall be elected chairperson by a simple majority ballot of the County Board members.

### **RULE 2- ANNUAL MEETING**

- (a) The County Board shall meet on the Tuesday after the second Monday of November but no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> of November in each year for the purpose of passing the budget and transacting general business of the County Board in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 59.11(1), or as that Statute may be revised, amended or renumbered.
- (b) If the date falls on November 11<sup>th</sup>, the annual meeting shall be held on the Wednesday following the second Monday of the month in November.

### **RULE 3- MONTHLY MEETING**

- (a) In addition to the meetings prescribed above, the County Board shall meet on the fourth Monday of each month, except April and November, for the purpose of transacting general business of the County Board.
- (b) This date may be changed or the monthly meeting may be cancelled by the County Board Chairperson in the event there is not enough business to warrant a meeting, or due to any other extenuating circumstance.
- (c) In the event a scheduled meeting is to be cancelled or changed, all members will be appropriately notified either by mail, verbally or electronically.

### **RULE 4- SPECIAL MEETINGS**

- (a) The County Board may be called into special sessions by request of the County Board Chairperson or upon written request of a majority of members of the County Board. Such written request shall be delivered to the County Clerk and shall specify the purpose and time of the meeting. The date of the special meeting shall not be less than 48 hours from the date of delivery of the written request to the County Clerk. Upon receiving the request, the County Clerk shall immediately contact each supervisor notice of the time and place of the meeting either by e-mail, verbal or electronically.

- (b) The County Board Chairperson may call an emergency meeting upon at least two (2) hours' notice in the event of a declared emergency. A declaration of emergency must be included as part of the meeting notice. Upon convening, the County Board shall ratify the existence of the emergency as a condition of proceeding further. For purposes of this rule, an emergency is deemed to exist if time is of the essence and a delay in meeting is likely to or will actually result in substantial damage, injury, or harm to the County, its residents, or property.

## **RULE 5-JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- (a) A committee may request a joint meeting with another committee on matters of common concern.
- (b) When a joint committee meeting is requested, the requesting Committee Chairperson will cooperate in preparing for the meeting and in determining the time and place, who is to preside and all other arrangements for the joint meeting. The person presiding at the meeting is responsible for providing notice of the meeting.
- (c) If differences arise that the Committee Chairperson cannot resolve, the Chairperson of any affected committee may ask the County Board Chairperson to intervene. The County Board Chairperson may order whatever action is necessary to ensure the success of the joint committee meeting.
- (d) Each committee participating in a joint meeting will vote separately on matters that come before the joint meeting that are within the authority and duties of the Committee.

## **RULE 6-MEETING TIMES**

- (a) The organizational meeting shall be held at 9:00 a.m. and monthly meeting shall be held at 7:00 p.m., with all times at the discretion of the County Board Chairperson.
- (b) Standing Committee meeting times and dates shall be established by each Committee.

## **RULE 7-OPEN MEETINGS**

- (a) All meetings of the County Board and its committees, and all other County governmental bodies must comply with the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law.
- (b) All meetings must be preceded by a public notice that specifies the time, date, place and subject matter of the meeting, including any matter intended for consideration in closed session, in a manner that is reasonably likely to inform the public and the news media of the nature and purpose of the meeting.

- (c) The person preparing the notice shall submit the original and three (3) copies to the County Clerk. The County Clerk is responsible for reviewing and posting the notice as required by the Open Meetings Law.
- (d) A motion, resolution, or ordinance offered for the purpose of rescinding something previously adopted may not be voted upon at a meeting unless specific notice of the subject matter was given as required by the Open Meetings Law. If the matter was not noticed, any action must be set over to a later meeting for which notice is given.

## **RULE 8-CLOSED SESSIONS**

- (a) Wisconsin law authorizes closed sessions when necessary to protect the public interest and when holding an open session would be incompatible with the proper conduct of governmental affairs.
- (b) Every meeting must be initially convened in open session. The meeting may subsequently convene in closed session only if a closed session is permitted under Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1) and the meeting notice provides for a closed session.
- (c) Closed sessions should be held sparingly and a meeting should remain in open session if there is any doubt about whether a closed session is permitted. All discussion during closed session must be limited to the business specified in the meeting notice for the closed session.
- (d) Discussions held, information presented or obtained, and actions taken during closed sessions are deemed to be confidential information and must not be disclosed without the proper legal authorization. Punitive action may be taken for improper disclosure.
- (e) When the reason for holding a closed session has passed, any information presented or obtained during the closed session becomes available for public inspection.

## **RULE 9 -RULES OF PRACTICE**

- (a) The rules of parliamentary practice comprised in Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern the proceedings of the County Board in all cases in which they are applicable and where they are consistent with State laws and these rules.
- (b) No action may be invalidated solely because of a failure to comply with Robert's Rules of Order or these rules.

## **RULE 10-CHAIRPERSON**

- (a) Election: At the organizational meeting, the County Board shall elect one of its members to serve as Chairperson for a term of (2) years or until such time as a newly elected County Board may be in session or until such time as a successor Chairperson shall be duly elected and qualified. The Chairperson shall be elected by a simple majority vote ballot after nominations from the floor.

The procedures for the election of the chairperson as outlined in Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 59.12, shall be followed, or as that particular Statute is revised, amended or renumbered.

(b) General Duties: It shall be the general duty of the Chairperson to:

1. Open the session by taking the chair, calling the members to order, and conducting the Pledge of Allegiance;
2. Announce the business before the County Board in the order in which it is to be acted upon;
3. Receive and submit, in the proper manner, all motions, resolutions, and propositions presented by the members;
4. Put to vote all questions regularly moved and announce the results;
5. To maintain the observance of order and decorum among the members and other attendees;
6. To instruct the County Board on any point of order or practice. The Chairperson may speak to points of order in preference to others and shall decide questions of order subject to an appeal by any member of the County Board, Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, shall prevail regarding the parliamentary procedure(s) to be followed. Every member of the County Board should familiarize themselves with Robert's Rules of Order;
7. Represent the body over which the chairperson presides;
8. Chair the Committee of the Board, a voting member of the Finance Committee, and shall be an ex-officio (non-voting) member of all committees. In the absence of a quorum at committee meetings, the County Board Chairperson's attendance and vote may be counted to achieve a quorum.
9. Be responsible for the appointment of all standing and special committees, unless otherwise directed by the County Board. The Chairperson of each committee, subcommittee, special committee, standing committee, or County Board shall have the primary responsibility for complying with chapter 19.81-19.88 of the Wisconsin State Statutes or as revised, amended or renumbered, more commonly known as the "Open Meetings Law".
10. Fill any vacancy on committees between sessions when necessary to form a voting quorum to carry on the business of the County.
11. Attend committee meetings as requested by a Standing Committee Chairperson.

12. Speak to points of order in preference to others and shall decide questions of order subject to an appeal by any member of the County Board.
- (c) Statutory Duties: Some of the duties of the Board Chair as described in Wisconsin Statutes 59.12 include but are not limited to:
1. Perform all duties required of the chair;
  2. May administer oaths to persons required to be sworn;
  3. Countersign all ordinance of the board;
  4. Preside at meetings and when directed by ordinance;
  5. Countersign all county orders;
  6. Transact all necessary board business with local and county officers;
  7. Expedite all measures resolved upon by the board; and
  8. Take care that all federal, state and local laws pertaining to county government are enforced.
- (d) Temporarily Vacate: When the Chairperson wishes to temporarily vacate the chair, the Vice Chairperson shall be called upon, by the Chairperson, to preside for a temporary time period. However, such substitution shall not extend beyond an adjournment of the meeting.
- (e) Permanently Vacate: In event of death or resignation of the County Board Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the position of Chair and a new Vice Chairperson would be elected by the majority of the County Board.
- (f) Absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson: In the absence of both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson at a County Board or Committee meeting, a chairperson pro tem shall be elected by the body. Such substitution shall not extend beyond the length of the meeting.

## **RULE 11-VICE -CHAIRPERSON**

- (a) Immediately following election of the Chairperson, the County Board shall elect one of its members to serve as Vice-Chairperson by a simple majority vote ballot after nominations from the floor to serve for a two (2) year term, or until such time as a successor shall be duly elected and qualified, who shall act during the absence of the Chairperson.

The procedures for the election of the chairperson as outlined in Wisconsin State Statues Chapter 59.12, shall be followed, or as that particular Statute is revised, amended or renumbered.

## **RULE 12-ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- (a) The recommended Order of Business for County Board and/or Committee meetings shall be as follows, except the Chairperson may modify the order of business as necessary:

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. The Pledge of Allegiance (County Board Meetings)
3. Roll Call of Members
4. Reading and Action on Previous Meeting Minutes
5. Public Comments Regarding Listed Agenda Items  
(Time limits may be established at the call of the Chairperson)
6. Alter the Order of Business as May be Necessary
7. Presentation of Petitions, Memorials, Letters, Reports and other Communications
8. Ordinances
9. Resolutions
10. Reports/Questions/Discussion from/to Committee Chairs Regarding Committee Meeting Minutes/Content.
11. Summary Report from County Board Chairperson (County Board Meetings)
12. Administrative Coordinator's Report (County Board, Human Resources and Finance)
13. General Public Comments
14. Adjournment

- (b) After calling the meeting to order, and before proceeding to scheduled business, the roll of the members shall be called and the names of those present, those excused and those absent shall be included in the minutes.
- (c) A simple majority of all elected members must be present at the meeting to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

### **RULE 13-DETERMINATION OF QUESTIONS**

- (a) All questions presented to the County Board shall be determined by a majority of the members present unless otherwise required by State law. The Chairperson shall vote on all matters, except appeals from his/her decisions.
- (b) All questions shall be put in the order they are moved, except privileged questions.
- (c) If a question contains two or more points, the question shall be divided at the request of any one (1) member.

### **RULE 14 -QUORUM and UNINTENDED QUORUM**

- (a) A simple majority of the Supervisors entitled to a seat on the County Board shall constitute a quorum for County Board meetings.
- (b) For four member committees of the County Board, three members of a committee shall constitute a quorum.



- (c) For all other committees of the Board, a majority of the appointed members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.
- (d) In the absence of a quorum at any committee meeting, the County Board Chairperson's attendance may be counted to achieve a quorum.
- (e) Any business conducted in the absence of a quorum, except for procedural actions to adjourn, fix the time for adjournment and/or set a new meeting date, recess, or take measures to obtain a quorum, is null and void.
- (f) Members of the County Board are entitled to attend committee meetings of the County Board, even when they are not members. It is possible that the attendance of one or more nonmember supervisors at a meeting may result in the creation of a quorum of another committee of the County Board. Such a quorum is unintended and the nonmember supervisors are not meeting for the purpose of and shall not exercise the responsibility, authority, power, or duties of any other committee of the County Board.

#### **RULE 15 -STATE OF MOTION**

- (a) When a motion is made and has a second, it shall be stated by the Chairperson previous to debate. If a question contains two or more points, the question shall be divided at the request of any member.

#### **RULE 16 -DEBATE**

- (a) Debate will only begin after a motion has been made and seconded to bring it to the floor.
- (b) The Chairperson is not required to step down from the chair in order to participate in discussion or debate of an agenda item, resolution, or ordinance.
- (c) When a member wishes to speak in debate or deliver any matter to the County Board, he or she shall raise their hand, respectfully address the Chairperson, and shall confine any remarks to the question on the floor.
- (d) The Chairperson may limit member remarks that are not related or relevant to the question on the floor.
- (e) No member shall speak more than twice on any question and shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless granted permission by the Chairperson.
- (f) When two or more members wish to speak at once, the Chairperson shall name the person who is to speak first.
- (g) A motion that does not pertain to the question on the floor shall not be received.

- (h) A motion to close debate is out of order as long as any member who has not yet spoken on the issues is seeking recognition.
- (i) A motion to adjourn shall be decided without debate.

### **RULE 17 -TERMINATION OF DEBATE**

- (a) Any member may terminate debate by moving for the previous question.
- (b) If the motion is carried by a majority of the members present, the County Board shall vote first on amendments in the order they were offered, then on the main question.

### **RULE 18 -MOTIONS ALLOWED**

- (a) When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received except:
  - 1. To adjourn.
  - 2. To take a recess
  - 3. To lay on the table
  - 4. To call the question
  - 5. To postpone to a certain time
  - 6. To refer to a select committee
  - 7. To amend
  - 8. To postpone indefinitely
- (b) These several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are named.
- (c) A motion to reconsider may be made on any matter except the budget. The motion must be made on the same day.
- (d) A motion to adjourn is always in order, except when a vote is being taken. This rule shall not permit any member to move for an adjournment when another member has the floor.

### **RULE 19-VOTES**

- (a) It shall be the duty of all members to vote yes or no, unless required to abstain under the Code of Ethics, any other applicable law or regulation, or as defined in Robert's Rules of Order.
- (b) The Chairperson shall vote on all matters before the County Board, the same order of vote as any other member of the body.
- (c) Unless otherwise stated within the rules or law, majority votes will be required to approve action, which is more than half of the votes that were cast by the persons legally entitled to vote at a legally held meeting with a quorum present.

- (d) The regular method of voting by a committee or other governmental body is by voice vote.
- (e) A ballot may be used when voting for the election of positions of the County Board or committees as provided in the rules.
- (f) A governmental body may vote in closed session, although rare, when the vote is an integral part of deliberations authorized to be conducted in closed session under Wisconsin State Statutes 19.85(1). The governmental body must vote in open session unless doing so would compromise the need for the closed session. Whenever a vote is taken in closed session, the motion and the result of the vote, including the name and vote of each person in attendance, will be recorded and made a matter of public record.
- (g) A roll call shall be taken on the following:
  - 1. Any action to suspend the rules, unless unanimous consent is granted;
  - 2. Any motion to convene in closed session pursuant to Wisconsin State Statutes 19.84;
  - 3. Any question involving the appropriation of money;
  - 4. Any question at the request of any member, which request may be made after a voice vote but before the next question is stated or motion made; or
  - 5. Any question decided by voice vote where the County Board Chairperson is in doubt as to the prevailing side if a division of the house is not used.
  - 6. Upon any business at the request of any one (1) member.
- (h) The following matters require the affirmation vote of two-thirds or more of the members-elect of the County Board by roll call:
  - 1. Any resolution or ordinance transferring funds from the general fund pursuant to Wisconsin State Statutes 65.90(5)(a) (2/3 vote);
  - 2. Any resolution or ordinance creating additional new, permanent, or temporary positions or increasing the salaries or other employment benefits which is acted upon by the County Board after the adoption of the budget but does not apply to changes in titles or duties where there is not a change in salary or benefits (2/3 vote);
  - 3. Borrowing under Wisconsin State Statutes 67.12 (3/4 vote of entire County Board);
  - 4. Any public construction referendum under Wisconsin State Statutes 59.52(29) (2/3 vote);

5. Any motion to withdraw a matter from a committee unless proper notice has been provided (2/3 vote);
  6. Amending or rescinding something previously adopted (2/3 vote of entire board);
  7. Any amendment to an adopted budget (2/3 vote of entire board);
  8. Amending the County Board Rules (2/3 vote);
  9. Suspending the County Board Rules (2/3 vote); or
  10. Any matter required by law.
- (i) Voting by roll call shall be conducted in a random listing order for a total of fourteen (14) unique voting lists. The voting lists will be utilized through the entire supervisor's term of office.
  - (j) The votes shall be published in the proceedings of the Board.
  - (k) In case of a tie vote, the question is lost.
  - (l) A member of the County Board must be physically present at any County Board meeting in order to cast a vote.

#### **RULE 20-REFERAL TO COMMITTEE**

- (a) Every subject matter from a source other than a Committee of the County Board which comes before the County Board may be referred to its appropriate committee by the Chairperson without motion unless otherwise directed by 2/3 vote of the County Board. Every committee shall report upon all items referred to it by the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting following the meeting of reference unless otherwise directed by the County Board.
- (b) Subject matters before a committee of the County Board, which will require further action by another committee or by the County Board, must first receive approval from the Standing Committee.
- (c) A tie vote in a committee is considered a loss.

#### **RULE 21-PUBLIC INPUT**

- (a) The purpose of public input is to provide nonmembers with an opportunity to present information to a governmental body. It is not intended to provide for interactive debate or for the cross-examination of citizens or members.

- (b) The person presiding at a meeting may request that a nonmember who wishes to speak may provide the nonmember's name, address, telephone number, and topic prior to the start of public input.
- (c) A member of the County Board must yield the floor to a nonmember and the person presiding must recognize a nonmember. Once recognized, the nonmember may speak without interruption, except for procedural matters. A nonmember who is called to order by the person presiding must immediately cease speaking.
- (d) A nonmember will normally be allowed three (3) minutes for public input. However, the person presiding may establish a shorter time limit. Additional time will not normally be granted, but the person presiding has the discretion to do so.
- (e) The person presiding may limit the number of persons who speak on an issue and may call a nonmember to order if the nonmember's statements are not germane or are unduly repetitive.
- (f) A person who wishes to ask a question during public input must direct his or her question to the chairperson. A person who directs a question to anyone other than the Chairperson may be ruled out of order. When the person has concluded his or her comments, the Chairperson may present the question to the board, refer the question to a committee or take such other action as the chairperson deems appropriate. No one may be compelled to answer a question that is asked during public input.
- (g) The person presiding may take whatever action is necessary to maintain an appropriate level of decorum and order at all times. The person presiding will not permit public input to become a running debate or to serve as a platform for personal attacks, and the person presiding may rule any citizen or member out of order if that person's comments or conduct is inappropriate.
- (h) The members of a governmental body may, during the period of public comment, discuss any matter raised by the public.
- (i) A nonmember may be denied permission to speak by a majority vote of the members present.
- (j) The person presiding may call upon a department manager or designee to speak on any agenda item that is related to the department and is properly before the meeting.
- (k) Corporation Counsel may provide advice relating to any matter that is properly before the meeting at any time during discussion or debate at the request of any member.

## **RULE 22-MEETINGS, AGENDAS AND DOCUMENTS**

- (a) The person presiding over a board, commission, or committee may schedule and call such meetings as are appropriate and necessary.

- (b) The person presiding at a meeting is responsible for the preparation of an agenda for each meeting and may determine the order of business.
- (c) The person presiding at a meeting will make the members aware of any correspondence that has been received and may direct that any appropriate document be read, distributed or placed on file. However, anonymous correspondence will not be read.
- (d) The person presiding at the meeting will inform the public and members that all electronic devices shall be muted during the meeting.
- (e) No one, other than a County Board member, may address the County board without the expressed permission of the County Board Chairperson. The Chairperson shall be responsible for the assignment of any allotted speaking time.
- (f) The County Clerk's Office shall receive agendas within five (5) working days for all scheduled committee meetings. This office will check content, properly post and notify appropriate news media and other interested persons as determined under the Open Meetings Law and as may be requested by the Committee Chairperson.
- (g) The County Clerk's Office shall be responsible for keeping and recording true minutes of all board meetings and committee meetings in a format chosen by the County Clerk. The County Clerk shall record minutes for the County Board, Finance, Human Resources and LEPC. The County Clerk may designate an individual to record minutes of board meetings and/or committee meetings upon mutual agreement that she/he is responsible for keeping. A copy of draft minutes shall be provided to all County Board Supervisors with the next available mailing. Drafts of meeting minutes will be made available to the County Clerk within seven (7) working days of the meeting day. Signed and approved meeting minutes shall be filed with the County Clerk and become part of the permanent record within seven (7) working days of approval at a committee meeting.

## **RULE 23-COUNTY BOARD DOCUMENTS AND MAILINGS**

- (a) The County Clerk's Office shall prepare and mail, or otherwise deliver, to all County Board members an itemized agenda along with copies of all ordinances, resolutions, nominations, and other matters to be considered at any meeting of the County Board.
- (b) All original resolutions or other matters of business to be brought before the County Board by the chairperson, committees or individuals, shall be reported to the County Clerk's Office no later than 3:00 p.m. Tuesday preceding the County Board meeting date in order to be placed on the agenda and considered by the County Board.
- (c) Any ordinance or resolution to be proposed at a County Board meeting shall be in writing and presented to each County Board supervisor prior to commencement of the meeting.

- (d) All other resolutions or other documents introduced to the County Board at the regular meeting shall be read or summarized, by a person designated by the chairperson, except on a properly made and approved motion to waive the reading of any specific resolution or other document.
- (e) Every written resolution or written ordinance shall have endorsed thereon the name(s) of the person(s) and the committee introducing it. Two (2) original signed documents shall be presented for consideration.
- (f) All resolutions and ordinances may be examined by the Corporation Counsel of the County and/or the County Administrative Coordinator to assure uniformity, legality of content, form and proper numbering prior to presentation by the committee introducing the resolution or ordinance.
- (g) All resolutions and ordinances approved by the Standing Committee that require further committee approval, even if denied by the Human Resources and/or Finance Committee, shall proceed to the full County board for review, discussion and/or action. Any action that does not have full committee approval shall contain an explanation identifying reasons for the decision made.

#### **RULE 24- COUNTY BOARD ATTENDANCE**

- (a) A County Board member shall attend every County Board and standing committee meeting appointed to; the required attendance being a mandatory obligation.
- (b) No member or officer of the County Board shall absent himself or herself from any session (or part of a session) of the County Board or standing committee meeting without having been properly excused by the Chairperson or appropriate notification to the Buffalo County Clerk's Office or Administrative Coordinator Office or Department Manager/Elected Official.
- (c) Failure to comply with this meeting attendance requirement will subject the offender to the penalties as provided for in Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 59.15, or as that particular Statute is revised, amended or renumbered.
- (d) The use of remote participation for standing committee meeting attendance and voting requirements is permissible due to personal illness, personal disability, emergency, or geographic distance subject to the following:
  - 1. Any meeting is conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.
  - 2. Approval of the attendance by remote participation must be preapproved by the Standing Committee Chairperson at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting unless such advanced notice is impracticable.

3. All Committee members who attend a meeting through remote participation shall be entitled to vote as if they were personally and physically present at the meeting, but their vote shall be recorded as done by electronic attendance.
  4. At least a quorum of the members of the Standing Committee must be physically present unless approved by the County Board Chairperson and the meeting must be chaired by a person who is physically present.
  5. All votes taken during a meeting in which a member participates remotely must be by roll call vote.
  6. If technical difficulties arise as a result of utilizing remote participation, the Chairperson or in the chairperson's absence, the person chairing the meeting, may decide how to address the situation. Whenever possible, the Chairperson or person chairing the meeting is to suspend discussion while reasonable efforts are made to correct any problem that interferes with a remote participant's ability to hear or be heard clearly by all persons present at the meeting. If a remote participant is disconnected from the meeting, the minutes must note that fact and the time of which the disconnection occurred.
  7. At the start of any meeting which a member will participate remotely, the Chairperson or person chairing the meeting must announce the name and member who is participating remotely.
  8. Members who participate remotely and all persons present at the meeting location must be clearly audible to each other and must be connected at least 5 minutes prior to the start time of any meeting. Any member wishing to participate electronically is responsible to provide their own equipment for remote access. Tests of equipment should be done prior to participation at any meeting.
  9. Members who attend remotely shall be paid one-half of the per diem meeting compensation and shall indicate on their reimbursement request that their attendance was done remotely. Members attending remotely are not entitled to receive any mileage.
- (e) Acceptable means of remote participation include telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing, or any other technology that enables the remote participant and all persons present at the meeting location to be clearly audible to one another. Texts messaging, instant messaging, email and web chat without audio are not acceptable methods of remote participation.



## **RULE 25-ACTION ON LEGAL CLAIMS**

No action shall be taken upon any claim or legal action until that same claim or legal action shall have been referred to the proper committee and by that committee properly reported to the County Board.

## **RULE 26- REPORTS**

- (a) A written copy of any specific report presented by any official or standing committee shall be furnished to any member of the County Board who requests it.
- (b) A copy of the annual report of each department shall be submitted digitally to the County Administration Office by April 1 of each year. A summary copy shall be provided to each County Board member at least one week prior to the applicable County Board session at which the report will be presented. A copy of the complete report will be provided to any County Board member who requests one.

## **RULE 27- DESIGNATION OF OFFICIAL PAPER**

- (a) The County Board shall annually designate a newspaper(s) in which the official proceedings of the County Board shall be published as required by law and recorded in Volume J of Journal Proceedings, Page 151 passed by the County Board on October 9, 1986.

## **RULE 28-APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES & OTHER GOVERNMENTAL BODIES**

- (a) At the organizational meeting, the County Board shall proceed to organize, by election by ballot of majority vote, one member of the County Board as County Board Chairperson and County Board Vice-Chairperson. These offices shall be held for two (2) year terms or until their successors are elected.
- (b) In the event of a vacancy on the County Board, the County Board Chairperson shall promptly appoint a person who is a qualified elector and resident of the unrepresented supervisory district to fill the unexpired portion for the term. The County Board shall, at its first meeting following the appointment, vote on whether to confirm the appointment by majority vote. If the County Board does not confirm the appointment, the members of the County Board shall nominate one or more persons who are qualified electors and residents of the unrepresented district to fill the vacancy and shall elect a person to fill the unexpired portion of the term.
- (c) Special and statutory committees will be elected by ballot at the annual organization meeting. (Buffalo County Highway Committee) The County Board will nominate County Board members to be elected to such committees and each county board member will submit a ballot with their vote for each committee position. The nominee receiving the



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| 5.  | Land Conservation and<br>Resource Management Committee        | 4 members<br>(3 County Board Members/1 FSA Member)  |
| 6.  | Land Information Committee                                    | 5 members<br>(3 County Board Members/2 Citizen Members)<br>(County Board Members shall also serve on<br>Land Information Council Committee) |
| 7.  | Recycling Committee   | 13 members (3 County Board Members/10<br>Municipal Site Representatives)  |
| 8.  | Highway Committee   | 5 members (Elected)   |
| 9.  | Health & Human Services<br>And Veterans Committee             | 7 members<br>(3 County Board Members/4 Citizen Members)   |
| 10. | Law Enforcement and<br>Emergency Management<br>Committee      | 5 members   |
| 11. | Zoning Committee  | 5 members   |
| 12. | Aging and Disability Resource<br>Center (ADRC) Advisory Board | Up to 2 members   |
| 13. | Western Dairyland Community<br>Action Board                   | 2 members   |
| 14. | Historical Society Committee                                  | 1 member  |
| 15. | Economic Development Committee                                | Up to 5 members (3 County Board Members/2<br>Citizen Members)   |

- (b) All of the above Committee members and/or appointments shall be selected from among the members of the County Board, except as otherwise provided by State of Wisconsin Statute.
- (c) At the first meeting of each Standing Committee, the members shall elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson by simple majority vote. An employee of the County may not be a Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of any Standing Committee.
- (d) Several statutory, elective or other special purpose committees shall be constituted as follows with membership in accordance with various established Wisconsin State Statutes. Committee appointment may be required by the County Board of Supervisors Chairperson and membership and term of service may be subject to approval by simple majority of County Board members, depending on the requirements of the specifying Wisconsin or Federal law:

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| 1.  | Zoning Board of Adjustment                        | Up to 4 members<br>(4 regular and 2 alternate)   |
| 2.  | Long Term Support Citizen<br>Advisory Committee   | 7 members<br>(2 County Board Members)  |
| 3.  | Land Information Council                          | 7 or more members<br>(3 County Board Members who shall<br>also serve on Land Information<br>Committee) |
| 4.  | Aging Advisory Committee                          | 5 members<br>(2 County Board Members)  |
| 5.  | Nutrition Committee                               | 5 members<br>(2 County Board Members)  |
| 6.  | Winding Rivers Library System Board               | 2 members (1 County Board Member)  |
| 7.  | Mississippi River Regional Planning<br>Commission | 2 members (1 County Board Member)  |
| 8.  | Veterans Commission                               | 3 Citizen members  |
| 10. | Highway Safety Committee                          | 5 or more Citizen members  |
| 11. | Local Emergency Planning Committee                | 5 or more members (1 County Board<br>Member or Designee)   |
| 12. | Buffalo County Fair Association                   | 1 member   |
| 13. | Criminal Justice Collaborating Counsel            | 1 member or designee.  |

Any special committee or sub-committee to be appointed shall be at the will of the Chairperson, or their designee, which may be established from time to time.

### **RULE 30-SPECIAL AND APPOINTED COMMITTEES**

- (a) The County Board may create special committees as the need arises. The County Board Chairperson will appoint the Chairperson and members of each special committee, subject to approval by majority vote of the County Board.

- (b) Members of special committees shall serve a term of two (2) years. However, special committees may be dissolved at any time by order of the County Board and will automatically be dissolved upon completion of the tasks for which the committee was created.
- (c) Special committees will perform the tasks authorized or directed by the County Board or the County Board Chairperson.
- (d) Alternates may be appointed when authorized by statute, ordinance, resolution or motion. An alternate may act when authorized to do so by the person for whom the alternative is serving as a replacement, provided that the committee Chairperson is notified and the action is noted in the minutes of any meeting at which the alternate serves.
- (e) The County may be statutorily obligated to appoint members to Appointed Committees, which have duties and responsibilities that are defined by regulations outside of the jurisdiction of the County or the County Board.

#### **RULE 31-AMENDMENT TO OR SUSPENSION OF RULES**

- (a) These rules may be amended or temporarily suspended by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members of County Board present.
- (b) Unless otherwise provided by law, any rule may be suspended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present. Immediately upon completion of the business for which the rule was suspended, the suspended rule will automatically be reinstated.
- (c) The vote shall be determined by roll call vote.
- (d) Nothing in these rules may be construed to conflict with state statute. These rules are severable and if any rule is held invalid, void or unenforceable, the remainder of the rules will remain in full force and effect.

#### **RULE 32-DRESS CODE & BOARD CONDUCT**

- (a) All members shall wear appropriate professional attire to all meetings of the County Board.
- (b) All members shall conduct themselves in a respectful, dignified manner at all County Board functions.
- (c) Whenever the presiding officer, or any member of the County Board, is addressing the County Board membership, the remaining members must remain seated, attentive and orderly.

## **RULE 33-EFFECTIVE DATE AND REPEAL OF PRIOR RULES**

- (a) These rules are effective immediately upon adoption and repeal any and all prior rules. Any other previously adopted rules, regulations, resolutions, and/or ordinances, in whole or in part, that are in conflict herein are rescinded.

## **RULE 34-REVIEW OF RULES**

- (a) This document shall be reviewed, with recommended updates, every two (2) years by the Committee of the Board of the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors, prior to the April reorganizational meeting.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

The County Board is aware that the Wisconsin State Statutes set forth various forms of conduct which are deemed to be prohibited and this code is not intended to be a criminal code. The acts prescribed herein need not be done with intent to do wrong, rather they are acts which, in doing, might cast doubt upon the integrity of the person so acting.

Purpose- Because the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors has long been a progressive innovative body, it is in the best interest of the citizens of the County that this board continue to reaffirm its leadership by adopting a Code of Ethics.

Intent- The purpose of this code is to hold the respect and inspire confidence of the people of the County and to protect the respective Supervisors from suspicion of misconduct. It is not intended to be a punitive approach to ethics; rather it is a listing of those essentials of ethical conduct which all elected officials should observe.

Unethical Conduct- Failure to abide by the rules of conduct on the part of a Supervisor shall be deemed unethical, provided nothing herein shall prohibit a Supervisor from entering into a contract as provided by state law and within the stator limits imposed. Unethical conduct by a Supervisor may result in removal of the Supervisor from any associated committee(s) by the County Board Chairperson for the duration of the Supervisor's term of office. Removal from office by the County Board would be a 2/3 majority vote.

Each County Board Supervisor shall take care to avoid any circumstances which cause that Supervisor to have a conflict of interest in carrying out the duties of the County Board; additionally, Supervisors shall avoid those situations in which there appears to be conflict of interest. For purposes of this section, a "conflict of interest" means a direct or indirect personal or financial interest which is inconsistent with the proper performance of one's official duties or which would tend to impair one's independence of judgment or action in the performance of official duties.

A County Board Supervisor shall immediately disclose a family relationship with any employee of the County and excuse himself/herself from any discussion, conversation, deliberation, or vote pertaining to any matter which may have an impact on a family member employee.

A County Board Supervisor shall not use their position to obtain preferential treatment or obtain financial gain for themselves or their immediate family members or for any business with which they are associated.

A County Board Supervisor shall not disclose or use privileged information concerning the County to promote a private or personal financial gain.

A County Board Supervisor shall not disclose or otherwise release any discussions and/or other information made known to the Supervisor during the "closed session" portion of any meeting.

A County Board Supervisor shall not vote on any legislation in which they have a personal or financial interest. Additionally, each Supervisor shall disclose prior to a vote on the particular issue, the nature and extent of any personal or financial interest in legislation pending before the County Board. The Supervisor shall abstain from voting on such an issue and shall be excused from any meeting dealing with that particular issue.

Any Supervisor directly or indirectly involved in a zoning issue shall disclose his or her position and abstain from discussions or voting on such an issue.

A County Board Supervisor shall not directly or indirectly lease or purchase any property from the County not normally available to the general public.

For purposes of determining the existence of a real or apparent conflict of interest, such a conflict on the part of the Supervisor's parents, spouse, or children shall be considered to be a conflict for the Supervisor.

Any public employee or public official shall not receive or offer to receive, either directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, or other thing of value which they are not authorized to receive from any person if such person: 1) Has or is seeking to obtain contractual or other business or financial relationship with the County or the County Board; or 2) Has an interest which may be substantially affected by the County or the County Board of supervisors. The receipt of any gift, gratuity, or anything of value as denoted above is contrary to the public policy of the County. Any gift(s) receive in conflict with this policy should be immediately turned over to the County.

Consequences for unethical behavior may be found in Wisconsin State Statues 19.59.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD**

The Committee of the Board shall consist of the County Board Chairperson, The County Board Vice Chairperson, and each standing committee Chairperson. The committee shall meet at least six (6) months or as necessary for policy and procedure formulation and other general needs as may be required. This committee shall be responsible for strategic planning.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee shall also function as the Purchasing, Budget, Property, Insurance, General Claims and Solid Waste. The County Clerk, County Treasurer, Register of Deeds, Clerk of Courts, District Attorney, Corporation Counsel, Circuit Courts, Maintenance, Register in Probate, Coroner, and County Administration Office are all supervised by this committee. This committee is also in charge of all building matters, to include new construction projects, and all other departments of the County not otherwise specifically assigned to another standing committee. The Chairperson of the County Board shall serve as a voting member of this Committee.

### **AGRICULTURAL AND EXTENSION EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The Agricultural and Extension Education Committee shall have the general supervision of the County UW Extension Office and develops and evaluates programs conducted by those offices. The Committee will interact with the County Fair Association Board.

### **LAND CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Land Conservation Committee, in the name of the county, may cooperate with, enter into agreements with, or furnish financial, technical, planning, or other assistance to any agency, governmental or otherwise, or any landowner or land user within the incorporated or unincorporated parts of the county, in carrying out resource conservation operations and works of improvement for flood prevention or for the conservation development, utilization and protection of soil and water resources within the county.

The Land Conservation Committee shall consist of four (4) members, three (3) members from the County Board, with two (2) of those being supervisors who serve on the Agricultural and Extension Education Committee. The fourth member of the committee shall be the chairperson of the County USDA Farm Service Agency committee or a committee member designated by the FSA chairperson. The committee has general supervision responsibility of the Land Conservation Department.



## **LAND INFORMATION COMMITTEE**

The Land Information Committee shall be responsible for oversight of land information functions of the County, including but not limited to GIS, Surveyor and the Land Information Council.

The Committee will promote and coordinate the integration of land information systems throughout the County, schedule meetings with appropriate Department Managers/Elected Officials and administrative-level employees to establish goals and timelines for Land Information projects and grants.

The officers of the Committee shall consist of a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, neither of whom can be employees of Buffalo County. The Chairperson may be appointed by the County Board Chairperson.

## **RECYCLING COMMITTEE**

The Recycling Committee shall be responsible for all matters relating to recycling materials in the county. Serve on the Recycling Management Board with the Collection Site Supervisors, and supervise the operations of the county recycling program and report major items to be decided by the Recycling Management Board.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

The Human Resources committee is in charge of all matters arising from Federal law or Wisconsin State Statutes concerning employees of the County. The Human Resources Committee will also recommend to the Finance Committee and County Board changes in salary and vehicle mileage reimbursement. This committee is also responsible for all matters relating to employee health insurance programs.

## **HIGHWAY COMMITTEE**

The Highway Committee consists of County Board members elected by the full County Board at the organizational meeting. The committee supervises the construction and maintenance of bridges and County and State roads as provided by Wisconsin State Statutes. The Highway Committee has the general supervision of the buffalo County highway Department.

## **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND VETERANS COMMITTEE**

The Health & Human Services Board supervises the Health & Human Services Department and performs all duties described by law and shall consist of County Board members and three town/municipality residents. The committee shall have supervision over and act in an advisory capacity with the Director of the County Department of health & Human Services on relief matters,

in addition to those duties contained in Wisconsin State Statutes and other related Federal Regulations.

The committee shall have supervision over and shall act in a supervisory capacity to Veteran's Service Officer in the administration of the office and shall audit all expenditures in connection with this office, as provided in Chapters 45 and 66, Wisconsin State Statutes.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Law Enforcement Committee shall confer with and supervise the needs and duties of Sheriff and the law enforcement department, including the jail and facilities and E-911 services pursuant to Wisconsin State Statutes.

The committee shall insure that an appropriate emergency government ordinance, in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes, is adopted and updated for the county and assure that emergency plans are current and works with the Emergency Management Director.

## **LAND RESOURCES ZONING COMMITTEE**

The Zoning Committee shall have overall general supervision of the Zoning Office and function within the County. The committee shall be responsible for reviewing and conducting public hearings for any and all zoning codes within the County, and overseeing all County Zoning code, ordinances and policies.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Economic Development Committee will recommend options to the County Board that encourages economic development that will have an impact on the County's future economic health and competitiveness.

## **COMPENSATION**

All members of the County Board shall be compensated in accordance with the following schedule:

- (a) Compensation shall be paid to each supervisor to cover additional time and expenses incurred as follows: County Board Chair - \$150.00 per month, County Board Vice Chair - \$75.00 per month, all other County Board supervisors - \$50.00 per month plus applicable vehicle mileage reimbursement. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson will be compensated at the County Board Chairperson rate.
- (b) For each attendance at any special County Board meeting, a supervisor is entitled to receive \$50.00 – per diem, plus applicable vehicle mileage reimbursement.

- (c) For each attendance at any standing committee, appointed committee or sub-committee of the County, a supervisor is entitled to receive \$40.00 per meeting, plus applicable vehicle mileage reimbursement. Supervisors should attach documentation for attendance at any appointed committee meetings with their request for reimbursement.
- (d) If two or more committee meetings are held on the same day, a supervisor is entitled to per diem for each committee that meets to consider its normal full agenda. Per diem will not be paid for perfunctory meetings in which only a limited agenda is considered.
- (e) Any other compensation must be established by Resolution in accordance with the State of Wisconsin Statutes.
- (f) For each day of attendance at a convention or conference out of the county, each Supervisor shall receive \$40.00 a day per diem, plus vehicle mileage reimbursement only for an individual who drives or the actual cost of other transportation. Reimbursement shall occur only for a day, or partial day, of actual attendance at a scheduled meeting. Each County Supervisor or official shall receive a meal allowance, including tax and gratuity, as stipulated in the Buffalo County Employee Handbook.
- (g) Attendance at meetings or conferences (other than regular County board or standing committees) shall specifically require prior authorization by the Board Chairperson, or designee, or the appropriate standing committee chairperson. Each Supervisor or official must have original receipts for all expenses, including lodging, in order to be reimbursed.
- (h) Attendance of any member at the Wisconsin Counties Association Annual Convention shall be approved by the County Board Chairperson.
- (i) Citizens that are appointed to Buffalo County Standing Committees (currently Land Conservation, Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and Health and Human Services Board Committees) shall receive vehicle mileage reimbursement to and from their home, any authorized out-of-pocket expenses, as the same per diem as County Board Supervisor members.
- (j) Citizens appointed to the Board of Adjustment are entitled to vehicle mileage reimbursement to and from their home, \$50.00 meeting per diem and any authorized out-of-pocket expenses.
- (k) Citizens that are appointed or elected to other committees or boards are entitled to vehicle mileage reimbursement to and from their home, \$30.00 meeting per diem, and any authorized out-of-pocket expenses.