

GENERAL RULES OF GOVERNMENT
BUFFALO COUNTY, WISCONSIN
(Effective June 27, 2016)

RULE 1

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.

The organizational meeting of the County Board shall be held on the third Tuesday in April of each election (even numbered) year. It shall be presided over by one of its own members, who shall be elected chairperson by a simple majority ballot of the County Board members.

The County Board shall meet on the Fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. for the months of January, February, March, April, May June, July, August, September and December. The October meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. as part of the Buffalo County’s Youth in Government Day. The annual budget hearing and associated County Board meeting held during the month of November shall be held on the Tuesday following the second Monday of the month, but no later than the 14th of November, commencing at 7:00 p.m., except when the date falls on November 11th. In those instances, the annual budget hearing shall be held on the Wednesday following the second Monday of the month of November, in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes 59.11, or as that Statute may be revised, amended or renumbered. The reorganizational meeting will be held in April of even numbered years at 9:00 a.m. according to Wisconsin State Statutes.

The Chairperson may cancel any scheduled County Board meeting in the event there is not enough business to warrant a meeting, or due to any other extenuating circumstance. In the event a scheduled meeting is to be cancelled, all members will be appropriately notified. The Chairperson may change any meeting date or time, at his or her discretion, upon proper notification of all County Board members.

RULES OF BUSINESS

RULE 2

The first order of business generally to be conducted at the organizational meeting of the County Board shall be the election of the Chairperson. The Chairperson is elected by a simple majority vote ballot. The Chairperson shall hold that position for two (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.

There shall be elected at the same time, by a simple majority vote of the members, a vice-chairperson, 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 disability of the Chairperson.

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

The Chairperson of the County Board shall be the Chairperson of the Committee of the Board and shall be an ex-officio (non-voting) member of all committees of the County Board and shall fill all vacancies on committees between sessions when necessary to successfully carry on the business of the County. The Chairperson may appoint the vice-chairperson, as needed, to temporarily fill vacancies on any committees between session when necessary to carry on the business of the County.

In the absence of both the chairperson and the vice-chairperson, a chairperson pro tem shall be elected by the body. Such substitution shall not extend beyond the length of the meeting.

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.

RULE 3

When the Chairperson wishes to temporarily vacate the chair, a County Board member may 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.

RULE 4

The first order of business generally after the organization of the County Board shall be the election of the members of the Buffalo County Highway Committee. The appointment of members to the various standing committees shall generally be completed within ten (10) working days of the organizational meeting of the County Board.

RULE 5

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.

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 4:30 p.m. Tuesday preceding the County Board meeting date in order to be placed on the agenda and considered by the County Board. The County Board may, by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present, suspend the reporting requirement of this paragraph.

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.

All other resolutions or other documents introduced to the County Board at the regular meeting shall be read or summarized, by an person designated by the chairperson, except on a properly made and approved motion to waive the reading of any specific resolution or other document.

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.

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.

RULE 6

The recommended Order of Business for County Board meetings shall be as follows:

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. The Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call of Members
4. Reading and Action on Previous Meeting Minutes
5. Public Comments Regarding Listed Agenda Items
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 Minutes/Content.
11. Summary Report from County Board Chairperson
12. General Public Comments
13. Adjournment

RULE 7

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 entered in the journal. A simple majority of all elected members must be present at the meeting to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

RULE 8

A County Board member shall attend every County Board and standing committee meeting appointed to; the required attendance being a mandatory obligation. 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.

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.

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 Chair 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 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 Chair or in the chair's absence, the person chairing the meeting, may decide how to address the situation. Whenever possible, the Chair 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 Chair 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.

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 9

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 a vote all questions regularly moved and to 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;
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. To represent the body over which the chairperson presides;
8. Alter the order of business as necessary, with the approval of two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present.

RULE 10

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 11

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.

RULE 12

It shall be the duty of all members present 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. The chairperson shall vote on all matters before the County Board, the same order of vote as any other member of the body.

Voting by roll call vote shall be commended 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.

A member of the County Board or Standing Committee shall physically be present at any Board or Committee meeting in order to cast a vote.

RULE 13

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 14

All questions shall be put in the order they are moved, except privileged questions.

RULE 15

All appropriations of county levied monies shall be voted on by roll call and the yes and no votes entered on the journal.

RULE 16

A roll call vote shall be taken upon any business at the request of any one (1) member.

RULE 17

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.

RULE 18

Whenever any member is to speak in debate or deliver any matter to the County Board, that member shall address the chair and confine their remarks to the question under debate.

RULE 19

In all cases, the presiding officer shall name the member who is first to speak.

RULE 20

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. Call the question
5. To postpone to a certain time
6. To refer to a select committee
7. To amend
8. To postpone indefinitely

These several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are named.

RULE 21

When a motion is made and properly seconded, it shall be stated by the Chair previous to debate. If a question contains two or more points, the question shall be divided at the request of any one member.

RULE 22

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 23

In case of a tie vote, the question is lost.

RULE 24

A copy of the annual report of each department shall be submitted to the County Administration Office by April 1 of each year. A summary copy shall be provided to each County Board member at least two weeks 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 25

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.

RULE 26

The Chairperson shall 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 19.81-19.98 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, (or as the Statute is revised, amended or renumbered) more commonly known as the “Open Meetings Law”.

The standing committees of the County Board shall be constituted as follows with more specific information of each committee contained in the latter portion of this document.

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|---|--|
| 1. Committee of the Board | County Board Chairperson
County Board Vice Chairperson
Standing Committee Chairpersons |
| 2. Finance Committee | 5 members |
| 3. Human Resources Committee | 5 members |
| 4. Agricultural and Extension
Education Committee | 4 members |
| 5. Land Conservation Committee | 4 members
(3 County Board Members) |
| 6. Recycling Committee | 2 members |
| 7. Highway Committee | 4 members |
| 8. Health & Human Services
And Veterans Committee | 6 members
(3 County Board Members) |
| 9. Law Enforcement and
Emergency Management
Committee | 4 members |
| 10. Zoning Committee | 4 members |

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| 11. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Advisory Board | up to 2 members |
| 12. Western Dairyland Community Action Board | 2 members |
| 13. Western Wisconsin Cares Board | 1 member |
| 14. Historical Society Committee | 1 member |

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.

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
(4 regular and 2 alternate) |
| 2. Long Term Support Citizen Advisory Committee | 7 members |
| 3. Land Information Council | 7 or more members |
| 4. Aging Advisory Committee | 5 members |
| 5. Nutrition Committee | 5 members |
| 6. River Country Resource Conservation And Development Council (RC&D) | 1 member |
| 7. Winding Rivers Library System Board | 2 members |
| 8. Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission | 2 members |
| 9. Veterans Commission | 3 members |
| 10. Highway Safety Committee | 5 or more members |
| 11. Local Emergency Planning Committee | 5 or more members |
| 12. Buffalo County Fair Association | 1 member |

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 27

The County Clerk's Office shall receive agendas 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.

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 may designate an individual to record minutes of board meetings and/or committee meetings. 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 28

These rules may be amended or temporarily suspended by the unanimous consent or by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members of County Board present. The vote shall be determined by roll call vote.

RULE 29

All members shall wear appropriate professional attire to all meetings of the County Board.

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, and because it appears to be 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 states 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.

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.

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 as necessary for policy and procedure formulation and other general needs as may be required.

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, Land Information/GIS, Maintenance, Register in Probate, Regional ADRC, 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.

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.

LAND CONSERVATION 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.

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 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, 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.

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.

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.

For each attendance at any regular or special County Board meeting, a supervisor is entitled to receive \$50.00 – per diem, plus applicable vehicle mileage reimbursement.

For each attendance at any standing committee, appointed committee, sub-committee or meeting where the attendance of the supervisor is necessary to carry on the work of the County, approved by the County Board Chair or Vice Chair, a supervisor is entitled to receive \$40.00 per meeting, plus applicable vehicle mileage reimbursement.

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.

Any other compensation must be established by Resolution in accordance with the State of Wisconsin Statutes.

B. 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 Policy and Procedures manual.

C. 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.

D. Attendance of any member at the Wisconsin Counties Association Annual Convention shall be approved by the County Board Chairperson.

E. Citizens that are appointed to Buffalo County Standing Committees (currently Land Conservation and Health and Human Services Board Committees) shall receive vehicle mileage reimbursement to and from their home, any authorized out-of-pocket expenses, and the same per diem as County Board Supervisor members. 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.

SUMMARY

The General Rules of Government shall not be in conflict with or take precedence over the current Buffalo County Policy and Procedure Manual.

All past resolutions, motions, and past practices pertaining to any language contained in this document is hereby superseded on the effective date of this document.

This document shall be reviewed, with recommended updates, ever two (2) years by the Committee of the Board of the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors, prior to the April reorganizational meeting. It will be updated, as necessary, through action of a majority of the members of the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors this 27th day of June 2016.