

2015

Washington County Board Structure Advisory Committee



Although the Study Committee has reviewed the elements of this report throughout the process, they have not had the opportunity to review the compilation of their work as it appears in this report format.

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BACKGROUND

With the onset of hiring Washington County's first Administrator, the need to examine the Washington County board size and committee structure was identified by the County Board Chairman. A fourteen member study committee consisting of eleven county board members and three staff was established to research and provide a recommendation to the County Board.

At the Study Committees first meeting, it was suggested to engage UW-Extension Washington County Community Development Educator Paul Roback in the facilitation of this process.

This draft report compiles the work and recommendations of the Study Committee as of their March 18, 2015. The Study Committee will continue to meet to address county board size, compensation and the responsibilities of the Board Chair.

STUDY COMMITTEE TIMELINE & PROCESS

October 1, 2014 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- Established advisory committee purpose, schedule and function
- Reviewed committee structure of Washington County and 15 other counties
- Established task list and timeline

November 3, 2014 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- Developed a strategy to engage county board members and department heads in study committee process
- Identified strengths and weaknesses of current Washington County committee structure

December 10, 2014 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- A representative from the Wisconsin Counties Association presented on the role of county board members and committees with an Administrator structure.
- Reviewed current Washington County standing committees

January 5, 2015 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- Guest presentations from Sheboygan County Administrator and Ozaukee County Administrator and Board Chair
- Presented process for reviewing committee structure options

January 19, 2015 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- Due date for committee members to send organizational chart preferences to County Board Chairman

January 29, 2015 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- Reviewed and discussed sample committee structures- used large display to easily move committees & department functions around
- Identified trends observed from committee organizational chart homework
- Identified questions to be further researched

February 2, 2015 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- Refined draft committee structure

- Addressed outstanding committee items, including:
 - Term-limits on committees
 - Who appoints committee members
 - Who appoints/elects committee chairs
 - Citizens on committees
 - How many committees can a supervisor be on? How many power committees?
 - Chair only one committee
 - Other/special committees
 - Transportation committee- elected or appointed
 - Bill review committee- is it necessary?
 - Number of supervisors on a committee
 - Keppler Rule

February 8, 2015 - Joint Meeting of Executive & Finance Committees

- Presented Advisory Committee work to date with three options for committee structure
- Sought feedback for County Board presentation

February 9, 2015 - County Board Meeting

- Presented Advisory Committee work to date with three options for committee structure
- Sought initial feedback from the County Board

February 18, 2015 - Department Head Meeting

- Presented Advisory Committee work to date with three options for committee structure
- Sought Department Head preference on committee structure

March 18, 2015 - Advisory Committee Meeting

- Discussed & finalized recommendation on county board committee structure
- Discussed & finalized recommendation on a process for electing county board and committee leadership

April 21, 2015 - County Board

- Vote on recommendation from advisory committee

Additional Topics to Address after County Board Vote:

1. County Board Size
 - a. Size- determine appropriate size of county board
 - b. Timeline- determine when reductions should take place
 - c. Process and Criteria for Redistricting- determine objectives that new districts must achieve
2. County Board Salaries & Per Diem
3. County Board Chair- work hours and salary

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF CURRENT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

As a starting point for considering why to reorganize the county committee structure, advisory committee members identified strengths and weaknesses of the current structure. Strengths should be carried over to the new committee structure and weaknesses should be proactively addressed with a new committee structure.

Strengths:

- Department Heads can relate to County Board members and County Board members understand Departments
- Informed County Board members make informed decisions
- Committees are operationally focused- committees understand department operations
- County Board members on committees have a lot of say on committees- they can impact Departments
- New committee reports and posted on website
- Committee size of 5 is appropriate
- Good meeting attendance- an indication that people take their job seriously and that the meetings have purpose

Weaknesses:

- County Board may be too hands-on with administrative functions
- Committee meetings have items that may not be important/necessary
- County Board members become committee/department advocates during budget process
- A lot of committees for the Administrator to manage effectively
- Committees not service oriented
- Some meetings do not have enough meat/substance
- Report focused- sometimes too detailed
- Sometimes go beyond the scope of the committee by encroaching on the operations of other organizations operations, such as the Agriculture & Industrial Society (AIS) and Historical Society

OBSERVATIONS & OBJECTIVES

In preparation for the January 29th Study Committee meeting, members submitted their preferences for county board committee structures. The following observations from this exercise were discussed at the January 29th meeting:

- Average number of committees (including Executive) was between 7 and 8 (7.7)
- Most frequently combined committee included Health & Aging with Samaritan
- Several instances of combining Planning, Conservation & Parks Committee (PCPC) with either Transportation or Education & Culture Committees
- Public Safety Committee remained the same on each organizational chart

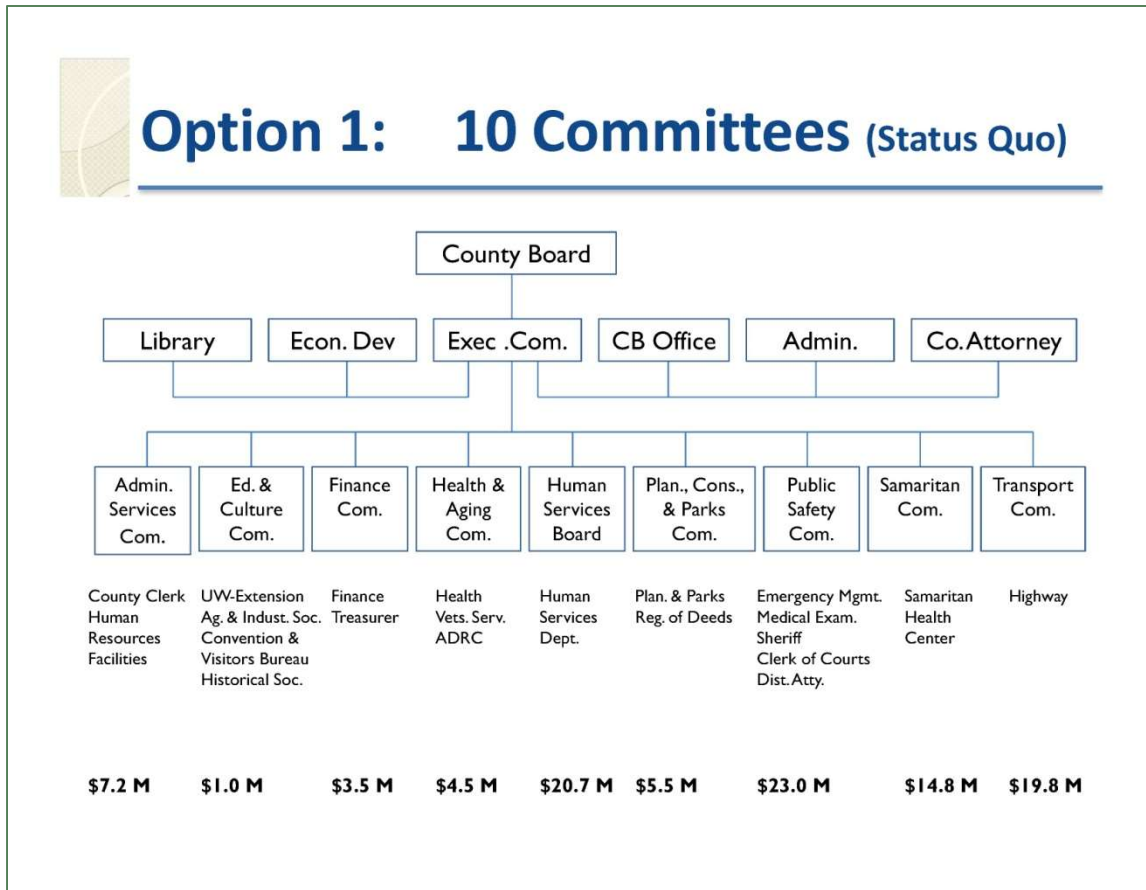
In order to assist decision-making, Advisory Committee members developed the following objectives to be considered in the development of a new committee structure:

1. Shared / balanced workload for each committee and supervisor
2. Even budget distribution among committees
3. Even personnel distribution among committees
4. Even department distribution among committees
5. Streamline processes / efficiencies- reduce the number of committees that decisions need approval from
6. New structure agrees with State Statutes

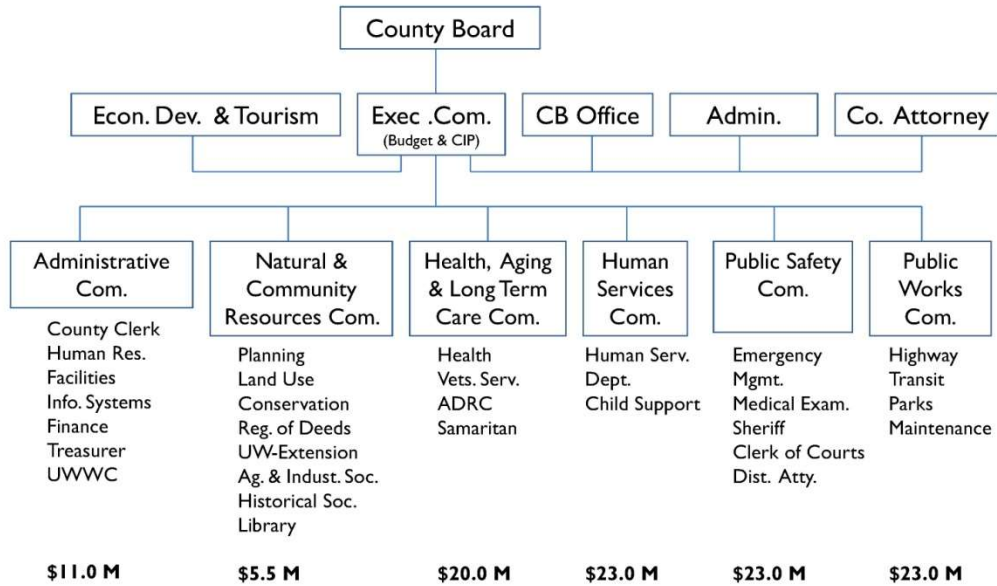
ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

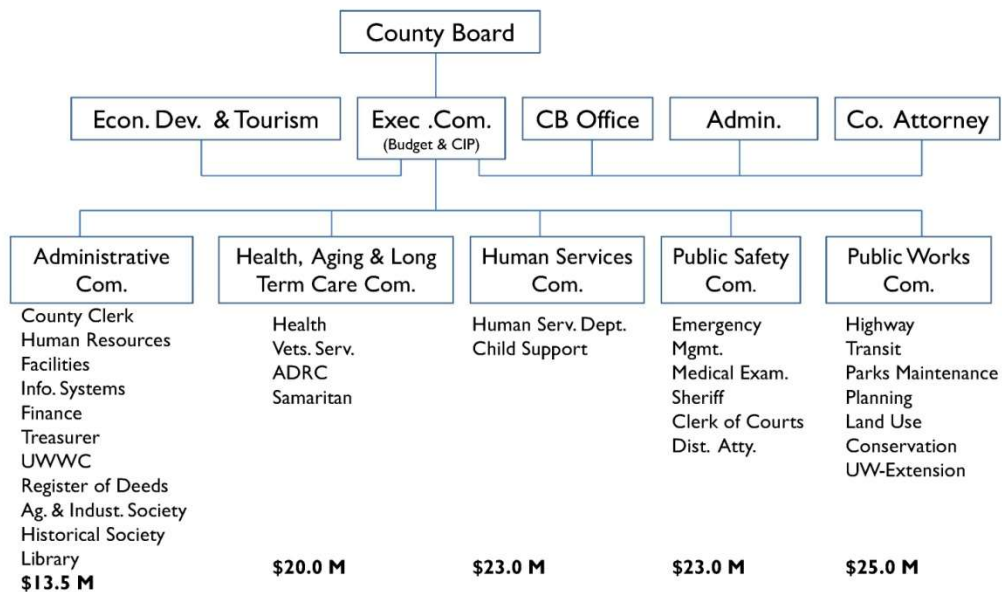
Using a “Sticky Wall” (Appendix A) at the January 29th meeting, committee members were able to start with the current committee structure (Option 1- 10 Committees /Status Quo) and then apply the observations and objectives to design two committee structure alternatives (Option 2- 7 Committees and Option 3- 6 Committees). The following is the result of this process.



Option 2: 7 Committees



Option 3: 6 Committees



PROCESS FOR ELECTING LEADERSHIP / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In addition to committee structure, committee leadership was also reviewed. In Options 2 & 3, the budget review process is moved to the Executive Committee, whose membership includes the chairs of each of the standing committees. The advantage of this change is that the budget will be reviewed by those that have knowledge of the departments that report to each of the standing committees. Currently, the budget is reviewed by the Finance Committee and it is possible that members who serve on this committee may not have working knowledge of specific county departments because none of the committee members serve or have served on the specific department's oversight committee. Several alternatives to how standing committee chairs are elected were discussed. These include:

Option 1- 7 member Executive Committee

1. Elect Board Chair
2. Elect Board Vice-Chair
3. Elect Board 2nd Vice-Chair
4. Elect 4 additional Executive Committee members
5. County Board Chair appoints 5 Executive Committee members to serve as Standing Committee Chairs

Option 2- 6 member Executive Committee

1. Elect County Board Chair
2. Elect 5 Standing Committee Chairs
3. From the 5 Standing Committee Chairs, elect a Vice-Chair and 2nd Vice-Chair

Option 3- 7 member Executive Committee

1. Elect Board Chair
2. Elect Board Vice-Chair
3. Elect 5 Standing Committee Chairs (randomly select order of election by pulling committee names out of a hat)
4. Elect 2nd Vice-Chair from the pool of 5 Standing Committee Chairs

RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Recommended Option 3: 6 Committees (5 Standing Committees + Executive Committee)

Decision Points

- Most closely balances objectives
 - Shared / balanced workload for County Board Supervisors
 - Even budget distribution among committees
 - Even personnel distribution among committees
 - Even department distribution among committees
 - Streamline processes- reduce the number of committees that decisions need approval from
- Department Heads overwhelming in favor of 6 committees
- Concerns expressed if UW-Extension should be in Public Works or Administrative
- Concerns expressed of merging planning functions with Public Works

PROCESS FOR ELECTING LEADERSHIP / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Recommend Option 3:

1. Elect Board Chair
2. Elect Board Vice-Chair
3. Elect 5 Standing Committee Chairs (randomly select order of election by pulling committee names out of a hat)
4. Elect 2nd Vice-Chair from the pool of 5 Standing Committee Chairs

Decision Points

- Desirable to have an odd number on the Executive Committee (Board Chair, Vice-Chair & 5 Standing Committee Chairs = 7)
- Priority placed on electing Standing Committee Chairs. It is desirable to have the county board decide who is most qualified to Chair each Standing Committee.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the Study Committee process, a number of related items were discussed and addressed.

- 1) Term-limits on committees
No term limits proposed for committee, committee chair or board chair service.
- 2) Who appoints committee members?
County Board Chair appoints committee members, except for committee chairs. Chairs are elected by the county board.
- 3) Who appoints/elects committee chairs?
County Board elects committee chairs
- 4) Citizens on standing committees
No citizens on standing committees. Citizen appointments to subcommittees, commissions and boards remains as it is currently and/or as required by state statute.
- 5) How many committees can a supervisor be on? How many power committees? (Keppler Rule, §2.05(5))
Eliminate Keppler Rule. No committee is perceived to have more power than another committee. Every Supervisor will serve on at least one standing committee. They may serve on additional committees based on their and the board chair's preference.
- 6) Chair only one committee
Yes. Remains as it is currently, §2.05(7)
- 7) Other/special committees
Creation of and appointments continue as they are currently made.
- 8) Transportation committee- elected or appointed
Treated the same as other standing committees- county board elects chair and board chair appoints committee members.

9) Bill review committee- is it necessary?

Sec. 59.52(12). The board “examine and settle all accounts” itself or may delegate bill review to a standing committee if the amount does not exceed \$10,000 OR to the standing committee chairperson if it adopts a resolution by majority vote delegating such authority. Resolution must be adopted every year. §2.42(7) of the County Code.

10) Number of supervisors on a committee

Five supervisors per standing committee. Executive committee size is 7, regardless if there are 6 or 7 total committees (Standing Committees plus Executive Committee). Each standing committee chair serves on the executive committee.

11) 2nd County Board meeting per month for educational items

A second county board meeting per month focused on education was discussed. No formal actions would be taken during these meetings. The Study Committee recommends continuing with the current practice, that the County Board Chair can call additional meetings as needed.

12) Budget review

Recommended to be moved to the executive committee, which has representation from each of the standing committees.

APPENDIX A

Using a “Sticky Wall” to apply study committee observations and objectives to design committee structures alternatives.

Option 1- 10 Committees (Status Quo)



Option 3- 6 Committees

