

Supervisor Veldran comments to the Executive Committee on Chapter 7 rule change recommendations.

7.22 SCHEDULING, NOTICE AND CONDUCT OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES. CHANGE (14) Committee members are expected to attend meetings in person, but may participate in a meeting, including counting for quorum and voting, via telephone or other electronic media if such participation is specifically noticed on the agenda for the member at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

7.51 PROCEDURAL RULES OF THE DANE COUNTY BOARD ADD (11) Board members are expected to attend meetings in person, but may participate in a meeting, including counting for quorum and voting, via telephone or other electronic media if such participation is specifically noticed on the agenda for the member at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

The above-referenced rule change recommendations should be voted down.

Reasoning: while the current situation regarding COVID-19 or other types of possible national or international emergencies should be viewed as exceptions not rules. While I would hope that the above would not be abused, it is open for such abuse by supervisors. The obvious “worst” case scenario, as well as highly unlikely, is that the entire county board is only virtually present while staff and citizens would be physically present in chambers or at a committee meeting. The scene of this possibility is chilling to me. As I said, having this scenario is highly improbable but not impossible would put the county board in an extremely uncomfortable position in the eyes of the public. That is why this is unnecessary and avoidable by not passing these changes.

Even if “no” supervisors would be unlikely in the chambers or at committee meetings, what is the possibility of barely a physical quorum being present in the chambers while the rest of the board is present “on line” or “on the phone”.

There are “safeguards” in the rules that can easily be circumvented: 24-hour notice or “expected to attend meetings in person”. I think it is still possible that any of these scenarios could still exist. And can be even more extreme at the committee level.

In the event that the committee would pass these changes, I would suggest an amendment that a sunset clause be added or that this must be voted on at every new board organizational meeting.

If we need to do this, again, rules such as this should only be used in extreme circumstances.

Thank you.