# Area of Emphasis #1 - Financial/Budget Condition of County

| Actions | Outcome Goal | Who's Responsible | Reporting Entity | Target Date | Measure of Success |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A - Continous Quality Improvement (CQI) | Provide recommendations to develop a comprehensive CQI program County Wide | Kathi Cauley; Brian Lamers; Leam Participates | Task Force | | |
| B - Smart Growth | Develop an overview of information related to growth in the county and education of plans, studies and community feedback. | Rob Klotz, Genevieve Borich, Andy Erdman | Presentation - Task Force and JCEDC; | | |
| C - County Farmland | Review existing studies and market impact; analyze short-term versus long-term financial impacts; policy for proceeds from any sale | Planning and Zoning; JCEDC; Land & Water; Finance | Task Force; County Board | | |
| D - Fund Balance Policy | Review existing policy and provide recommednations for changes; determine if protocal is needed for when utilized (ex- issuing debt) | Finance Committee | County Board | | |
| E - Alternate Revenue Sources | Continue to explore revenue opportunties to support County provided services | Department Heads | County Administrator | | |
| F - Transporation Plan | Work to Develop a cohesive transportation plan that covers a diversify of needs (Infrastructure; Human Services; Workforce Development; Economic Issues; Transportation) | Transporation Working Group | County Administrator; Mis Boards and Committees | | |

# Area of Emphasis #2 - Staff/Work Environment

| Actions | Outcome Goal | Who's Responsible | Reporting Entity | Target Date | Measure of Success |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A - Analysis of OT and Sick Time utilization | Review current levels of OT and Sick Time usage and determine if policy changes and/or staffing changes may assist in reduction | Sheriff and Highway Commissioner | County Administrator and Human Resource Committee | | |
| B(1) - Technology - ERP | Issue an RFP for an ERP system | Finance Director | County Administrator | | |
| B(2) - Technology - Security | On-going evaluation of security balanced with operational needs | MIS | County Administrator; Infrastructure | | |
| B(3) - Technology - long term plan | Continue to evaluate evolving change in technology working with DH on impacts and ROI | MIS | County Administrator; Infrastructure | | |
| C(1) - HR - Training | Work with staff to further enhance training opportunites and foucs on leadership and best management practices. | HR Director; DH | HR Committee; County Administrator | | |
| C(2) - HR - Recruitment and Retainage | Continue on-going analsysis with internal and external comparables to ensure the County is able to retain and recruit qualified staff. This may include reviewing the classification versus market conditions. | HR Director; DH; CA | HR Committee | | |
| C(3) - HR - Sucession Planning | Work with DHs on mid to long term transtions to ensure senior management staff is prepared in moving forward. | County Administrator | HR Committee; Admin & Rules | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D - Facilities | Respective staff works to develop a facilities assessment to develop a long range plan for maintaining the County's facilities in a economically sustainable fashion. | Central Services Director; Human Services Staff; Highway Staff; Fair Park Staff; County Administrator | Infrastructure | | |

# Area of Emphasis #3 - Structure & Governance

| Actions | Outcome Goal | Who's Responsible | Reporting Entity | Target Date | Measure of Success |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A - Develop a Council of Governments (COG) | Develop a formal COG to develop cohesive strategies across the County along with lokoing for opportunties partner and reduce duplication of services. | County Board Chair | County Board | | |
| B - Communication with State Agencies and State Legislatures | Develop a process to assist in better engagement with state officials | COG & Admin and Rules | | | |
| C - Committee Structure | Review committee structure and number of committee; look for opportunties if consolidatin of committees/boards make sense; look at scheduling of committees for process | County Board; Administration and Rules | County Board | | |
| D- County Board Size | Review size of Board to determine what best fits Jefferson County | Administration and Rules; Andy Erdman; Barb Frank | County Board | | |
| E (1) - Strategic Plan - Update | Review Strategic Plan and determine what updates or refinements need to take place. | Administration and Rules | County Board | | |
| E(2) - Strategic Plan - Action Plan | Develop an Action Plan for the County's Strategic Plan; Review Departments' Action Plans as part of the process for inclusion as needed | County Administrator | Admin & Rules; County Board | | |

# Wisconsin Counties Rating Summary (as of January 28, 2015)

| Wisconsin County | Moody's Rating | S & P Rating | Fitch Rating | Jan. 1 2014 Population Est. | 2014 Equalized Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adams | A2 | -- | -- | 20,844 | $ 2,375,180,900 |
| Ashland | -- | -- | -- | 16,071 | 1,174,714,700 |
| Barron | -- | AA | -- | 46,020 | 3,731,429,300 |
| Bayfield | Aa3 | -- | -- | 15,059 | 2,508,332,200 |
| Brown | Aaa | -- | -- | 253,156 | 18,752,729,300 |
| Buffalo | -- | -- | -- | 13,594 | 1,034,660,000 |
| Burnett | -- | -- | -- | 15,462 | 2,479,279,200 |
| Calumet | Aa2 | AA+ | -- | 49,715 | 3,542,752,300 |
| Chippewa | Aa2 | -- | -- | 63,038 | 4,776,638,200 |
| Clark | -- | -- | -- | 34,697 | 1,884,365,200 |
| Columbia | Aa1 | -- | -- | 56,795 | 4,858,148,100 |
| Crawford | A1 | -- | -- | 16,628 | 1,092,001,100 |
| Dane | Aa1 | -- | AA+ | 502,251 | 51,741,144,300 |
| Dodge | Aa2 | -- | -- | 89,203 | 5,927,146,000 |
| Door | Aa2 | -- | -- | 27,976 | 6,964,805,000 |
| Douglas | Aa3 | -- | -- | 44,196 | 3,337,770,000 |
| Dunn | Aa3 | AA | -- | 43,917 | 2,672,053,700 |
| Eau Claire | Aa1 | -- | -- | 100,477 | 7,173,688,100 |
| Florence | -- | AA- | -- | 4,450 | 592,170,600 |
| Fond du Lac | Aa2 | -- | -- | 102,424 | 6,903,471,700 |
| Forest | -- | A+ | -- | 9,253 | 1,136,913,000 |
| Grant | -- | AA- | -- | 52,603 | 2,894,231,300 |
| Green | Aa3 | -- | -- | 36,822 | 2,662,968,000 |
| Green Lake | Aa3 | -- | -- | 19,114 | 2,207,401,600 |
| Iowa | A1 | -- | -- | 23,809 | 1,832,307,600 |
| Iron | -- | AA- | -- | 5,915 | 937,406,900 |
| Jackson | -- | AA- | -- | 20,630 | 1,484,833,300 |
| Jefferson | Aa2 | -- | -- | 83,974 | 6,345,404,000 |
| Juneau | A2 | AA- | -- | 26,934 | 1,890,300,800 |
| Kenosha | Aa2 | AA | AA | 167,258 | 12,581,231,400 |
| Kewaunee | A1 | AA- | -- | 20,652 | 1,483,318,300 |
| La Crosse | Aa1 | -- | -- | 116,740 | 8,428,637,800 |
| Lafayette | -- | -- | -- | 16,914 | 1,042,694,500 |
| Langlade | Aa3 | -- | -- | 19,847 | 1,657,313,300 |
| Lincoln | Aa3 | AA | -- | 28,816 | 2,263,763,700 |
| Manitowoc | A1 | -- | -- | 81,320 | 5,162,422,900 |
| Marathon | Aa1 | -- | -- | 134,803 | 9,670,069,100 |
| Marinette | -- | AA- | -- | 41,605 | 3,525,197,200 |
| Marquette | -- | A+ | -- | 15,399 | 1,552,166,400 |
| Menominee | -- | -- | -- | 4,236 | 289,124,800 |
| Milwaukee | Aa2 | AA | AA+ | 949,741 | 58,253,923,600 |
| Monroe | -- | AA | -- | 45,339 | 2,937,775,800 |
| Oconto | -- | -- | -- | 38,014 | 3,555,500,100 |
| Oneida | Aa2 | -- | -- | 36,082 | 6,707,234,200 |
| Outagamie | Aaa | -- | -- | 180,022 | 13,285,408,500 |
| Ozaukee | Aaa | -- | -- | 87,116 | 10,584,585,500 |
| Pepin | -- | -- | -- | 7,445 | 546,022,900 |
| Pierce | Aa2 | -- | -- | 41,107 | 2,807,114,900 |
| Polk | Aa3 | -- | -- | 44,237 | 4,144,282,200 |
| Portage | -- | AA | -- | 70,882 | 5,194,469,700 |
| Price | -- | A+ | -- | 14,155 | 1,460,493,300 |
| Racine | Aa1 | -- | -- | 195,461 | 13,623,818,800 |
| Richland | A1 | -- | -- | 17,995 | 1,053,069,500 |
| Rock | Aa1 | AA | -- | 160,104 | 9,742,746,400 |
| Rusk | A1 | A+ | -- | 14,790 | 1,196,067,900 |
| Saint Croix | Aa1 | -- | -- | 85,735 | 7,591,908,200 |
| Sauk | Aa1 | -- | -- | 62,092 | 6,425,899,700 |
| Sawyer | Aa3 | -- | -- | 16,676 | 3,391,249,700 |
| Shawano | Aa3 | -- | -- | 41,859 | 2,924,524,000 |
| Sheboygan | Aa2 | -- | -- | 115,362 | 8,604,762,900 |
| Taylor | -- | A+ | -- | 20,733 | 1,379,731,200 |
| Trempealeau | -- | AA- | -- | 29,184 | 1,900,381,000 |
| Vernon | A1 | AA- | -- | 29,977 | 1,813,055,000 |
| Vilas | Aa2 | -- | -- | 21,523 | 6,830,023,600 |
| Walworth | Aa1 | -- | -- | 102,837 | 13,280,169,800 |
| Washburn | Aa3 | -- | -- | 15,948 | 2,357,662,700 |
| Washington | Aaa | -- | -- | 133,071 | 12,983,825,900 |
| Waukesha | Aaa | -- | AAA | 392,761 | 48,995,016,900 |
| Waupaca | Aa2 | -- | -- | 52,454 | 3,846,254,200 |
| Waushara | -- | AA- | -- | 24,511 | 2,388,103,000 |
| Winnebago | Aa1 | -- | -- | 168,216 | 11,931,753,000 |
| Wood | Aa1 | -- | -- | 74,954 | 4,716,937,300 |

**Prepared by Public Financial Management, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (414-771-2700)**

# Wisconsin Counties Rating Summary (as of January 28, 2015)

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| Washington | Aaa | -- | -- | 133,071 | 12,983,825,900 |
| Waukesha | Aaa | -- | AAA | 392,761 | 48,995,016,900 |
| Columbia | Aa1 | -- | -- | 56,795 | 4,858,148,100 |
| Dane | Aa1 | -- | AA+ | 502,251 | 51,741,144,300 |
| Eau Claire | Aa1 | -- | -- | 100,477 | 7,173,688,100 |
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| Marathon | Aa1 | -- | -- | 134,803 | 9,670,069,100 |
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| Clark | -- | -- | -- | 34,697 | 1,884,365,200 |
| Lafayette | -- | -- | -- | 16,914 | 1,042,694,500 |
| Menominee | -- | -- | -- | 4,236 | 289,124,800 |
| Oconto | -- | -- | -- | 38,014 | 3,555,500,100 |
| Pepin | -- | -- | -- | 7,445 | 546,022,900 |

Back to Web Site

# Bond Rating Definitions

| Moody's | | S&P | | Fitch | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Long-term | Short term | Long-term | Short-term | Long-term | Short-term | | |
| Aaa | P-1 | AAA | A-1+ | AAA | F1+ | Prime | An obligor has EXTREMELY STRONG capacity to meet its financial commitments. |
| Aa1 | | AA+ | | AA+ | | High grade | An obligor has VERY STRONG capacity to meet its financial commitments. It differs from the highest rated obligors only in small degree. |
| Aa2 | | AA | | AA | | | |
| Aa3 | | AA- | | AA- | | | |
| A1 | | A+ | | A+ | | | |
| A2 | | A | | A | | Upper Medium Grade | An obligor has STRONG capacity to meet its financial commitments but is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligors in higher-rated categories. |
| A3 | | A- | | A- | | | |
| Baa1 | | BBB+ | | BBB+ | | | |
| Baa2 | P-3 | BBB | A-3 | BBB | F3 | Lower medium grade | An obligor has ADEQUATE capacity to meet its financial commitments. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to lead to a weakened capacity of the obligor to meet its financial commitments. |
| Baa3 | | BBB- | | BBB- | | | |
| **Investment Grade ↑** | | **High Yield / Junk ↓** | | | | **Investment Grade ↑** | **High Yield / Junk ↓** |
| Ba1 | Not prime | BB+ | B | BB+ | B | | |
| Ba2 | | BB | | BB | | Non-investment grade. Speculative | An obligor is LESS VULNERABLE in the near term than other lower-rated obligors. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties and exposure to |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | adverse business, financial, or economic conditions which could lead to the obligor's inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments. |
| Ba3 | BB- | BB- | | |
| B1 | B+ | B+ | | |
| B2 | B | B | Highly speculative | An obligor is MORE VULNERABLE than the obligors rated 'BB', but the obligor currently has the capacity to meet its financial commitments. Adverse business, financial, or economic conditions will likely impair the obligor's capacity or willingness to meet its financial commitments. |
| B3 | B- | B- | | |
| Caa1 | CCC+ C | CCC C | | |
| Caa2 | CCC | | Substantial risks. Extremely speculative | An obligor is CURRENTLY VULNERABLE, and is dependent upon favorable business, financial, and economic conditions to meet its financial commitments. In default with little prospect of recovery. |
| Caa3 | CCC- | | | |
| Ca | CC | | | An obligor is CURRENTLY HIGHLY-VULNERABLE. |
| | C | | | |
| C | D / | DDD / | In default | An obligor has failed to pay one or more of its financial obligations (rated or unrated) when it became due. |
| / | | DD | | |
| / | | D | | |
| WR | | | | Rating withdrawn for reasons including: debt maturity, calls, puts, conversions, etc., or business reasons (e.g. change in the size of a debt issue), or the issuer defaults. |

# Short-Term Prime Rating System

**Moody's** employs the following three designations, all judged to be investment grade, to indicate the relative payment ability of rated issuers:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Prime-1**<br>Issuers rated Prime-1 (or supporting institutions) have a superior ability for repayment of senior short-term debt obligations. Prime-1 repayment ability will often be evidenced by many of the following characteristics: | 1. Leading market positions in well-established industries;<br>2. High rates of return on funds employed;<br>3. Conservative capitalization structure with moderate reliance on debt and ample asset protection.<br>4. Broad margins in earnings coverage of fixed financial charges and high internal cash generation;<br>5. Well-established access to a range of financial markets and assured sources of alternate liquidity. |
| **Prime 2** | Issuers rated Prime-2 (or supporting institutions) have a strong ability for repayment of senior short-term debt obligations. This will normally be evidenced by many of the characteristics cited above but to a lesser degree. Earnings trends and coverage ratios, while sound, may be more subject to variation. Capitalization characteristics, while still appropriate, may be more affected by external conditions. Ample alternate liquidity is maintained. |
| **Prime 3** | Issuers rated Prime-3 (or supporting institutions) have an acceptable ability for repayment of senior short-term obligations. The effect of industry characteristics and market compositions may be more pronounced. Variability in earnings and profitability may result in changes in the level of debt protection measurements and may require relatively high financial leverage. Adequate alternate liquidity is maintained. |
| **Not Prime** | Issuers rated Not Prime do not fall within any of the Prime rating categories. |

# Short-Term MIG/VMIG Ratings – US Tax-Exempt Municipals

There are four rating categories for short-term obligations that define an investment grade situation. These are designated by Moody's as MIG 1 (best quality) through MIG 4 (adequate quality). Short-term obligations of speculative quality are designated SG.

In the case of variable rate demand obligations (VRDOs), a two-component rating is assigned. The first element represents an evaluation of the degree of risk associated with scheduled principal and interest payments, and the other represents an evaluation of the degree of risk associated with the demand feature. The short-term rating ssingned to the demand feature of VRDOs is designated as VMIG. When either the long or short-term aspect of a VRDO is not rated, that piece is designated NR, e.g. AAA/NR or NR/VMIG-1.

Issues or features associated with MIG or VMIG ratings are indentified by date of issue, date of maturity or maturities or rating expiration date and description to distinguish each rating from other ratings. Each rating designation is unique with no implication as to any other similar issue of the same obligor. MIG ratings terminate at the retirement of the obligation while VMIG rating expiration will be a function of each issue's specific structural or credit features.

| | |
|---|---|
| **MIG 1/VMIG 1** | This designation denotes best quality. There is present strong protection by established cash flows, superior liquidity support or demonstrated broad-based access to the market for refinancing. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **MIG 2/VMIG 2** | This designation denotes high quality. Margins of protection are ample although not so large as in the preceding group. |
| **MIG 3/VMIG 3** | This designation denotes favorable quality. All security elements are accounted for but there is lacking the undeniable strength of the preceding grades. Liquidity and cash flow protection may be narrow and market access for refinancing is likely to be less well established. |
| **MIG 4/VMIG 4** | This designation denotes adequate quality. Protection commonly regarded as required of an investment security is present and although not distinctly or predominantly speculative, there is specific risk. |
| **SG** | This designation denotes speculative quality. Debt instruments in this category lack margins of protection. |

# Jefferson County

# REPORT

# County Board Size

# 2006

Jefferson County
320 S. Main Street
Jefferson, WI 53549

www.co.jefferson.wi.us

*JeffersonCounty Board*
*Agenda item 14 z*
*March 14, 2006*

## County Board Size

**Background**

State statutes dictate that counties with between 50,000 and 100,000 population may have up to 39 supervisors. Jefferson County has 30 supervisory districts. That size was set in 1981 when the County Board reduced it from 38. In 2001, the County Board considered but did not adopt a proposal to downsize to 26 districts. The decision was in response to data showing that the total savings from reducing four districts would be about $2,700 annually. This was based on a fee of $45 per meeting multiplied times 12 county board meetings each year per supervisor plus $135 each annually in mileage. The 2001 discussion was prompted by the requirement to reapportion districts following the availability of 2000 census data.

On January 4, 2006, Governor Doyle signed Act 100 which allows county boards to reduce their size in between the decennial census, which forms the basis for reapportionment of electoral districts. Until Act 100 was signed, only Milwaukee County had the statutory right to change its county board size between censuses.

The law also allows citizens to seek a reduced county board size through a referendum process. The referendum must state the size of county board that is sought by the petition. It can be **any** number the petitioners choose, as long as it is less than the current size. The referendum must have signatures of 25 percent of the voters who voted in the last supervisory election. County Clerk Barb Frank calculates this to be 1,743 signatures.

Act 100 stipulates that the change in the county board size, whether it is prompted by county board action or referendum, can not take effect before 2008. A reduction under this law can occur only once between censuses. Presumably, at the earliest, the new districts would have to be set by November 2007 because that is when candidates must take out their nomination papers to seek supervisory office in the April 2008 election.

**Discussion**

On January 5, the Legislation and Rules Committee took up a discussion of the new law. The committee agreed that a primary concern for any resizing of the county board is the number of committee seats that need to be filled. Issues around identifying proper committee size include: large enough size to prevent lack of quorums; large enough size to prevent illegal meetings (this is especially of concern with committees of only 3 members when two members run into each other in the community and "chat" about issues on their mind) and large enough size to provide for diverse geographic representation. Most county board committees currently have five members. A few have only three. Still fewer have seven. The committees with larger numbers are driven by statutory requirements of who must be on the committee.

The Legislation and Rules Committee sent several resolutions to the County Board in February proposing changes to the Board's current committee structure. This proposed restructuring was part of the normal "housekeeping" the County Board conducts before every supervisory election. However, the discussion created by Act 100 prompted the committee to be more aggressive about combining or reducing committees.

In its examination of the issue, the Legislation and Rules Committee identified several issues it thought county board members should consider in their review and evaluation of Act 100.

***Cost of having 30 county board districts***

The County Board's 2005 budget for salaries, per meeting fees, and expenses for 30 supervisory districts was $165,627. This budget is based on supervisors each being paid $55 per meeting that they are authorized to attend, and a $50 per month salary.

The difference in a per diem payment system and a salary system is an important distinction. A salary system, such as in Waukesha County means the county pays regardless of how much work a supervisor performs. The per diem system, such as in Jefferson County, means the county pays only if a supervisor attends the committee meetings he/she is assigned to.

Therefore, cutting a supervisor in a salary system brings greater savings than cutting a supervisor in a per diem system. In Waukesha County, cutting a supervisor saves $9,121 salary per year. In Jefferson County, cutting a supervisor saves $1,320 in annual salary and board meeting fees. The per meeting fee will still need to be paid to the supervisor who is assigned the committee duties of the eliminated supervisor. Therefore, substantial savings from reducing the number of supervisors are not found in the per meeting payment system, unless the number of committees and/or committee meetings are reduced.

Thus, the challenge for the Jefferson County Board is to determine if the public believes that proper oversight of county government can be performed with fewer committees and committee meetings.

***County Board oversight***

The County Board that was elected in 2004 provided unprecedented tax reduction for county taxpayers. Jefferson County was the only county in the state to cut its budget on all counts in 2005. The Board cut actual spending, cut the tax levy, and cut the mill rate. This cutting occurred while equalized valuation increased. The Board cut the tax rate again in 2006.

These tax cuts came about through the vigorous work of county board committees. Under the leadership of the new board chairman and vice chairmen, the County Board cut $1.4 million in annual spending without reducing services.

These cuts came as a direct result of supervisors attending more meetings and using more temporary committees than previous county boards. This effort – and the per meeting reimbursements that financed it – produced significant savings for the taxpayers.

This experience seems to confirm a 2003 Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance study that found that larger boards actually save money. The non-partisan group found that spending per taxpayer decreases approximately $8 to $10 with each additional supervisor on a county board.

***Workload of county supervisors***

County supervisors are each expected to serve on two to three committees. Some supervisors serve on four or five committees. Others serve on only one. Committees meet once or twice a month. Meetings last from one to five hours. And on rare occasion, some committees meet all day. The County Board meets one night per month for 2-3 hours. In addition, supervisors are expected to spend time preparing for meetings by reading materials and asking questions in advance. They also handle concerns and inquiries from constituents.

In a recent survey of current county board members, supervisors reported working between seven and twenty hours per month. Several report serving ten or more hours per week.

While many supervisors are happy with the results of their tax cutting during the 2004-2006 session, several also noted that they were "maxed out" and could not absorb any more work or meetings than was required of them these past two years.

Jefferson County supervisors each represent 2,600 citizens. The statewide average for county supervisors is 2,700. Of the state's ten counties with similar size population to Jefferson County, five have larger county boards and four have smaller county boards than Jefferson County.

County Clerk Barb Frank reports that many citizens seeking information about county board seats choose not to run when they learn the time commitment required. She notes that reducing the number of supervisors would increase the workload on each supervisor and would probably deter more people from running for county board.

With levy caps, it is quite possible that more work will be required, as supervisors will have to make many difficult choices about which programs to fund and which to eliminate.

***Changing the number and size of County Board committees***

Reducing county board size requires reducing the number and size of county board committees. The Legislation and Rules Committee conducted a review of county board committees. They identified which committees are mandated by state statute and which are not.

Currently, the current county board committee structure requires about 109 committee assignments. This means about three committee assignments per supervisor. In an effort to reduce those assignments, capture any possible savings now – and to prepare the way for the board to consider a downsizing plan – the committee is suggesting several substantial committee changes. Their recommendations would reduce assignments to the low 80s. The proposals will be taken up and reviewed by the County Board at its March meeting. If approved, there would be an estimated savings of $15,000 to $20,000 annually now, without a reduction in the board size.

In the long run, whether or not these committee reductions produce the expected cost savings depends on a number of factors. If the committees are overloaded because fewer members are handling the workload, will they require additional meetings? Currently if a meeting runs beyond four hours, the county pays each supervisor an additional $25 meeting fee to compensate supervisors for their time. It is uncertain if more of these fees will be paid because meetings are longer as a result of two or more committees being merged into one.

It should be noted that the ability to reduce county committees is easier said than done. In large part, this is due to state mandates.

For example, the state does NOT mandate a Board of Health. This led the Legislation and Rules Committee to discuss eliminating the county's 7-member board. When the public balked at this proposal, the committee discussed reducing the committee to three members. This was deemed problematic because state statutes require that if a county has a Board of Health, at least three members must be public appointees, which would result in a Board of Health with no elected officials. In the end, the Legislation and Rules Committee opted to recommend a five member board with three public members appointed by the County Administrator and two elected officials. While this sacrifices control of the Board of Health by elected officials, it eliminates two committee assignments for supervisors.

***Cost of reducing the County Board***

The work of reducing county supervisory districts falls to the County Clerk and the County Land Information Office, which is responsible for drawing the maps that create the supervisory districts.

This is a complicated but necessary process that must respect the constitutionally mandated "one man, one vote" doctrine. This has been tested in Wisconsin courts in the past. The current system for apportioning supervisory districts is a result of a 1965 court case brought by a Milwaukee Sentinel editor. The court ruled that supervisory districts must be apportioned by population to preserve the $14^{th}$ Amendment's guarantee of equal representation.

In addition, there are three key requirements in Wisconsin Act 100:

1. "the districts are substantially equal in population according to the most recent countywide federal census"

2. "the districts consist of contiguous whole wards in existence at the time at which the redistricting plan is adopted"

3. "to the extent possible, place whole contiguous municipalities or contiguous parts of the same municipality within the same district"

According to Land Information Office Director Andy Erdman, the current supervisory district plan of 30 districts had an average district size of 2,525 residents based on the 2000 census block statistics. The targeted population in each supervisory district was no more than a 5% plus (2,651) or minus (2,399) variation. We believe this met the one person one vote doctrine of equal representation in a reasonable manner.

A reduction in districts to a number that can be divided equally into 30, such as 15 or 10, could be achieved by combining one or more supervisory districts. In a supervisory district plan with any other number of districts, it most likely would be impossible to meet the plus or minus 5% target district population, without modifications to local ward plans, Erdman said. Modification of wards is not allowed in this process, notes Corporation Counsel Phil Ristow.

A note of caution. There is consensus among the Legislation and Rules Committee, the County Board Chairman, the County Administrator, the County Clerk, and the County Corporation Counsel that reducing the board to 15 or fewer supervisors could increase operating costs because it may move the position to a part-time or full-time job requiring support staff, offices, and the payment of benefits, as determined by the smaller board..

In addition, any future County Board can establish higher salaries for the next term. This could happen if the work load doubles. Getting a majority vote to make such a change is far simpler on a smaller board. Hence, the likelihood of a pay raise increases when there are fewer supervisors voting.

If the County Board chooses a size not evenly divisible into 30, it becomes very difficult to draw legally compliant maps, according to Erdman. Here's why: There are 90 wards in Jefferson County that vary in size from 2 persons in the Village of Lac la Belle ward 2 to 1,715 persons in the 10th ward of the City of Whitewater. Building a new supervisory district plan involves a trial and error process of adding adjacent ward population counts together to hit a district population that falls within or close to the target population range.

For example, if a 25 district plan was selected, each district should have an average census population of 3,030 persons. To adhere to plus or minus 5% target, each district could have between 2,879 and 3,181 residents. A preliminary investigation into building a plan with 25 districts from "contiguous whole wards in existence" indicates that variations in district population could be 12% or more. This would not appear to meet the one person one vote doctrine of equal representation, and would be subject to legal challenge, according to Corporation Counsel Phil Ristow.

In summary, Erdman said, the two requirements of "substantially equal district populations" and "the use of existing whole wards" required by Act 100 for reducing district numbers are in conflict with each other, given our current local ward plans.

Erdman estimates that it will cost $15,000 in staff time to develop county maps for districts not divisible by 30.

At current salary and per diem rates, the county could save $1,320 annually for each supervisor it cuts. The savings come from the $55 monthly county board meeting per diem and $55 monthly salary paid each supervisor. The cost of per diems for committee meetings, however, are not saved because attendance at those meetings is shifted to remaining supervisors. In addition, there would be annual savings in mileage of an estimated $0 to $200 per supervisor annually, depending on the distance the supervisor travels to attend county board meetings.

**Conclusion**

Reducing the county board size is a complicated process because of state mandates regulating the structure of supervisory districts and the number of committees mandated to oversee county government.

The savings from reducing the board are relatively small because Jefferson County uses a per diem payment system, rather than the more expensive salary system found in neighboring counties.

However, significant cost savings can be obtained by reducing county board committees. Reducing committee size and number raises policy issues about open and clean government. Does the new committee size make it harder to obtain quorums? Does it inadvertently increase chances of illegal meetings because fewer supervisors make a quorum and run into each other in the community and engage in informal chats that briefly touch on county business? Will committee meetings run longer, thus reducing the pool of candidates willing or able to meet the time commitment of the office? Will the county have to pay more $25 fees for meetings over four hours?

If the County Board chooses to reduce its size, it may want to target the reduction to take effect after the 2010 census when all municipalities will have to redistrict and will have the money in their budgets to do so. At that time, municipal wards are redrawn to fit the proposed county board size, as well. This would reduce the probability of a successful legal challenge based on large percentage differences in population between supervisory districts, because when properly planned, variations can be kept to a minimum.

**Action Needed**

Discussion and input to the Legislation and Rules Committee. The committee will take the input under advisement and potentially offer a resolution to the County Board in the coming months.

*Prepared on: 3/6/06*
*By: County Board Chairman Sharon Schmeling*
*Legislation and Rules Committee (Supervisors Marv Munyon, John Molinaro, Paul Babcock)*
*Corporation Counsel Philip Ristow*

# Committee Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Committee/Board Name: Date of Meeting:

| Name (Please Print) | City or Township | Person/Firm Representing | Item # or General Comment |
|---|---|---|---|
| LeighAnn Scherer | | DA's Office | |
| Barb Frank | | CC | |
| Brian James | | Finance | |
| Stacee Jensen | | Child Support Agency | |
| Donna Haugom | | Emergency Mgmnt | |
| Mark Watkins | | L.W.C.D | |
| Tim Braughler | | Cty Supervisor | |
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