



MARATHON COUNTY RULES REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date & Time of Meeting: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.

Meeting Location: Courthouse Assembly Room, B-105, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI or WebEx

Committee Members Present: Kurt Gibbs (Temporary Chair), Chris Dickinson, Kody Hart, Jacob Langenhahn, John Robinson, Rick Seefeldt.

Supporting Staff Present: Lance Leonhard, Kim Trueblood, Toshia Ranallo

Meeting Recording

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Gibbs called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

2. Public Comment (not to exceed 15 minutes) - None

3. Approval of the Minutes of the November 28, 2023 Rules Review Committee Meeting

Discussion:

Members discussed the recording and documentation of meeting discussions. Some felt the Minutes should only reflect official actions, following a standard set by the WCA. Others disagreed, wanting more detail in the Minutes to aid understanding without having to review recordings. Supervisor Dickinson highlighted the importance of consistency in meeting documentation. The group agreed to defer the current Minutes for revision, aiming to include a summary of discussed topics for clarity.

Action:

MOTION BY ROBINSON; SECOND BY DICKENSON TO DEFER THE APPROVAL OF THE 11/28/2023 MINUTES TO THE NEXT MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Topics for Discussion and Possible Action

- A. Review and consideration of existing Marathon County Board Rules*, discussion of potential revisions, and next steps for the Committee

➤ **Reviewing ERC Committee Membership Requirements (10:09)**

Discussion:

Members discussed if the appointee should be from Eastern or Western towns and whether zoning matters. There was talk about who should make the appointment: the County Board chair or the Towns Association presidents. They also reviewed statutory requirements related to ERC membership, focusing on agricultural engagement as per state statutes. The consensus leaned towards having a Farm Service Agency member and a Towns Association representative, with the inclination for the County Board chair to make the appointment, as per the current rules. Ultimately, they agreed to uphold the rule where the County Board chair appoints one Towns Association representative.

➤ **Public Comment Guidelines and Time Limits (22:27)**

Discussion:

Discussion was had to standardize public comment rules. Members debated implementing a three-minute limit per person for both County Board and committee meetings. Concerns were raised about extending time and distinguishing between agenda-specific topics and broader committee jurisdiction.

Suggestions included a uniform three-minute limit for consistency. They discussed potential delays due to a large number of speakers and the risk of losing a quorum during discussions. A proposal emerged to allow three minutes per speaker for up to 15 minutes, deferring additional comments to the meeting's end. Legal counsel advised caution about continuing discussions without a quorum.

The board agreed to have staff draft a proposal incorporating these points for further consideration.

➤ **Recording all Meetings (38:43)**

Discussion:

The discussion revolved around whether to record all meetings including subcommittee meetings, considering legal requirements and retention periods. Some mentioned challenges like public record status and the seven-year retention period. The debate touched on different types of recordings; some for minutes, others for public dissemination. There were concerns about the workload and legal implications, with opinions varying on the necessity of recording all meetings. The committee decided to request staff recommendations for clearer guidelines on recording practices and minutes templates.

➤ **Creating a Rule requiring three members to direct the Chair to place on item on the agenda (48:00)**

Discussion:

The discussion centered on a proposed rule change allowing three committee members to request an agenda item directly. Currently, a member needs to bring an item to the chair, who then sends it to the relevant committee. The intention behind the existing rule was to prevent repetitive agenda items after a decision, and ensure any request goes through the committee or the executive committee if necessary. Some saw the proposed change as empowering committee members, ensuring their concerns are heard, while others raised concerns about potential issues like walking quorums. There was a suggestion to reword the rule to emphasize each supervisor's ability to put items on the agenda without changing the process.

➤ **Adding Budget Modifications Process to Rules (57:21)**

Discussion:

The budget process will be discussed by the Executive Committee at their next meeting.

➤ **Chairperson's Guidelines (57:54)**

- I. Ex Officio Membership
- II. Appointments to other boards

Discussion:

The discussion touched on two main points: the role of ex officio members and appointments to external boards. Regarding ex officio members, there was debate on whether the vice chair could hold that status, the voting rights of ex officio members, and whether the county board chair should have voting powers in committees.

On the topic of appointments to external boards like the NCHC, there was deliberation on whether the county board could restrict the chair from being appointed or becoming the chair of the NCHC board. Different opinions were shared on whether the chair's involvement in multiple roles could lead to stress or whether it's essential to retain equal rights for supervisors to serve on various committees.

Ultimately, the decision leaned towards maintaining the existing rules with the understanding that the county board would still have discretion in approving appointments to external boards.

5. Future Agenda Items for Discussion

The next meeting topics will focus on reimbursement, public comment, meeting recordings, the budget process, and a comprehensive review of all rules and grammar.

6. Adjournment

MOTION BY LANGENHAHN; SECOND BY ROBINSON TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:17AM. MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes prepared by Toshia Ranallo, County Administration