

**MARATHON COUNTY BOARD SIZE TASK FORCE
AGENDA**

**October 7, 2020
3:30 P.M.**

210 RIVER DR., WAUSAU, WI

Task Force Purpose: Determine the optimal number of Marathon County Supervisory Districts, each represented by one County Board Supervisor. In making this determination, the Task Force shall consider the expected impact of the proposed board size on: the ability to attract well qualified candidates and to foster competitive elections, the efficient functioning of county governance, and the cost of County Government.

Members: John Robinson – Chair, Craig McEwen - Vice Chair, Tim Buttke, Sandi Cihlar, Jacob Langenhahn, Arnold Schlei, Rick Seefeldt, David Eckmann, Deb Hager

The meeting site identified above will be open to the public. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health directives, Marathon County encourages Task Force members and the public to attend this meeting remotely. To this end, instead of attendance in person, Task Force members and the public may attend this meeting by **telephone conference**. If Task Force members or members of the public cannot attend remotely, Marathon County requests that appropriate safety measures, including adequate social distancing, be utilized by all in-person attendees.

Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the telephone conference beginning **five (5) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number:**

PHONE NUMBER: 1-408-418-9388

Access Code: 146 590 3645

No other number is required to participate in the telephone conference.

When you enter the telephone conference, PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. CALL TO ORDER;
2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS;
3. PUBLIC COMMENT


POLICY DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

1. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 MEETING;
2. COMPARISONS AND CONSIDERATIONS USED BY OTHER COUNTIES;
3. DECISION MAKING CRITERIA;
4. DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS FOR BOARD SIZE;

(Please come prepared to discuss different options relating to the size of the board and provide the Task Force with your top two or three options and the justification for selecting each. Options can range from 3 to 47 members, the most allowed under the statutes.)

5. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS;
6. NEXT STEPS;
7. NEXT MEETING DATE TO BE DETERMINED;
8. ADJOURN.

Any person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation in order to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 715-261-1500 or e-mail infomarathon@mail.co.marathon.wi.us one business day before the meeting.

SIGNED 

Presiding Officer or Designee

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE:

FAXED TO:
News Dept. at Daily Herald (715-848-9361), City Pages (715-848-5887),
Midwest Radio Group (715-848-3158), Marshfield News (877-943-0443),
TPP Printing (715 223-3505)
Date: 09/30/2020
Time: 2:30 p.m.
By: cek
Time/By: _____

Date: _____
Time: _____ a.m. / p.m.
By: County Clerk

**MARATHON COUNTY BOARD SIZE TASK FORCE
MINUTES
September 17, 2020**

MEMBERS PRESENT: *John Robinson – Chair, Craig McEwen - Vice Chair, Tim Buttke, Sandi Cihlar, Jacob Langenhahn, Arnold Schlei, Dave Eckmann, Deb Hager,*

MEMBERS EXCUSSED: *Rick Seefeldt*

OTHERS PRESENT: Dave Mack, Amanda Ley, Jamie Alberti,

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Call to Order

In the presence of a quorum, with the agenda being properly signed and posted, the meeting was called to order by Chairman Robinson at 3:30 p.m. via WebEx.

2. Welcome and Introductions

All were welcomed and introductions were made.

3. Public Comment

No Comments were given by anyone at this time.

POLICY DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

4. Approve Minutes August 19, 2020 meeting

Action: MOTION / SECOND BY BUTTKE / HAGER APPROVE THE AUGUST 19, 2020 MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE, NO DISSENT.

5. The Agenda items of:

CONSIDERATIONS USED BY OTHER COUNTIES;

DECISION MAKING EVALUATION CRITERIA;

COMMENTS FROM THE COUNTY BOARD PRESENTATION;

COUNTY BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY;

These items were all discussed during the overall conversation of the meeting and no one individual item was discussed with the intent to take action on them separately. Consensus was reached on how to proceed with items at the next meeting.

The overall discussion was as follows:

Robinson and McEwen continued the discussion regarding comparisons between counties that have recently changed their Board sizes. McEwen went over the packet information obtained from St. Croix County with all the information they used to deliberate on their Board size change. Subsequently, St. Croix County had a referendum to determine the board size and went from 31 to 19 members.

Robinson explained the new version of the County comparisons chart with the additions reflecting gender comparisons, members on standing committees, and specialty committee structures.

The members reviewed the evaluation criteria charts (25% formula and 30%/10% formula) and with consensus determined that they would use the 25% formula with the four main headings each representing 25% of the scoring. Members asked to continue to work on the criteria to determine a baseline number for each question. Robinson said he would ask Mark O'Connell, WCA, to assist in

MARATHON COUNTY BOARD SIZE TASK FORCE

September 17, 2020

determining what demographic changes may have occurred with other counties changing their board sizes.

Robinson explained the IAP2 Public Participation Model and expressed his thoughts that the Consult option fit this exercise the best. This would entail asking the public for their feedback on ideas put forth by the Task Force and would probably be in the form of public meetings. Members agreed with the concept of having three public “listening sessions” and it was thought they should be held on the west side and east side of the county with one in the metro area. Staff will look for the best locations with the dates to be sometime in late October or early November.

Hager explained the results of the Board self-assessment that was given to the Executive Committee. The undertaking was very thorough and some main themes were identified as a result. Hager expressed that the themes would be good for the Board to review, but may not be very relevant to the discussion of Board size. It was agreed that the survey should be developed for the whole County Board to take, if leadership wanted.

For the next meeting, members agreed to discuss the evaluation criteria further with baseline information included, additional information from other counties that changed board sizes, and the public engagement process with meeting locations and more details on the program and questions for the public.

6. Future Meetings and Schedule – October 7, 2020

Action: THERE BEING A CONFLICT WITH THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING, THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE RESCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 7, 2020 AT 3:30 PM AT 210 RIVER DRIVE, WAUSAU, WI AND VIA WEBEX.

7. Adjourn

Action: There being no further business to come before the members, **ROBINSON ADJOURNED THE MEETING OF THE MARATHON COUNTY BOARD SIZE TASK FORCE AT 5:00 PM.**

Submitted by:

Dave Mack, Program Manager

Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning

DM: CK

September 30, 2020

Changes in Numbers of Supervisors
Top 20 Counties
2010-2020

County	2020 Board size	2010 Board Size	2012 Board Size	2012 New Sups	2014 New Sups*	2016 New Sups **	2018 New Sups	2020 New Sups	2014 Female sups	2020 Female Sups
Brown	26	26	26	5	2	5	4	10	1	7
Chippewa	15	29	15	2	4	7	3	5	2	5
Dane	37	37	37	11	3	3	8	14	11	20
Eau Claire	29	29	29	5	3	6	8	5	9	15
Fond du Lac	25	18	25	10	6	5	1	3	6	6
Kenosha	23	28	23	5	4	5	5	4	3	6
La Crosse	29	35	29	7	8	5	2	9	10	13
Marathon	38	38	38	11	9	11	8	12	6	9
Milwaukee	18	19	18	5	0	5	4	5	4	6
Outagamie	36	36	36	14	8	7	7	4	6	11
Ozaukee	26	31	26	5	5	2	6	3	5	6
Portage	25	29	25	5	4	5	6	3	3	5
Racine	21	23	21	1	3	1	5	5	4	3
Rock	29	29	29	4	7	4	7	10	8	8
St Croix	19	19	19	12	9	4	4	10	4	5
Sheboygan	25	34	25	1	2	0	3	8	4	6
Washington	26	30	30	10	4	5	9	10	3	6
Waukesha	25	25	25	7	6	4	6	1	5	4
Winnebago	36	36	36	5	3	5	9	4	5	9
Wood	19	19	19	3	2	1	3	4	3	2
Statewide TTL	1600	1680	1620	367	286	291	316	345	286	378
New Chairs			22		20	21	18	25		
Female Chairs			8		10	8	9	10		
New Female Chairs			4		3	1	1	5		
% Female Sups					17.74%		19.98%	23.17%		
% New Sups					17.74%	18.19%	19.50%	21.72%		

* 2014 Polk County reduced size from 23 to 15

** 2016 Washington changed from 20 to 26, Monroe County from 24 to 16

TOO MANY POLITICIANS? HOW WI ACT 100 CHANGED COUNTY BOARD SIZES

Created by Jake Langenhahn



TOPIC BACKGROUND

- In 2006, Governor Doyle signed Act 100 in law
- Allows County Boards to downsize their governing bodies once each decennial Census
- Elected to County Board 6 years ago
- Do County Boards actually use Act 100 to downsize their boards?



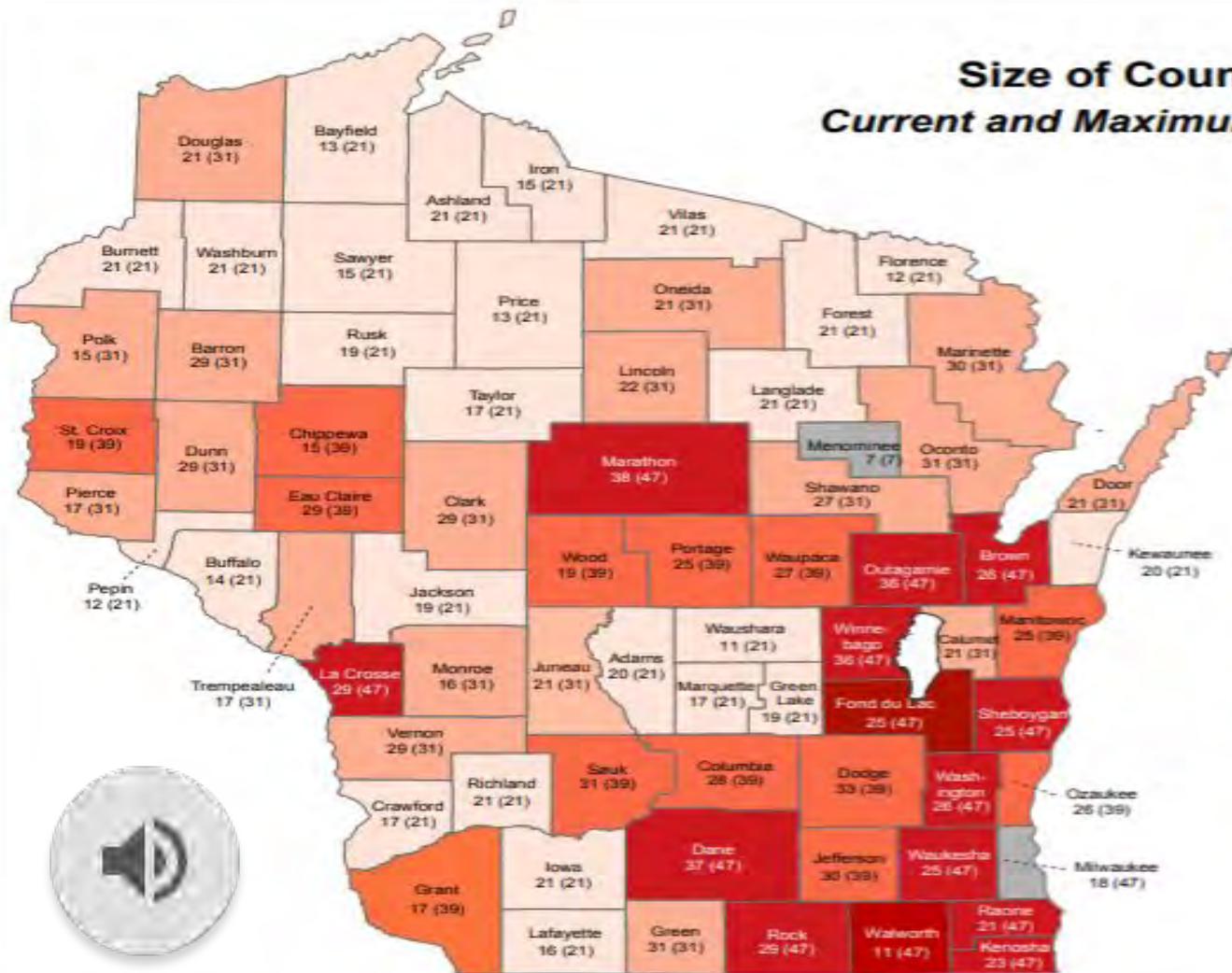
Size of County Board

Current and Maximum Allowable Size



Local
Government
CENTER

UW
Extension
University of Wisconsin-Extension



County Population = max size

- Less than 25,000 = 21
- 25,000 to 49,999 = 31
- 50,000 to 99,999 = 39
- 100,000 to 750,000 = 47
- Statutory Special Exception

Number of Supervisors

38 (47) Current Number (Max. Number)

Sources: UW-Extension Local Government Center and 2010 Census of Population and Housing

12-1-18 - Information assembled by Dan Hill and Daniel Foth, Local Government Specialists, University of Wisconsin-Extension Local Government Center



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do County Boards change their Board sizes? (Examined in Literature Review)
- How many County Boards have used Act 100 to down size?
- Why would County Boards choose to downsize?



ACT 100

- Reapportionment and Redistricting take place after Census
- After Census has been completed
 - County should have an idea of how many Supervisory Districts they're aiming for
 - Tight timeline prescribed by WI Statute 59.10
- Downsizing can take place by Resolution or by Petition of the County Board of Supervisors
- Important: Obligations of County governments do not change regardless of County Board size
 - Ex. services required by WI State Statutes, Constitutional requirements, etc.



THEORETICAL APPROACH

- Group Dynamics and Decision Making
 - Free Rider Problems - Larger the size of the group making decisions, more likelihood for free riders to exist (Ali, 2018)
 - In industry, research suggests that the size of an organization is positively associated with the size of the organization's governing board (Ali, 2018)
 - Doing more things - more insight has a positive impact
 - Can create agency problems which is an argument for downsizing (Eldenberg & Krishnan, 2003)
 - In non-profits, where there isn't a market for corporate control, boards tend to be larger (Aggarwal et al, 2012)
 - Therefore, one would assume that County Boards would want to maintain sizes



THEORETICAL APPROACH CONTINUED

- Why, would YOU lay yourself off???
 - Business oriented approach to considering downsizing
 - Layoffs create uncertainty in markets due to a lack of trust in the company (Worrel et. al, 1991 as cited in Ursel et. al 1995)
 - Lack of trust from public could make policy difficult
 - Self Interest Approach
 - Irrational to eliminate your own elected position/put your future self at a disadvantage
 - One Psychology study found that self interest influences decisions in the “near condition” (Hunt et al., 2010)



THEORETICAL APPROACH

- Symbolic Politics
 - “Symbolic policies are those that confer the appearance of change, allowing policymakers to present themselves as having addressed the problems that become salient, but ultimately preserving the status quo”. (Suarez, 2014)
 - Are proposals for County Board downsizing more symbolic than anything?



HYPOTHESIS

Due to the lack of social, political, and technical support for County Board downsizing, I predict that I will see very little (less than 1% reduction) downsizing among County Board members.



RESEARCH

- Quantitative and Qualitative in Nature
- Quantitative – Gathered data to determine sizes of County Boards in all 72 Counties over a period of time to be determined by available data
 - Blue Books (2005 and 2017)
- Qualitative – Primary Documents
 - Research Question Changes
 - News Articles and Official Studies conducted by Counties on downsizing



ANALYSIS

How many members less?	How many counties downsized?	Average downsize amount?
195	27	7.222222222
Most Downsized	Least Downsized	Most Popular Downsized Amount
Wood - 19	Buffalo - 2	2
	Green Lake - 2	
	Racine - 2	
	Rusk - 2	
	Winnebago 2	

DISCUSSION

- $195/1795 \times 100 = 10.9$
- Result: County Board sizes decreased by 10.9% between 2005 and 2017
-woops
- 2nd part of research - why did downsizing happen?



Arguments For Downsizing

Arguments Against Downsizing

Save Money

Problem that can be solved with restructuring

Work More Efficiently

Increase Workload of Reduced # of Board Members

Decrease Workload of Board Members

Highly Technical Requirements of Adhering to State and Federal Rules

Board Members are Operationally Focused

Agendas Filled with Unnecessary Items

Better Meeting Attendance

Obligations of County Remain Unchanged

Fewer Meetings

Committee work under previous system now done by full County Board

Better Relationships between Department Heads and Board Members

Promotes Diversification (Rural Argument)



Can't change number (can't go back)

More Opportunities for People to get Involved

More Likelihood for Lobbying/Special Interest Groups

QUOTE FROM CHIPPEWA COUNTY SUPERVISOR

“I don't have a problem with the board coming down, I have a problem with the fact that if this passes we are stuck at 15 we can't go back up. And that's one reason why I'm definitely gonna vote against it,” former board supervisor Dave Hillman told the crowd.

(Cerling, 2010)

CONCLUSION

- A LOT of Opportunities for Future Research
 - Downsizing on School Boards, City/Village Councils, etc.
 - What mechanisms do other units of governments have for changing the size of their legislative bodies?
- Even though I found considerable information explaining why downsizing occurred/was likely to occur
 - I can't explain it quantitatively...yet
- Was this all the start of a long term trend for Wisconsin local government?
- Community Engagement
- Something to monitor going forward and to watch from the sidelines



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Evaluation Criteria (25% Formula)		Ranking High =3, Medium=2, Low=1		Score
Efficiencies/Costs 25%	How will the change impact the cost to conduct county board operations?			
	How will the change impact staff resources dedicated to support the board and committees?			
	Will the end product result in better service or improve the quality of service to the residents of Marathon County?			
	Sub Total	0	2.78	0.00
Representation 25%	How does the change impact the ability to represent their constituents, interact with local units of government and other groups?			
	Will the change lead to an increase in diversity among members?			
	Will the change lead to increased public interest and/or participation in county board activities?			
	Sub Total	0	2.78	0.00
Time Commitment 25%	Will the change impact the amount of time required to fulfill the job duties?			
	How many committees will the average supervisor be on based on the change?			
	Sub Total	0	4.16	0.00
Organizational issues 25%	Will the change require any modifications to committee structure?			
	Will the change create potential problems relating to obtaining quorums?			
	What is the potential for open meeting law issues because of the change?			
	Will the change increase or decrease the efficiency of the board?			
	Sub Total	0	2.08	0.00
Total				0.00

Scoring for each question:

less cost = 3, same/unknown = 2, more cost = 1

less needed = 3, sam/unknown = 2, more needed = 1

better service = 3, same/unknown = 2, worse = 1

easier = 3, same/unknown = 2, harder = 1

more diverse = 3, same/unknown = 2, less diverse = 1

more interest = 3, same/unknown = 2, less interest = 1

more time = 1, same/unknown = 2, less time = 3

more committees = 1, same/unknown = 2, less committees = 3

decrease # of committees = 3, same/unknown = 2, increase # of committees = 1

less problems = 3, same/unknown = 2, more problems = 1

less problems = 3, same/unknown = 2, more problems = 1
increase efficiency = 3, same/unknown = 2, decrease efficiency = 1

Definitions:

Service:

Diversity:

Efficiency: