

**Joint Executive, Ethics and Insurance Committee and Legislative & Judicial
Committee meeting minutes**

January 31, 2012

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Call to order:

This joint meeting of the Executive, Ethics and Insurance Committee and the Legislative & Judicial Committee was called to order by E,E & I Committee Chairman Chris Mayer at 10:00 A.M. in Vilas County Courthouse conference rooms, 330 Court Street, Eagle River, Wisconsin, with the following committee members present.

E,E & I Committee: Alden Bauman, Charles Rayala and Linda Thorpe. Erv Teichmiller is replacing Steve Favorite during the latter's absence.

L & J Committee: Chairman Sig Hjermvick, Jim Behling and Ron De Bruyne. Kathleen Rushlow was excused.

Others present at this meeting: Maynard Bedish, Dennis Nielsen, Janna Kahl, Martha Milanowski, Ken Anderson, John Helgeson, Joe Van De Laarschot and County Clerk David Alleman.

Proper notification of meeting and quorum present were verified.

Approve Agenda to be discussed in any order by the Chair:

Motion by A. Bauman, 2nd by L. Thorpe to approve the agenda. All voted aye. Carried.

County Board committee restructuring and consolidation:

C. Mayer began the discussion by pointing out several findings that are contained in the Schenck report, specific to county board restructuring and department consolidation. The report recommends that steps be taken to reduce the number of Vilas County Board standing committees. C. Mayer asked the members present for their personal views of this issue.

J. Behling strongly supports restructuring.

S. Hjermvick recognizes that change is inevitable, but he is not sure about using private sector models to create public sector policy. He wants to proceed cautiously in a reasonable manner.

E. Teichmiller expressed the need to be open to exploring necessary changes for the sake of efficiency. Restructuring/consolidation efforts should be tailored to better serve the citizens of the county.

A. Bauman feels that the principles behind restructuring/consolidation are positive. He urges that this effort is inclusive of all county Supervisors. He suggests an initial goal of reducing to fourteen committees.

C. Rayala views this effort as a step in the right direction, but urges the committee to proceed slowly. He feels that a seven committee structure is unworkable and he wants input from other counties that have already undertaken committee restructuring.

L. Thorpe feels that this effort is proceeding in the right direction. She urges the committees to partake of thorough discussion of this issue.

The group discussed committees that are required by statute. M. Milanowski will create a list of statutorily required committees; strategies can then be developed to continue to comply with those requirements. C. Mayer presented the concept that supervisors will need to rethink their positions as applies to county committees; supervisors need to be legislators and policy makers, not micromanagers. Management responsibilities need to be shifted to department heads wherever appropriate. The group discussed the fact that policies will need to be created and implemented to help guide department heads with

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their management decisions. The group discussed the fact that long term micromanagement of county departments by county board committees, may have prevented some department heads from fully developing and utilizing their management skills. Department heads may require additional management training. J. Behling stated that current committee practice creates weak managers by not encouraging management responsibility and initiative. A. Bauman felt some committee consolidations were overdue; he used the COP, Commission on Aging and Social Services committees as examples of committees that could readily consolidate into one unit. The group then discussed other possible committee consolidations. C. Mayer would like all committees to suggest ways to streamline committee agendas and ways to shift department oversight, where appropriate, to the department heads. S. Hjemvick would like all department heads to also offer their full and honest insight and suggestions. Discussion shifted to a restructuring timetable. C. Mayer expressed his opinion that restructuring needed to be accomplished in 2012. S. Hjemvick reiterated the need to request committee and department head input. **Motion by S. Hjemvick, 2nd by R. De Bruyne to instruct the County Clerk to send a memo to all County Board members, requesting that each committee deliberate upon ways to streamline committee agendas and oversight activities. A similar memo is to be sent to all department heads. Findings are to be presented to the joint committee at their February meeting. All voted aye. Carried.**

Letters and Communications:

Nothing presented.

Set next meeting date and time:

A joint meeting of the Executive, Ethics & Insurance and the Legislative & Judicial committees will be held at 10:00 A.M., Tuesday, February 28, 2012.

Adjournment:

Motion by A. Bauman, 2nd by C. Rayala to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:13 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by:

David R. Alleman

Vilas County Clerk

Minutes reflect the recorder's notations and are subject to approval by the appropriate board or committee.