

call to order

Duties of the Chair

—J. Michael Blaska, Parliamentarian & Chief of Staff,
Wisconsin Counties Association



One of the basic provisions of any body or assembly is to elect a presiding officer or chair. It is the chair's job to conduct the business and enforce the rules of the assembly.

Once a member assumes the position of chair it is important for the chair to maintain a position of impartiality and help to preserve an objective and impersonal approach.

Past *Call to Order* articles have referenced duties and responsibilities; this article attempts to quantify the duties and responsibilities as listed in *Robert's Rules of Order*.

It is the duty of a presiding officer to:

- 1) Open the meeting at the appointed time by taking the chair and calling the meeting to order and determine whether a quorum is present.
- 2) Announce in proper sequence the business that comes before the assembly or becomes in order in accordance with the prescribed order of business, agenda or program, and with the existing orders of the day.
- 3) Recognize members who are entitled to the floor.
- 4) State and put to vote all questions that legitimately come before the assembly as motions or that otherwise arise in the course of proceedings, and to announce the result of each

vote; or if a motion that is not in order is made, to rule it out of order.

- Restate the motion placing it before the body and for clarity.
 - Relinquish the chair when participating in debate and not return until the pending question is disposed of (except in small committees).
- 5) Protect the assembly from obviously dilatory motions by refusing to recognize them.
 - 6) Enforce the rules relating to debate and those relating to order and decorum within the assembly.
 - Remind members to confine remarks to the merits of the question.
 - 7) Expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of members.
 - 8) Decide all questions of order, subject to appeal, unless when in doubt, the presiding officer prefers initially to submit the question to the assembly for decision.
 - 9) Respond to inquiries of members relating to parliamentary procedure or factual information bearing on the business of the assembly.
 - 10) Authenticate by his or her signature, when necessary, all acts, orders and proceedings of the assembly.

11) Declare the meeting adjourned when the assembly so votes or where applicable at the time prescribed in the program, or at any time in the event of a sudden emergency affecting the safety of those present.

The statutory duties of the county board chair are found in *Wis. Stats.* 59.12, which states, “The chairperson shall perform all duties required of the chairperson until the board elects a successor. The chairperson may administer oaths to persons required to be sworn concerning any matter submitted to the board or a committee of the board or connected with their powers or duties. The

chairperson shall countersign all ordinances of the board, and shall preside at meetings when present. When directed by ordinance the chairperson shall countersign all county orders, transact all necessary board business with local and county officers, expedite all measures resolved upon by the board and take care that all federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations pertaining to county government are enforced.”

Additional duties of the chair, such as making committee appointments, setting agendas and serving on committees, should be codified in county ordinance as part of the board’s rules.

Source: Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition

**TOWN and COUNTY OFFICIALS,
EDUCATORS, NEIGHBORS and
LOCAL CITIZENS...**

You are Invited

to an **On-The-Farm Twilight Meeting** where local community leaders and dairy farmers learn together and discuss important issues relating to our communities, resources and farming.

Select a date and location most convenient for you!

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Dairy Farm Tours at 6:00 p.m.
 Ice Cream Social at 7:00 p.m.
 Community Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
 Entertainment at 8:00 p.m.

The Agricultural Community Foundation presents a FREE!

Presented in part by Wisconsin Dairy &
 Wisconsin Cattle Associations and
 Wisconsin Dairy Producers



SAUK COUNTY

Thursday, August 13

Wausau Dairy Farm LLC
 2076 Stone Road
 Wausau, WI 54980



BROWN COUNTY

Tuesday, August 18

Wausau Dairy LLC
 303 Wausau Road
 Greenleaf, WI 53418



MARATHON COUNTY

Wednesday, August 19

Wausau Dairy LLC
 7781 County Road A
 Jolly, WI 53111



ST. CROIX COUNTY

Thursday, August 20

Clara Farms
 107 Lake Street
 Hartwood, WI 54110