



Supermajority Votes of the County Board

In most cases, adoption of a motion on the floor of the county board requires a simple majority vote, i.e. more than half. From time to time, though, state statutes and parliamentary authorities subject the county board to a higher threshold. Rather than a simple majority, these motions require at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote or even a three-fourths (3/4) vote for approval.

The following tables list the actions requiring a supermajority vote. There is no attempt to describe any procedures that need to be followed prior to these actions being taken. It often takes more than simply adopting a motion at a county board meeting for board action to be legal. For example, while it is true that the vote requirement for removing certain county officers is two-thirds, the board would first need to comply with section 17.16 of the Wisconsin statutes which contains the procedures that must be followed.

Note: Counties with a population exceeding 500,000 are subject to special rules not included in the first table.

| Motion before the County Board | Statute | Vote Required |
|--|---|---|
| Removal from office of the county clerk, county treasurer, county surveyor, or county board supervisor | 17.09(1) | Not less than 2/3 of all supervisors entitled to a seat on the county board. |
| Removal from office of county officers appointed by the county board. | 17.10(2) | Not less than 2/3 of the supervisors entitled to seats on the county board. |
| Make application to withdraw land from county forest program Also, if application is denied county board may appeal to a review committee. And, if application is approved, county board must approve resolution to withdraw the land. | 28.11(11)(a)1 28.11(11)(a)4 28.11(11)(a)6 | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Financing harbor improvements. ...assume the obligation of paying the principal and interest of such evidences of indebtedness as are then outstanding. | 30.34(3)(b) | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Withdrawal from a public library system. | 43.18(1)(am) | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Removal for misconduct or neglect of a trustee of a county institution. | 46.18(3) | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Removal of a county social services board member appointed by the county board. | 46.22(1m)(c)2 | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Removal of a member of a county human services board. | 46.23(4)(c)1 | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |

| Motion before the County Board | Statute | Vote Required |
|--|----------------|--|
| Removal of a member of a county community programs board. | 51.42(4)(a)1.a | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Removal of a member of a county developmental disabilities services board. | 51.437(7)(a)1 | Not less than 2/3 of appointing authority. |
| Fix the compensation of the board members to be next elected. | 59.10(3)(f) | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Override a veto of the county executive. | 59.17(6) | Not less than 2/3 of the members-elect of the board. |
| Discontinue furnishing abstracts. | 59.44(5) | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Purchase membership in an association of county boards. | 59.52(22) | Not less than 2/3 vote. |
| Authorization to take certain actions related to public transit in counties. | 59.58(3)(i) | Not less than 2/3 vote of county board membership |
| Amending a zoning ordinance in an airport affected area. | 59.69(5)(e)5m | Not less than 2/3 of the members of the board present and voting. |
| Removal of a member of a solid waste management board. | 59.70(2) | Not less than 2/3 vote of the appointing authority. |
| Changes or amendments to a previously adopted budget. | 65.90(5)(a) | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Withdrawal from a regional planning commission. | 66.0309(16) | Not less than 2/3 vote of the members elect. |
| Authorization to expend in excess of funds available or appropriated. | 66.0607(7) | Not less than 2/3 of county board membership. |
| Relief from conditions of gifts and dedications. | 66.1025(1) | Not less than 2/3 vote of the members elect. |
| Declaration as premier resort area. | 66.1113(2)(a) | Not less than 2/3 of the members of the county board who are present when the vote is taken. |
| Motions requiring a 3/4s vote | | |
| Change in restricted use of land. | 27.065(15) | Not less than 3/4 of the county board. |
| Financing harbor improvements through bonds or notes. | 30.35(1) | Not less than 3/4 of the county board. |
| Amendment or repeal of previously adopted ordinance related to fixing the number of deputy sheriffs and their salaries | 59.26(8)(d) | Not less than 3/4 of the members elect. |
| Bypassing bidding requirements for certain public works projects done directly by the county. | 59.52(29)(a) | Not less than 3/4 of the county board. |
| When protest filed against a proposed zoning ordinance amendment. | 59.69(5)(e)5g | Not less than 3/4 of the members present and voting. |
| One of the ways that a county can meet the conditions to issue debt | 67.045(1)(f) | Not less than 3/4 of the members elect |

This table includes some of the common motions under Robert's Rules of order, Newly Revised that require more than a majority for approval.

| Motion before the County Board | Robert's Rules of Order | Vote Required |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Limit or extend the limits of debate on a pending question | Chapter 15 | 2/3 of members voting |
| Limit or extend the limits of debate for the duration of the meeting. | Chapter 15 | 2/3 of members voting |
| Objection to consideration of a question | Chapter 26 | 2/3 of members voting |
| Previous question (end debate and vote on the pending question) | Chapter 16 | 2/3 of members voting |
| Suspend the rules | Chapter 25 | 2/3 of members voting |

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