



**United Counties Council of Illinois**  
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October 22, 2018

To: UCCI Membership

Re: **Opinion re Dissolving County Board Committee**

**Issue:**

Is there a required process, procedure, or required time frame for the establishment or dissolution of county board committees?

**Analysis:**

Although the Counties Code makes several references to committees, it does not directly reference the establishment, dissolution, or structure of subordinate committees (working/standing) of the county board. In the absence of a statute, a County should then refer to any ordinances or resolutions it has adopted regarding the establishment, dissolution, or appointment of members to committees. If no such ordinances or resolutions have been adopted, then the County should look to see whether any similar, county-specific board rules regarding committees have been adopted. Lastly, if no other provision for committees has been made, a County should determine whether it has adopted a set of standard rules of Order such as Roberts Rules of Order

If a county has established its own procedures for the establishment and dissolution of committees, then the county must follow such procedures. If a county has adopted a standard authority, such as *Robert's Rule of Order* or *Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure*, then the county must follow the procedures outlined in the authority so adopted.

Where a County has adopted *Robert's Rule of Order*, the county board's authority to establish committees is deemed or otherwise considered an inherent authority vested in boards and commissions.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, *Robert's Rule of Order* contains procedures for appointment of members, filling vacancies, or removal of members. "In the absence of special conditions, appointment of committees by the chair, or by the regular presiding officer, is

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<sup>1</sup> *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, Sec. 49 ("any board can appoint committees to work under its supervision or according to its specific instructions. Such committees of the board always report to the board."); see also Sec. 50("Committees").

usually the best method in large assemblies, and it is the ordinary procedure in many small societies as well.”<sup>2</sup>

Counties that have not formally adopted *Robert’s Rule of Order*, often find it beneficial to reference and utilize its procedures as a guide, but not a binding authority.

In the absence of any of the above procedures, the county should follow the same procedure to dissolve a committee as it initially did to establish such committee.

**Conclusion:**

The establishment and dissolution of county board committees must follow any governing statute, ordinance, resolution, or board rule. In the absence of such authorities, a county board may follow standard rules of order such as *Robert’s Rule of Order*. However, the dissolution of any committee should utilize the same process as was used to establish the committee in question.

At the request and direction of UCCI this opinion was prepared by  
GIFFIN, WINNING, COHEN & BODEWES, P.C.

  
Herman G. Bodewes

  
Jason E. Brokaw

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<sup>2</sup> *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, Sec. 50, p.495.