



KENOSHA COUNTY BOARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURE EVALUATION REPORT

JANUARY 2012

PREPARED BY
TEDI WINNETT, DIRECTOR, AND
KRISTEN LIE, COMMUNITY PLANNING EDUCATOR
KENOSHA COUNTY UW-EXTENSION



KENOSHA COUNTY
Wisconsin

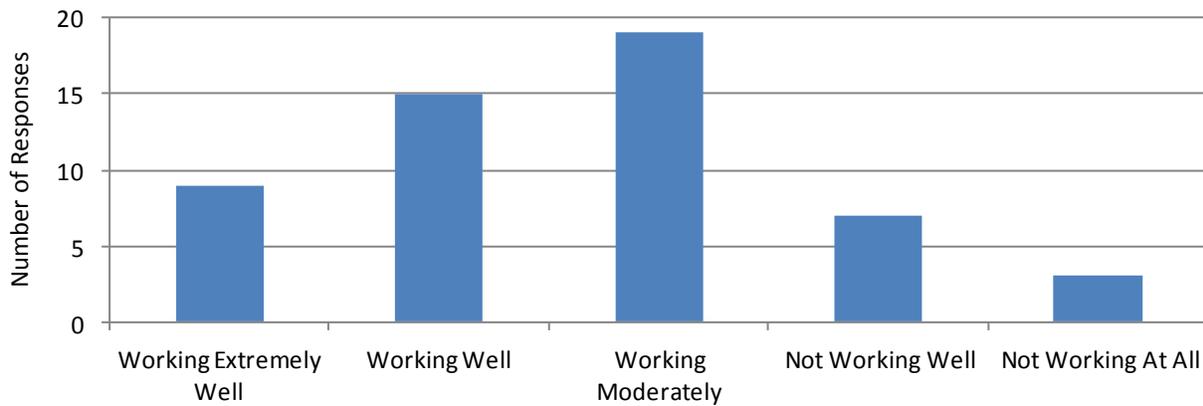
Executive Summary

In Spring 2011, the Kenosha County Board Chairman reorganized the number of county board committees from nine to six. This reorganization resulted in consolidating some of the committees and reassigning county board supervisors who serve on the committees. As part of the reorganization process, it was agreed that there would be a mid-year review of the new committee structure, focusing on the impact of the new structure on the effectiveness and efficiency of county governance, as well as its effect on the involvement of county board supervisors.

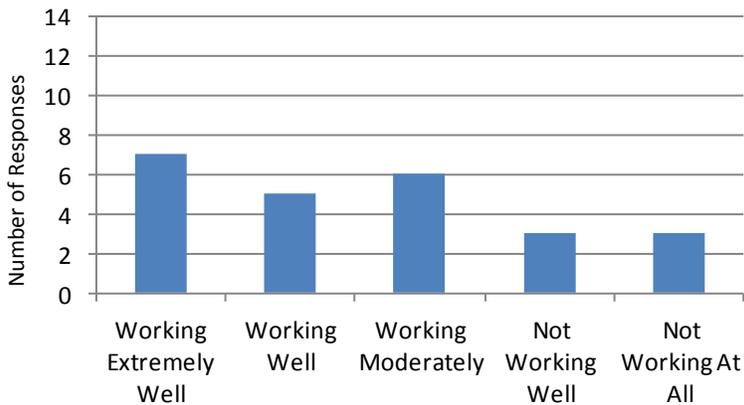
In November 2011, Kenosha County UW-Extension conducted an evaluation of the county board committee structure. A total of 66 evaluations were distributed to county board supervisors, county administration, county department/division heads, county staff who provide administrative support to committees and to Youth In Governance (YIG) members.

The response rate was 86 percent for county board supervisors and 85 percent for county administration/staff. There were seven Youth In Governance surveys returned; however, only two of these responses were valid, as most YIG members were assigned to committees after the reorganization, and therefore have no knowledge base for the previous committee structure. For this reason, the YIG responses are not included in the analysis of the results.

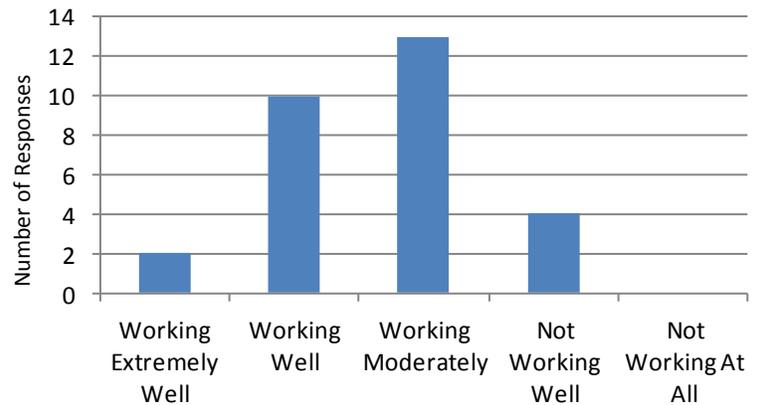
Overall, the majority of respondents feel that the new county board committee structure is either working extremely well (17%) or working well (28%). Thirty-six percent feel that it is working moderately well. Approximately 19% feel that it is not working well or not working at all.



SUPERVISORS



ADMIN/STAFF

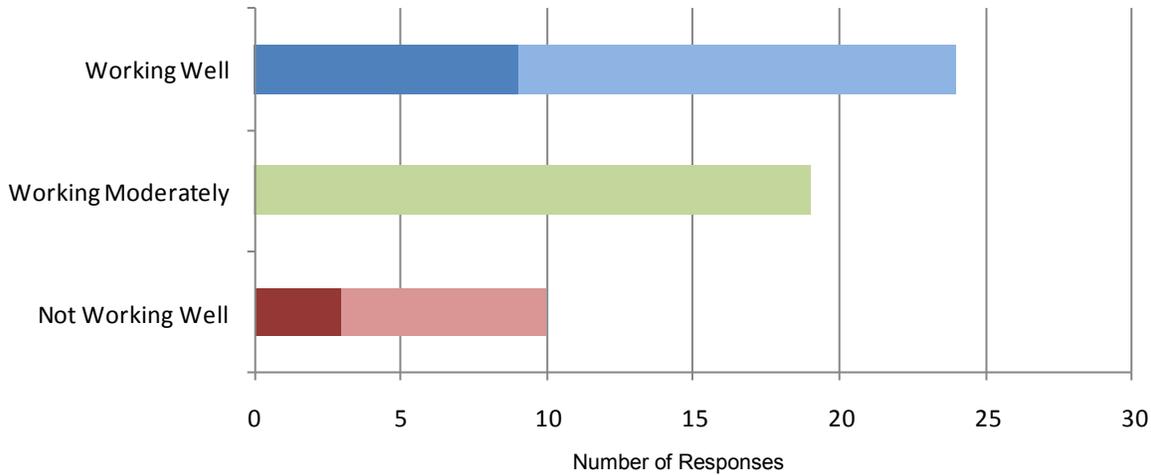


Supervisors with less than six years experience were more likely to report that they feel the new committee structure is not working (33% marked “not working well” or “not working at all”), compared to the supervisors with six or more years experience who indicated that the structure is working well (73% marked “working extremely well” or “working well”).

What is your opinion of the new County Board committee structure?

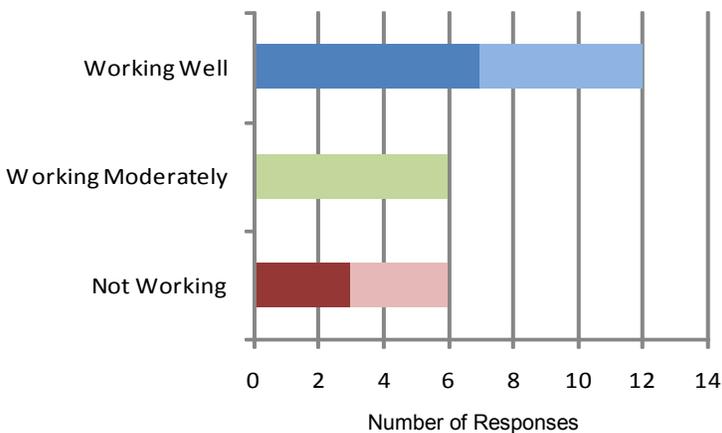
Overall, the majority of respondents reported that the new committee structure is working well, with 17 percent feeling that it is “working extremely well,” and 29 percent saying it is “working well.” Over one-third (36%) were neutral, reporting that it is working moderately well. About 19 percent felt that the new structure is not working well, including 6 percent who indicated it is “not working at all.”

OVERALL RESPONSE:

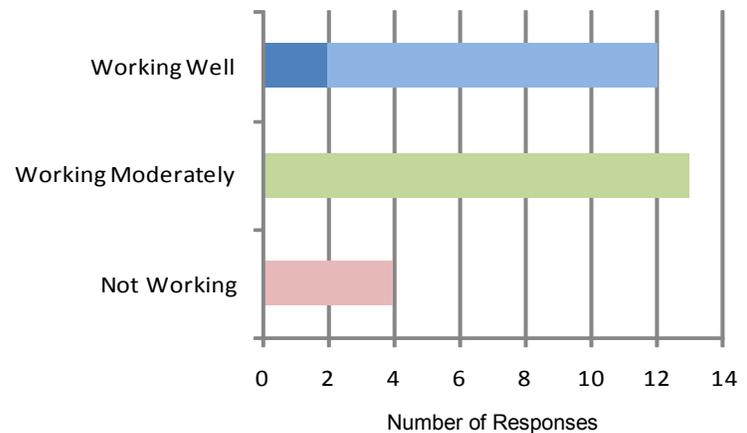


■ Working Extremely Well
 ■ Working Well
 ■ Working Moderately Well
 ■ Not Working Well
 ■ Not Working At All

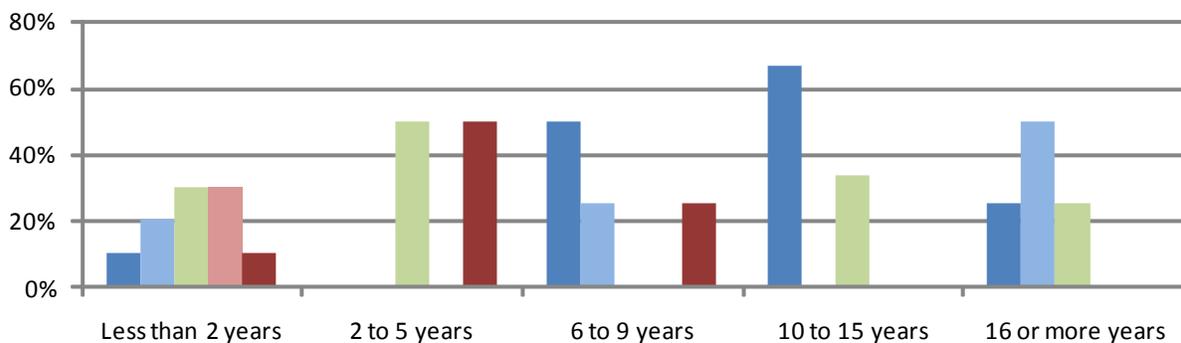
SUPERVISORS



ADMIN/STAFF



SUPERVISOR RESPONSE BY YEARS OF TENURE



■ Working Extremely Well
 ■ Working Well
 ■ Working Moderately Well
 ■ Not Working Well
 ■ Not Working At All

What have you seen, heard and/or experienced in the past seven months that led to your opinion?

SUPERVISORS

ADMIN/STAFF

Efficiencies:

- I believe that the combining of committees has allowed supervisors to focus on just one committee, thus giving them more time to research the issues. There will always be some that do the minimal amount of work as a supervisor, but others are happy to concentrate on one.
- My experience is that the committees are more diligent and efficient with their time with regard to issues that would often require approval by multiple committees. The county staff have also provided feedback as to the efficiency of the committees and staff time in preparation and presentation of issues before committees.
- Some of the processes have been streamlined.
- Less staff time - Fewer meetings overall - Supervisors can cover more areas with less time.

Power Concerns:

- The executive committee has too much power. There is no structure as to what items are put on their agenda. It gives the county board chair the ability to go off on his own and this might not be in the best interests of Kenosha County. I think the Finance committee needs to be separate from Administration. Again, too much power for such important committee assignments.
- Too much power in too few members. I have only 1 standing committee as do 13 other board members. I believe this was by design by the leadership of the board.
- I don't like the executive committee. This has taken on a dictatorship role on the county board. I know they, the executive committee, don't see it because they created this. Now put them in our shoes. How do you think they would like it? One board member, one vote!!
- A power grab
- The committee of the Lords (executive) is too strong. Sets all the agendas. Chairman has no need to vote at committee level.
- Some committees have much more work than others. The Executive Committee should be disbanded and Legislative Committee should be combined with Judiciary and Law. The County Board Chair should not be a chairman of a standing committee. We will have to work harder than in the past because of the smaller board size.
- I sat in on a finance committee where the budget director spent an hour and 15 minutes going through the changes between the text of the budget resolutions from 2011 and 2012. I wondered, where was the efficiency? How was this effective? It would have been much simpler for him to have clicked a button in Microsoft Word that would have done that for him. Members of the committee could have gone through it at their leisure. Additionally the new structure allows for far too much of a concentration of influence. It is enough that we have committee chairs. To have a committee comprised of committee chairs, I think, creates a problem. Particularly when the chairman designates who is on what committee and whether they are a chair or vice chair.
- I've been removed from 1 committee; overall reflection of impact on other members. This results in concentrated voting power in fewer committee members and less input from diverse committee members.

Misc:

- Feeling less a part of the process.
- My personal opinion
- Meetings run longer, thus information is at times, rushed thru.
- I think it is too early to tell for sure.

Efficiencies:

- Fewer meetings and meetings tend to be run more efficiently because of larger agendas.
- Anything that has to do with the department is all being discussed at one meeting with one committee rather than two and so the group as a whole is on the same page. In the past there were items being discussed that were discussed at two different times by two different committees.
- Better integration of policy issues, more consistency of policy deliberation, fewer meetings, and meetings are more effective.
- Logical combination of committees.
- Better overall cooperation.
- Supervisors can focus their attention on the work of one committee.

Power Concerns:

- Concentration of power in one committee; some supervisors' talents not being fully used.
- Our HSC committee has remained the same, except for adding 2 members. Doesn't matter either way if we have 5 or 7 members. Both ways work. As to the Finance/Admin Committee, I feel they should be separate committees. It's too much content for one committee. Also, with 2 separate committees, each is more accessible for agenda items. And, I feel they deal with 2 separate types of agenda items to justify having 2 separate committees. As to the Executive Committee, I question its purpose. It seems to me it was created to control the agendas of the other committees. It seems to me that committee should be eliminated.
- The combined function of administration (employment matters) and financial matters are completely incompatible. Moreover, the committee is heavily imbalanced against employee concerns.
- I have heard that there are less opportunities for involvement and input. The combining of some committee functions do not make sense to me but I have not been directly affected.

Time Issues:

- Combined committees have led to lengthier meetings and everything does not get accomplished.
- Longer meetings.
- The meeting tend to run too long. The agendas are too full.
- Meetings are too long. Wrong Chairman of the committee.
- Finance/Admin meetings are way too long.
- I believe that the combined committees do not spend enough time on issues. The fact that they try to squeeze what 2 committees did in 2 nights is compressed into one.

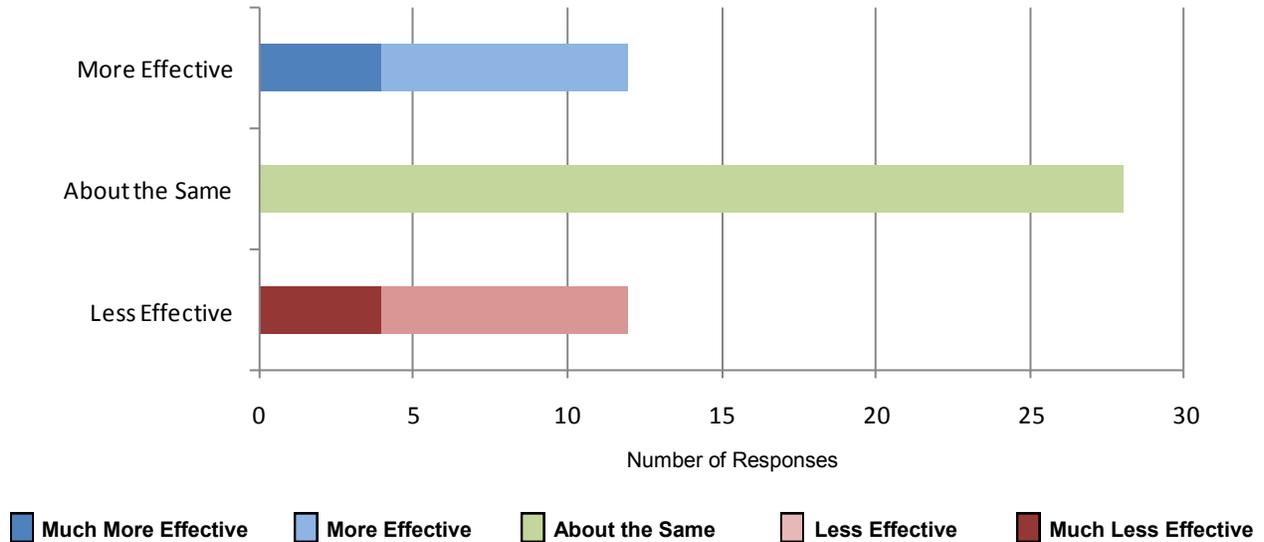
Misc:

- I don't see much difference You see some of the same people as heads of the committee and can only see put to have a woman chairman on Planning and Development & Ext. committee. I don't believe we need to have an executive committee.
- I haven't really noted much of any changes in our operation related to the change.
- It appears progress is still being made.

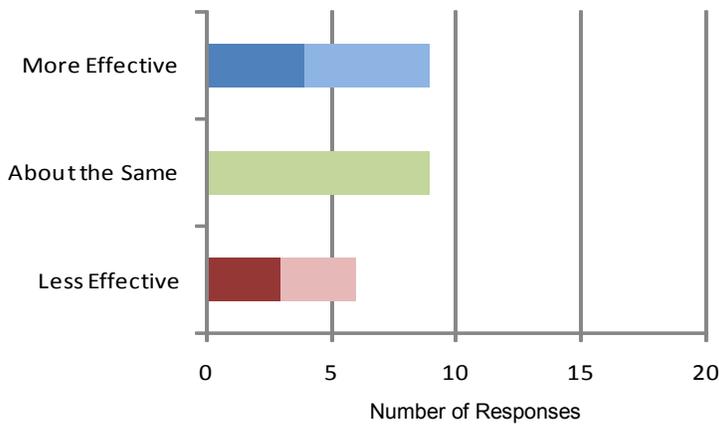
As a result of the change in committee structure, County Board committees are:

Overall, the majority of respondents (53%) reported that the new committee structure works as effectively as the previous structure. A nearly equal percentage of respondents felt that the new structure has made committees more effective (24%, including 11% who felt committees are much more effective) and less effective (23%, including 8% who felt committees are much less effective).

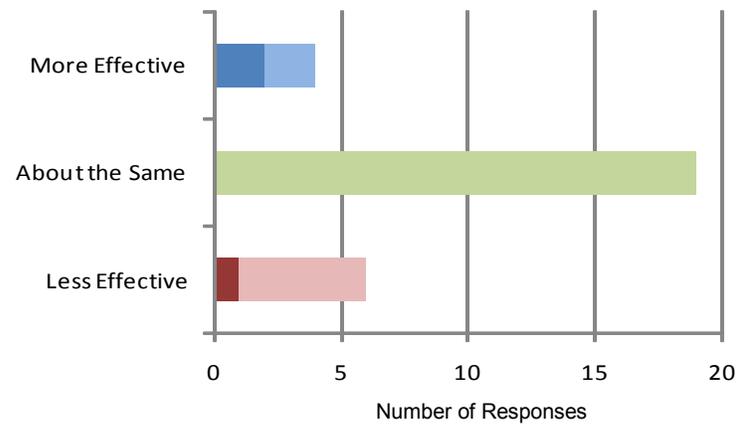
OVERALL RESPONSE:



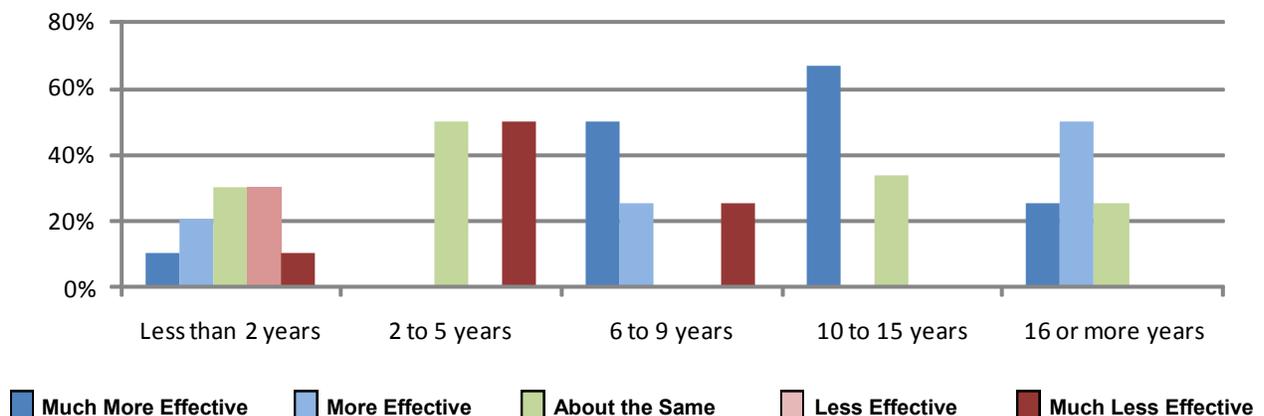
SUPERVISORS



ADMIN/STAFF



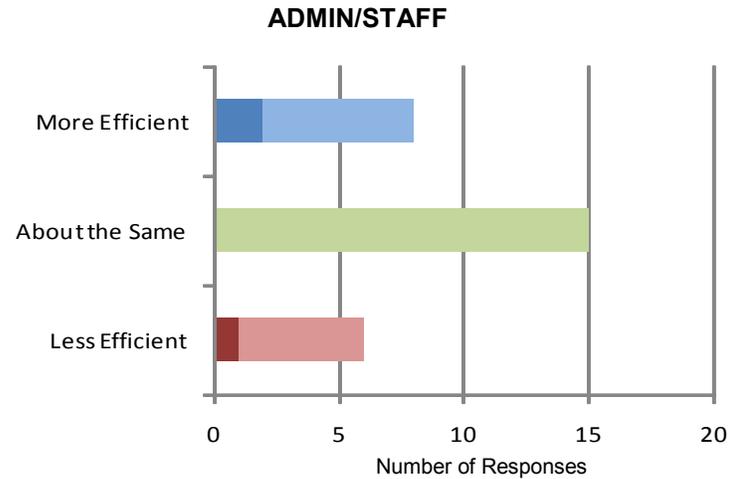
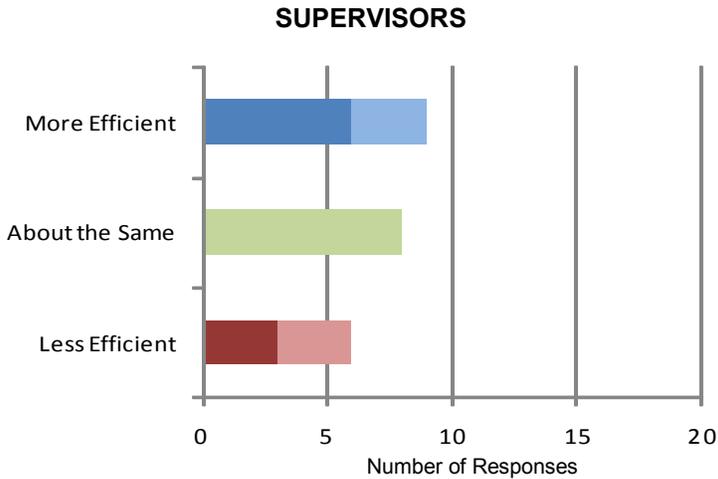
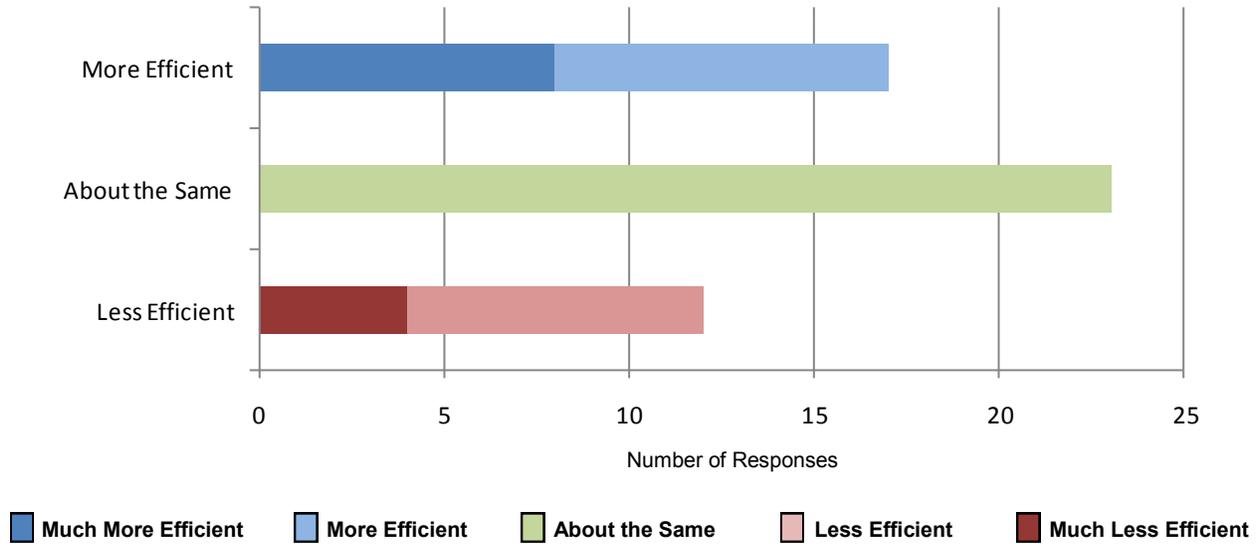
SUPERVISOR RESPONSE BY YEARS OF TENURE



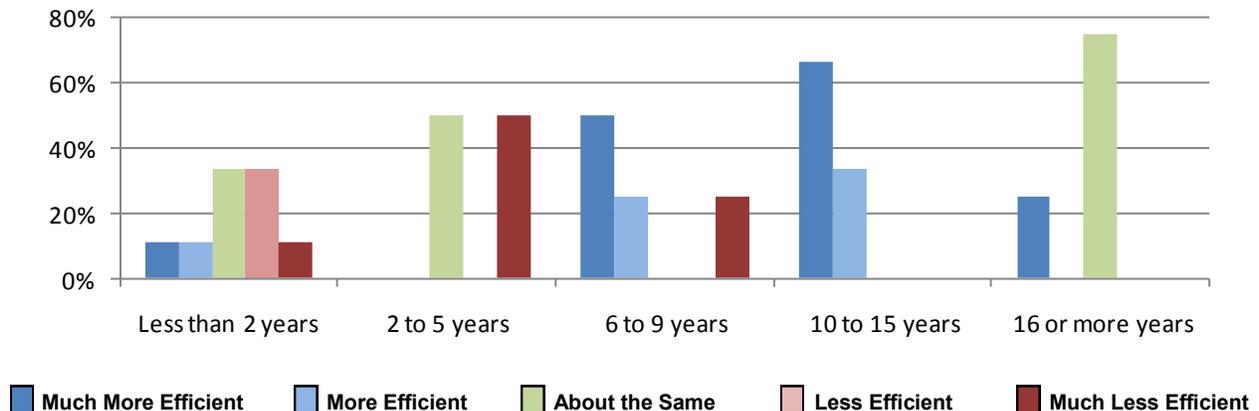
As a result of the change in committee structure, County Board committees are:

Almost one-third of respondents felt that the new structure has made committees more efficient (32%, including 15% who said committees were much more efficient). The majority of respondents (44%) reported the new structure works as efficiently as the previous structure. 23% felt that the new structure resulted in less efficient committees, including 8% who indicated they are much less efficient.

OVERALL RESPONSE:



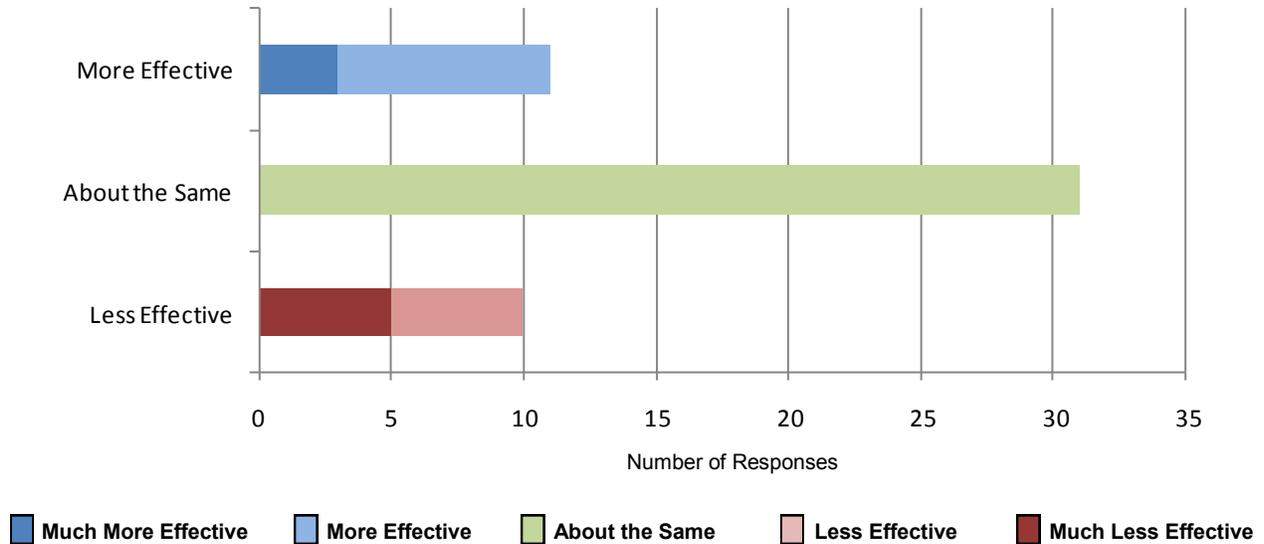
SUPERVISOR RESPONSE BY YEARS OF TENURE



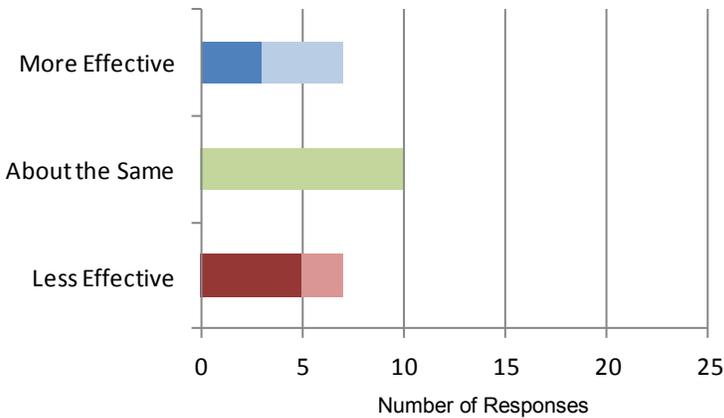
As a result of the change in committee structure, how has your work as a County Board Supervisor/Administration/Staff changed?

The majority of respondents (60%) reported that the effectiveness of their work has remained about the same under the new committee structure. One-fifth of respondents indicated that their work has become more effective, including 6% who said it is much more effective. The same percentage (20%) reported that their work has become less effective, with 10% saying it is much less effective.

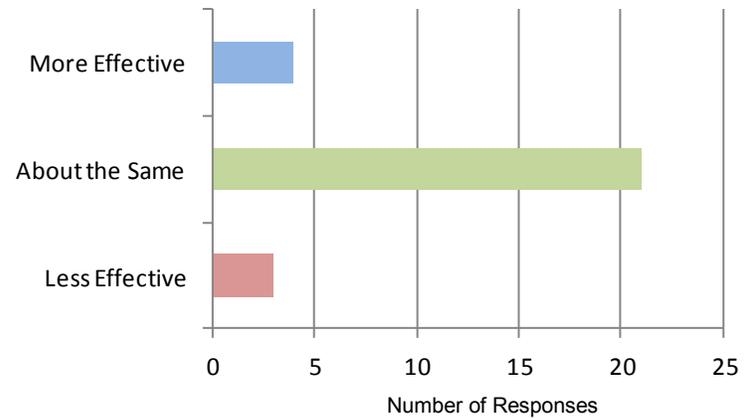
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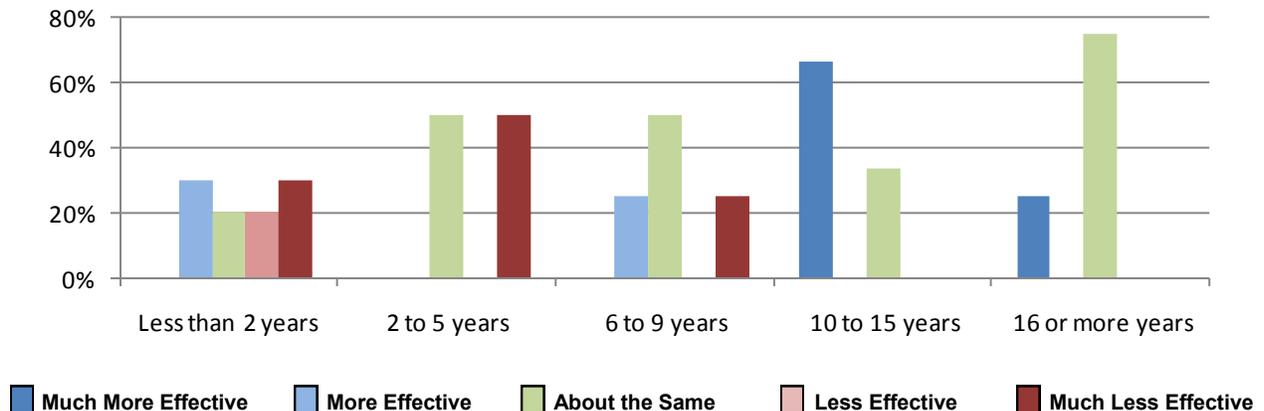
SUPERVISORS



ADMIN/STAFF



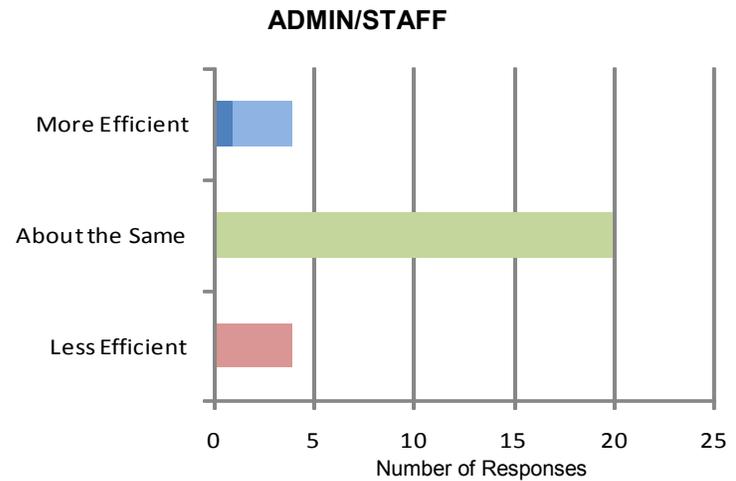
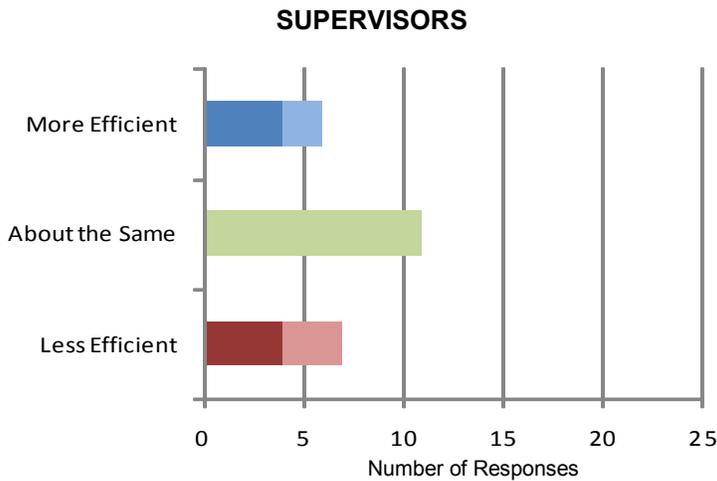
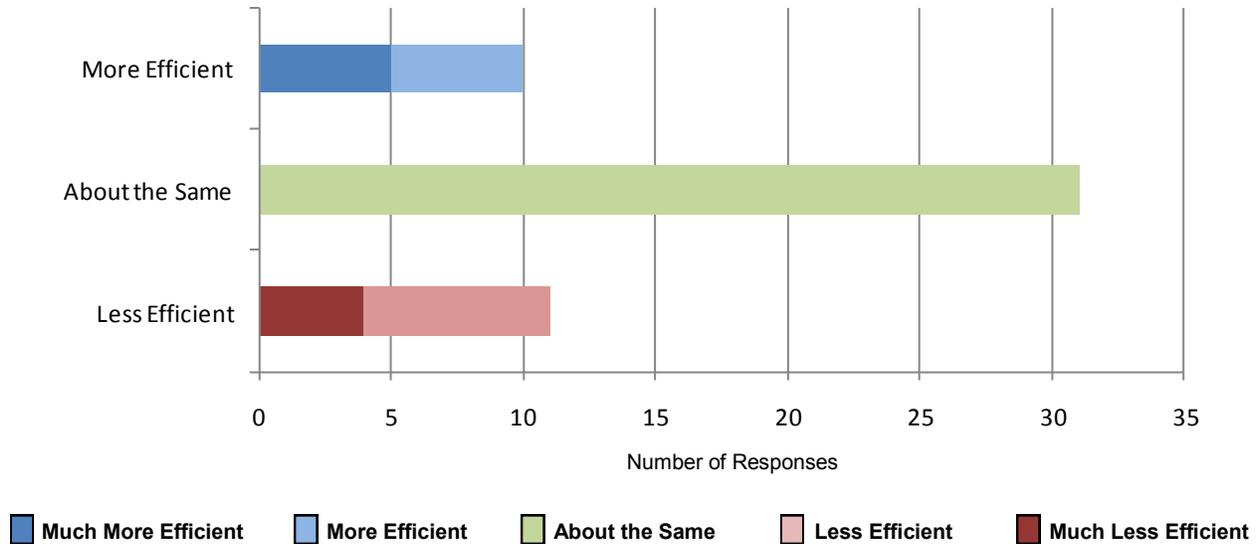
SUPERVISOR RESPONSE BY YEARS OF TENURE



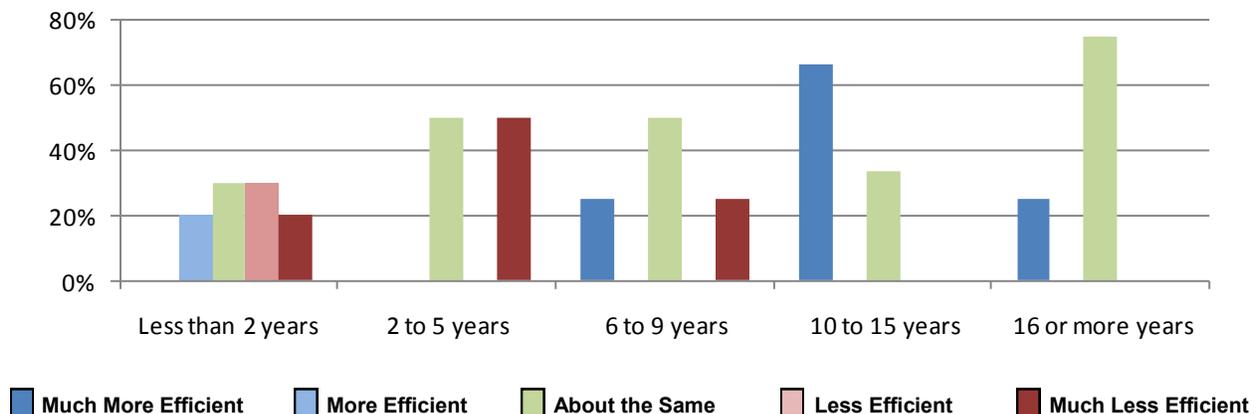
As a result of the change in committee structure, how has your work as a County Board Supervisor/Administration/Staff changed?

Similar to effectiveness, the majority of respondents (60%) reported that the efficiency of their work has remained about the same under the new committee structure. 19% of respondents indicated their work has become more efficient, including 10% saying it is much more efficient. A slightly higher percent (21%) reported that their work has become less efficient, with 10% saying it is much less efficient.

OVERALL RESPONSE:



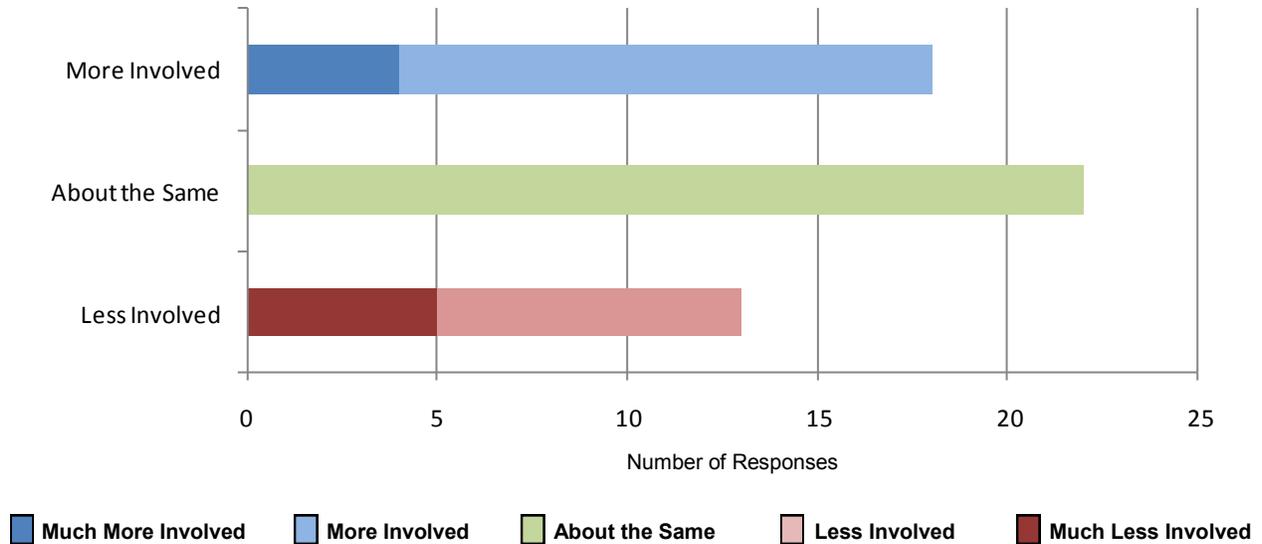
SUPERVISOR RESPONSE BY YEARS OF TENURE



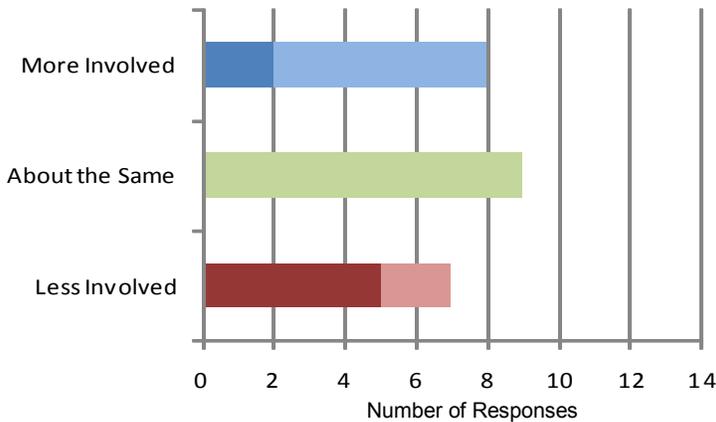
As a result of the change in committee structure, do you think that County Board Supervisors are more involved in county governance or less involved?

Over one-third of respondents (34%) reported an increased involvement of county board supervisors as a result of the new structure, including 8% who felt supervisors are much more involved. About 42% indicated that supervisors' involvement has remained about the same. The remaining 24% said supervisors are less involved in governance, including 9% who said they are much less involved.

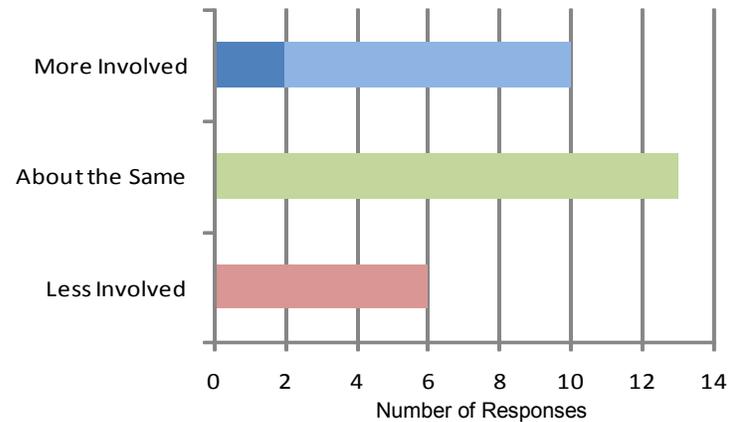
OVERALL RESPONSE:



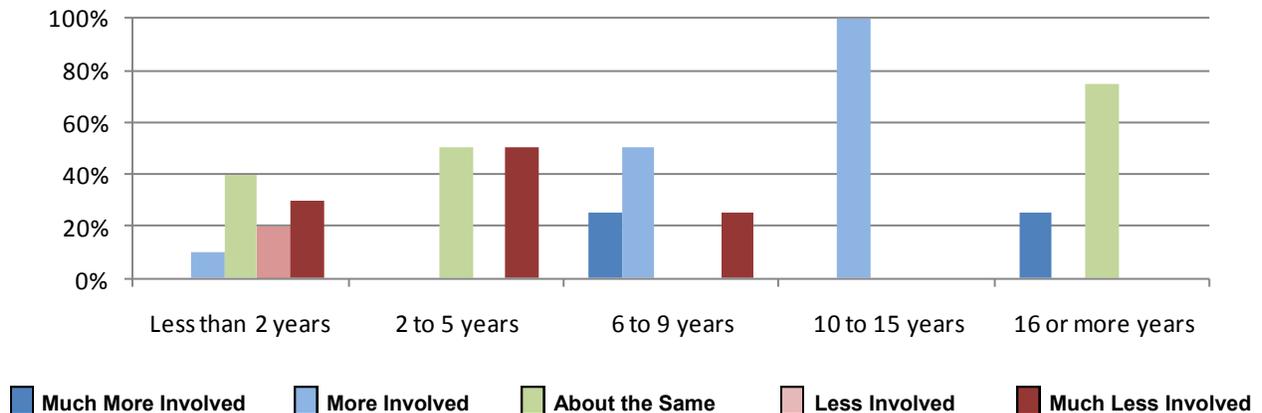
SUPERVISORS



ADMIN/STAFF



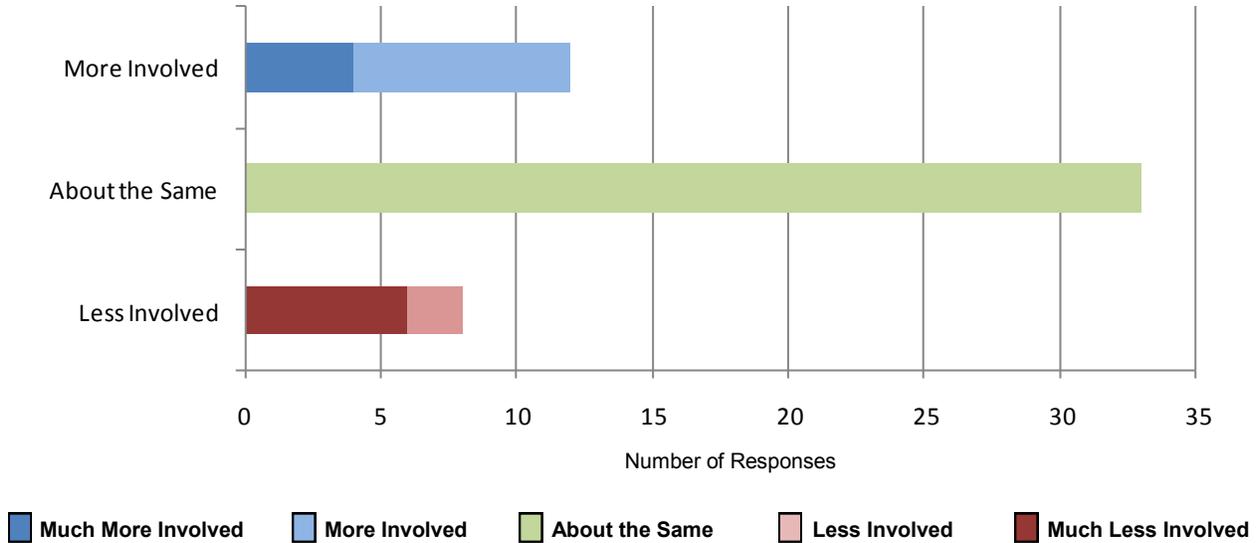
SUPERVISOR RESPONSE BY YEARS OF TENURE



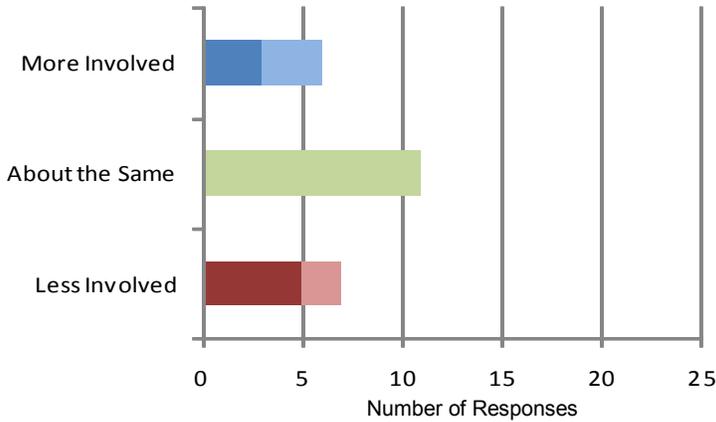
As a result of the change in committee structure, do you believe that you are more involved in county governance or less involved?

Overall, the majority of respondents (62%) indicated that their own involvement in county governance has remained about the same under the new committee structure. 23% reported that they are more involved, including 8% who said they are much more involved. Only 15% said they are less involved in governance, with 11% stating they believe that they are much less involved.

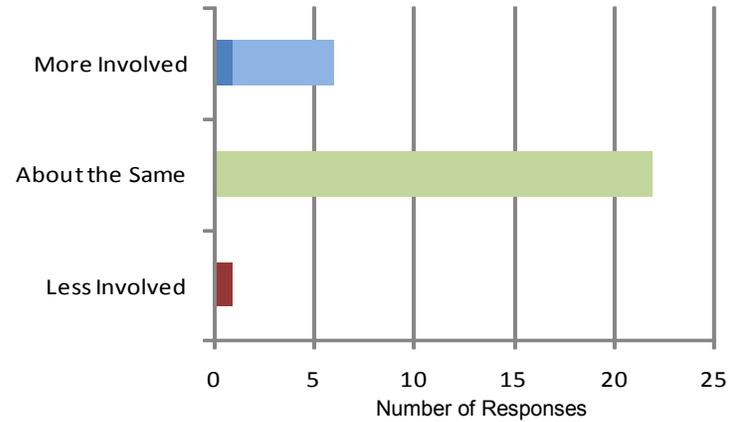
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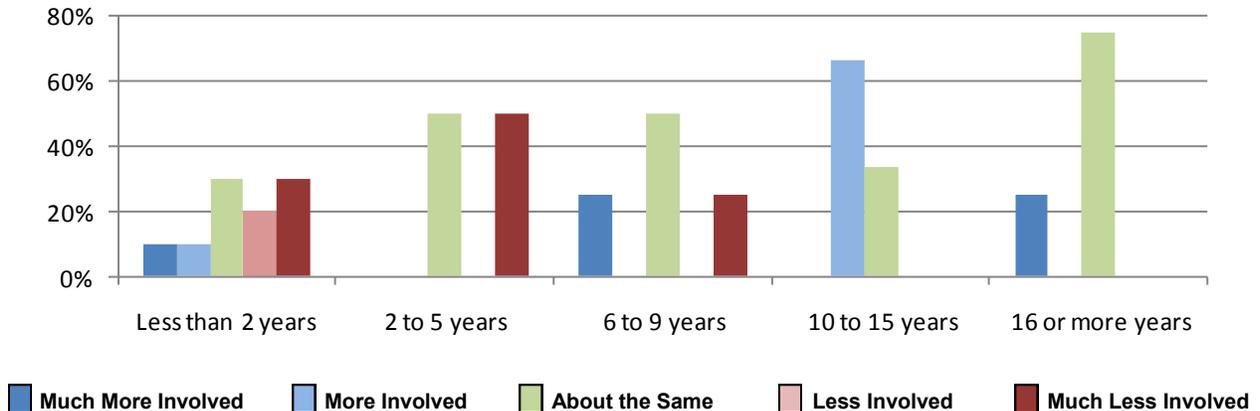
SUPERVISORS



ADMIN/STAFF



SUPERVISOR RESPONSE BY YEARS OF TENURE



What do you see as the strengths of the new committee structure?

SUPERVISORS

Better Use of Time:

- Better use of staff's and public's time for less overall meetings to attend, and more supervisors' input in committee level work.
- Some duplication was needed by staff in the past. Staff time is better used.
- It eliminates staff from presenting to multiple committees. One could argue that this is a more efficient use of staff time.

Increased Efficiency:

- New committee structure has combined committees that previously shared a significant amount of county government oversight, allowing for a more efficient and engaged staff and board. Seven-member committees has allowed for more dialogue and debate at the committee level.
- Larger committee – more input from supervisors; executive committee has caused more coordination of committees
- Some policies only have to go to one committee whereas in the past, things may have needed to go before two bodies, and sometimes three, before being forwarded to the full board for action. There are more opinions and representation on each committee also.
- The combined committees allows the supervisors to understand more than one department and experience how these departments function together.

Consolidation +/-:

- Committees that should have been combined have been.
- Some committees needed to be put together. Finance and admin. need to stand alone.
- Consolidation of some committees makes good common sense. Such as Bldg & Grounds & Highway & Parks. However, I am no longer on these 2 committees to evaluate efficiency or effectiveness. I think consolidation of Land Use & Extension & Conservation Committee also make sense but haven't served on these committees for many years.
- About the same as pre-re-org.

No Strengths Identified:

- I don't see a lot of strengths. I see more power for some supervisors and less involvement by other supervisors depending on what your relationship is with the board chairman.
- I don't see any strengths.
- I don't see any in its current form.
- Strengths: Unknown.

Name Changes:

- I like some of the name changes. They are more modern and accurate. The name change to Public Works is good.

Misc:

- I checked 1 to all above questions because I have no idea except question 7. That one I am sure is correct.

ADMIN/STAFF

Better Use of Time:

- Less committees = less meetings.
- Can only speak to Finance/Administration. Strength is one less meeting per month.
- Fewer meetings.

Increased Efficiency:

- More efficient meetings
- More efficient for the Supervisors.
- There is increased efficiencies by combining committees that provide oversight for divisions within the same department - i.e., combining Highway & Parks Committee with Building & Grounds. Both divisions are part of the Department of Public Works. Supervisors do not have to serve on more than one committee - allowing them to become "involved" and learn more about one specific committee rather than spreading themselves "thin" between more than one committee.
- You hear what is being discussed as a whole instead of two different discussion and discussions changing between committees and meetings.
- Much more integration of policy process. Less "silos" with regard to how policy matters are reviewed. Policy matters are reviewed in a more holistic manner.
- Increases responsibility of major issues in some committees over others.

Consolidation +/-:

- Combining some of the committees made sense, such as Judiciary and Law and Public Works/Facilities.
- Combining Buildings & Grounds with Highway & Parks made the most sense.

More Supervisor Involvement:

- I would think that more members bring more ideas to the table.
- More input of Supervisors at the committee level. Not limited to 4 or 5.
- 7 members allow for more consensus before an item is taken to the full board.

Greater Knowledge:

- Overall knowledge of what is happening in the county.
- County Board members have more knowledge of other Divisions' activities.
- More members allow for more to hear what you do and hopefully advocate on your Dept.'s behalf.

Leadership:

- The strengths of the committees depend upon the leadership. Some committees are stronger than others.

Misc:

- My oversight committee was not affected. However, when I do need to attend Admin meetings, they do go excessively long at times.
- None

What do you see as the weaknesses of the new committee structure?

SUPERVISORS

ADMIN/STAFF

Time Issues:

- Some meetings can become lengthy.
- There may be times when meetings may be somewhat longer due to time-consuming agendas. For example, if there were to be a big project similar to the courthouse and then a big parks project in the same time frame, it may make for long meetings and less informed decisions
- We are rushed too much info for one committee. If you have two committee assignments you could have as much as four different department head to deal with.
- Some information is rushed.
- Meetings may deter some public involvement in issues over time if meetings are consistently longer than the past structure.

Power Concerns:

- Too much power on some committees. Finance, administration, building and grounds and highway and parks were very busy committees when they were separate committees. By combining them, it has made long agendas and long meetings.
- Too much power in a smaller number of committees.
- Too much power too a few people.
- The chairman with his all important vision that he brings to all committees.

Consolidation Concerns:

- Executive Committee roles need to be defined more; possible overstepping on Finance/Admin.
- Not sure if merger of Admin & Finance is always appropriate. Again, I don't serve on either but have in the past & wonder if this is a great or even good consolidation.
- The new structure severely limits opportunities for supervisors to take on leadership roles. Committee meetings are longer. There is less time spent with division administrators and non-senior county staff. The combined administration and finance committee has too much influence. I miss my time with Extension. :(

Efficiency Concerns:

- Workload is not shared equally. 13 have one standing committee and others have 2 and 3.
- Lack of dual (multiple) committee review of important issues tends to fast track issues that need to be fully discussed and vetted with more of the board members.

Misc:

- Consult Q.3, above.
- None

Time Issues:

- Potentially longer meetings
- Too long of certain meetings
- Created longer meetings which does not always translate into a productive event.
- Just that the meetings are too packed. Too much on the agenda.
- Length of agenda items, longer meetings, same people serving on the same committees
- Too long of a meeting; people lose focus.
- Meetings too long. Members lose interest.
- Long meetings

Power Concerns:

- The creation of the Executive Committee seems to have given more power to the more experienced supervisors and excludes the more recently elected supervisors.
- The Executive Committee has created a centralization of power in such a way as it has diminished the role of the other committees and many other supervisors. It has also downplayed the Legislative role of that former committee. UW-Extension has also been downplayed in the new structure.
- Too much micro-managing.

Consolidation Concerns:

- Finance/Admin should not have been combined. They need to be 2 separate committees.
- Combining Finance and Administration has too many complicated issues to address. These two committees should not be combined.
- See incompatibility statement above.
- Some combinations don't make sense and would seem to deter from more thoroughness on issues, e.g., Judiciary & Legislative.

Efficiency Concerns:

- May be too much to take on for each body, may be too many members on each committee to be efficient.
- Too much debate. Supervisors are redundant in debate because they all feel they need to speak.
- Need to do a better job of coordinating staff with Executive Committee to be sure subject matter experts are properly involved. Also, committee charters should be issued to committee liaisons so we can be sure issues are presented to the proper committee.

Misc:

- None that I can think of.
- None that I can think of.

What recommendations, if any, would you make to improve how the committees are currently structured?

SUPERVISORS

Finance/Administration Committee:

- Definitely separate Finance and Administration.
- Finance and Administrative need to be separate. Eliminate Executive Committee. I see no way to resolve this with the present leadership on the board. If I am re-elected I will put forth any other ideas at that time.
- Make Admin and Finance not meet on same week, bring back Legislative.

Executive Committee:

- Combine Legislative function with the Judiciary and Law Committee. Get rid of the Executive Committee.....we have a County Executive.

Structure Working Fine:

- The committee structure is working fine. The issue is with the involvement of the supervisors. Some put in much more time than others and some just don't care. There is nothing that can be done with that. Leave the committees as they are and challenge the supervisors to find additional ways to streamline their departments, without deteriorating the services to the residents.
- Overall, I feel that this structure is working and I would be happy to see it remain the way it is.
- Either old or new structure works for me.

Return to Former Structure:

- I would go back to the way it was. With the downsizing to 23, the committees will be back to 5 members.
- Go back to former structure.

Setting Agendas:

- Organize the meeting agenda to put top priority items at the beginning of the agenda for more public interest and involvement.
- In concept, I like the Executive Committee that oversees Corp Counsel, County Board & Legislative Duties. To date, the agendas have been too long and too aggressive. Need to focus on fewer agenda items and move on from one major topic to another. Rather than a little discussion about so many issues.

Misc:

- Since the power, efficiency and performance of a board lies in its committees, the changes made, with 28 supervisor districts in place, have reduced the county board's overall reflection of the community.
- There seems to be a lot of confusion about the division of labor regarding issues. For example, an issue in the Facilities Department may have a financial impact but the understanding as to what aspects of the issue each committee will discuss often has become unclear. The U.S. Senate, and the U.S. Congress resolve this by having memos of understanding between committees. This prevents chairs of committees from pulling rank in thinking one committee is higher than the other. I think it would be good for supervisors to be more like the U.S. Senate where the chair of each committee is decided on by the body as a whole. There should be a split between administration and finance. They should be separate. Personnel issues should be taken separately from financial issues.
- NONE

ADMIN/STAFF

Finance/Administration Committee:

- Finance/Admin should be 2 separate committees. Executive Committee should be eliminated. I don't know enough about the Planning, Zoning & Ext Education Committee to have an opinion.
- Separate finance/admin.

Executive Committee:

- Eliminate the Executive Committee and bring back the Legislative Committee; and bring back a UW Extension Committee.

Supervisor Appointments:

- The chair of the county board should really look at the strengths of the supervisor and put strong, effective supervisors into leadership positions.
- Make sure County Board members have an interest in the Committee subject matter before they are assigned to the Committee.
- Just as we do with new employees, it would be nice to have committee members go through some sort of orientation to get them acquainted with the Dept they have oversight of.
- Appoint more of the less-experienced supervisors to committees to give them an opportunity to learn and encourage them to get more involved.
- Better rotations of supervisors as chairmen of the committees. Utilize new supervisors more on Finance and Public Works committees This may have to be looked at again once the reduction in supervisors is done in the 2012 election.

County Board Policies:

- Release committee charters, find a way to coordinate Exec committee so that you have appropriate staff in attendance to address policy issues.
- County Board should not allow amendments on the Board floor unless amendment had previously been brought forward to the committee and rejected or approved at the committee level. That would provide stronger support of the Committee structure and provide more meaning full debate and information of the proposal at the Committee and Board level.

Misc:

- Right now I think they are running smoothly.
- I have none.
- None
- Go back to the former committee structure
- Recommendation for the PD&EE Committee: start the meeting at 6:15p in Room A for the Extension Education portion of the meeting and then move to the Hearing Room at 7p to convene the public hearing portion for Planning & Development. This will allow more time for Extension and reduce the "confusion" for those individuals attending the public hearing portion (they walk into a meeting that has already started and they are "confused!")

Appendix A: Kenosha County Board Standing Committees

County Board Committees Prior to April 2011 Reorganization

Administration Committee

Building & Grounds Committee

Extension Education Committee

Finance Committee

Highway and Parks Committee

Human Services Committee

Judiciary & Law Committee

Land Use Committee

Legislative Committee

County Board Committees Following April 2011 Reorganization

Executive Committee

Finance/Administration Committee

Public Works/Facilities Committee

Human Services Committee

Judiciary & Law Committee

Planning, Development & Extension
Education Committee

Appendix B: Evaluation of the Kenosha County Board Committee Structure Survey



Evaluation of the Kenosha County Board Committee Structure

As a result of the new County Board committee structure implemented in the spring, it was determined that an evaluation of the new structure would be done by the end of the year. This evaluation is your opportunity to provide input and share your ideas.

The survey is being provided in two formats: this hard copy version and an online evaluation through Zoomerang. COMPLETE ONLY ONE VERSION by December 2nd!

1. I am a:

- County Board Supervisor
 - I have been in this role for:**
 - Less than 2 years
 - 2 – 5 years
 - 6 - 9 years
 - 10 – 15 years
 - 16 or more years
- Youth In Governance
- County Administration/Staff

2. What is your opinion of the new County Board committee structure?

	Working extremely well				Not working at all
	5	4	3	2	1

3. What have you seen, heard and/or experienced in the past seven months that led to your opinion? (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

4. As a result of the change in committee structure, County Board committees are:

	Much more		About the same		Much less
A. Effective	5	4	3	2	1
B. Efficient	5	4	3	2	1

5. As a result of the new committee structure, how has your work as a County Board Supervisor/Administration/Staff changed?

	Much more		About the same		Much less
A. Effective	5	4	3	2	1
B. Efficient	5	4	3	2	1

6. As a result of the change in committee structure, do you think that County Board Supervisors are more involved in county governance or less involved?

Much more involved		About the same		Much less involved
5	4	3	2	1

7. As a result of the change in committee structure, do you believe that you are more involved in county governance or less involved?

Much more involved		About the same		Much less involved
5	4	3	2	1

8. What do you see as the strengths of the new committee structure? (*Attach additional sheets if necessary.*)

9. What do you see as the weaknesses of the new committee structure? (*Attach additional sheets if necessary.*)

10. What recommendations, if any, would you make to improve how the committees are currently structured? (*Attach additional sheets if necessary.*)

*Thank you for participating in the evaluation!
Please return it in the self-addressed envelope provided.*

For more information:

Kenosha County UW-Extension
19600 75th Street, PO Box 550, Bristol, WI 53104
<http://kenosha.uwex.edu>

Tedi Winnett, Director, 262-857-1931
Kristen Lie, Community Planning Educator, 262-857-1946

