



---

## Action Plan Example & Resources

November 21, 2023

City of Whitewater Common Council

Statement:

1. The Council is respectful that each individual council member has distinct, competing and divergent viewpoints designed to promote the best interests of the City and representation of the community.
2. The Council intends to work on a plan to enhance the effectiveness of the Council as a body and as that body works with the employees of the City.
3. The Council is committed to Roberts Rules as a guideline and the City's transparency ordinance
4. The Council will explore and conduct training as to governance, conduct of meetings, and open meetings compliance, and encourage appointed officeholders to participate in such opportunities.
5. The Council will explore standards of decorum and civility for its meetings
6. The Council will work with the City Manager for development of an onboarding process for new elected and appointed officeholders
7. The Council will set expectations for self-accountability – individual commitment to one another
8. The Council will consider whether use of outside resources of benefit to this process including resources from CVMIC, the executive branch of the City, facilitators, or other resources.
9. The Council's commitment to this plan is ongoing which the Council will address at subsequent meetings.

### Example of an Action Plan Outline

#### a. Training:

- **Objective:** Ensure all council members understand the rules, regulations, and legal obligations related to governance and open meetings.
- **Action Steps:**
  - Schedule regular training sessions for council members on parliamentary procedures and open meetings laws.
  - Invite legal experts or professionals to conduct workshops on compliance.
  - Develop an onboarding process for newly elected and appointed officeholders

#### b. Documentation and Communication:

- **Objective:** Establish clear communication channels and documentation practices.
- **Action Steps:**
  - Develop and distribute a comprehensive handbook outlining governance procedures and open meetings compliance. (Good Governance Manual)

#### c. Code of Conduct:

- **Objective:** Foster a respectful and professional environment during meetings.
- **Action Steps:**
  - Develop a clear and concise code of conduct outlining expectations for decorum and civility.
  - Distribute the code of conduct to all council members and make it publicly available.

#### d. Enforcement Mechanisms:

- **Objective:** Establish consequences for violations of decorum standards.
- **Action Steps:**



- Implement a progressive disciplinary system for members who fail to adhere to the code of conduct.
- Clearly communicate the consequences of violating decorum standards.

e. **Facilitated Discussions:**

- **Objective:** Provide opportunities for constructive dialogue.
- **Action Steps:**
  - Introduce facilitated discussions or workshops on effective communication and conflict resolution. (Council retreat)
  - Encourage open communication channels for members to express concerns and provide feedback.

f. **Individual Goal Setting:**

- **Objective:** Encourage members to set City-related goals.
- **Action Steps:**
  - Implement a system for members to set individual goals related to their priorities on the council.
  - Conduct regular check-ins to review progress and offer support.

g. **Transparency in Decision-Making:**

- **Objective:** Ensure transparent decision-making processes.
- **Action Steps:**
  - Implement practices that encourage members to uphold transparency at the both the Common Council and Committee level

h. **General Recommendations:**

- **Regular Review:**
  - Periodically review and update the action plan to adapt to changing circumstances and needs.
- **Public Engagement:**
  - Encourage public input on governance and accountability measures to ensure community involvement and satisfaction.
- **Feedback Mechanism:**
  - Establish a feedback mechanism for council members and the public to provide input on the effectiveness of the action plan.

**Training Opportunities**

**UW-Extension** provides instruction to local government officials as follows:

- To help new officials understand their roles and responsibilities as public officials in Wisconsin
- To develop the abilities of new and continuing officials to fulfill their roles and responsibilities
- To enhance the ability of Extension educators to establish relationships and work with local officials in their area
- To help officials keep current on topics and practices which affect their communities
- To help officials fulfill requirements when specific instruction is required by statute (such as Board of Review).

This instruction is usually in one of five forms:

- in-person workshops presented statewide in the spring and fall of each year



- teleconference programs on individual topics offered live and in recorded form
- video accompanied by written materials
- the Local Government Education website

Example Attached: Parliamentary Procedures for Local Government Meetings (City of Middleton Presentation)

**Rose Simon-Silva**, Assistant Village Attorney/Human Resources Director, Village of Menomonee Falls. Through my City HR group, Attorney Simon-Silva has offered to provide training for our Council.

**NEOGOV** online trainings:

Public Official Training Series – 8 trainings

Ethics-Governmental Transparency

Ethics-Personal Financial Gain

From Private to Public: What You Need to Know

Social Media for Public Officials

Ethics-Personal Advantages and Perks

Ethics-Understanding Fair Processes

Private to Public: An Overview

Writing in Plain Language

Leading with Emotional Intelligence – 3-part training

Open Records & Open Meetings – 2 trainings

Still waiting for a response:

DOJ provides Open Meetings presentations and may have a recorded option. DOJ Communications Department has been contacted for options.

League of Municipalities provides training for municipalities. Executive Director Jerry Deschane provides an approximately 50-minute presentation on Good Governance. The League is checking the Executive Director's schedule. Local Government 101 Training cycle is finished for 2023.

Additional Resources Provided to HR:

[City of Whitewater Transparency Ordinance and Code of Ethics – Chapters 2.62 and 7.04](#)

[City of Whitewater Good Governance Manual](#)

[League Newly Elected Officials Guide – June 2023](#)

[Village of Windsor – Conduct & Ethics](#)

[City of Madison Ethics Code](#)