



Wisconsin Small Business Environmental Council Guidelines

*Created and approved: 2002
Last Revised: January 2017*

Purpose

The Small Business Environmental Council (SBEC) is authorized under s. 285.795, Wis. Stat., modified in June 2011 from the original authorizing language in s. 560.11, Wis. Stat. created in 1993.

The statutes charge the SBEC with the following:

- Advise Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on the difficulties experienced by small businesses when complying with environmental regulations.
- Provide other advice to DNR on ways to assist small businesses to comply with state and federal environmental regulations.
- Determine the impact and severity of environmental regulations and enforcement against small businesses.
- Review Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) outreach materials to ensure they are understandable by small businesses.
- Advise DNR on effectiveness of SBEAP.

These activities are carried out through regular, periodic meetings organized by SBEAP staff.

Members

Wisconsin Statutes establish how the members to SBEC are appointed. The statutes require seven members be appointed as representatives of the general public (3) and owners of small businesses (4). The Governor's office and the majority and minority leaders of both State Senate and Assembly will appoint these seven members.

One additional member represents the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which provides the funding and staffing for the SBEAP. The Secretary of DNR shall appoint the agency representative.

Each of the members serves a three-year term. When a term is about to expire, the member will communicate with their appointing official to either request reappointment or indicate they will not continue with the council. When a vacant position exists, the council and/or DNR staff may provide names of candidates for appointment.

When a member chooses to leave mid-term, they should notify:

- (1) the council chair and DNR staff by email or letter; and
- (2) their official appointing office, to learn how to make the resignation official and allow filling of the vacancy.

Officers

Officers will be selected from volunteers among the business representative members of the council. At the end of the terms of office, the vice-chair succeeds the chair and a new vice-chair will be selected unless the council members elect to extend the term of the current officers.

The current chair shall be the initial recipient of indications from those interested in becoming candidates for vice-chair. Each spring meeting prior to the end of the officer's terms shall include a block of time to make this decision for the coming term. The following meeting held in summer would be the one in which the newly appointed chair and vice-chair shall take office.

If a vacancy in either the chair or vice-chair occurs, the council will appoint an existing member to fulfill the term.

The term for the chair position shall be a two-year term, which was preceded by a two-year term as vice-chair unless extended by council members. Chair responsibilities include:

- Where a signature on a letter from the council is required, the chair shall sign the letter, unless it pertains to the chair's position/appointment at which time the vice-chair shall sign.
- The chair shall assist SBEAP staff with drafting Council's Corner articles, follow-up appointment letters, or letters of recommendation to Governor or legislators or regulatory agencies.
- The chair will discuss agenda items with SBEAP staff in advance of the meetings to ensure agreement on key issues of discussion.
- Where SBEAP staff role is as facilitator or secretary for council meetings, concerned with keeping notes and managing the agenda timely, the chair will assist in keeping the content of discussions pertinent to the issue at hand.
- Bring issues to the council from the National Compliance Advisory Panel (CAP) - as brought to chair's attention by Region V CAP representative (may or may not be a member of our council) - and provide input on those issues as needed.
- May represent council through presentations to outside groups about the purpose and nature of the council.

The vice-chair shall succeed the chair as indicated above. Whenever the chair is unavailable for any of their responsibilities as listed above, the vice-chair will fill in as much as possible.

Administration

SBEAP staff is responsible for arranging logistics for all council meetings. Accommodations must be sufficient to allow roundtable discussion to take place with minimal outside noise or distractions and that presentations/slide shows will be easy to view if provided. Staff will compile agenda items for each meeting and arrange for speakers as needed. Agenda items will be discussed with chair (or vice-chair as necessary) prior to meeting to obtain agreement on key points to be discussed. Details on logistics and agenda items shall be provided to council members at least one week in advance of meeting.

Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly and will last 2-3 hours; longer meetings including lunch may be scheduled if appropriate. Each member shall make every effort to attend all council meetings. Meetings shall be scheduled to minimize conflicts, and maximize member's attendance. If any member misses half of the scheduled meetings within a fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) they shall be asked to reconsider their membership. The council shall take into account extenuating circumstances such as health or other conflicts that could not be avoided.

SBEAP staff will be notified as soon as a member knows they will be unable to attend a meeting. Staff will notify chair of attendance responses to the email message providing the logistics and agenda. If the conflict arises after 7 am on the day of the meeting, the member shall contact staff and provide notice that they are unable to attend the meeting (use the small business hotline: 1/855-889-3021).

Decision-making Process and Voting

The council's preferred method for making decisions is consensus. Where consensus does not appear possible, a vote may be taken. A quorum of 4 out of the 7 business representative members must be present to vote. Each business member has 1 vote; agency member does not vote. In the event of a tie vote no action will be taken on the issue until more business members are present to break the tie. If the tie is not broken, the matter will be carried over to the next meeting for further consideration. Business members not attending the meeting may vote by proxy given to the chair.

If the vote stays as a tie, members will be given an opportunity to express their opinion on the issue, as individuals.

Additional Member Responsibilities or Activities

Items that have been suggested as possible extensions of the council members' responsibilities are:

- Represent the council through presentations of the purpose and activities of the council, etc. to business groups in the member's community or as requested.
- Mentor or provide referrals (to SBEAP, WisCon, other assistance providers, etc.) to businesses in need of assistance within the member's community or as requested.
- Communicate with member's respective appointing bodies (Governor's office, etc.) regarding activities of the council. (Staff may create an annual report format for use by council members in communication with any outside group(s) they choose.)
- Encourage each member to become active in small business activities (i.e., local Chambers) in the member's community. Periodically report on these activities to the Council.