

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Appropriation:** an act of a government body allowing money to be paid from the treasury for a specified use.
- Acquisition:** the act of purchasing something. For example: the acquisition of land or a building.
- Assessment:** an official value placed on property for the purpose of establishing a tax.
- Authority** a person or group of people having the power or right to control, judge, or prohibit the action of others, such as a government, police force, etc.
- Commission government:** a form of local government where all authority is held by a small group of individuals that are elected by the public. This group is usually called a board. Each individual on the board is responsible for one branch of government, such as public safety, public works, or finance.
- Constituent:** a resident of a city, county, state or county represented by a particular elected individual. For example: a resident in the city of Milwaukee represented by the Mayor of Milwaukee is a constituent of the Mayor.
- Meeting:** the gathering of members of a governmental body (committee) for the purpose of using the responsibilities, authority, power or duties delegated to the committee. At least one-half of the members of a committee must be present for the meeting to be official and for the committee to have the authority to act.
- Motion:** a formal step to introduce a matter for consideration by a group.
Examples of motions –
- Moved by Ms. Martin, seconded by Mr. Schmit to approve the November 4, 2011, minutes. Motion carried.
 - Moved by Ms. Martin, seconded by Mr. Edgren to approve \$5,000 for the Highway Plan Integration Project with the scope being presented to the Planning, Conservation and Parks Committee and referred back to the Land Information Council. Motion carried.
- Ordinance:** a rule enacted by a government body (such as a city) against an action, similar to a law. For example: a city ordinance against excessive noise.
- Resolution:** the act of deciding on or settling something, the outcome of making a decision. For example: "they finally reached a settlement with the union."
- Rules of Order:** the rules and customs governing meetings and other government operations.
- Statute:** a permanent rule or law set by a city or state to govern its affairs. Failure to abide by statutes results in potential fines and/or penalties.