

CHAPTER 4

FINANCE

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4.01 FISCAL YEAR. The fiscal year for all County departments, except those departments otherwise provided for by statute, shall be the calendar year, that is January 1 to December 31.

4.02 SALE OF TAX DELINQUENT REAL ESTATE.

(1) PREFERENCE TO FORMER OWNERS OR THEIR HEIRS. After the second Thursday in November of 1961, persons who were former owners, or heirs of persons who were former owners, of land whose title was lost through delinquent tax collection enforcement procedures shall have preference in the right to purchase County lands acquired by delinquent tax sales, provided the failure to pay such taxes was inadvertent or due to ignorance or inability to pay, and provided such preference shall be approved by a 2/3 majority of the members of the County Board.

(2) EXCEPTION. This section shall not apply to tax deeded lands which have been approved for or dedicated to public use by the County subsequent to their acquisition, or to lands acquired more than 5 years prior to the application for purchase of such lands.

(3) TO PROCEED UNDER ss. 75.521, WIS. STATS., IN RELATION TO THE ENFORCEMENT OF COLLECTION OF TAX LIENS. (Cr. #4-82) From and after February 18, 1982, the County elects to adopt the provisions of ss. 75.521, Wis. Stats., for the purpose of enforcing tax liens in this County in the cases where the procedure provided by such section is applicable, and the County Treasurer need not, thereafter, proceed upon its tax sale certificates in cases where such section is applicable in any of the other methods provided by Ch. 75, Wis. Stats., or its charter provisions, but may do so at his option.

(4) CHARGES FOR IN REM FORECLOSURES UNDER SECTION 75.521, WIS. STATS. In all cases where the County elects to enforce tax liens pursuant to s. 75.521, Wis. Stats., or any amendments thereto, a charge for the fees and costs incurred by the County in foreclosing the tax lien shall be determined by the County Board and shall be subject to change from time to time.

4.03 DISPOSAL OF ABANDONED PROPERTY.

(1) The County shall make reasonable efforts to notify in writing all persons who have or may have a rightful interest in abandoned or unclaimed property that has a commercial value in normal business usage unless such property poses an immediate threat to life or property.

(2) If any personal property remains abandoned or unclaimed for a period of 30 days after the written notice, then pursuant to s. 66.0139, Wis. Stats., the County may dispose of the personal property by any of the following means:

(a) Sale by public auction.

(b) Sale by open or closed bid and the County Board may accept the bid most advantageous to the County.

(c) Acquire the personal property for public uses or purposes of any nature as determined by the County Board.

(d) Dispose by any other means determined by the County Board to be in the best interest of the County.

(3) If the disposal is in the form of sale, all receipts from the sale, after deducting the necessary expenses of keeping the property and conducting the sale shall be paid into the County Treasury.

FINANCE 4.03(4)

(4) If the property is not disposed of in a sale open to the public, the County shall maintain an inventory of the property, a record of the date and method of disposal, including the consideration received for the property, if any, and the name and address of the person taking possession of the property. The inventory shall be kept as a public record for a period of not less than 2 years from the date of disposal of the property.

4.06 INVESTMENT OF EXCESS COUNTY FUNDS. The County Treasurer may, subject to the approval of the Finance and Personnel Committee, invest excess County funds in U.S. bonds and U.S. bills or other investments as provided in ss. 59.75, Wis. Stats.

4.07 HIGHWAY EXPENDITURES. The Highway Committee shall make detailed monthly reports on highway expenditures to the County Board.

4.08 ADVANCE OR TRANSFER OF HIGHWAY FUNDS.

(1) ADVANCE. Pursuant to ss. 84.03(3), Wis. Stats., the County Highway Committee may petition the State Highway Commission on behalf of the County to advance such sums as may be required and are not otherwise available for previously authorized or additional and necessary highway construction improvements in the County, with the understanding that the amounts advanced will be deducted from future State allotments for State trunk highway construction under ss. 84.03(3), Wis. Stats.

(2) TRANSFER. The County Highway Committee may petition the State Highway Commission on behalf of the County to transfer to or between previously authorized or additional necessary highway construction improvements in the County, any funds allotted by the State under ss. 84.03(3), Wis. Stats., and remaining unallocated funds in reserve.

4.09 INTEREST RATE AND PENALTY ON DELINQUENT GENERAL PROPERTY TAXES, SPECIAL CHARGES, SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS AND SPECIAL TAXES. (Rep. & Recr. #13-89)

(1) There is hereby imposed a penalty of 0.5% per month, or fraction of a month, in addition to the interest rate of 1% per month, or fraction of a month, provided for in Section 74.47(1), Wis. Stats. on all delinquent general property taxes, special assessments, special charges and special taxes, included in the tax roll.

(2) The County Treasurer shall exclude the additional revenue generated by the penalty from the distributions required by ss. 74.03(7) and 74.031(12)(c) and (d), Wis. Stats.

4.10 REGISTER OF DEEDS; TERMINATION OF JOINT TENANCY COSTS. Fees for services are established as follows:

(1) Recording certificates by the Register of Deeds under the provisions of ss. 867.045, Wis. Stats. \$25.

(2) Preparing and mailing documents by the Register of Deeds under the provisions of ss. 867.045, Wis. Stats. \$25.

4.11 PURCHASING PROCEDURES.

(1) PURPOSE. The purpose of this section is to establish uniform procedures for La Crosse County to secure, for County taxpayers, the advantages and economies which could result from centralized control over the expenditure of County funds for supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services; to promote efficiency and standardization of purchasing methods for all County departments and agencies; to promote competitive bidding and to provide for the administration, regulation, control, and enforcement of the purchasing procedures and methods hereby established.

FINANCE 4.11(2)

(2) AUTHORITY. The section is created and adopted pursuant to authority granted by Section 59.51 and 59.52(9), Wis. Stats.

(3) DEFINITIONS.

(a) Best Judgment Purchase. A purchasing method used for budgeted items when the estimated cost is \$5,000 or less.

(b) Simplified Bid. A purchasing method used for budgeted items when the estimated cost is between \$5,000 and \$20,000.

(c) Official Sealed Bids. A purchasing method used for budgeted items when the estimated cost is over \$20,000.

(d) Budgeted purchases or items. Material or service purchases that are funded or planned for within an account of a Departmental Budget.

(e) Non-Budgeted purchases or items. Material or service purchases that require funding that is not available within a specific account of a Departmental Budget.

(f) Emergency purchase. A purchase of material or service that is needed to respond to an emergency situation. An Emergency situation exists when a material or service is immediately needed to protect health, safety and welfare, or to preserve and protect property. An emergency purchase is needed when a situation is unforeseen, calls for immediate action and can not be properly responded to using established purchasing procedures.

(g) Invalid purchase. A purchase that is contrary to the Code or the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual.

(h) Purchase limitations. The authority and approval levels within the Code that permit the spending of County funds.

(i) Governmental unit. A department, branch, agency, school or organization that is part of the Federal, State, or County Government, or local municipality.

(j) State contract. A contract for material or services that has been awarded to a vendor for use by the state government and the terms of the contract has been extended to County Governments.

(k) Lease purchase. A contract for the use of equipment, supplies, or other property under which title will not pass to the County.

(l) Lease with option to purchase. A contract where title may pass to the County.

(m) County Based Contract. County Government receives the benefit of material or service provided by a vendor. The County compensates the vendor.

(n) Client Based Contract. A County designated client receives the benefit of material or service provided by a vendor. The County compensates the vendor.

(o) Sole Source. A material, service, or special situation where it is evident or it is determined that only one vendor can fulfill the needs of the County.

FINANCE 4.11(3)(p)

(p) Negotiation. Department Head or designee in conjunction with the Auditor/Finance Director or designee discuss cost, terms, and conditions with a vendor to secure a contract that is in the best interest of the County.

(r) Blanket contract. A contract or purchase order issued to establish an account for the purpose of making repetitive purchases of similar material or services.

(s) "Request for Proposals (R.F.P.)" A description of a program and/or services needed, parameters and/or limitations that vendors have to work within; the expectations of the County, and the result the vendor is expected to achieve.

(t) Non-conformance. Procedures, methods or practices which are or appear to be in violation of or contrary to the Code, Finance Purchasing and Procedures Manual, or instructions that are communicated to the Departments by the Auditor/Finance Director or County Administrator.

(u) Finance and Purchasing Procedure Manual. Written procedures and practices that are consistent with the Code and provide an effective, efficient, and organized way of purchasing materials or services.

(v) Purchasing Manager. Performs, leads, and manages the purchasing process consistent with the Code and under the direction of the Auditor/Finance Director.

(4) ADMINISTRATION. The provisions of this section and regulations as are duly enacted hereunder shall be administered, supervised and enforced by the Auditor/Finance Director with the guidance of the Executive Committee. The Auditor/Finance Director shall, subject to provisions of this chapter and applicable provisions of federal or state law or administrative regulations promulgated there under;

(a) Establish and supervise a central purchasing system for coordination and direction of procurement activities. Develop and maintain a Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual consistent with the Code. The purchasing process shall be in accordance with the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual.

(b) Have the authority to delegate purchasing activities to user departments and purchasing staff subject to the Code.

(c) Transfer between departments, supplies, materials and equipment which are no longer needed by a holding department, but which can be used by a receiving department.

(d) Exchange, trade-in or sell those supplies, materials and equipment which are surplus, obsolete or unused and shall confer with the County Administrator when necessary. Funds derived there from shall revert to the appropriate fund unless otherwise provided by law.

(e) With the approval of the Corporation Counsel, develop standard forms and specifications for bids or quotes, purchase orders and contracts; develop and prescribe the use by departments of additional forms required in carrying out the provisions of this section and amend or eliminate any such forms.

(f) Perform all duties under the general direction of the County Administrator and the Executive Committee. Pursuant to the provision of this section, all Department Heads shall cooperate with the Auditor/Finance Director and Purchasing Manager in the purchases for the departments which they administer.

FINANCE 4.11(4)(g)

(g) Have direct supervision, management and control of the purchasing system and be responsible for submitting an annual budget for the centralized purchasing system, when necessary.

(h) Insure that user departments adhere to central purchasing policies and procedures when delegation is extended. All delegated purchasing activities shall be monitored by the Purchasing Manager under the direction of the Auditor/Finance Director.

(i) Review Request for Sealed Bid and R.F.P. specifications using information furnished by the department, the standing committee, and any such other sources as may be deemed necessary in order to meet the needs of the department, consistent with the purpose of this section.

(j) Recommend to the County Administrator the adoption of administrative regulations to be contained in the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual which shall be circulated to all departments.

(k) Maintain necessary records to account for expenditures of funds for purchases made.

(5) STATUTORY AND ORDINANCE CONFLICTS. This section shall govern all purchasing for La Crosse County, provided nothing herein shall be in conflict with ss. 59.52(29) or 66.0901, Wis. Stats., dealing with construction improvements or with other applicable statutes.

(6) PURCHASING OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES.

(a) Best Judgment Purchases. For purchases under \$5,000.

1. All authorized and budgeted purchases, whose estimated costs are less than \$5,000, may be made and approved by the Department Head.

2. Procurement cards may be used for Best Judgment purchases. The procedures and limitations for the use of such cards are outlined in the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual.

(b) Simplified Bid Purchases. Purchases between \$5,000 and \$20,000. All authorized and budgeted purchases of material or services whose estimated costs are between \$5,000 and \$20,000 shall be approved by the Auditor/Finance Director and made by the Department Head or designee. Purchase orders are required for all Simplified Bid Purchases. If possible, written price quotes from 3 or more vendors should be obtained. The Department Head shall submit copies of all written quotes with the purchase order requisition.

(c) Official Sealed Bids. Purchases over \$20,000. All authorized and budgeted purchases of material or services over \$20,000 shall be made by sealed bid or R.F.P. except the following types of purchases are excluded from this requirement if approved by the appropriate authorities: purchases from governmental units, purchases through state contracts, sole source purchasing or contract extensions through negotiation. The approval of the Auditor/Finance Director and Standing Committee is needed to award a bid or R.F.P. over \$20,000 by all departments except the Health and Human Services Departments. The approval of the Department Head, Auditor/Finance Director, Purchasing Manager, Human Services Operations Administrator, and Health or Human Services Financial Manager or their designees is required to award a bid or R.F.P. by the Human Services Department or the Health Department.

1. All Requests for Sealed Bids or R.F.P.'s shall be coordinated by the Department Head with the Purchasing Manager under the direction of the Auditor/Finance Director.

FINANCE 4.11(6)(c)2.

2. Specifications shall be drawn by the Department Head, or their designee, and reviewed by the Purchasing Manager. Sealed bid specifications shall be drawn so as to make competitive bidding reasonably possible in the interest of obtaining the best product or service at the most advantageous price to La Crosse County. A copy of the final bid specifications shall be submitted to the Purchasing Manager.

3. All Requests for Sealed Bids or R.F.P.'s shall be advertised at least once in the official County newspaper. The Department Head shall determine if it is necessary to advertise in any other publications. The advertisement shall indicate when and where bids will be opened and R.F.P.'s will be reviewed. Direct mail notification shall be given to any interested vendors or providers.

4. Sealed Bids and R.F.P. shall be received by the Department Head and opened publicly either by the Department Head or designee at the time indicated in the specifications and the newspaper advertisement.

5. The Department Head shall prepare a written tabulation of bids or review summary of R.F.P.'s received and shall submit said report to the Auditor/Finance Director, Standing Committee, and the Purchasing Manager.

(d) Non-Budgeted Purchases. All non-budgeted purchases except in an emergency as defined in s. 4.11(3)(f), shall be approved by the Standing Committee and County Board. An account transfer within a department's budget or a transfer from the Contingency Fund to the Department's budget must be made pursuant to s. 2.02(11)(a) prior to or in conjunction with non-budgeted purchases.

1. Account transfer within Departmental budget – procedures are outlined in the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual.

2. Account transfer from Contingency Fund to Department budget – procedures are outlined in the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual.

(e) Department Heads or designee. Performs purchasing functions under the general supervision of the Auditor/Finance Director and in cooperation with the Purchasing Manager.

1. Departments are to adhere to all purchasing policies and procedures that are set forth in the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual or are communicated to departments.

2. Departments must use blanket contracts set up by the County which cover certain material or services s. 4.11(7)(i) of this Code.

3. Departments are required to maintain all records necessary to account for expenditures of funds for purchases made. All sealed bids received may be open to public inspection.

(f) Non-conformance to County Code, Purchasing Policy, or Procedure. Purchase orders, methods, procedures or practices that are or appear to be in violation of the purchasing ordinance or contrary to the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual will be investigated by the Auditor/Finance Director or his/her designee. The Auditor/Finance Director may request a written explanation of the situation in question. This explanation along with any other information may be forwarded to the County Administrator, County Board Chair, and Standing Committee.

FINANCE 4.11(6)(f)1.

1. If a department's purchasing methods or practices are in violation of the Code or contrary to the Finance and Purchasing Procedures Manual, the Auditor/Finance Director and/or the County Administrator may intercede to ensure that the proper practice, method or procedure is followed.

(7) GENERAL POLICY.

(a) Purchase Limitations. All purchases shall be made in accordance with the budgetary line item appropriations as established by the County Board for the operation of the respective departments. The responsibility for adhering to existing line item appropriations rests with the Department Head. The Auditor/Finance Director or his/her designee shall refuse to issue any purchase order or accept any contract when the funds needed exceeds the line item appropriation or lacks the appropriate approval level, except as provided in s. 4.11(7)(j) regarding emergency purchases.

(b) Material or product purchases. Purchase orders are required for all material purchases over \$5,000 and for all purchases of capital items over \$500. For material or products under \$5,000 a purchase order is not required if the material or product will be delivered and invoiced within 30 days. A purchase order may also be requested at the discretion of the Department Head.

(c) Contract or lease purchase. The approval level and purchasing procedure used for service contracts and leases is determined by the total of payments or total estimated contract sum regardless of the term. A distinction is made between County Based Contracts and Client Based Contracts (see s. 4.11(7)(c) 3 and 4). A copy of all contracts and leases must be sent to Corporation Counsel for approval pursuant to s. 4.13.

1. Lease Purchases. The dollar amount used to determine the approval level is the total amount of all payments in the lease agreement regardless of the term of the lease. Equipment leases or lease-purchases may be made by Department Heads for up to \$5000 using "best judgment purchasing". From \$5,000 to \$20,000 Department Heads may employ a "simplified bid" purchase, a purchase through state contracts or a "sole source purchase" practice with approval of the Auditor/Finance Director. Above \$20,000 Department Heads may enter into a lease with the approval of the Auditor/Finance Director and Standing Committee. A copy of all leases must be forwarded to Corporation Counsel for review and approval.

2. Lease Purchase with Option to Buy. The dollar amount used to determine the approval level is the sum of all payments in the lease plus the buyout cost regardless of the term of the lease. Equipment leases or lease-purchases may be made by Department Heads for up to \$5000 using "best judgment purchasing". From \$5,000 to \$20,000 Department Heads may employ a "simplified bid" purchase, a purchase through state contracts or a "sole source purchase" practice with approval of the Auditor/Finance Director. Above \$20,000 Department Heads may enter into a lease with the approval of the Auditor/Finance Director and Standing Committee. A copy of all leases must be forwarded to Corporation Counsel for review and approval.

3. County Based Contract. A contract for material or service where the County receives the benefit of the contract and compensates the vendor.

4. Client Based Contract. A contract for material or service where a County designated client receives the benefit of the contract and the vendor is compensated by the County.

FINANCE 4.11(7)(d)

(d) **Invalid Purchases.** The County may consider as void, any purchase or contract made on behalf of the County which is contrary to the provisions of this Code. The employee making such purchase transactions will be considered for disciplinary action by their Department Head or the County Administrator as appropriate.

(e) **Purchases from Governmental Units.** Materials, supplies, machinery or equipment offered for sale by the state, federal, or County government or by any municipality may be purchased without bids, at prices to be agreed upon between the governmental agency and the Department Head or designee. This authority shall be limited to purchases of budgeted items whose estimated cost does not exceed \$5,000. Purchases may be made from Governmental Units between \$5,000 and \$20,000 with approval of the Auditor/Finance Director. Purchases over \$20,000 must be approved by the same authorities as required in s. 4.11(6)(c).

(f) **Purchases through State Contracts.** In order to utilize the mass purchasing power of the state, material goods or services may be purchased directly from vendors awarded bids by the state government, without the solicitation of County bids. Department Heads may use "best judgment purchasing" practices up to \$5,000. From \$5,000 to \$20,000 Department Heads may purchase from a state contract as a substitute for the "simplified bidding" practice with approval of the Auditor/Finance Director. Documentation of the state contract must accompany the purchase order or a copy of the service contract or lease agreement must be forwarded to the Corporation Counsel and the Finance Department. Above \$20,000 Department Heads may purchase from a state contract as a substitute for "official sealed bid" practice with the approval by the same authorities as required in s. 4.11(6)(c).

(g) **Sole-Source Purchasing.** Sole source purchasing is acceptable when, after a good faith review of all possible sources, it is determined there is only one viable source for material, supply, or service. To be a sole source, a vendor shall have the ability to deliver a unique material or service, have technical expertise or qualifications, the ability to deliver at a particular time, or have the ability to fulfill the needs for a special purpose or situation such as a client choice purchase from a qualified provider. Department Heads may use "best judgment" practices up to \$5,000. From \$5,000 to \$20,000 approval of the Auditor/Finance Director is required. Above \$20,000, approval is needed by the same authorities as required in s. 4.11(6)(c). Purchases over \$5,000 under this section require a written explanation as to the reason for a sole source purchase.

(h) **Negotiation.** The dollar amount used to determine the approval level is the total sum of the contract regardless of the term of the contract. The County may extend an existing contract through negotiations with a current vendor. Negotiation may be used if it is evident or it is determined that it is in the best interest of the County to do so. Up to \$5,000 purchases may be made by the Department Head using "best judgment purchasing" practices. From \$5,000 to \$20,000, negotiation with the current vendor may be used if approved by the Auditor/Finance Director. Above \$20,000, negotiation to extend an existing contract must be approved by the same authorities as required in s. 4.11(6)(c).

(i) **Blanket Contracts and Standardization.** Where it is in the best interest of the County due to dollar volume, standardization, conformance, or favorable terms, the County may enter into contracts that affect all or multiple departments. The approval for entering these contracts shall be consistent with the Code.

(j) **Emergency Purchases.** An emergency shall be deemed to exist when an essential service or material is immediately required or when unforeseen circumstances arise causing situations requiring immediate action in order to protect health, safety, and welfare, or to protect and preserve property.

FINANCE 4.11(7)(j)1.

1. Budgeted items: In the event of an emergency, if the material or supply needed is under \$5,000, the Department Head may use "best judgment purchasing" practices. Above \$5000 requirements for the simplified bid purchase, state contract purchase and sole source purchase may be waived with approval of the Auditor/Finance Director. In the event that the Auditor/Finance Director is unavailable, the Department Head shall obtain the approval of the County Administrator or County Board Chair. In the event that neither person is available, the Department Head shall obtain the approval of the Standing Committee Chair.

2. Non Budgeted Items: The Department Head shall seek approval of the County Administrator before the purchase of any material or service up to \$20,000. In the event that the County Administrator is unavailable, the Department Head shall obtain the approval of the County Board Chair. In the event that neither person is available, the Department Head shall obtain the approval of the Standing Committee Chair. For purchases over \$20,000 the Department Head shall obtain the approval of the County Administrator and County Board Chair.

3. For every emergency purchase made that is over \$5,000 for a budgeted item or any amount for a non-budgeted item, the Department Head shall, not later than the next working day thereafter, submit to the County Administrator and the Auditor/Finance Director, a written explanation of the circumstances of the emergency and any estimated costs related thereto. Said explanation shall also be submitted by the Department Head to the departmental committee at the next earliest meeting.

(k) Disposal of Surplus Property.

1. Departments that have surplus equipment or supplies with an estimated value of less than \$1,000 shall report a description of such equipment or supplies to the Purchasing Manager, who shall canvass other County departments to determine whether such equipment or supplies may be used by them. Transfers between departments or disposals shall be coordinated by the Purchasing Manager. If the property is not used by another department it may be held for sale at a County public auction or sale.

2. Departments that have surplus equipment or supplies with an estimated value in excess of \$1,000 shall report a description of such equipment/supplies to the Purchasing Manager. The Purchasing Manager shall canvass other County departments to determine whether such equipment or supplies may be used by them. If the Auditor/Finance Director approves, property may be sold by sealed bids or special public auction. The Purchasing Manager will be responsible for the bid process or special public auction. If the property is not used by another department, put for sale by sealed bid or special auction, it may be held for sale at a County public auction or sale.

3. Proceeds from the sale of any equipment or supplies shall revert to the appropriate fund unless otherwise provided by law or internal procedure.

4. Surplus property may be sold at a public auction. With approval of the County Administrator, the Auditor/Finance Director or designee may hold a public auction to dispose of surplus property.

4.12 LA CROSSE COUNTY FUND BALANCE POLICY. Fund balance is the difference between assets and liabilities as reported in the basic financial statements for governmental funds only. The following fund balance classifications exist:

- (1) Nonspendable Fund Balance. Fund balance, or a portion of, which cannot be spent and meet one of the following definitions:

FINANCE 4.12(1)(a)

(a) Fund balance is not in spendable form and cannot be converted to cash. Examples include prepaid expenses, inventories, loans/notes receivable, delinquent taxes, and property acquired for resale.

(b) Fund balance is legally or contractually required to be maintained intact. Examples include the principal of an endowment fund.

(2) Restricted Fund Balance. Fund balance, or a portion of, exists when constraints are legally enforceable by external restrictions.

(a) Restrictions are imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation. Payment must be used only for the specific purposes stipulated by legislation.

(b) Restrictions are externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, laws, or regulations of other governments. Examples include:

1. Donations and grants received for a purpose specified by the donor or grantor until all conditions are satisfied.

2. Fund-raising activities where proceeds have been publicly committed to a specific project or defined purpose. Participant donations less related expenses shall be treated as restricted third party donors.

3. Unspent debt proceeds

4. Specific restricted amounts as listed in each specific governmental fund.

(3) Committed Fund Balance. Fund balance, or a portion of, may be used for a specific purpose based on formal county board action.

(a) Committed funds may not be used for any other purpose unless changed or amended by the same county board action creating the original commitments such as resolutions or ordinance.

(b) Commitments must be made prior to the end of the fiscal year regarding purpose, the amount may be determined subsequent to the fiscal year. Use of committed funds for intended purposes shall be authorized utilizing standard budgetary processes. Addition of funds for commitments previously authorized shall be authorized in conjunction with budget adoption or year-end closing resolutions.

(c) The county uses encumbrance accounting which allows operating funds designated by a purchase order for a specific good or service to be carried forward into the next year's budget. Amounts not spent for the assigned good or service will lapse and not be included in the next year's budget for future spending purposes. An outstanding purchase order carried forward over year-end shall be considered a commitment.

(d) Donations and fund-raising activities not specifically restricted by a third party shall be considered committed. Those donations may be used for non-operating or recreational purposes by the department head or elected official of the department where the donations are received. Funds may be used within the confines of the budgetary processes.

FINANCE 4.12(3)(e)

(e) Specific commitments are listed below under each specific fund type. Commitments are only reported in the financial statements for governmental funds per Governmental Account Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 54, "*Funds Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions*".

(4) Assigned Fund Balance. Fund balance, or a portion of, may be assigned by a government's intent to use funds for specific purposes provided neither a restriction nor commitment is applicable. The county board authorizes the Executive Committee to assign funds. The intent of the assigned funds may change with the appropriate approvals as decided by the Executive Committee. The following amounts shall be treated as assigned amounts at fiscal year-end.

(a) Budget assigned during the adoption of the budget for subsequent year expenditures in accordance with s. 4.12(8) of the County Code.

(b) Capital projects and grants that have not been completed and are not otherwise committed or restricted.

(c) Long-term receivables or amounts not collected in the first 180 days after fiscal year-end with no specified purpose or legal restriction exceeding \$25,000.

(d) All governmental funds other than the general fund shall report all non-specified fund balances as assigned due to the nature and purpose of the fund to exist for its intended purpose.

(5) Unassigned Fund Balance. Unassigned fund balance is the General Fund's available expendable financial resources that are not the object of tentative management plans. The county assigns the use of all governmental fund balances for specific and non-routine purposes only. All governmental funds may report a negative unassigned fund balance after first reducing all assigned fund balance available.

(6) Minimum Fund Balance. Minimum unassigned fund balance amounts shall be calculated on an annual basis following the acceptance of the annual audit. Temporary noncompliance with established minimums is permissible with the authorization of county board through the budget adoption process or specific county board action. Minimum fund balance is recorded as unassigned in the General Fund. All other governmental funds shall report minimum balance as assigned due to the nature and purpose of the fund to exist for its intended purpose. The Executive Committee, along with the County Administrator and Finance Director, will annually review and make recommendations to the County Board for the use of fund balance amounts not specifically committed or assigned. The use will be based on, but not limited to, the following guidelines:

(a) Capital expenditures. To the extent that a cash contribution to pay for all or part of the capital program will reduce the reliance on borrowed funds and future debt service costs.

(b) Prepayment of outstanding debt. To generate greater rates of return than refinancing and/or result in the immediate improvement of many important credit ratios.

(c) Start-up costs of new programs. Recurring start up costs for new programs contemplated by the county that are intended to improve the quality or efficiency of services if the costs are justified by the future cost efficiency of the services provided.

(d) Termination costs of ineffective or inefficient programs. Costs associated with elimination or privatization of ineffective or inefficient governmental services.

FINANCE 4.12(6)(e)

(e) Advance payment of multi-year obligation to achieve a discount. Prepayment of multi-year contractual obligations, which will result in savings to the County.

(f) Debt service expenditures. Payments of debt associated with the specific fund's capital expenditures or the entire county's debt expenditures for the use of general fund balance.

(g) Other nonrecurring expenditures. Other nonrecurring expenditures, which are expected to yield a positive financial return in the future, arise out of unforeseen circumstances, or are not expected to continue into future years.

(7) General Fund. The general fund shall be established as the chief operating fund for financial resources not specifically accounted for in other funds. The general fund unassigned minimum fund balance shall be between 30 to 50 percent of the total of the county's general fund expenditures. Use of unassigned funds may be made in accordance with s. 4.12(6).

(8) Budget Carry Forwards. Unless approved by the Executive Committee, every appropriation, except an appropriation for an authorized grant program, capital expenditure or a major repair, shall lapse at the close of the fiscal year to the extent that it has not been expended or encumbered. An appropriation for an authorized grant program, capital expenditure or a major repair shall continue to force until the purpose for which it was made has been accomplished or abandoned, as determined by the County Administrator and Finance Director. An appropriation is considered abandoned if 3 years pass without any expenditure form, or encumbrance of, the appropriation concerned.

4.13 CONTRACT APPROVAL PROCEDURE.

(1) Preparation of Contract Approval Form.

(a) The Department originating a contract shall prepare the Contract Approval Form and fill in the following information:

1. Contract Title.
2. Provider/Vendor Name.
3. Term of Contract.
4. Date Submitted for Approval.
5. Department Head Approval (including signature and date).

6. Financial Information. Complete org. number, account number, the current revised budget, the contract amount and the source of funding (such as, federal or state), for each org. and account number when available.

(b) Attach Contract Approval Form to 2 copies of the contract or 3 copies if the Department would like a signed original.

(2) Contract Approval Guidelines (If purchase is budgeted).

(a) \$0 - \$5,000 requires Department Head approval.

(b) \$5,001 - \$20,000 requires Department Head and Standing Committee Chair approval.

(c) Over \$20,000 requires Department Head and Standing Committee approval.

(3) Corporation Counsel Review. The Contract Approval Form and contract shall be reviewed and approved by Corporation Counsel. If any changes or corrections are requested before the contract is signed, the contract will be returned to the originating department and committee for further review and approval. If requested by the originating Department, Corporation Counsel will review any contract before committee approval.

(4) County Board Approval. If the amount in the contract is non-budgeted or for any other reason County Board approval is required, a resolution shall be prepared and submitted through the appropriate Standing Committee and the Executive Committee (if there is a fiscal impact) and passed by the County Board. The resolution number and date of passage by the County Board should be noted on the "County Board Approval" line of the Contract Approval Form. The same contract approval procedure shall be followed as required for budgeted purchases.

(5) Authorized Contract Signatures. After the Contract Approval Form is completed with all required signatures of approval, the form and all copies of the contract shall be presented to the County Board Chair or the County Administrator for signature on behalf of La Crosse County. The County Clerk may sign the contract if an additional signature is required. The County Board Chair and County Administrator may each designate which contracts may be signed electronically on his/her behalf.

(6) Provider/Vendor Signature. The originating Department shall be responsible for obtaining the Provider/Vendor's signatures on all copies of the contract either before or after the signing of the contract by County officials.

(7) Disbursement of Contract Copies.

(a) Signed original contract and Contract Approval Form shall be filed with the County Clerk or stored electronically.

(b) Signed original contract shall be sent to the Provider/Vendor.

(c) Originating Department may make a copy of the signed contract for its file or retain a signed copy if 3 copies were submitted for signature.

(8) Alternative Procedure for Large Batches of Contracts (more than 10 at 1 time).

(a) Use a single Contract Approval Form.

(b) Attach form to a complete listing of the contracts that includes Provider/Vendor names and annual amounts of each contract. Make special note of any non-budgeted contract amounts and the terms of contracts that are longer than 1 year.

(c) Submit the batch of contracts through the same procedure as outlined above.

(9) County Clerk. Original contracts and Contract Approval Forms shall be retained by the County Clerk in accordance with the La Crosse County Records Retention Policy. As an alternative procedure, the completed contract may be stored in a database for the time period required by the Records Retention Policy and electronic notification shall be sent to the County Clerk that the processing of the contract(s) has been completed.

4.14 DEBT LEVY MILL RATE CAP.

(1) The County Board shall not issue debt that will cause the county to increase the debt levy mill rate for the budget years of 2008 and 2009 above the rate that was set in the 2007 budget of \$.52 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

(2) Adopting a resolution to issue debt shall require a vote of at least two-thirds of the supervisors present unless state law requires a vote of at least three-fourths of the members-elect.