



BOARD REPORT

TO: VILLAGE PRESIDENT & BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FROM: SCOTT KOEPPPEL, VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT: REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

AGENDA: October 6, 2026

DATE: September 29, 2026

ISSUE

Shall the Village Board add a Committee of the Whole?

DISCUSSION

In response to the request from Trustees, this memorandum outlines how a Committee of the Whole (COW) operates within non-home rule municipalities in Illinois. A Committee of the Whole is a parliamentary mechanism where the full Board of Trustees and the Village President meet as a working committee rather than as a formal legislative body. The primary objective is to allow for informal discussion, early-stage policy exploration, and staff direction without taking binding, final legal action. This memo provides an overview of statutory considerations, comparative models from peer non-home rule municipalities in Illinois, operational pros and cons, and potential options for Sugar Grove.

What is a Committee of the Whole?

Under standard municipal meeting formats, formal actions (ordinances, resolutions, expenditure approvals) are deliberated and voted on during regular Board meetings under strict parliamentary rules.

A Committee of the Whole:

- **Membership:** Consists of all members of the corporate authorities (Village President and Trustees).
- **Function:** Serves as a workshop/discussion forum to review proposals, preliminary developer plans, long-term capital projects, budget drafts, or policy revisions.
- **Voting & Authority:** No formal or binding votes are taken. The committee builds consensus and provides direction to staff or consultants. If an item is deemed ready, it is forwarded to a subsequent regular Village Board agenda for formal adoption/vote.

- **Open Meetings Act (OMA):** COWs are official public meetings under the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/). They require proper public notice, published agendas (48 hours prior), open public attendance, and formal meeting minutes.

Sugar Grove Specific Considerations

- **Meeting Place:** At the present time, the Village does not have a formal meeting space and instead relies on the library.
- **Committee Appointment Authority:** Appointment Authority for all committees lies with the Village President. **1-8-6: APPOINTMENTS:** Unless otherwise specified by law or ordinance, the mode of appointment for any appointed position (including, but not limited to, appointments for committees and subcommittees of the village and for committees established by other entities to which the village is entitled to appoint a member) shall be by the president, subject to the advice and consent of the board.
- **Staff Time:** For all committees, staff needs to draft an agenda, board reports, minutes, prepare, and attend the meetings (typically off-hours).
- **Discussion Items:** For all intents and purposes, the Discussion portion of the Village Board meeting acts as a Committee of the Whole.

Application in Non-Home Rule Municipalities in Illinois

Non-home rule communities in Illinois operate strictly under the powers granted by the Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/). While non-home rule status restricts certain regulatory and taxing powers, it does not restrict how a municipal board organizes its discussion and meeting procedures. Under 65 ILCS 5/3.1-40-15 and local board rules, corporate authorities have full discretion to establish standing committees, workshops, or COWs to manage board workflow. Several neighboring and peer non-home rule municipalities utilize the Committee of the Whole structure:

1. **Village of Elburn:** Holds a COW meeting on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month, running either immediately before or after the regular Board meeting. Items are vetted in COW first, then placed on a future consent agenda or regular action item list.
2. **Village of Montgomery:** Schedules a regular COW meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of the month to handle working sessions, strategic planning, and presentation reviews.
3. **Village of Maple Park:** Uses a monthly COW format (3rd Tuesday) specifically to review draft ordinances and board items before moving them to the formal consent agenda.
4. **Village of Cary:** Conducts a COW immediately following every regular Board meeting to discuss policy direction and staff recommendations.
5. **Village of North Riverside:** Structures its standing committees as committees of the whole, ensuring all trustees participate in policy discussions across departments.

Options for Consideration:

If the Board wishes to explore or implement a Committee of the Whole structure, staff has three potential options:

1. Option A: "Back-to-Back" Meetings (Most Common)

- Hold a COW meeting immediately prior to (e.g., 6:00 PM) or immediately following the regular Village Board meeting on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month.
- *Benefit:* Avoids adding extra travel nights for Trustees, Staff, and the public.

2. Option B: Dedicated Monthly Workshop Night

- Schedule one standing COW meeting per month (e.g., the 3rd Tuesday or a dedicated 5th Tuesday) solely dedicated to high-level policy, budget, and capital discussion.
- *Benefit:* Provides focused, uninterrupted time for complex topics without rushing toward a 7:00 PM formal meeting start.

3. Option C: Hybrid / "As-Needed" COW Meetings

- Maintain the standard meeting format but authorize the Village President or a majority of Trustees to call a special COW meeting when a major project (e.g., comprehensive plan updates, major developments, annual budget) requires extended deliberation.

COST

There is no cost for the discussion.

ATTACHMENTS

- None

RECOMMENDATION

The Village Board reviews the program and provides feedback to staff.