



Understanding the State and Local Legislative Process

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Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention



Levels of Government

- Federal
- State
- Local (County, City or Town, Lake District)



Federal

Don't deal with much in Wisconsin because:

- EPA delegated authority to manage waters under Clean Water Act to state

Local

- Similar process to state
- Hard to discuss in general because it varies by jurisdiction
- Terminology may be different (e.g. “ordinances” vs. “laws”)

State

- Sources of authority
 - Delegated by United States via EPA
 - State Constitution – the “Public Trust Doctrine”

“Laws” vs “Rules”

- Laws (statutes) are passed by the legislature and signed by Governor
- Rules (administrative code) are developed by agencies
 - Must be authorized to do so by a statute
 - Governor approves concept, agency develops rule, Governor and Legislature approve
 - E.g. Shoreland zoning – Wis Statute 59.692 authorizes shoreland zoning rules in NR115

Formation of a Law

- Bill is introduced by a legislator and submitted to a committee
- Committee chair decides if and when to hold public hearing
- After public hearing, committee may or may not vote on bill
- If bill passes committee, goes to full house of legislature
- Bill passes one house, is sent to other for the same process
- If the same language passes both houses, goes to governor for signature

Two types of legislation

- Budget bill
- Everything else



Legislative timeline

- Legislative session is two years
- Budget is worked on Feb-June of 1st year of session
- Other legislation is before budget work, and then winter-spring
- Floor periods are limited

Timeline for state budget development

A horizontal timeline graphic with a blue background and a yellow arrow pointing right. Below the arrow are seven blue upward-pointing arrows, each above a white text box with a blue border. The text boxes describe the steps in the budget development process from Fall 2016 to June 2017.

Fall 2016
Agencies
submit
budget
requests to
Governor

Feb 2017
Governor
announces
Executive
Budget
Proposal

Mar 2017
Legislature's
Joint Finance
Committee
Hold Hearings
with Agencies
and Public

April 2017
Joint Finance
Committee
votes on
each section
of the budget

May-early
June
Full legislature
votes

June 2017
Governor
signs in full,
vetoes in full,
or exercises
line item
vetoes

June 2017
Legislature
can override
vetoes (rarely
happens)

- State budget is biennial – 2 years (July 2017-June 2019)

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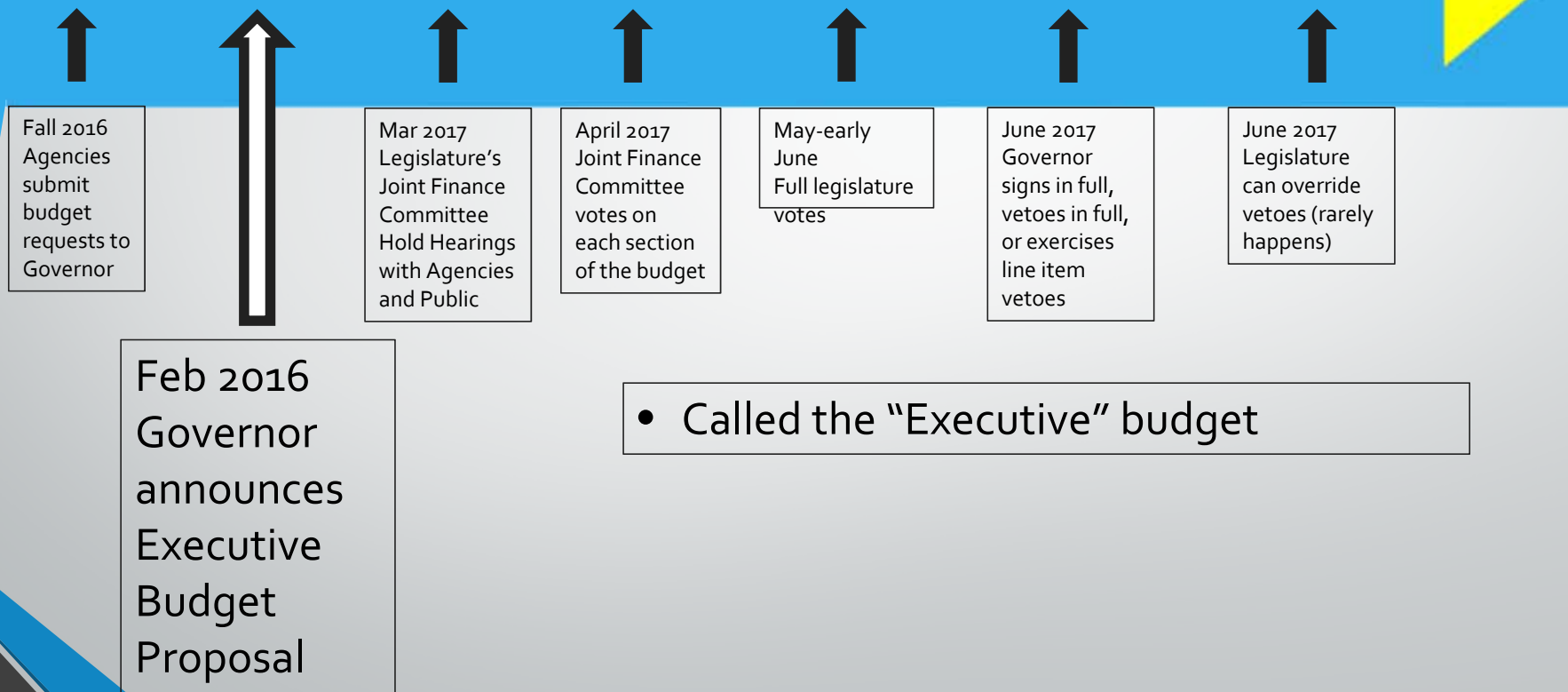
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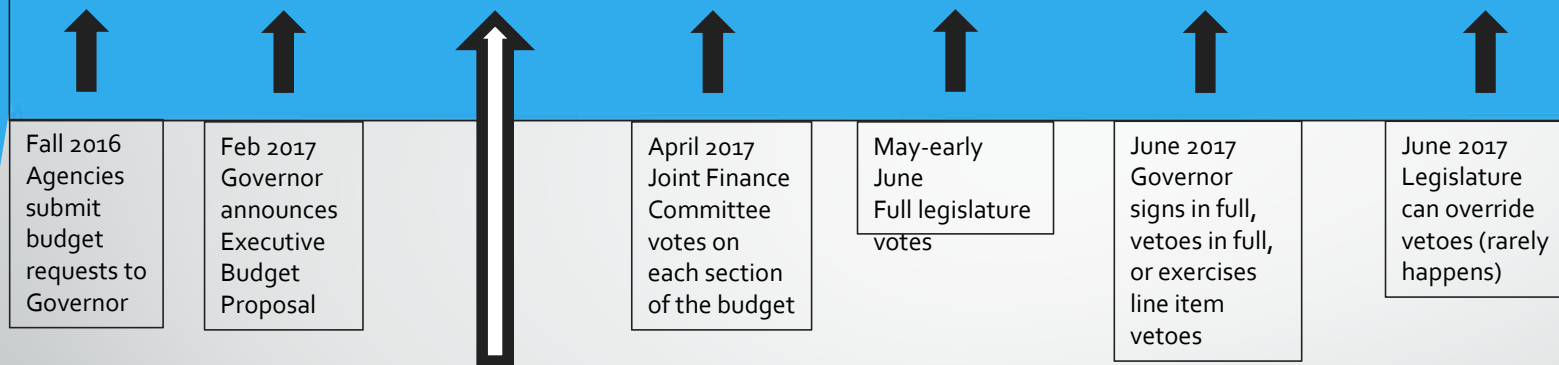
Fall 2016
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requests to
Governor

- Agencies started work back in early 2016, submitted budgets to Governor's office in fall of 2016
 - This would indicate any changes in programs or needs for increased or decreased funding
 - DNR's submission made few changes from last budget – small decrease in funds, -9.5FTE

Timeline for state budget development



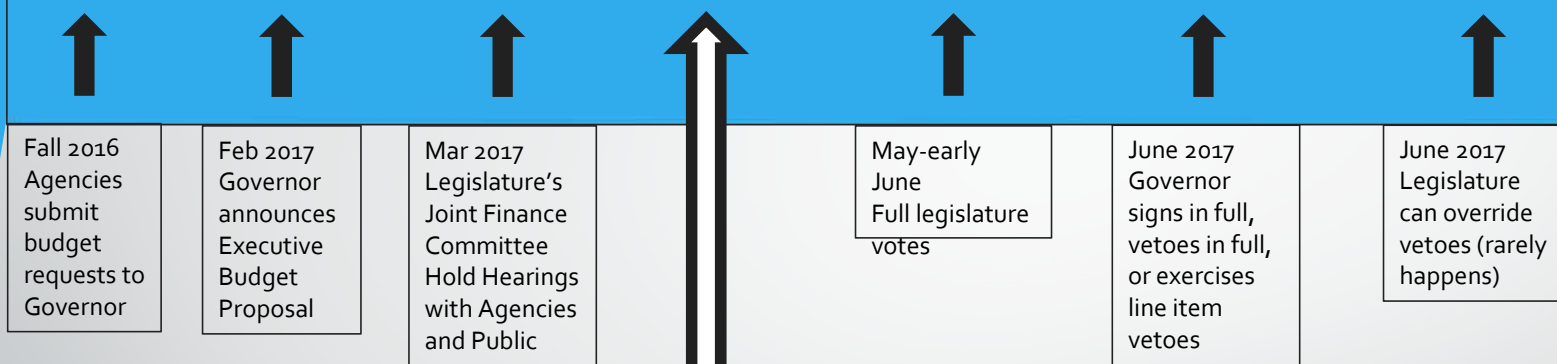
Timeline for state budget development



Mar 2017
Legislature's Joint
Finance Committee
Hold Hearings with
Agencies and Public

- Agency hearings allow legislators to ask questions of agency heads – can be more theater than informational

Timeline for state budget development



April 2017
Joint Finance
Committee votes on
each section of the
budget

- Takes place over several weeks
- JFC can add, delete, and change items

Timeline for state budget development

