

**SPECIAL ORDERS SESSION  
COUNTY BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2003**

Chairman Joseph Maehl called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the County Board Room, Fourth Floor, Courthouse, 415 Jackson Street, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation by Supervisor Rankin.

The following Supervisors were present: Sevenich, Diakoff, Griesbach, Hotynski, Scoville, Maehl, Klitzke, Widener, Lauson, Albrecht, Thompson, Steineke, Madison, Radewan, Sundquist, Wingren, Jacobson, Norton, Hert, Robl, Eichman, Kline, Kramer, Finch, Farrey, Sievert, Arne, Brennand, Egan, Rankin, Rengstorf, Barker, Pech and O'Brien. Excused: Nielsen, Egan, Hert, Finch and Arne. Absent: Tierney and Koziczkowski.

Motion by Supervisor Robl and seconded to adopt the agenda. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

**COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, ETC.**

A Notice of Claim received from Gloria Mack for alleged illegal acts by various county employees, was referred to the Personnel & Finance Committee.

A thank you note was received and read from Supervisor Schaidler thanking the board for the flowers sent during his convalescence.

A WCA Education Seminar entitled "E-Government" to be held Monday, March 24 at the Sheraton Madison Hotel was read. Anyone interested in attending can contact the County Clerks Office.

The following resolutions from various counties were received:

- La Crosse County - Resolution No. 142-2/03 - "Medicare Payment Inequities Between States" was forwarded to the Judiciary & Public Safety Committee.
- Langlade County - Resolution No. 13-2003 - "Request Legislative Action on the Merits of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law" was referred to the Legislative Committee.
- Price County - Resolution No. 6040 - "Requesting Rescinding of "Smart Growth" Legislation" was referred to the Legislative Committee.
- Racine County - Resolution No. 2002-219 - "Resolution by the Intergovernmental Relations Committee Requesting a Waiver from Certain Statutes Requiring Publication in a Newspaper of Certain Notices" was referred to the Legislative Committee.
- Resolution No. 2002-218 - "Resolution by the Intergovernmental Relations Committee Supporting Legislation to Increase Additional Page Fees for Register of Deeds Documents" was referred to the Legislative Committee.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Supervisor Barker announced the next Legislative Committee meeting would be Monday, March 24, 9:00 a.m. at the Coughlin Building. Anyone having agenda items should contact her as soon as possible.

Supervisor Sundquist announced a public issues forum sponsored by the Oshkosh Rotary Club and presented by Michael Best and Friedrich LLP entitled "The Future of Local Government". It will be held Monday, March 31, 12:00 noon at the Pioneer Resort & Marina.

Supervisor Widener announced a total of \$175,000 in donations have been made to Park View Health Center since 1994 by the Keller family. He also stated that due to diligence by the staff of Park View in seeking out Medicare patients, there will be a surplus of approximately \$370,000.

Supervisor Rengstorf brought the Board's attention to information placed on their desks regarding the county's Transportation Programs and Services for Elderly or Disabled Persons in Winnebago County. He hopes through making these programs more visible to constituents, there will be more people who will take advantage of these services.

Supervisor Kline wanted to bring everyone's attention to the new County Webpage. He commended the County for how much more user friendly it is.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Maehl extended happy birthday wishes to Supervisors Schaidler and Griesbach. He also said treats available tonight were for his birthday.

Chairman Maehl extended a thank you from himself and his wife Patti for the many cards, letters, phone calls and flowers sent during her recent hospital stay.

Chairman Maehl asked everyone to remember Supervisor Mark Nielsen and to drop him a note.

Chairman Maehl stated a "good supply" of scholarship applications have arrived. There are 12 from Lourdes High School alone.

Chairman Maehl thanked Supervisor Steineke for his donation to the Scholarship Fund.

Chairman Maehl spoke regarding a speech he made to La Crosse County constituents, by invitation from the La Crosse County Board.

## **WISCONSIN SOUTHERN RAILROAD REPORT**

William Gardner, President of Wisconsin Southern Railroad gave a presentation on the Wisconsin Southern Railroad, what they do and their benefits to Winnebago County.

In 1980 Wisconsin Southern Railroad started as a 150- mile short line railroad running through Dodge, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Washington and Winnebago Counties. Today Wisconsin Southern Railroad has over 500 miles of railroads and is the third largest railroad. In 2001, Wisconsin Southern Railroad was named Regional Railroad of the year.

Wisconsin Southern Railroad has partnerships with five rail transit commissions: East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium, Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission, Pink Lady Rail Transit Commission, South Central Rail Transit Commission and Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission.

In an effort to keep counties and supervisors informed, a quarterly newsletter is mailed.

In 1980, no one was hauling grain by rail. All grain was hauled by truck. Now there are 22 grain load-out facilities on the railroad serving several farmers in Winnebago County. If empty facilities are found along the railroad, an attempt is made to find someone to fill that facility, thereby creating new jobs and more business for the railroad.

In 2002, Wisconsin Southern Railroad shipped over 45,000 rail cars of products either into or out of Wisconsin. That translates into over 150,000 trucks taken off county and state highways. By working with the State of Wisconsin, it has been determined they have saved the State of Wisconsin over \$12 million in highway maintenance dollars by putting product on the railroad rather than the road.

In 1980, Wisconsin Southern Railroad started with 18 employees. It now has 190 employees not counting the summer help.

Ken Lutz, employed by the South Western Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, provides staff services to three rail transit commissions in Wisconsin. They are Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission (the largest), Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission and South Central Rail Transit Commission. He spoke on rail transit and how it impacts preservation of rail service.

The East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium was formed in the early 1980's under statues 59.968 and 66.30 to take over and preserve abandoned railroad lines for continuation of branch line rail service.

Wisconsin Southern Railroad was formed to operate short lines and branch lines under the law. They are a private entity that can acquire, operate, maintain, lease or contract to another railroad operator for the use of the lines.

In the late 1970's and early 1980's several private railroad companies felt the branch lines were not profitable, so they abandoned them. Instead of having the line revert to private ownership, the State of Wisconsin asked the counties to form a consortium because they could not own infrastructure at that time. The land remained owned by Wisconsin Bureau of Railroads and Harbors, but the transit commission took over the ownership of the infrastructure. Most of the Transit Commission's have contracted with a private entity such as Wisconsin Southern Railroad to maintain the lines.

The Rail Transit Commissions are eligible for State Grants through the Bureau of Railroad and Harbors for rehabilitation and expansion of railroad service. They are available to communities, counties, public entities as well as private shippers. The grants have an 80/20 split. The 20 is a local match such as a shipper, community or rail transit commission. Most of the 20% is split between the rail transit commission and railroad operator. Mr. Lutz said without the partnerships, the railroad system would not be successful.

## **GRANDPARENTS PARENTING THEIR GRANDCHILDREN CHRIS KNIEP, UW-EXTENSION FAMILY LIVING EDUCATOR**

Chris Kniep, UW-Extension Family Living Educator provided a packet of information to each supervisor regarding her presentation. She started her presentation with a quote. "Parenting is not as simple as children growing up and leaving home and you retire and play. Parenting is forever".

The Grandparents raising Grandchildren initiative started in 1998 when UW-Extension down-linked the satellite nationwide to help people become aware of the issue.

There are a variety of agencies that have partnered from the beginning and stayed involved from 1998 until today. The agencies are a mixture of county and community agencies.

Ms. Kniep stated this is a complex issue ranging from trying to pick their grandchildren up from school and being told they don't have the authority to take the child from school to being turned down at the doctors office saying they don't have permission to have their grandchild treated.

There are three assumptions regarding grandparents raising grandchildren that are erroneous:

1. This is an urban issue.
2. This is a minority issue.
3. Grandparents were bad parents and are getting what they deserve.

The median age for a grandparent raising a grandchild is 57, but the age range is 40's to 70's and 80's. The majority are grandmothers with 68% being white and with a rural and urban split.

In 1990 there were 700 grandchildren being raised by grandparents in Winnebago County, in 2000 there was 1030. There are 8 factors contributing to the increase in grandparent caregiving:

- Substance Abuse - Most prevalent reason
- Divorce
- Death
- Neglect
- Abuse/Abandonment
- Incarceration
- Unemployment
- Teen Pregnancy

There are many types of supports issues needed for grandparents : educational support, emotional support, school district support, financial support (Kinship Care), medical and dental needs, legal advocacy (number 1 thing), housing and public awareness.

A series of workshops with varying topics are offered with some meetings being simply talking and sharing. The meetings are held monthly with both grandparents and grandchildren attending. For grandparents unable to attend the meetings, a packet of information is provided with various resources available.

Because of Winnebago County's early involvement with the program, connections have been made at the State and National level. The group has become a test to look at news letters that are being developed as well as piloting a survey looking at grandparents and their issues.

The Winnebago County Grandparents Support groups listed numerous needs/issues/concerns including recognition (rejections from previous friends), authority, legal relationships, financial resources and other resources.

Ms. Kniep feels her roll is one of coordination. She is the contact for the program since her neutral roll as not being a part of the legal or the human services systems is not looked at as a threat.

Each month 10-20 grandparents, 10-15 grandchildren and 10 agency representatives get together for 2 hours to connect with others. This year great-grandparents have been added.

Ms. Kniep closed with two quotes:

1. "Grandparents raising grandchildren are called "Silent Savers". They're people willing to save the next generation."
2. "Grandparents raising grandchildren are packing up the pampers and depends in a shopping bag and going to the pediatrician while their piers are hiring a babysitter for the dog and going on a cruise."

## **SOLID WASTE ANNUAL REPORT**

Len Leverage, Winnebago County Solid Waste Director and Supervisor Patrick O'Brien gave a progress report on the Solid Waste operations since the merger of the Landfill and Recycle Center as well as the Landfill Gas Operation.

Supervisor O'Brien stated in 1991 Winnebago County approached Outagamie and Brown Counties regarding the merger of the Landfill and Recycling Centers. In 2001, the merger became a reality.

Mr. Leverage wanted to update the Board on the implementation of the Regional Program. In November, 2001, the three counties signed the 25 year Regional Landfill Contract and 12 year Recycling Contract. In the past 12 months, Winnebago County has completely implemented our portion of the programs 100%. The existing recycling facility has been remodeled to a transfer facility. 30 truckloads of garbage and recycling are going to the other two facilities each day with paper going to Outagamie County and blue bags to Brown County. Brown County will be closing in March or early April, 2003 and will begin transferring their garbage to the Outagamie County Facility. In a month or two the program will be 100% with all 3 counties.

Mr. Leverage explained financial benefits are finally being seen. By 2011, the county labor force will be reduced by 40%. 15 communities in Winnebago County have contracts with the Recycling Facility. By using the Recycling Center for a Transfer Station, the previous \$1.5 million debt service was reduced to \$150,000. The 25 year agreement saves \$43 million, with Winnebago County's share decreasing the annual budget of the Solid Waste by \$700,000 or 20%.

Mr. Leverage stated Winnebago County has some of the most efficient tipping fees in the State and Nation with the national average being \$34 per ton and ours being \$18 per ton.

The second part of Mr. Leverage's report was Landfill Gas/Electric Generation Program. In 1990, when the Snell Road Landfill was closed, rather than simply collecting and flaring the gas as required by law, the Solid Waste

Board decided to use the gas more beneficially. To that end, in 1990, electricity has been generated for revenue of approximately \$900,000 per year. As part of the regional program, there will be more methane gas. The contract with Wisconsin Public Service has 7 years remaining. A feasibility study is being done to see what is currently being done with the gas as well as future opportunities for development. Two options are being looked at:

1. Expand the contract with Wisconsin Public Service or another utility company. The market place with this option is not as profitable for Winnebago County to develop.
2. Internally, there is enough surplus gas to heat and cool the Highway Facility and the new Law Enforcement Center. The Highway Department pays approximately \$30,000 per year for gas and \$85,000 for electricity. It would cost about \$15,000 for the pipeline to the facility. Similarly, the gas bill for the new jail is being estimated at \$130,000 per year. Gas could be piped to that for \$110,000. In 2005/2006, Winnebago County will be the host county for 7 years, which will triple the rate of gas production. This could supply electricity to the new jail, which would be a huge cost savings. There would be \$8-\$10 million dollars in methane gas available over the next 20 years, which would convert into savings to Winnebago County.

At 7:45 p.m. Chairman Maehl asked for a brief recess. At 8:00 p.m. Supervisors Eichman, Finch and O'Brien left. At 8:05 p.m the Board reconvened.

### **OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET CHUCK ORENSTEIN, FINANCE DIRECTOR**

Chuck Orestein, Finance Director, gave a presentation clarifying the difference between the Operating and Capital Budget's.

The Operating Budget is comprised of general operating expenses of the County. This includes capital expenditures that are smaller with shorter useful lives (3-15 years) and smaller dollar costs that can be paid for in a single year. The process usually starts in April and is completed in October/November at the Budget time.

Mr. Orenstein compared the Operating Budget to a family budget. Items such as home appliances, TV's and electronics can normally be paid for in a single year rather than financing. Winnebago County normally has between \$775,000 and \$1.2 million of capital in the annual operating budget each year.

The Capital Budget contains large capital items that are difficult to finance in one year. The time line for the 5-Year Capital Budget begins in January with the County Executive and Mr. Orenstein looking at Department Head requests for Capital items and prioritizing them and ends with a presentation to the County Board at their June Special Orders meeting.

Capital Budget items of \$100,000 or more are funded using General Obligations Promissory Notes. Notes have an expected life of 10 years and bonds are above 10 years. If the project is a large building, generally the furniture, fixtures and equipment are included. Most fixtures, furniture and equipment are used for 10 years before being disposed. Usually items in the Capital Budget are difficult to anticipate in advance and made a part of the operating budget.

Mr. Orenstein again compared the Capital Budget to a family budget. Items such as automobile, boats, houses and home improvements are too costly for payment in a year and usually require a homeowner to finance them.

Mr. Orenstein explained the Capital Budget is under much more scrutiny because of the dollars involved. Each item in the Capital Budget is presented first at a Special Orders meeting where it is presented and discussed, then as a resolution at a regular County Board meeting. This allows more time for the Supervisors to review each project.

Mr. Orenstein explained building and road projects span multiples years. Costs for such things as architectural and design work and feasibility studies are smaller thus being put in the Operating Budget. Capital projects approved in the current year generally do not affect the operating budget in that year. The example made by Mr. Orenstein was for a project approved in 2003 would be started, advance money followed by a bond issue in the second part of the year thereby not affecting the tax levy until 2004.

In closing, Mr. Orenstein said the 5-Year Capital Budget Plan is not "set in stone". It is a planning tool and can be changed and reprioritized each year.

### **THE STATE BUDGET CRAIG THOMPSON, WISCONSIN COUNTIES ASSOCIATION**

Craig Thompson, Legislative Director for Wisconsin Counties Association gave a presentation on the "Fiscal Crisis of the State". The power point presentation given to each Supervisor, was actually put together prior to Governor Doyle's Budget Address, but also has information regarding impact to counties based on Governor Doyle's proposed actual budget cuts.

Mr. Thompson started by discussing the problems the State faces:

- 2003-2005 projected revenues fall short of expected expenses;
- the current deficit stands at \$4.825 billion;
- Before Governor Doyle would discuss budget options, he asked both houses to agree on the amount of growth. The estimated growth for 2004 of 5.1% and 5.6% for 2005, leaving a shortfall of \$3.2 billion;
- 47 of 50 state are facing deficits. Moody's bond rating showed that 28 states were rated higher than Wisconsin and only three were lower.

Mr. Thompson discussed "how we got there", meaning how the State got in the current financial crisis. There are a host of reasons including economic slowdown, commitment to schools of 2/3 funding, new tough on crimes policies such as truth in sentencing, deferring costs to future biennia, sale of tobacco money, series of tax cuts in the late 1990's, no rainy day fund and increase Medical Assistance commitments such as Badger Care and Senior Care.

86% of the State General Purpose Tax Revenues are collected between individual income taxes and sales and use taxes. Mr. Thompson stated the top ten programs for General Purpose Tax Revenues per the Department of Administration for FY2002 are:

1. School Aids - 40.4%
2. Medical Assistance - 9.5%
3. Shared Revenue - 9.1%
4. UW Systems - 8.7%
5. Corrections and Related - 7.3%
6. Property Tax Credits - 4.2%
7. Community Aids - 1.6%
8. Wisconsin Works - 1.3%
9. Tax Relief to Individuals - 1.3%
10. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) - 1.1%

With Shared Revenue being number 3 on the list or 9.1%, 64% goes to the cities, 20% to the counties and 8% each to the towns and villages. Of the 20% that goes to the counties, it makes up only 2% of the General Purpose Revenue.

Mr. Thompson discussed changes that have taken place over the last ten years in appropriations. The corrections budgets has gone up 150%, school aids up 110.1%, school levy tax credit up 46.9% and both community and juvenile correctional services and public assistance have been reduced 3.7% and 6.6% respectively.

Mr. Thompson spoke regarding a broad overview of Governor Doyle's Budget. The Budget would have no rate increase or change in exemptions for income, sales or corporate taxes. There would be increases in the annual car registration from \$45 to \$55, increase resident deer hunting licenses from \$20 to \$32, increase fishing licenses from \$14 to \$20 and increase the resident patron license from \$110 to \$140.

The Governor's Budget would also result in the elimination of about 2,900 jobs by mid-2005, ask workers to pay for more of their health insurance, privatize the state lottery, and eliminate eight agencies, departments and boards including departments of Electronic Government and Employment Relations. The budget would cut \$250 million in aid to the UW System over 2 years and put a tuition increase limit in place, reduce the 2/3 funding of K-12 education to 64% next year and 62% the following year, but would still provide a 2 year increase of \$100 million which would come from the transportation account. The General Purpose Revenue savings by not maintaining the 2/3 funding would be \$150 million in FY04 and \$300 million in FY 05. Governor Doyle would also eliminate QEO (Qualified Economic Offer) and the high school graduation test requirement.

Regarding Shared Revenue, Governor Doyle's Budget did not propose any further cuts; however, \$70 million would be cut in the second year, none of which would come out of County money, but would come out of cities, villages and towns. There is an additional amount of \$40 million that is to be cut in 2004 which was left in the old McCallum budget.

Other changes in the Governor's budget include lowering the blood-alcohol standard from .10 to .08 to avoid losing federal funds and applying for \$408 million more in federal funds for Medicaid services provided over the last three years.

To accomplish his goals, Governor Doyle took \$500 million out of the transportation budget and placed \$100 million in school aid and \$400 million in shared revenue. This is the most controversial part of the budget. If the transfer from the transportation budget, the \$408 million for Medicaid services and/or the money to come from casino gaming do not materialize, it could have a devastating affect on Shared Revenue and completely eliminate it. Recently Speaker Gard announced he does not agree with taking the money out of the transportation budget and is trying to get the budget passed quickly. A lot of work has to be done before the budget is finalized.

A copy of Mr. Thompson's complete presentation is available for viewing in the County Clerk's Office.

At approximately 9:20 p.m., a motion was made by Supervisor Robl and seconded to adjourn. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

The next meeting of the Board will be Tuesday, March 25, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patricia Rabe, Deputy  
Winnebago County Clerk

State of Wisconsin)  
County of Winnebago) ss

I, Patricia Rabe, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Journal of the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors for their special orders meeting held February 18, 2003.

Patricia Rabe, Deputy  
Winnebago County Clerk