

**SPECIAL ORDERS SESSION  
COUNTY BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2007**

Chairman David Albrecht 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 prayer.

The following Supervisors were present: Sevenich, Barker, Griesbach, Hotynski, Ramos, Koziczowski, Pollnow, Widener, Hamblin, Albrecht, Anderson, Thompson, Lohry, Farrell, Hall, Wingren, Jacobson, Norton, Warnke, Drexler, Robl, Schmuhl, Kline, Locke, Eisen, Finch, Farrey, Sievert, Arne, Diakoff, Brennand, Egan, Ellis, Rengstorf and O'Brien. Excused: Schaidler, Maehl and Lennon

Motion by Supervisor Robl and seconded to approve the agenda for this evening's meeting. CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

**COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, ETC.**

A Notice of Claim was received from Atty. John M. Daniels for Danielle Prato for damage to Ms. Prato's vehicle caused by a County Highway Department vehicle was referred to the Personnel & Finance Committee.

A Notice of Claim was received from Mathew Pratt for damage to his vehicle's windshield caused by a County Highway Department snowplow was referred to the Personnel & Finance Committee.

- ❖ "Resolution in Support of Increasing the Medicaid Reimbursement Rate for Dental Care" from Brown County was referred to the Legislative Committee.
- ❖ Resolution No. 07-3 "Opposition to Proposed Statewide Smoking Ban and Associated Tax Increase" from Ozaukee County was referred to the Legislative Committee.
- ❖ Ordinance No. 25 (2006/07), "re: Reducing County Board Size" from Sheboygan County was referred to the Legislative Committee
- ❖ Resolution #39-2007, "Intent: Request Wisconsin Counties Association Revise Their By-Laws Regarding Membership and Voting" from Langlade County was referred to the Legislative Committee

**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS AND BOARDS**

Supervisor Barker reported on her attendance at an East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission seminar. She found the presentation by Leon Church of Sweetwood Builders about a condominium development in the county that will not have storm sewers or retention ponds most interesting. She explained that storm water will instead run into rain gutters and then be dispersed around the property. Supervisor Barker stated that the county uses a similar set up at the Expo Center, where water is caught in the rain gutters and then used to water the flower and vegetable gardens.

Supervisor O'Brien thanked the Board for their support of the two Solid Waste Management Board's resolutions that were presented in April. One of those resolutions was in support of the Governor's Task Force on Waste Materials Recovery and Disposal, which generated a number of questions by Board members. Supervisor O'Brien explained that he has placed a copy of the Executive Summary of that report on everyone's desk tonight to help answer any questions they might still have. If anyone needs the full report, he can get a copy of it for them.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Albrecht reported that Supervisors Schaidler, Lennon and Maehl are excused from tonight's meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

No one addressed the Board.

**MARKETING WITTMAN REGIONAL AIRPORT**

Peter Moll, Wittman Regional Airport Director; Rob Mark of CommAvia; and Doug Pearson of Chamco, Inc., addressed the board on airport economic development.

Mr. Moll thanked the Board for their support of the airport and gave synopsis of his aviation background.

Mr. Moll explained that Wittman Regional Airport is "ripe" for aviation business development. The businesses

that are currently at the airport are doing very well, but there are opportunities for other businesses there too.

Mr. Moll explained that they are no longer focusing on getting airlines for commercial traffic into Wittman Regional Airport, because of the close proximity to other airports--Appleton, Milwaukee and Madison. Instead they are focusing their efforts on general aviation, corporate traffic and light support aircraft.

Mr. Mark explained that prior marketing plans for Wittman Regional Airport were "fragmented" and business contacts were not well organized. Mr. Moll, Mr. Pearson and Mr. Mark are now coordinating their efforts so that things will run more smoothly. Mr. Mark explained that there are businesses interested in the airport now that weren't a few months ago, which is very encouraging.

Mr. Mark distributed to each county board member a copy of the marketing package that they send out to businesses. He explained that the EAA has also distributed the information to their mailing list of convention businesses and vendors. Mr. Mark stressed the importance of being proactive and "leveraging" existing business relationships by asking them to help market the airport.

Mr. Pearson explained the various marketing tools that they have available to them:

- customized labor-training grants
- investor revenue bonds (long term, low interest, tax free financing for real estate improvements)
- Chamco spec building program
- Low interest major economic development loans
- Foreign trade zone (Wittman Regional Airport is one of only two foreign trade zones in Wisconsin)
- Enterprise development zone - state tax credits for businesses that develop there
- Technology development zone - state tax credits for businesses that adopt state-of-the-art technology
- Industrial Development Board fund
- Airport development zone

Mr. Pearson stated that they are investing their resources in retaining existing business and recruiting new businesses at the airport. He explained that 85% of the growth in jobs and tax base at the airport will come from the expansion and growth of existing businesses, so retention of those companies is very important. Mr. Pearson stated that recruiting new businesses is a "long odds, high stakes ballgame" and is very risky. There is a lot of competition among the 20,000 economic development organizations that are trying to recruit a limited number of businesses.

Mr. Pearson explained that 65% of the growth happens in businesses with five or fewer employees, so the retention and recruitment of these types of businesses is also very important. Currently, they are working on retaining and expanding six businesses currently at the airport, as well as recruiting six potential businesses. An announcement will be made at tomorrow's Aviation Committee meeting about one of the recruitments. Other projects they are working on include two startup companies, two potential land acquisitions and the locating of the corporate aircraft and flight crews of a major corporation.

Mr. Moll asked that if any member of the Board knows anyone in the aviation community they would like him to contact, to please let him know. He also invited the Board to tour Wittman Regional Airport and the businesses that are located there.

Mr. Moll, Mr. Mark and Mr. Pearson took questions from the Board.

A copy of the airport's marketing packet is on file in the County Clerk's Office.

## **GOVERNMENT SERVICES PRESENTATION - INSTITUTE FOR WISCONSIN'S FUTURE**

Executive Harris introduced Dr. Jack Norman and Joe Fahey of the Institute for Wisconsin's Future, which is a "non-profit, non-partisan statewide policy research and community education center." Their mission is to, "inform Wisconsin residents about issues and policies that affect their lives, encourage broader civic involvement in public policy debates and decision making; provide a progressive voice in debates on policies that impact working families in the state."

Dr. Norman spoke to the Board about taxes and property taxes, and the impact that the Newark case is having on local units of government. In his presentation entitled, "The Property Tax Tightrope", Dr. Norman explained that even though no one likes to pay property taxes, those taxes fund and maintain the quality of the public services that we all expect. However, local units of government are not in the position to get additional revenue from property taxes. The question is how do you maintain or improve the level of public services and keep steady, or even reduce, the amount of property taxes citizens need to pay. Dr. Norman explained that to do this, local units of government need to find alternative sources of revenue.

Points of Dr. Norman's presentation:

- State funding to local governments for public institutions/services has not kept pace with actual costs. In the last ten years, state funding has been reduced by approximately 30%.
- Approximately 4.3% of an individual's income goes to pay their property taxes. This makes Wisconsin the eighth highest in property taxes in the country.

- Approximately 29% of the State of Wisconsin and local government's revenues come from property taxes; 23% from sales tax; 21 % from individual income tax; 21% from fees; 3% from corporate income tax and 6% from other.
- Wisconsin's ranking in these areas are: 9<sup>th</sup> highest in personal income tax; 38<sup>th</sup> highest in sales tax; and 28<sup>th</sup> highest in fees.
- Wisconsin ranks 40<sup>th</sup> in business income taxes. Dr. Norman explained that the companies that fall into this category are large companies that have facilities in other states and other countries.
  - ✓ These companies have sophisticated tax accounting and legal departments and are legally able to avoid paying a lot of taxes.
- The lower the homeowner's income, the greater their tax burden. (source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue)
- While homeowners property taxes have increased over the last 30 years, corporate property taxes have fallen. In 1971, 50% of all property taxes were paid by homeowners. In 2004, almost 70% of property taxes were paid by homeowners.
- Since 1978, the corporate income tax has gone from a little more than 10% of the state's total revenue to a little more than 6%.
- 62% of Wisconsin's largest corporations pay no income tax. Some of those companies include Kimberly-Clark, McDonalds, Merck, Microsoft, Manpower, Kohls and Pepsi Co. If these and other companies were paying income tax at the national average, Wisconsin and local units of government would see another \$1.3 Billion in revenue.
- Dr. Norman cited various sources (Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce) that refute this and say that corporate taxes in Wisconsin are too high. Other sources (Forward Wisconsin) say that Wisconsin's business taxes are low.
- "Wisconsin can ensure stable revenues for services and control property taxes" if:
  - ✓ Revenues are protected from additional tax loopholes
  - ✓ Tax secrets are eliminated
  - ✓ Everyone pays a fair share of taxes and fees
- Newark Case - A New Jersey-owned paper plant located in Milwaukee has won a court case, based on a 1953 pollution-abatement law, that gives them a 100% exemption from paying property taxes.
  - ✓ This is opening the door to other companies to do the same, which would cause local governments to loose \$2 Billion and put a tremendous burden on the homeowner.
  - ✓ This is primarily a paper company situation right now, but could potentially extend to other types of businesses.
  - ✓ Senate Bill 122 would close this loop hole in the law.
- Other situations that could cause Wisconsin to loose revenue is the elimination of the estate taxes and existing income tax "loop holes" for large companies.
  - Dr. Norman then took questions from the Board.
  - A copy of Dr. Norman's report is on file in the County Clerk's Office.

### **FOXCOMM INITIATIVE PRESENTATION**

Karen Carlson, ENP, FoxComm Management Information Coordinator, and Howard Mezera, Calumet County Information Systems Director, updated the Board on FoxComm and their plans for expanding public safety communication.

Ms. Carlson explained that initial efforts to get FoxComm started began in 1997. At that time their objectives were to, "facilitate the development of a common radio and data communications network for the member Public Safety agencies...." They would, "utilize existing resources, examining the addition of necessary resources, or possibly developing a new common system...." Ms. Carlson explained that standardizing telecommunication (911) operating procedures was also their goal.

FoxComm officially began in 2002 when Brown, Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago Counties signed the agreement that formed the consortium. Their mission is to, "provide to all municipalities within the four counties a reliable and responsive communications link between fire, police, rescue, emergency medical and emergency government services."

Ms. Carlson stated that the first phase of FoxComm was integrated dispatch and records management sharing for public safety agencies. This made it possible to get more information to the people responding to emergency situations.

Ms. Carlson then explained organizational structure of FoxComm:

1. County Boards/Administration
2. FoxComm Fiscal Advisory Board
3. County Communications Committee and Fox Comm User Technical Committee
4. UTC Workgroups

Mr. Mezera presented FoxComm financial and cost-savings information:

- Cost for Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system & equipment was approximately \$725,000. Winnebago County's cost was approximately \$130,000. (Without FoxComm it would have cost Winnebago County another \$595,000.)
- On-going annual maintenance cost is approximately \$90,000. Winnebago County's share is \$25,000. (Without FoxComm it would cost Winnebago County another \$65,000 annually.)
- All costs of upgrades and improvements to the system or network are split between the four counties on a per capita basis. Winnebago County's share is 26.79% of these costs.

Ms. Carlson explained the various "pieces" of the program and whether they belong to FoxComm or Winnebago County:

- FoxComm:
  - ✓ Provides the inter-county network
  - ✓ Provides CAD infrastructure--routers, servers, etc.
  - ✓ This network allows agencies to view data from county-owned Record Management Systems (RMS) and Wisconsin Justice Information Sharing Program (WIJIS)
- Winnebago County:
  - ✓ Owns computer workstations at the dispatch center and Sheriff's office
  - ✓ Owns and provides the intra-county network and devices
  - ✓ Owns and provides a law RMS, jail records; municipalities own individual fire records system

What has FoxComm accomplished:

- Strong governing structure - allows for sharing of resources and costs
- CAD
- Application Support - training and procedures
- Wireless (cellular) E911 - 4Q 2005 & 1Q 2006
- CAD upgrades & feature enhancement
- Wisconsin Justice Information Sharing (WIJIS) & inter-county RMS sharing (agreements & policies)
- Mobile data computer enhancements
- Shared connectivity & connectivity encryption
- Dispatch backup/support
- RMS & FRMS interface issues

Where will FoxComm go next:

- Invest more in the network - key components for voice and data communication. (There is federal money available for these types of projects and FoxComm will be pursuing those funds.)
- Radio communication & interoperability
- Data communication & interoperability
- Additional consolidation of services
- Regional planning to gain federal funding
- Purchasing power of many
- Continue momentum of gained efficiencies
- Invite/include additional counties

Ms. Carlson and Mr. Mezera took questions from the Board.

A copy of the FoxComm report is on file in the County Clerk's Office.

### **TRI-COUNTY ICE ARENA REPORT**

Supervisor Susan Locke began the presentation by reading a statement from Supervisor John Schaidler, who also serves on the Tri-County Recreation Association Board of Directors. In his statement Supervisor Schaidler commends the "public/private partnership" between Outagamie and Winnebago Counties and the Tri-County Recreation Association. In his letter, he also states that not only does the ice arena provide a wonderful recreational opportunity for people, but it is also a venue for trade shows, home & garden shows, sport shows, festivals, etc. Supervisor Schaidler stated that the ice arena has become a "necessary part of the life of the Fox Valley" and the Board should be proud of their efforts to save the arena. He commended the Tri-County Recreation Association on their management of the arena.

Supervisor Locke introduced Searle Pickett, General Manager of the Tri-County Ice Arena; and Gordon Eckrich, President of the Tri-County Ice Arena; Nancy Hackers, Manager; Ted Galloway, Secretary.

Gordon Eckrich explained the background and history of the Tri-County Arena:

- Because of the generosity of Robert F. Shattuck and his family, the ice arena was built in 1975 at a cost of approximately \$1.6 Million. It was named the Fox Cities Ice Arena.
- The arena was popular for skating activities during the traditional skating season (October thru April). However, because the floors in the arena were not "hard surfaced", those areas could not be utilized for anything else during the off season.
- Under utilization of the facility caused it to close in 1982. Concerned citizens from Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago Counties convinced their county boards to step in and finance the facility.
- The facility re-opened in late 1982 as the Tri-County Ice Arena, even though Calumet County decided not to be involved. Calumet County's portion of the cost was covered by private citizens, some of whom became part of the management group.
- Outagamie and Winnebago Counties then entered into an agreement with the Tri-County Recreation Association, a non-profit group. The facility and all assets and equipment are owned by the two counties and the Tri-County Recreation Association manages and runs the facility.
- The Tri-County Recreation Association has retired the debt from the private citizen investors (\$250,000 to \$350,000) and has invested another \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 in improvements to the facility.
- Outagamie and Winnebago Counties have also invested in the ice arena. The largest investment made by the counties was the installation of concrete floors, which has allowed the ice arena to be used for other events, such as trade shows and various types of expositions.
- The demand for ice surfaces in the valley has increased. There are now ice arenas in Oshkosh and Appleton which have taken some of the Tri County Arena's business, but a growth in recreational skating, ice hockey and figure skating keeps their business strong.
- The agreement between the Tri County Recreation Association and the counties will be coming up for renewal in the near future.
- The Tri County Arena needs to have the parking lot resurfaced and they will be working with Outagamie and Winnebago Counties to get that job done.

Searle Pickett presented a list of the improvements that have been made to the arena since June 2000. The cost of these improvements was \$538,800. Some of the improvements that were made include: repair of the rink boards, new rink glass, repair and maintenance of the rink floor, rebuilding compressors, purchased a Zamboni and ice resurfer, installed new ice equipment, parking lot maintenance, and remodeling of the men's and women's restrooms.

Mr. Pickett then presented the "Summary of Activity Attendance, Fiscal June 30, 2000 to June 30, 2007". During that time frame, 1,067,949 people have attended events at the Tri County Arena. The year with the largest attendance-- 136,115--was 2007. Activities that are held at the arena at various times include Fox Valley Youth Hockey; Over 30 Hockey; WIAA high school teams; public skating and skating lessons; Valley Figure Skating Club, competitions and ice shows; home and garden shows; antique shows; Spring Fling Alpaca Show; Hmong Festival; Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry Business Expo; Fox Valley Cat Show; broomball, school groups; birthday parties and private rentals.

Mr. Eckrich and Mr. Pickett took questions from the Board  
A copy of their reports is on file in the County Clerk's Office.

Chairman Albrecht announced that Jerry Schuster, a citizen member on the Land Conservation Committee, passed away today.

Chairman Albrecht reminded the Board that the County Board tour is scheduled for Monday, May 21.

Motion by Supervisor Robl and seconded to adjourn until Tuesday, May 15, 2007 @ 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan T. Ertmer  
Winnebago County Clerk

State of Wisconsin)  
County of Winnebago) ss

I, Susan T. Ertmer, 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 Session held May 1, 2007.

Susan T. Ertmer  
Winnebago County Clerk