

**LA CROSSE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PLANNING MEETING
PROCEEDINGS; MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2011**

The La Crosse County Board of Supervisors Planning Meeting was held on Monday, October 10, 2011 in the Administrative Center, Room B410. The County Clerk, Ginny Dankmeyer, took attendance. 32 supervisors were present when Chair Tara Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and those otherwise present, excused or absent are noted in the roll call detail:

District Name	Attendance
1 Richmond, Andrea	Present
2 Geary, Ralph	Present
3 Feehan, Bill	Present
4 Johnson, Jai	Present
5 Johnson, Karin	Present
6 Billings, Jill	Present
7 Plesha, Roger	Present
8 Freedland, Maureen	Present
9 Hampson, Sharon	Present
10 Wood, Margaret	Present
11 Kader, Audrey	Present
12 Flood, Bridget	Present
13 Brockmiller, Bill	Present
14 Medinger, John	Present
15 Mach, Beverly	Present
16 Sebranek, Gerald	Excused
17 Meyer, Donald	Present
18 Johnson, Tara	Present
19 Keil, Robert	Present
20 Bina, Donald	Present
21 Manthei, Dennis	Excused
22 Ebert, Ray	Present
23 Gamroth, Tammy	Present
24 Pfaff, Leon	Excused
25 Schroeder, Jeffrey	Present
26 Burke, Vicki	Present
27 Pedretti, Marilyn	Present
28 Doyle, Steve	Present
29 Kruse, Monica	Present
30 Spiker, Charles	Present
31 Ferries, Dan	Present
32 Benrud, Arlene	Present
33 Berns, Jim	Present
34 Wehrs, Tina	Present
35 Bilskemper, Joe	Present, Excused at 07:24 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

County Board Chair Report - Tara Johnson

- Update on County Board Downsizing Work Group - Chair Johnson thanked Supervisor Hampson and Berns for agreeing to co-chair the Downsizing Work Group. If you are interested in being on this committee, please let the Chair know tonight. The co-chairs will be starting to set schedule for their work and using the list from last month's policy planning meeting.
- Expense Reports - We are running low of money in the County Board budget. Chair Johnson is asking that if you have any expenses, please submit those so we can work with the budget and have a much better handle on expenses. She also asked that anyone who is making plans to attend a conference and will be incurring travel expenses to please get prior authorization. A review will be done of the travel ordinances at the Executive Meeting.
- Concealed or Open Carry of Weapons or Firearms Ordinance Public Hearing - A reminder that there will be a public hearing Thursday, October 20th, at 5:00 p.m. for the ordinance on open carry of weapons in County buildings, Room B190. During this meeting, individuals will only be allowed to talk on the ordinance being proposed, not on the entire scope of concealed or open carry. Supervisor Hampson suggested starting the meeting with a brief overview and a purpose of the public hearing.
- Supervisor Conference Reports
 - Supervisor Flood attended the WCA (Wisconsin Counties Association) Conference and the Human Services redesign workshop. Their bottom line was Human Services delivery in its current state is not sustainable. She also attended the business meeting of the conference where the rules and the minutes were adopted, a report from the executive director, and eight resolutions. An overview of the resolutions that were adopted or tabled was given. The fee will remain the same for belonging to the Counties Association, which is \$14,077 a year. It has been the same since 2003.
 - Supervisor Bina attended the North Central Association of RC&D (Resource Conservation & Development) held in Stevens Point on September 14th, 15th, and 16th. The funding for RC&D was cut off by the Feds. There are presently 375 RC&Ds throughout the United States. Some of these will not survive and will run out of money. Now that RC&D is a nonprofit organization, they will have to generate their own income. They bring a lot of grants in and some have administrative fees attached to them. They received a forestry grant for the Kickapoo Valley in the amount of \$532,000, a new invasive species grant in the amount of \$253,000, and a grant in the amount of \$250,000 for the emerald ash borer. They are also working with Alliance Fuel Energy for alternative fuels as fuel prices go up.
 - Supervisor Burke also attended the WCA Conference. One of the sessions she attended was on mental health issues in county jails. We are already doing everything that was suggested; however, we know we still have some issues. Emergency communication, the idea that everyone would be able to communicate on the same frequency and have better communication. They have been working on this for several months.
 - Supervisor Wood attended the WCA Conference as well. She also attended the session on serving people with mental illness in county jails. The presenter, who is from Rock County, expressed that 16% of their inmates have mental health issues, and one of the things to be aware of is to be sure to check the physical conditions of these inmates. She attended the Discovery Farms, the pursuit of sustainability in Wisconsin agricultural and rural communities. The main point was sustainability as it relates to farming has these three items: profitability (income over cost), environmentally

(124-11/12)

protective (managing manure), and socially acceptable. Wisconsin women in county government gathered in regards to the new Act 10 and what has happened to the earnings of women to men on the dollar. It was \$.077 on the \$1.00 and now this will have an impact on the wages of women in terms of how much they make with the new Act 10. The other session Supervisor Wood attended was recycling and resource management and the waste stream. She found out we are looking at our funding issues, long term, sustainability and all our contracts.

- o Supervisor Benrud attended the Highway Transportation meetings at the WCA Conference.
- o Supervisor Freedland attended Coulee Partners Sustainability Dinner in La Crosse where our own Jai Johnson was recognized as one of the two important people in sustainability.
- o Supervisor Kruse also attended the WCA Conference and the session regarding sustainability on the family farms. In Wisconsin, there are 13,000 surviving dairy farms, and the number is rapidly decreasing. They highlighted the sustainability as collaboration, system, and imagination. These issues go beyond individual practices and require cooperation and collaboration. One of the professors from the University of Wisconsin Madison in the farming department supported the science of our own zoning measure and the animal units that are a sustainable number in order to continue sustainability farming practices.

Administrator Report - Steve O'Malley

PROCLAMATION RE: OCTOBER 2011 - COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH

WHEREAS, change is constant and affects all cities, towns, suburbs, counties, townships, rural areas, and other places; and **WHEREAS**, community planning and plans can help manage this change in a way that provides better choices for how people work and live; and **WHEREAS**, community planning provides an opportunity for all residents to be meaningfully involved in making choices that determine the future of their community; and **WHEREAS**, the full benefit of planning requires public officials and citizens who understand, support, and demand excellence in planning and plan implementation; and **WHEREAS**, the month of October is designated as National Community Planning Month throughout the United States of America and its territories, and **WHEREAS**, The American Planning Association and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, endorse National Community Planning Month as an opportunity to highlight the contributions sound planning and plan implementation make to the quality of our settlements and environment; and **WHEREAS**, the celebration of National Community Planning Month gives us the opportunity to publicly recognize the participation and dedication of the members of County's Planning Resources and Development Committee and all of the Town Village and City Plan Commissions of La Crosse County and other citizen planners who have contributed their time and expertise to the improvement of La Crosse County, WI; and **WHEREAS**, We recognize the many valuable contributions made by professional community and regional planners of La Crosse County, WI and extend our heartfelt thanks for the continued commitment to public service by these professionals; **NOW, THEREFORE**, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the month of October 2011 is hereby designated as **Community Planning Month** in La Crosse County, WI in conjunction with the celebration of National Community Planning Month.

Motion by D. Meyer/B. Brockmiller to approve passed on a unanimous voice vote with 32 ayes, 3 excused - D. Manthei, L. Pfaff and G. Sebranek.

PROCLAMATION RE: OCTOBER 2011 - SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING MONTH

WHEREAS, dedicated nationally recognized County professionals help to minimize our county's impact on the environment by effectively managing waste through award winning programs; and, **WHEREAS**, La Crosse County solid waste programs in part include waste-to-energy, permanent household hazardous materials collection, asphalt shingle recycling,

(125-11/12)

treatment of petroleum impacted soils, and trailer home recycling; and, **WHEREAS**, in addition to these programs, La Crosse County facilitates local and regional collaborative efforts in managing waste through shared recycling newsletters, mobile collection of household hazardous materials, access to the waste-to-energy program, and solid waste planning; and, **WHEREAS**, La Crosse County has shown its commitment to further enhancing solid waste and recycling efforts through sustainability practices which will be coordinated by the County's sustainability coordinator; and, **WHEREAS**, residents benefit from the cost savings, improved service and enhanced sustainability that result from intergovernmental collaboration at all levels of government on solid waste and recycling collection, processing and beneficial reuse of by-products; and, **WHEREAS**, all residents have an on-going responsibility to participate in sustainability through decreasing the amount of garbage that is produced in our homes, schools, communities, and work place by practicing waste reduction, recycling, and buying recycled products. **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the La Crosse County Board does hereby proclaim the month of October 2011 as La Crosse County Solid Waste and Recycling Month and urges all residents to join in recognizing the valuable contribution of persons dedicated to the welfare of La Crosse County residents.

Motion by J. Johnson/K. Johnson to approve passed on a unanimous voice vote with 32 ayes, 3 excused - D. Manthei, L. Pfaff and G. Sebranek.

We are tentatively looking at conducting first interviews for Corporation Counsel on Tuesday, October 18, 2011.

- Update on Gas to Energy Project – Solid Waste Director Hank Koch
 - Currently, we are under budget from what has been approved. We do not want to go into the contingency; we want to bring this project in on budget. We also keep a 5% retainage with our contractor. Right now, we are \$32,000 under budget. There have been a few delays on both sides. For the County the delays were due to some underground utilities that were unexpected, rain days, change orders to save money and Public Service Commission (PSC) requirements. The delays on the Gundersen Lutheran side, engine arrival delayed and modifications were needed, buy-back rate will make this project profitable, and Public Service Commission (PSC) approval yet to happen. The start date has changed from October 2011 to January 2012. The compressor bought ahead of time allowed us to get this moving quickly. Puddling is a process where they take a water hose with pressure, make mud and then suck out the dirt without affecting the utilities. They were looking for utilities that were not on the map and plenty of them were found that were unknown. The hot water that comes off the radiator will provide the hot water and heat. In summary, the project should come in under budget; it will be a 3 month delay; the La Crosse County/Gundersen Lutheran Partnership is strong – good communication, proactive, responsibility with accountability, and PSC issues need to be resolved - approval of buy-back rate and final approval of pipeline. We will continue with the monthly reports to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee. Solid Waste Director Hank Koch responded to questions from the Board.
- La Crosse County Highway System Needs – Highway Commissioner Ron Chamberlain
 - In the La Crosse Tribune article titled "Our View: Transportation Funding Drives", it stated, "At a time when we're trying to boost business and employment, this seems like the wrong time to let transportation funding drive off the cliff. Aging infrastructure combines with growing population means challenging times ahead. One third of major roads are poor or mediocre, one fourth of bridges are deficient; and air traffic control faces a major overhaul. Potential cost of lost business is \$336 billion. Here's what the U.S. Chamber recommends for modernizing our infrastructure: spur private investment and remove red tape, invest in ailing transportation and

water infrastructure, modernize and protect energy infrastructure, and update telecommunications infrastructure. As the debate heats up, remember that investment can have a return." According to several meetings attended by Ron Chamberlain, \$1.00 investment in transportation yields a \$3.00 return. La Crosse County has a diverse amount of soil. Good farming soil is not good road building soil. The sandier and poorer the soil, the better it is to build roads. The following are critical definitions to remember: maintenance - includes activities to preserve and repair a system of roadways with its elements to its designed or accepted configurations; resurfacing - placing a new surface on an existing roadway to extend or renew pavement life; rehabilitation - removing the total thickness of all pavement layers from an existing roadway and providing a new paved surface without changing the sub-grade, in capacity or geometrics and no increase in roadbed width is performed; reconditioning - work in addition to resurfacing or rehabilitation; reconstruction - total rebuilding of both the pavement and the sub-grade of an existing highway; and, expansion - same as reconstruction and also involves the construction of additional through lanes beyond the work associated with reconstruction. The Wisconsin DOT has generated a system, PASER ratings for paved roads. This is a system that tracks all the pavement conditions for all the roads in the state of Wisconsin on the local system, not the state trunk highways. The rating system starts at 1 (failed - need total reconstruction) and goes to 10 (excellent - new construction). La Crosse County currently does not have any roads rated at a number one. Roads are typically constructed with a 30 year life expectancy, with proper and timely maintenance. This means that these maintenances must be done at a certain time to get the most value out of the investment. For 2011, La Crosse County has 284.51 miles of road with an average PASER rating of 5.85. We have gradually decreased over time and are somewhat concerned. We have done a good job on the urban local streets (city street without extra traffic). We are slipping on urban collector which brings roads together into a major road. The urban arterial (main traffic to get some place) and the rural local are holding. The rural collector is losing ground. The urban collector, the urban arterial, and the rural local are the higher traffic volumes with more truck traffic. Condition frequency report shows a percentage of the roads and where they fall within the PASER ratings. In 2005, .09% of our roads fell in a rating of 1 to 2; and, in 2011, 4.21% of our roads fell in a rating of 1 to 2. Why are our ratings decreasing? We have an increase traffic, especially truck traffic, an increase in weight limits, i.e. ACT 167 - 98,000 lbs for the timber industry became effective on May 19 2006, changes in climate that have resulted in longer spring break-up periods and more instability, and increasing costs for construction and maintenance and a decreasing availability of funds to do the same. This is not only in La Crosse County; it is nationwide. Costs are rising faster than we can keep up with. Highway Commissioner Ron Chamberlain responded to questions from the Board.

- Overview 2012 County Administrator's Budget Recommendation
 - The 2012 recommended budget is a total gross budget of \$134.117 million, an increase of .33% total gross. After two consecutive years of 0% change in operating levy, the only increase has been for debt service. In 2012, there will be a 0% change in Operating, Library and Debt Levies. Tax rate rises due to decreased value. Our total tax rate would go from \$3.84 to \$3.87. Nearly every department shows a decreased levy. We did not do this by increasing our reliance on fund balance. WRS cost shift from the County to the employees did help; however, it did not meet all challenges. The net tax levy savings is about 59%. Impact is spread across departments, but not an equal percentage across the board. We work as a team and find solutions. We are not highly reliant on increased user fees. There was no increase in Health and Dental premiums, and we will be considering other changes in the

(127-11/12)

plan design to help control long-term cost. We do not recommend refinancing of the 2001A LEC debt in 2011. We continue to use highway debt as a short-term strategy. The only new debt to be issued under the recommended 2012 budget to the Board will be \$2.1 million for highway. By the end of 2012, we will have lower total debt due than we did at the start; we are going to pay off the 2001A early. The total budget shows a net decrease of 5.08 FTE (excluding the Economic Support regionalization). We will be adding 3 to 4 positions in the Economic Support Regionalization Department at no cost to La Crosse County, and it will be brought to the Board as a separate resolution. Mississippi Valley Health Services (MVHS) commission approved a 5% increase in the per diem rate from \$57.00 per day to \$59.86 per day and transfer of \$615,000 of the MVHS reserves to help La Crosse County with Western Wisconsin Cares client issue. MVHS is a collaboration of 13 counties and saves La Crosse County \$1 million a year, which we would have had to levy. Roughly one quarter of the entire budget is Human Services, and approximately 14% is Courts and Public Safety. The largest portion of the budget is Health, Aging, and the two Nursing Homes, but the majority of the costs are not paid by the property taxes. The state budget does recognize new construction as a way of stabilizing costs of services to our existing taxpayers. Over the last 10 years, 43% of tax increase cost was supported by new construction. We did not rely on that this year. This year we are proposing a budget at 0. When total market value is declining, the tax rate still goes up. One of largest issues that we deal with is trying to maintain debt service. The difficult part is paying for the old LEC debt while planning for the new LEC debt. The original idea for the 2001A LEC debt was to refinance \$3.58 million over the next 4 years and save \$259,000 (\$65,000 per year) by reducing the interest rate from 4.5% to 1.6%. Upon further review, if we pay off the balance by the end of 2012, 3 years early by using the 2012 debt service for this bond, plus the extra debt levy saved because of spreading out the new LEC bond issues and the project savings from LEC construction and Jail assessment reserved, it saves \$364,000 in interest. This holds the line on the total County debt levy in 2012, while providing limited options for future debt needs: Highway, Lakeview and Administrative Center. For 2012, the only debt issuance being recommended will be for the Highway debt \$2.145 million, a 5 year note paid by Highway fund. The capital and debt decisions for 2013 and beyond are the following: highway needs, administrative center remodeling or replacement, and Lakeview facility needs-remodel versus build new. There will be a resolution coming to the Board regarding position changes with a net decrease of 5.08 FTE (excluding the separate resolution for the Economic Support regionalization). We are budgeting for and asking the bargaining unit for patrol deputies to pay 5.9% towards their retirement just like other employees. We do not have an agreement. If we do not get an agreement it will be subject to arbitration, and we will have to make it up within the budget. Other counties are doing the same strategy. The ongoing and challenging issue is the home health division. Home Care actual expense has doubled from approximately \$124,000 in 2006 to \$252,000 in 2010. We have no other part of the budget that is growing at that rate and no other amount of levy growing at that rate. If we would eliminate or downsize home health care entirely, it would have cost us about \$100,000 in levy. We are bringing a budget that would hold home health care next year by resizing and downsizing the clients we serve to \$110,000. We will be downsizing by roughly a quarter to focus on clients with less services (fewer visits). A resolution will be going to the Health and Human Services Board in regards to redefining the focus of Home Health and what the benchmarks will be to monitor performance and budget. It will reduce the amount of client revenue we receive and reduce the staff by 2.4 FTEs. Home care is non-mandated service by the state, and only 10 counties

(128-11/12)

are left providing this service. Three positions will be cut, and the vacant positions will be eliminated. We have been trying to control the costs in this area. The Board will also see a resolution come to them in regards to position changes due to the Economic Support regionalization. It will have no tax levy impact. It will be seven other counties: Buffalo, Clark, Jackson, Monroe, Pepin, Trempealeau, and Vernon. There will be certain functions centralized in La Crosse County to gain efficiencies, such as client changes, registration and administration. Some of the positions will be reduced in other counties, where La Crosse County will be adding positions paid for by federal and state revenue. It will add one Economic Support Supervisor, two Clerk positions, and one Economic Support Clerk. Another budget item is County Board Budget. One of the biggest changes is decreasing the County Supervisors from 35 to 29, which saves \$18,000. The definition for qualifying for Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) changed with the state budget bill; it is now 1200 hours. Also, the Board Chair would have been required to pay into WRS; therefore, it was eliminated for the Board Chair, which then saves us money. The Board Chair proposed that the new County Board Chair in April receive the payment for County Board Chair and not to receive the Supervisor pay in addition. This will allow the 2% raise for all supervisors. There is also a net WRS savings due to the Chair's assistant. The WCA dues have been consolidated instead of spreading them among other budgets. The fees and charges master list will be coming this next week from Finance. They are categorized by: Set by State (SS), Set by County (SC); and Set by Both (SB). Most have not changed; however, there were some exceptions. Indirect costs increased by \$128,000; one of the largest increases was in Hillview Health Care Center. Other increases are in MPO and Child Support. Solid Waste and Hazardous Material is at full recovery. The biggest change in Health user fees is in Home Health Care client visits. We are budgeting to serve fewer clients, which means less revenue; however, it will levy less. Register of Deeds recording fees are lower. Justice Sanctions and Chemical Health in monitoring and client fees are down. In Aging, our contributions and donations are down. In Law Enforcement, service of papers is down. The biggest increase in revenues is in the Medical Examiner; the volume of cremations is increasing and the new morgue fee. In the jail, calling card use is increasing, which will generate additional revenue. Interest on taxes is increasing due to the increase in the number of delinquent taxes. MVHS transferred \$615,000 to us; we are using \$315,000 to stabilize the levy for the clients from La Crosse County. The budgeted WRS savings without the 2% raise is a gross amount of \$2.9 million; offset with the 2% raise of \$1 million, the gross savings is \$1.9 million. Household Hazardous Material, Economic Development, MPO, Carroll Heights, Hillview Terrace, Hillview, Lakeview, and Solid Waste do not require direct levy support. By the end of the budget, we will save about 59%. The major 2012 budget challenges are State budget cuts (shared revenue, general transportation aids, courts, child support, victim witness, youth aids), child waiver changes (Federal change), care center deficit, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse client revenue, general fund interest revenue, Register of Deeds, and growth in Western Wisconsin Care clients. The tax levy savings solutions are WRS contributions by employees with the 2% raise, Juvenile Detention Facility downsizing, increased sales tax revenue, increase indirect cost changes, interest on taxes, utilities, net position savings, medical examiner revenue, contribution by Western Wisconsin Cares, jail concessions, and other smaller changes. Administrator O' Malley feels that they have brought the best conservative budget that positions us better for the future with capital items without raising property taxes by \$1.00.

(129-11/12)

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

- Supervisor Geary would like a resolution in regards to La Crosse County buying only American with our tax dollars.

ADJOURN

Motion by B. Feehan/B. Brockmiller to adjourn at 8:35 PM passed on a unanimous voice vote with 31 ayes, 4 excused - J. Bilskemper, D. Manthei, L. Pfaff and G. Sebranek.

STATE OF WISCONSIN)

COUNTY OF LA CROSSE)

I, Ginny Dankmeyer, La Crosse County Clerk, in and for the County of La Crosse, Wisconsin, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Journal of Proceedings of the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors at the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors Planning Meeting held Monday, October 10, 2011 and that it is the whole thereof. IN WITNESS THEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO SET MY HAND AND AFFIXED THE OFFICIAL SEAL THIS DAY 24 OF OCTOBER 2011.