

20
23

Impact Report

LA CROSSE COUNTY
CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICES



Amy Twitchell, County Treasurer
Ginny Dankmeyer, County Clerk
Robin Kadrmas, Register of Deeds



LA CROSSE COUNTY

Honored to Serve the Public

MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER



Our office continued to support the taxpayers of La Crosse County throughout 2023. Wisconsin Help for Homeowners (WHH) was a statewide program that helped people with different items such as mortgage payments, past due property taxes, and other household bills to name a few over the past couple of years. According to the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration link, [DOA Wisconsin Help For Homeowners](#), a total of 222 La Crosse County homeowners were assisted. This program was a great program and unfortunately has expired.

Our Deputy Treasurer, Annette (aka Netty) Kirchhoff, a dedicated employee of La Crosse County for over 14 years lost her battle to cancer. She was a very devoted employee and a great asset not only to the Treasurer's office, but to the County. She brought a lot of knowledge into this office from her experiences working for Vernon County, a title company and the La Crosse County Zoning Department. You can tell that she was very much liked and loved by all the generous people who donated their vacation time to her. A sincere thank you goes out to all the kind La Crosse County employees who made vacation donations and other donations to help her. Netty and her family were very appreciative of all the love and support she received. She will truly be missed.

Another huge thank you goes out to our new Deputy Treasurer, Christine Westpfahl, who has served La Crosse County over 17 years. I am very appreciative and proud for the friendly and effective service she provides. Christine has helped our office continue to run like a well-oiled machine and brings knowledge from her previous position with the Clerk of Courts.

I am also excited to introduce Cynthia (aka Cindy) Sikora as our new Assistant Deputy Treasurer. Cindy joined our team on March 25, 2024 and will be a great asset to our office and to La Crosse County. Currently, Cindy is the Town of Bergen Treasurer in Vernon County. Her knowledge and insights from a Town perspective will be a great value. We are very lucky and happy to have her.

In the fall, La Crosse County will be transitioning from our in-house tax/treasurer system to a new tax software with Catalis, previously known as GCS and LandNav. Another huge thank you goes out to the project manager Jami Hundt in our IT Department. She has done an excellent job leading this project, with strong support from Pam Hollnagel and Kyle Willoughby in our Zoning, Planning & Land Information Department.

Though this was a difficult and challenging year, it allows us time to reflect on our priorities and what's important in our lives. Working with the County staff and seeing the care, kindness, and support that they shared for Netty and our office is unbelievable. It shows what the priorities are. We are here to serve the people of La Crosse County, but also to be supportive of one another. It is a privilege and honor to serve as the La Crosse County Treasurer for the people of La Crosse County. Please reach out if you have questions. Thank you!

Amy Twitchell

La Crosse County Treasurer

atwitchell@lacrossecounty.org

2023 Overview

WHAT WE DO

The La Crosse County Treasurer's Office duties and responsibilities are set by the Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 59, 74 and 75. Some of these duties are:

- Collect delinquent and postponed real estate taxes (exceptions for the City of La Crosse).
- Complete settlements with the municipalities and the State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue.
- Settle with all taxing jurisdictions (towns, villages, cities, Western Technical College, school districts, Lake Neshonoc District, Mindoro Sanitary District, and St. Joseph's Sanitary District).
- Receipt funds received to the correct general ledger accounts in a timely matter.
- Keep and maintain the bank accounts.
- Provide the State with required payments, statements, and reports.
- Send lottery credit applications, delinquent notices, tax certificates, letters to taxpayers.
- Foreclose via In Rem.
- Interact with many County departments.
- Dedicated to providing friendly, and effective customer service to all.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

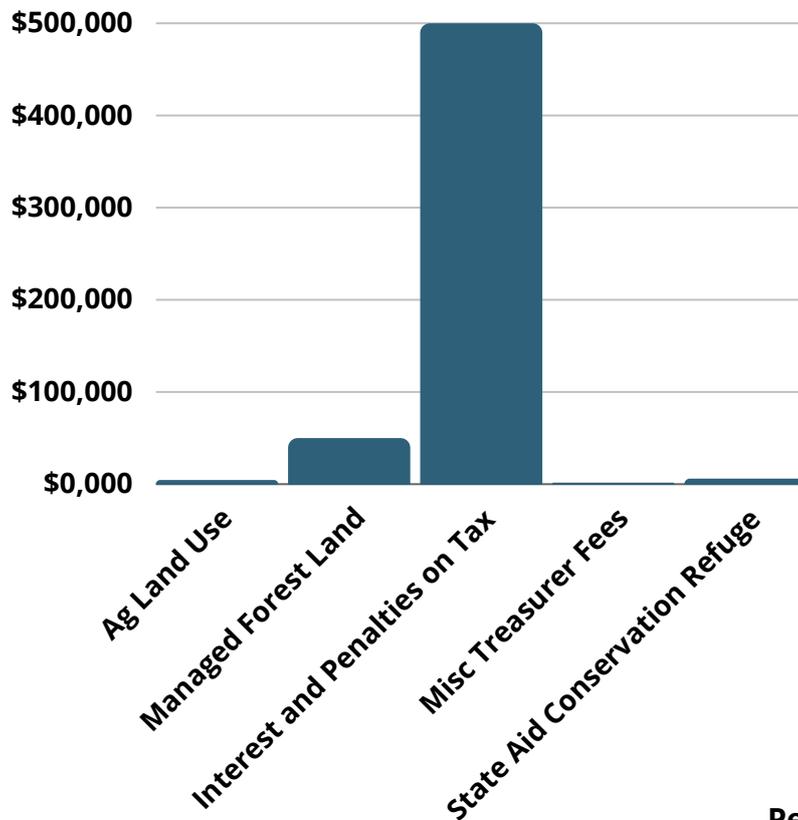
- Continued to mail lottery credits letters to primary homeowners. The lottery credit is a reduction that appears on the real estate tax bill. To qualify for the lottery and gaming credit, the property must be the primary residence of the property owner as of the certification date of January 1st and a lottery credit application must be completed. The lottery credit ranged from \$232.33 to \$318.99 for the tax year 2023 in La Crosse County. This amount is based upon the school district in which the property is located.
- The conversion process to Catalis is in motion and testing is being done. It is planned to go live in October 2024.

LOOKING FORWARD

- Going live with our new tax/treasurer system Catalis
- Continuing to provide exceptional customer service
- Continuing to work and interact with other County departments

2023 Finances

REVENUE & EXPENSES



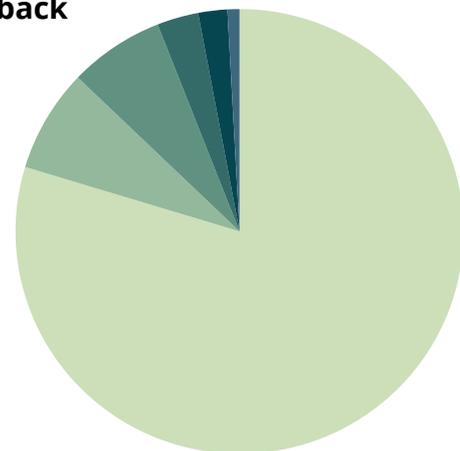
REVENUE

- Ag Land Use: \$4,500
- Forest Cropland/Managed Forest Land: \$50,000
- Interest and Penalties on Tax: \$500,000
- Misc Treasurer Fees: \$1,650
- State Aid Conservation Refuge: \$6,000
- **TOTAL: \$562,150**

EXPENSES

- Operating Expenses: \$22,972
- Personal Property Purchase: \$10,000
- Public Notice: \$7,000
- Real Estate Chargeback: \$25,000
- Salaries and Benefits: \$266,138
- Training/Travel/Professional Dues: \$2,900
- **TOTAL: \$334,010**

Personal Property Purchase
3%
Real Estate Chargeback
7.5%



Salaries and Benefits
79.7%

800

800 delinquent notices were mailed out in 2023.

\$23 million

\$23,512,500 in property taxes were collected in 2023.

2,884

In 2023, 2,884 property tax reminder postcards were mailed out.

Counting Every Vote

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY CLERK



With only two elections in 2023, it was a good year to onboard a new staff member, perform some necessary software updates, and plan some longer-term projects.

At 52%, the 2023 Spring Election saw likely the highest turnout on record for a spring election that did not include a presidential primary. The huge interest in the Supreme Court election helped to drive the high turnout.

Deputy County Clerk Terri Foley started work in our office in the fall and has been an excellent addition to the team. She joined Deputy County Clerk Jody Wickler and Administrative Clerk Ann Isham to form one of the best teams in the business.

We also signed a contract in 2023 to digitize county board proceeding books going all the way back to 1902. This is an important historical record, currently stored as hard copies. The records will be more accessible and better protected for posterity once they are digitized, a process that will start this year.

Another important project completed in 2023 was to update our election software. This means we now have the latest and best software to continue securely recording and counting your votes.

I am writing this as we are conducting training for poll workers for the Spring Election at the start of a busy year, that will culminate in the presidential election in November. We will be preparing for the newly redrawn state legislative maps, which may require some additional voter education about the changes. I have complete confidence in the security and accuracy of our election system in Wisconsin, and especially here in La Crosse County.

While my office is best known for running elections, we do a lot more, including issuing marriage and dog licenses, maintaining accurate records of county board proceedings, issuing parade permits, and more.

We look forward to continuing to serve the public in 2024 and beyond. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions about my office.

Sincerely,

Ginny Dankmeyer

La Crosse County Clerk

gdankmeyer@lacrossecounty.org

2023 Overview

WHAT WE DO

Our Mission Statement: The goal of the La Crosse County Clerk's Office is to provide efficient, friendly and fiscally responsible public service consistent with, and often directed by, state statutes.

To this end, the County Clerk and her staff will:

- Oversee the county-wide election process, always striving to keep the public informed so they may exercise their right to vote.
- Conduct fair and accurate elections.
- Maintain accurate records of all County Board proceedings and make them available to the public.
- Assist individuals who wish to marry in La Crosse County with the necessary paperwork and issue their marriage license in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes.
- Work diligently to maintain complete and accurate records on the dogs in our County and coordinate with the Health Department to assure that these dogs are properly vaccinated and licensed for the safety of all.
- Coordinate with the Department of Natural Resources to issue hunting and fishing licenses to qualified applicants.
- Produce and distribute a La Crosse County Directory.
- File timber cut notices and issue parade permits.
- Assist the public whenever possible and cheerfully perform any and all duties required of us.

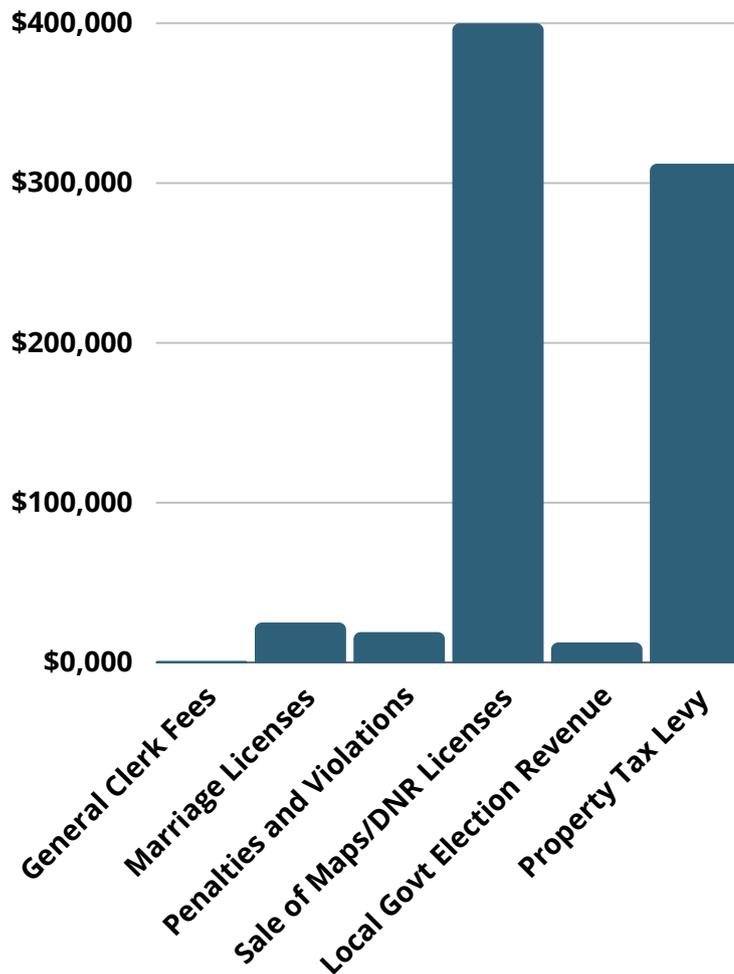
The County Clerk also serves as the Chief Election Official of the County.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- 9,634 postcards were sent to dog owners in March reminding them to license their dogs before the March 31 deadline. A late fee of \$25 is assessed starting April 1.
- The April 2023 election had a turnout of 52% of registered voters. This ballot included a hotly contested Wisconsin Supreme Court election.
- County Clerk Ginny Dankmeyer was named Wisconsin Constitutional Officer of the Year for 2023 by the Wisconsin Constitutional Officers Association and also received her Master County Clerk certificate last year.

2023 Finances

REVENUE & EXPENSES

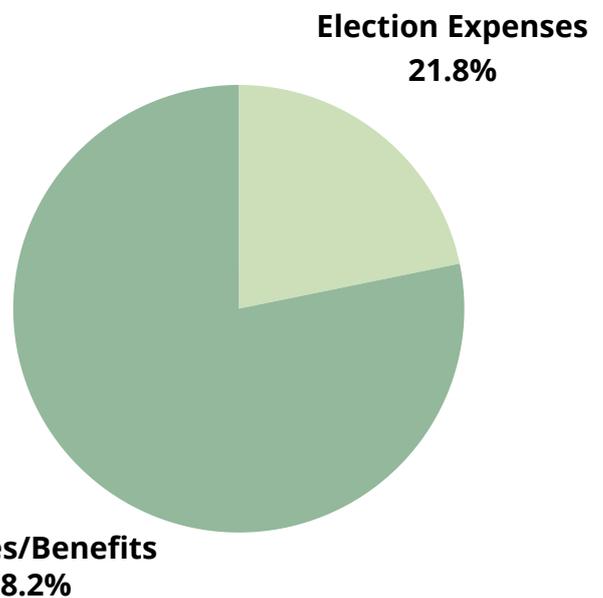


REVENUE

- General Clerk Fees: \$1,000
- Marriage Licenses: \$25,000
- Penalties and Violations: \$19,000
- Sale of Maps/DNR Licenses: \$400
- Local Govt Election Revenue: \$12,525
- Property Tax Levy: \$312,135
- **TOTAL: \$370,060**

EXPENSES

- Salaries/Benefits: \$289,481
- Election Expenses: \$80,579
- **TOTAL: \$370,060**



600

600 marriage licenses were issued in 2023.

29

29 free tags issued for blind deaf and mobility impaired dogs.

19,589

In 2023, 19,589 dogs were licensed in La Crosse County.

Protecting Vital Records

MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTER OF DEEDS



2023 saw a rise in interest rates and our office did see a slowing in the real estate area, but the industry remains active with growing businesses and developments, and I look forward to an increase in 2024. Our office continues to assist customers on the phone and at the counter with real estate and vital records requests. Vital requests remain steady.

Last year I had my first real estate class from UWL come for an office visit and tour of what we do. The response was so good from the students that I recently hosted another one. It has been wonderful interacting with students in the community and showing them what our office does and how they can use our office as a resource for both personal and business means.

There are a few Assembly and Senate Bills being watched closely by our office right now regarding recording fee increases, discriminatory restrictions, transfer fee split changes and privacy for judicial officers. I am looking forward to a great 2024, continuing to assist our public in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Robin Kadrmas

La Crosse County Register of Deeds

rkadrmas@lacrossecounty.org

FEEDBACK FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

- “Very helpful staff, very responsive by phone and email. 5 stars!”
- “Quick, friendly response. What a great resource!”
- “Kind, fast, friendly service. Made the process easy”
- “Professional, timely, responsive, attentive, attention to detail”
- “Very quick to greet and help me out. It doesn’t go unnoticed!”

2023 Highlights

- We now have Laredo Anywhere which is a branch off our Laredo Desktop program. This allows customers of Laredo to have access via laptops or cell phones. We also became the first county to allow a Laredo Customer to have access to all the counties they have contracts with using one login to make it easier for them to switch between counties.
- We are researching companies to find the best price to do a scanning project in which old microfiche will be scanned into electronic images. This project will hopefully take place in 2025.
- We are continuing with back indexing, and we are now currently working on documents from the beginning of 1932. We also continue back scanning the old vital records (pre-1907) and are getting closer to having these all digitized which will allow us to work with IT (in the future) to get these older images onto our public computers, so genealogists have access instead of them looking at the originals. This will keep the frail documents from deteriorating further. These projects continue to be done daily as time permits and is an ongoing project.
- Last year we recorded over 15,500 documents and we are still over 80% being e-recorded. We implemented SWIFT in January which allows us to email the recorded paper documents back to the customers, eliminating mailings. Since then, e-records have increased so we look forward to seeing the trend over the next year.
- Property Fraud has become more prominent in surrounding areas so keeping the public up to date with any issues in our area has been a concern of mine. I am continuing to promote our Property Fraud Alert system where property owners can sign up to be notified right away to possible fraudulent documents being recorded in our office. This can be done by signing up on our website.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

94.9%

Very Satisfied

4.7%

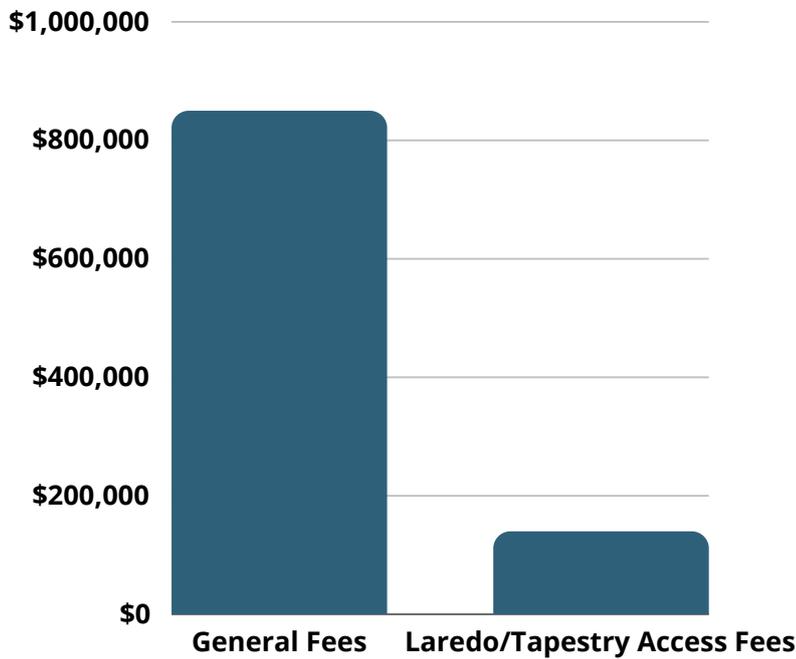
Satisfied

.4%

Very Dissatisfied

2023 Finances

REVENUE & EXPENSES

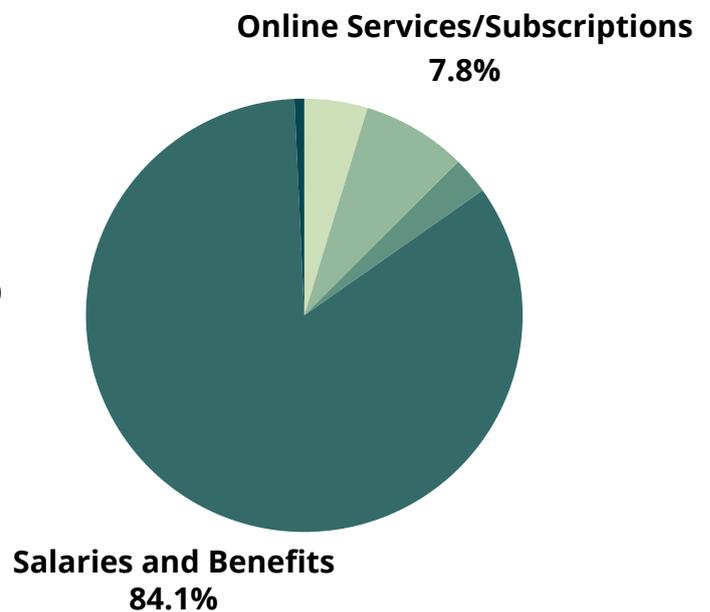


REVENUE

- General Fees: \$850,000
- Laredo/Tapestry Access Fees: \$140,000
- **TOTAL: \$990,000**

EXPENSES

- Laredo Access Fees: \$21,500
- Online Services/Subscriptions: \$35,700
- Operating Expenses: \$12,656
- Salaries and Benefits: \$385,921
- Training/Travel/Professional Dues: \$3,325
- **TOTAL: \$459,102**



1600

Over 1600 real estate copies were sold in 2023.

\$1.9 Million

Over \$1.9 million collected in Transfer Fees in 2023, of which almost \$400,000 were retained by the county.

21,000

Over 21,000 vital records were sold in 2023.



LA CROSSE COUNTY

Exceptional services. Extraordinary place.



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