

Sheboygan County News

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The State of the County and 2012 Budget Process by Adam Payne, County Administrator

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Sheboygan County is a leader in providing responsive and cost-effective local government. We have healthy fiscal reserves, an excellent bond rating, and hard-working, caring staff who are effectively providing high quality services.

Over the years, staff and the County Board have made numerous cost-saving changes, including consolidating departments, privatizing services, sharing resources with other units of government, and streamlining operations. In fact, our total county payroll is less today than it was in 2002.

However, unlike many in the private sector that are struggling with a downturn in sales, business is booming for Sheboygan County government. Demands for our services continue to increase, particularly in health and human services, law enforcement, and the judicial system. Whether it is supporting a direct care service or maintaining and improving our transportation infrastructure, costs continue to rise.

2012 Budget Process

The State has further restricted local control by setting a levy limit for 2012 and 2013 of either 0% or the percentage increase in valuation due to net new construction, and a 1.5% cap thereafter. In addition, we need to absorb \$1.7 million in State revenue reductions, as well as increasing costs associated with health insurance and operating expenses such as fuel, utilities,

groceries and other supplies. In total, we began the budget process with a \$3.2 million gap to address. Thanks predominately to most of our employees now contributing towards the cost of their pension, other cost saving measures, and the planned modest use of fund balance, the remaining gap to contend with is now just under \$600,000.

The All Liaison Committee Chairpersons, Executive, and Finance Committees established the goal of no property tax levy increase and the following guiding principles: 1) Preservation of the County's bond rating; 2) Improve departmental efficiency; 3) Savings from employee concessions largely retained in the respective departments; 4) Direct resources based on County priorities; and 5) Strategic, conservative use of fund balance, not to exceed \$500,000 attributed to County employee concessions. Our fiscal challenges and gap are no surprise, for the County Board is well aware of our fiscal challenges and outlook.

Last year, the ½% county sales tax was proposed, considered and rejected by the County Board. There was considerable discussion among the Board, and a number commented that more programs and services need to be reduced or eliminated before they could support implementing a ½% sales tax. To that end, the County Board certainly made expenditure

reductions as part of the 2011 budget, and will need to do more of the same as we proceed with the development of the 2012 budget. The State's restrictive property caps, increasing costs, demands for services and infrastructure needs, as well as the importance of diversifying our revenue streams, will all necessitate this topic being revisited next year.

Thank You

I trust you share my pride in being a part of Sheboygan County Government and helping make our community an even better place. Though the 2012 budget process will be challenging, we certainly are not alone. Unemployment is hovering around 7-8%, and government at all levels, all across the nation, are struggling with significant fiscal challenges as well. Times like these test one's character, and tend to bring out the best in some people, and the worst in others. Together we will work to be a part of the solution, and together, we will problem-solve and persevere.

WE have an excellent track record. Thank you again for being a part of the solution and for all that you do.



Fehlhaber Hunts for Varied and Unique Hobbies

by Eric Fehlhaber, Engineering Supervisor

I am pleased to be the featured employee this quarter. I have been employed with Sheboygan County since June 1980 as the Engineering Supervisor for the Sheboygan County Planning and Conservation Department—Land & Water Conservation Division. Prior to my employment with Sheboygan County, I held a similar position with Ozaukee County.

My wife, Sue, and I are originally from the Glendale, Wisconsin area but have called Howards Grove

home for the past 28 years. We have three grown children, a daughter in Ohio and two sons in Sheboygan.

In our spare time, we enjoy rummaging and typically sell two to three times a year at Cedarburg’s Maxwell Street Days. We also enjoy weekend getaways—particularly to the Forestville area of Door County where my wife has many relatives.

I enjoy both bow and gun hunting, mostly up in Door County. Other hobbies include ancestry research,

woodworking and gardening. My most unique past hobby was participating in the annual Snowsnake Racing Championship held at the Smerke’s Conservation Club in Sheboygan Falls, where I became a five time world champion.

I am proud to serve the people of Sheboygan County through the Land & Water Conservation Division and have established rewarding relationships with many people, particularly in the rural areas of our County.



Eric Fehlhaber, Engineering Supervisor

Public Invited to See How County Government Works

by Kay Lorenz, Assistant to the County Administrator

Every day, over 115,000 residents of Sheboygan County directly or indirectly rely on the services that we provide, though many are not aware it is their county government that provides them. In an effort to help raise greater awareness, the County Executive Committee and County Administrator have initiated a Sheboygan County Government Works Week, scheduled for July 18 through July 24.

On Tuesday, July 19th, there will be an open house at the Courthouse from 4:00—6:00 p.m. with a kick-off reception in the lobby and a chance for the public to meet their County

Board Supervisor. Department Heads and Circuit Court Judges will also be participating and providing guided tours of the Courthouse. The public is encouraged to attend that evening’s regularly scheduled County Board meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. with a special presentation by the County Administrator.

On Wednesday, July 20th during the late afternoon/early evening hours, most other county departments will be hosting open houses and guided tours. Please watch the Sheboygan Press and Plymouth Review for articles featured prior to and throughout the week

on specific county departments and the programs and services provided. Thank you for the important work that you all do and to those of you who are directly involved in helping plan and coordinate this event. You are all welcome to participate and I encourage you to please share this upcoming opportunity with your friends and neighbors.

For more information, please contact County Administrator Adam Payne or Kay Lorenz Assistant to the County Administrator at (920) 459-3103.

“Whether it is a friendship, marriage or good government, respect and a willingness to compromise are essential”

~Adam Payne~



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Planning & Conservation Department Focuses on Quality of Life

by Aaron Brault, Interim Director of Planning & Conservation

The Planning & Conservation Department is responsible for many quality of life aspects of the community that many take for granted. The dedicated staff is responsible for environmental protection and enhancement, recreational opportunities, community planning, and public safety. This dynamic County department plays a role in the daily lives of all our citizenry through the services it provides. In fact, the Department is currently managing or actively involved in over \$93 million worth of quality of life projects beyond its day-to-day functions.

The Department champions many environmental efforts to initiate the use of Best Management Practices for sensitive areas by providing to landowners, technical services and even provides cost sharing in specific instances. These can be directly seen in agricultural practices such as conservation tillage or barnyard improvements that have a direct connection to the overall quality of surface water resources. The Department also has a role in regulations that protect ground and surface water for all citizens through the implementation of the County's Sanitary, Shoreland, Floodplain, and Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinances.

The Planning & Conservation Department works diligently behind the scenes to improve the Sheboygan River and resolve the Area of Concern designation established by the Environmental Protection Agency. Our goal is long-lasting improvements to the water resource as contaminants are removed and safely disposed of.

As indicated in the name, the Department also has responsibilities in the development of plans for the County as well as local community assistance. The County Comprehensive Plan, Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, Farmland Preservation Plan, Outdoor Recreation Plan, and Land/Water Management Plan are all living documents that are revisited every couple of years. The Department recognizes the importance of valuable local citizen input in all planning and makes an effort to involve interested citizens in the development of our planning documents.

The Planning & Conservation Department also plays a role in providing the recreational amenities that make Sheboygan County a great place to live. This

Department oversees the Old Plank Road and Interurban Trails, the Sheboygan Marsh, several Boat Landings and assists with the Snowmobile Trail Program.

The land information maintained and created in the Department assists with public safety provision through the rural addressing and parcel mapping in unison with the Sheriff's Department and other emergency service providers.

Many County departments rely on accuracy of this information for various responsibilities. The Geographic Information System (GIS) is constantly becoming more diverse and accurate as information is improved through the filing of parcel information, address assignments, and added road information.

This is just a snapshot of the responsibilities of the Planning & Conservation Department. The variety of roles and responsibilities undertaken by this Department seem like a large undertaking, but all focus on the common goal of making Sheboygan County a great place to live.



County Mutual Program Provides Scholarships

by Kay Lorenz, Assistant to the County Administrator

Children or grandchildren of County employees have until August 1st to apply for scholarships available through the County's liability insurer, Wisconsin County Mutual Insurance.

County Mutual created the County Mutual Scholarship Program in 2007 in honor of the company's 20 year anniversary. Scholarships are awarded each year during the Wisconsin Counties Association Annual Conference in the fall. In 2010, five \$2,000 scholarship recipients were selected by an independent panel of current and former educa-

tors based on scores received in the following categories: future goals and career plans, grade point average, community involvement, the quality of their writing, and a letter of recommendation.

To qualify for the County Mutual scholarship, applicants must have enrolled in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited two or four-year Wisconsin college or university no later than the fall of 2011, and the applicant or the applicant's parent, grandparent or guardian must be a County Board

Supervisor or employee of Sheboygan County.



Visit us at:

www.wisconsincountymutual.org or
www.wicounties.org

Consultant Completes Operational Study of Information Systems; Makes Findings by Terry Hanson, Finance Director

The County recently received the completed Information Systems Operational Review from our consultant, Baker Tilly. The operational review was conducted from January 2011 through April 2011. The goal of the review was to evaluate the overall governance, management, and structure of the IS Department.

As part of the review, the County's departments were solicited through a survey and departmental interviews to identify systems supported by the IS Department and to document the strengths and weaknesses of the IS Department. In addition, interviews were conducted with all IS Department staff.

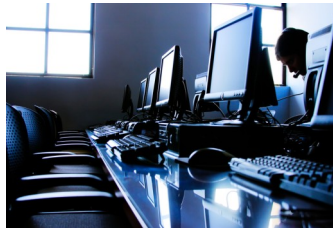
Baker Tilly recognized the difficulty in providing IS support for the County's extremely diverse set of functions with vastly different business requirements. In addition, Baker Tilly identified effective and efficient information systems services as being vital to the success of almost every County operating department.

Baker Tilly identified 10 general finding categories that encompass one or more specific issues that are related to: Management Functions, Applications Services, Infrastructure and Research & Development. The 10 general finding categories are:

- There is minimal prioritization of how IS versus operating department technology resources are spent.
- There is no strategic budgeting for IS Department operations.
- Overall communication is poor between operating departments and IS, and between IS Department staff and management.
- There is no defined management approach in the IS Department to completing its work.
- The IS Department allocates insufficient time and resources to maintenance, resulting in higher user complaints and crisis-driven system migration.
- There is a lack of alignment between IS Department resources and the business requirements of operating departments.
- Current IS Department organizational structure is not aligned to operating department technology needs.
- The IS Department has not prioritized continuing education to increase the skill sets of the IS department staff.

- The IS Department has not prioritized cross training to increase the skill sets of the IS department staff.

- The IS Department has outsourced some application network support to vendors and consultants but they do not manage vendors effectively.



Out of these 10 general finding categories Baker Tilly recommended 34 "Initiatives" to help address these items and grouped them into 4 waves:

- Wave 1—Critical Needs (next 3-6 months)
- Wave 2—Data Driven Decisions & Staffing (6-9 months)
- Wave 3—Alignment between IS Strategy and Resources (9-12 months)
- Wave 4—Sophisticated Framework and Tools (12-18 months)

Thank you to all the people and departments that participated in this study. Without your participation the IS Operational Study would not have been as successful in highlighting areas that need improvement. Your continued cooperation and support will be necessary as the County works to address the issues presented in the report.

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Wisconsin Celebrates 1 Year of Smoke-Free Air

by Liz Abler, Public Health Nurse, Health & Human Services

On July 5, 2010, Wisconsin joined the list of 23 other states that had gone smoke-free in all indoor work places and public places. The Smoke-Free Air Law protects workers and the public from the serious health effects of secondhand smoke. Many people have played a vital role in its successful implementation. As predicted, Sheboygan County has seen only a small number of complaints and violations related to compliance of the law. There are two ways the public can report violations: a toll-free complaint line, 1-800-No-Smoke, as well as a "complaint form" on www.wibetterSmokefree.com.



The Tobacco-Free Sheboygan County Coalition has recently updated its Quitting Tobacco Guide. It is available on the Sheboygan County website under Public Health or go to: http://www.co.sheboygan.wi.us/county_depts/pubhlth/NoSmoke/Tobacco_Guide_5-2011.pdf.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns involving the Smoke-Free Air Law, please contact Liz Abler, RN, Public Health Nurse, Division of Public Health.

Register of Deeds Offers Free Service to Protect Your Most Valuable Investment

by Ellen Schleicher, Register of Deeds

Sheboygan County Register of Deeds Ellen Schleicher encourages you to take advantage of a FREE service offered by the Register of Deeds office to help protect against property fraud. Since May 1, 2010, land owners have had the option to sign up through the county's website to receive Property Fraud Alerts, an automated database that monitors activity involving land records filed in the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office.

What is it?

When someone illegally uses your property for financial gain.

How does it happen?

Someone records a fraudulent document in the county Land Records office, making it look like they own your home or property.

Should you be concerned?

Yes, according to the FBI property and mortgage fraud is the fastest growing white-collar crime.

What can you do about it?

Your Register of Deeds office has teamed up with Fidlar Technologies to create a notification service called Property Fraud Alert.

Subscribe free of charge: www.propertyfraudalert.com/sheboyganwi or call the Property Fraud Alert Hotline at 1-800-728-3858.

Be Informed...Be Alert...Be Notified

Marsh Tower Marks 1st Year Anniversary

by Keith Abler, County Board Supervisor

Summer is here, I don't remember much of a spring this year, but a great place to view the beauty of the natural Wisconsin outdoors is atop the Sheboygan County Marsh Tower, the tallest wooden observation tower in the state. It is located at the Sheboygan County Marsh Park west of Elkhart Lake. May 15th marked the tower's first year anniversary. There has been great coverage in the media, so without sounding redundant I will state that with the anniversary a new wooden sign has been mounted at the tower's base that explains the rich history of the Marsh, including the construction of the tower. My dog Deuce loves climbing it with me; in fact, several times he decided to stay on the top and look at the view, making me climb it again to retrieve him. The additional exercise is certainly not wasted on me!



Funding for the tower has been done by the generous donations of the public. Plans are being developed that will include future programs for educational and environmental projects that will only enhance the beautiful Marsh area. Donations are still being accepted in the form of commemorative personalized bricks or steps. Donations are tax deductible.

Upcoming Training Calendar Features Caremark Pharmacist

by Michael Collard, Human Resources Director

Training sessions planned for the second half of 2011 will feature a pharmacist from the County's prescription benefit manager discussing ways to save money on prescription drugs, sessions on County personnel manual revisions, and training for managers and supervisors on investigations, scheduling issues, and employee leaves of absence.

Coming first on the agenda will be training for supervisors and managers on the topics of employee investigations and corrective action, and overtime and other scheduling issues. A presentation and Q&A on these topics will be given on four different dates by HR Director Mike Collard and Controller Pam Kacmarynski. Subject to department head approval, all County supervisory employees should plan to attend one of the four 90-minute sessions, which will be held:

July 18	2:00 p.m.	Health & Human Services ~ Room 413
July 20	8:00 a.m.	Administration Building ~ Room 302
July 21	1:30 p.m.	Rocky Knoll
July 26	12:00 (noon)	Administration Building ~ Room 302

Next, and of interest to all employees, will be a series of presentations by Wayne Salverda, Senior Director of Clinical Services for Caremark Corporation, which provides prescription management services to the County. Mr. Salverda will help employees find ways to more effectively manage their prescription medications, providing for better health as well as lower costs. The presentations will be held at the Law Enforcement Center, Room 113, on September 27 and 28 (exact time to be announced).

A wide range of County employment policies will be of greater interest to more employees than ever before after collective bargaining agreements expire. The Human Resources Department is working on revisions to the employee handbook, and will conduct training sessions for all employees on certain policies as well as an introduction to the new handbook in early December 2011.

Before the new handbook is complete, however, we will be looking for input from employees as well as supervisors before finalizing revisions. Look for opportunities to provide feedback this upcoming fall. Emails will be sent to update employees on the status of revisions to policies, and your comments will be welcomed.