

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY PROGRAM WORKSHEET

February 16, 2005

Department: Register of Deeds

Date: 3/22/05

Program	Description	Mandated	Priority	Service Level Required	2004 Actual Expense	2005 Budgeted Expense	2005 Budgeted Grants/Fees Revenue	2005 Tax Levy
Real Estate	Record, file and archive legal documents pertaining to real estate. Provides required compliance review for accuracy for conformity to the law before recording. Upon request certify records maintained by statutes.	Yes 59.43 236 703.14 706 779.97	1	100%	\$418,973	\$418,973	\$418,973	\$00.00
Vital Records	Provides official acceptance and registration of birth marriage and death records, including military records pertaining to Sheboygan County. Conduct search & issuance of legally certified copies to entitled persons upon written request and submission of required fees.	Yes Chapter 69	2	100%	\$128,219	\$128,219	\$128,219	\$00.00
Directive Duties	A. Establishes, and implements operational policy, goals, statutory changes, system modernization, program and procedure evaluation and staff development to assure outstanding service for our citizen customers.	Yes. Chapter 59.43	A.1	100%	\$53,785	\$53,785	\$53,785	\$00.00
	B. County requirements such as required meeting attendance, financial reporting, budgeting, personnel forms, copies, spreadsheets, analysis, & reports, requested by other departments.	Variable County requirements have become both time-consuming and expensive.	B. 3	Variable				

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE
February 16, 2005

- A. **INSTRUCTIONS:** For each program, list the Scheduled Review Date, the Department, the Department Mission Statement and the Program Title at the top of the page, and answer the following questions for each program. The overall response for each program should be no greater than two (2) pages in length.

SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE: March 22, 2005

DEPARTMENT: Register of Deeds

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT:

Provide recording, filing, registration, archival storage, accurate indices, and convenient public access for the important documents of your life, including real estate, vital records, UCC filings, federal tax liens, military discharges and other instruments entitled to be recorded, filed, or registered; to collect, disburse, and accurately account for taxes and fees imposed by statutes and other local and state regulations; and to implement statutory changes, systems modernization, program and procedure evaluation and staff development to assure outstanding service for our citizen customers.

PROGRAM: Real Estate

1. Describe the program, its purpose and goals.

Program: To record, file and archive legal documents pertaining to real estate and to collect fees and taxes associated with this program. We are required to provide a compliance review for documents and tax returns for accuracy and conformity to the law before recording. Upon request we search and certify records maintained by statutes as proof of their existence. A significant amount of revenue is collected including the transfer fee tax, recording fees and copy fees.

Goals: To meet the public's needs in a timely and efficient way, and to provide a high level of timely service for our citizen-customers.

2. Who is the program intended to serve? How many are served?

This Program is intended to serve the 115, 500 residents of Sheboygan County. All who have an interest are served.

In 2004 34,452 real estate documents were recorded, over 150,000 images archived, and 24,866 requested copies were searched and issued.

3. Are the program benefits long-lasting and essential to the service populations?

Yes. No recorded real estate document ever becomes obsolete and the real estate program is absolutely essential to the service populations.

Without it, property ownership could not be ascertained and marketable title established. Individuals and business would be unable to obtain mortgage loans and credit bureaus would be unable to establish credit ratings.

Service populations include banks and lending institutions, and title companies, assessors, appraisers, surveyors and developers. It would be impossible to complete their work without this program.

4. Is this program directly or indirectly related to or does it support any other program in this department or another department? If so, how?

On the county level, it is from our records the Treasurer, Tax Lister, municipal assessors, and Planning collect data to collect taxes, and assessments, ordinance compliance review, mapping and other essential data.

On a state and federal level, required Reports are provided to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue to determine county equalization values and tax compliance. Other reports are provided to: US Treasury –Federal IRS Tax Liens, WI Department of Administration-Plat Review, WI Department of Commerce-Rental Weatherization.

Revenues collected from the real estate program support Land Records modernization efforts such as GIS.

5. How does this program make the department or county government more effective or efficient, including any intergovernmental relationship?

Success in expediting the recording and issuing of certified real estate records and the collection of fees to support modernization efforts are outstanding. Other departments such as Tax Listing, Planning, and the Highway Department are able to access the scanned real estate records, which save employee time for them and makes them more efficient. The city of Sheboygan has contracted with us for remote access to real estate records as well.

6. How do you determine/measure if this program has been effectively provided and implemented?

Technology has made us very effective. Our customers are now able to access real estate records 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Two websites provide this service; one is contracted while the Tapestry site utilizes a credit card. Both have created new revenue streams for Sheboygan County. In addition, our records have never been more accessible to our citizen customers.

7. Could the county cost-effectively subcontract this program?

No. It is statutorily mandated.

8. State the numerical ranking of this program compared to all programs in your department and briefly explain.

All my programs are equally important, but when ranking them I rank this as number one.

9. Are there current alternatives to this program available in the community? Can this program be provided through alternative arrangements with other providers?

No. And no. These programs are statutorily mandated.

10. If this program were eliminated, what would be the ramifications for the County (i.e., added risk, liability or legal issues)?

There would be legal issues since the statutes mandate this.

Practical issues would be a person's inability to sell real estate or to borrow money against it. Sheboygan County would be unable to collect the property tax. Equalization values would be undetermined.

11. What is the program impact and effectiveness related to the program cost? (Provide data if available.)

I budgeted \$418,973 for this program in the 2005 budget. This program is self-funded by the required collection of fees and revenues in the Register of Deeds office, and by contracts with title companies for remote access.

There is no cost to county taxpayers for this program. There is no tax levy for this program.

12. Is this program currently duplicated by another county department or provider in the community?

No.

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PROGRAM: Vital Records

1. Describe the program, its purpose and goals.

Our office is the local registration and filing point for all birth, death, and marriage records in Sheboygan County. Since the county has taken over the city health department our vital records business has increased significantly. We file about 4,000 vital records per year. We also added the ability to order vital records by credit card, to assist those customers with immediate needs. Our office collects an additional fee for this special service, which increases our office revenues. Registration of Military Discharge documents is also a part of this program

Goal: To meet the public's needs and provide convenient access in a timely and efficient manner.

2. Who is the program intended to serve? How many are served?

The program is intended to serve the public and the approximately 115, 500 residents of Sheboygan County.

We file about 5,500 vital records per year. In 2004 we issued 6,467 birth records, 8,241 death records, and 1,428 marriage records upon request. We also issued 519 copies of military discharges. Genealogical searches totaled 1,058.

3. Are the program benefits long-lasting and essential to the service populations?

Yes. Official Certified copies of vital records are the basis of an individual's citizenship, age, identity, proof of marriage, and cessation of life. Included among in their uses are enrollment in school, to obtain driver's license, to go into the military, to get a job, to travel, to obtain social security, to obtain insurance benefits, and many other uses.

4. Is this program directly or indirectly related to or does it support any other program in this department or another department? If so, how?

The Veteran's Service office requests certified copies of birth, death and marriage records for veteran's benefits, and certified copies of registered military discharge records are proof of military service for veteran's benefits.

The County Clerk requires certified copies of birth records for proof of age to issue marriage licenses. At their request, the Sheboygan County Department of Public Health has a memo of understanding with us to allow them to track cause of death data. I also provide administrative copies of death records and statistical information to the Coroner.

Required weekly reports and records are sent to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services for statistical and archival purposes.

5. How does this program make the department or county government more effective or efficient, including any intergovernmental relationship?

Success is providing our citizen customers with a properly registered and certified vital record upon request in a timely manner. We are normally able to provide this service to counter customers within ten minutes, and mail customers with a one-day turn-around time.

6. How do you determine/measure if this program has been effectively provided and implemented?

Customers tell us frequently how happy they are with our fast, and efficient service.

7. Could the county cost-effectively subcontract this program?

No. It is statutorily mandated, plus there are many security concerns with handling these records.

8. State the numerical ranking of this program compared to all programs in your department and briefly explain.

They are all important, but in ranking this program I would rank it as number 2.

9. Are there current alternatives to this program available in the community? Can this program be provided through alternative arrangements with other providers?

No. And no, these programs are statutorily mandated.

10. If this program were eliminated, what would be the ramifications for the County (i.e., added risk, liability or legal issues)?

There would be legal issues since the statutes mandates this program.

As a practical matter, it would be very difficult to live in our security conscious society with no proof of age, identity, citizenship, marital status or cessation of life.

11. What is the program impact and effectiveness related to the program cost? (Provide data if available.)

The estimated costs in the 2004 budget are \$128,219. The fees collected cover all costs for this program.

12. Is this program currently duplicated by another county department or provider in the community?

No, it is statutorily mandated.

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PROGRAM: Directives

1. Describe the program, its purpose and goals.

This program can best be described in two parts:

- A. Establishes and implements operational policies, goals and objectives for the department. Assures office procedures are carried out according to federal, state and county laws, ordinances, rules and regulations.
- B. Required meeting attendance, Reports, Spreadsheets, Personal Forms, Financial Reporting, Analysis and documents requested by other departments, the Administrative Coordinator, and the County Board.

Goals: To implement statutory changes, system modernization, program and procedure evaluations and staff development to assure a high level of timely services for our citizen customers.

2. Who is the program intended to serve? How many are served?

The program is intended to serve the public. Every citizen who needs the use of our office is served.

3. Are the program benefits long-lasting and essential to the service populations?

Yes.

4. Is this program directly or indirectly related to or does it support any other program in this department or another department? If so, how?

This program regulates and prepares all the programs mandated by the statutes.

It supports other departments such as county clerk, county treasurer, highway, veteran's services, coroner, tax lister, planning and other county departments

5. How does this program make the department or county government more effective or efficient, including any intergovernmental relationship?

Success is in expediting the recording and certifying real estate documents and vital records to assure accurate and timely service.

6. How do you determine/measure if this program has been effectively provided and implemented?

An efficient and well-run office determines success.

7. Could the county cost-effectively subcontract this program?

No. Program A is statutorily mandated, while Program B is variable.

8. State the numerical ranking of this program compared to all programs in your department and briefly explain.

A. Administration of programs directed by statutes is ranked as a one.

B. Other county requirements such as required meeting attendance, Reports, Spreadsheets, Personal Forms, Financial Reporting, Analysis, and documents requested by other departments, the Administrative Coordinator and County Board, I would rank as a three. Some are very necessary while others are repetitious and time-consuming. These directives are taking up more and more of management time and therefore they are becoming very expensive.

9. Are there current alternatives to this program available in the community? Can this program be provided through alternative arrangements with other providers?

No. And no, these programs are statutorily mandated or mandated by the county.

10. If this program were eliminated, what would be the ramifications for the County (i.e., added risk, liability or legal issues)?

Program A. There would be legal issues as the statutes mandates this under 59.43.

Program B. In some cases it would make no difference if the requirement were eliminated.

11. What is the program impact and effectiveness related to the program cost? (Provide data if available.)

The estimated cost of this program is \$53, 785. Revenues collected by the office cover the costs of both programs.

12. Is this program currently duplicated by another county department or provider in the community?

Program A. No.

Program B. Sometimes yes.