

# 2011 Department Annual Reports

## Executive Summary

The mission of Sheboygan County is to provide courteous, responsive, efficient and effective services to those we serve. Our vision is to be recognized as a leader of responsive and cost-effective local government. To this end, annual goals and objectives were established for Departments and the County as a whole and actively pursued.

As the Chief Administrative Officer of Sheboygan County, the *County Administrator* supervises all non-elected Department Heads and coordinates and directs the administrative and management functions of all County Departments. The County Administrator's responsibilities include leading the annual budget development process; recommending organizational changes, new programs, ordinances and resolutions; and implementing County Board decisions.

The County Administrator led a challenging budget process that involved significant expenditure reductions in a number of departments, including the consolidation of the Information Systems Department with the Finance Department. Sheboygan County maintained its excellent bond rating, healthy reserves, and is the only county in Wisconsin to have reduced the property tax levy four out of the last five years. The budget supports 20 departments, 850 employees, hundreds of contracted service providers and more than 200 programs. Our recent budget success is largely attributed to employees contributing for retirement and health insurance, declining debt service, expenditure reductions, and refinements to our health insurance plan. Despite the decreasing overall tax levy, the County's tax levy *rate* increased from \$5.23 in 2011 to \$5.27 in 2012 due to a decline in overall property values.

The County Administrator was also very involved in the Sheboygan River/Harbor Superfund site clean-up efforts in 2011. In total, approximately \$100 million will ultimately be expended in order to clean up and restore the river/harbor and significantly improve the economic development opportunities and vitality of the area.

The trends in State funding and further restraints placed on local elected officials continue to be discouraging. Whether it is the courts, health and human services, maintaining our transportation infrastructure, or other essential programs, the State continues to not meet its commitments, and there is a growing funding disparity associated with implementing State mandated services. Though the County has continued to be proactive in pursuing cost containment initiatives and is leading by example, savings do not equate to the shortfall in State funding and operational cost increases we must absorb. Expenditure reductions, diversifying our revenue, and continuing the trend of employees contributing more towards the cost of their health insurance and pension will be necessary. Despite these ongoing challenges, Sheboygan County is recognized as a leader of providing responsive and cost-effective local government, and we have an excellent team in place.

The **County Airport** Department continues to improve its infrastructure and support services. The enhancement and implementation of long-range project planning allows the Airport to qualify for project funding aids under the Federal Aviation Trust Fund which offset 80%-97.5% of capital project costs. Since 1999, these efforts have produced 37 capital improvement projects totaling \$24,486,623. Of that total, \$18,860,936 (77.09% of the total cost) was provided by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), \$4,096,880 (16.74%) by the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics, and \$1,510,807 (6.17%) by Sheboygan County. With the recent extension of runway 3-21 to a length of 6,800 feet and bearing capacity of 100,000 pounds, the airport is capable of handling transcontinental range jet aircraft. The 1,094-acre airport grounds are well maintained for use 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with approximately 36,000 flight operations. The Sheboygan County Memorial Airport is one of the finest airports in the state and remains the airport of destination for the world class events being hosted at Road America and Whistling Straights. It ranks #7 out of Wisconsin's 16 largest general aviation corporate/transport category airports.

In addition to ongoing maintenance and custodial responsibilities for 489,000 square feet of space in six geographic areas of the county, the **Building Services** Department provided support or oversight on a number of improvement projects. In addition including continuing to lead the Energy Team which, through the implementation of energy-saving measures and increasing staff energy awareness, resulted in an 12.4% decrease in electrical use and a 20.1% decrease in natural gas use in 2011.

The **Child Support** Department works to ensure adequate financial and medical support for families by locating parents and establishing and enforcing court-ordered child support collections. Their caseload has reached 5,300 and continues to grow. In 2011, the Department qualified in all four of the State performance standards categories to qualify for 100% performance based funding in the areas of paternity rate, unproductive arrears cases, court order rate, and current support collection rate.

The **Clerk of Courts** Office provides support to the five Circuit Courts, including jury notification, maintaining a record of all documents filed with the courts, and collecting the various fees, fines and forfeitures ordered by the court or specified by law. The Department processed 13,821 new cases, a decrease of 2,018 from 2010. During 2011, the Department disposed of nearly 14,800 cases, also a decline from last year. The five Circuit Court judges presided over 38 jury trials during the year consisting of 65 total trial days. The Department collected \$3.23 million in fines, surcharges and assessments, a \$352,679 decrease from 2010.

The **Coroner** is on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In 2011, the Coroner investigated 523 deaths in Sheboygan County reportable under Wisconsin Statutes and signed 471 cremation permits. The Office coordinated four tissue donation/harvests during the year.

The law firm of Hopp, Neumann, Humke LLP provides legal counsel to Sheboygan County, and Attorney Carl Buesing has been the lead **Corporation Counsel** from the firm since 2000. During 2011, he prepared numerous resolutions, ordinances and contracts as well as provided legal analysis and advice to the County Board, County Administrator and Department Heads.

The office of the **County Clerk** provides support to the County Board including maintaining the records for the Board and all of its Committees, certifying that meetings are posted in

compliance with the Open Meeting Law and auditing the County Board expense sheets. The office administered several elections during 2011 in addition to 8 recounts following the April election. The County Clerk's office provided redistricting options for the County Board in anticipation of reducing its size from 34 to 25 effective April 2012. The County Clerk's office also provides the ongoing services of processing Passport applications and issuing marriage, domestic partnership, conservation, DNR vehicle, and dog licenses. Requests for marriage and conservation licenses declined during 2011.

The mission of the office of the ***District Attorney*** is to prosecute all crimes and non-criminal traffic and ordinance citations occurring within the County on behalf of the State of Wisconsin. The office also assists law enforcement in its investigations and prosecutes a variety of juvenile matters. The Department's caseload included a total of 2,273 criminal cases: 1,131 misdemeanors, 474 criminal traffic and 658 felony charges. In addition, the office prosecuted a total of 1,850 non-criminal cases: 1,206 non-criminal traffic and ordinance and 644 juvenile cases. Total cases prosecuted for the year were 4,123, a decrease of 1,163 from 2010. A total of 213 search warrants were issued during 2011, 98 of which were drug related, and 110 various types of electronic tracking/records warrants/subpoenas, almost all drug related. The Check Fraud Unit returned \$26,781 to victims, mostly area merchants.

The primary role of the ***Family Court Commissioner*** is to aid and expedite the Sheboygan County Circuit Court system. The Court Commissioner's Office manages a variety of work including conducting pre-trial paternity conferences or initial appearances, temporary and stipulated divorce hearings, mediation referrals, referrals to Remember the Children Program, bail hearings, initial appearances in ordinance cases, and weddings.

The ***Finance and Information Technology*** Department strives to effectively and efficiently safeguard and account for the County's resources and to provide financial services in support of all County departments. Significant goals and objectives achieved in 2011 included the oversight of the operational study of the Information Systems Department followed by a major transition with the successful consolidation of the Finance and Information Technology (IT) Department, successful completion of the 2012 budget process, continuing to maintain an agreement with the City of Sheboygan to share the services of the County Purchasing Agent and development of a 5-year Capital Plan.

The ***Health and Human Services*** Department's mission is to improve the quality of life and self-sufficiency of Sheboygan County residents. The Department includes the Divisions of Community Programs and Elder Services, Economic Support, Public Health, and Social Services which collectively provide a broad array of services ranging from community based services for mental illness and developmentally disabled treatment, Senior Centers, hotel and restaurant inspection, drug abuse assessment and prenatal care to child protective services and job placements. In 2011, supports in the area of economic assistance continued to climb to record levels with over \$115 million in local benefits provided. There was an 8% increase in the FoodShare caseload and a 3.5% increase in the average monthly Medicaid caseload. The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) averaged 930 contacts per month compared to 760 in 2010, a 22% increase. The Health and Human Services Department provides critically important programs and services to thousands of people in our community.

The **Highway** Department maintains 451 miles of Sheboygan County Trunk Highways, 170 miles of State Trunk and Interstate Highways and 465 miles of local township roads, which equates to a total of 2,172 lane-miles of maintenance responsibility. Their mission is to provide safe and reliable transportation – Today and Tomorrow. Other major operations included gravel crushing, blacktop production, grading and construction, bridge maintenance and inspection, roadway marking and signing, and snow removal. The department also performs concrete work, pipe replacements, drainage improvements, engineering services, equipment repair, project consultation, road building and paving. During 2011, many highway improvements took place including the completion of the reconstruction of County Trunk Highway (CTH) “O” from CTH “Y” to I-43, roundabout construction at CTH “OK” and CTH “EE”, and 26.5 miles of paving on our county highway system including overlays, milling and pulverizing, and construction projects. The Highway Department produced 74,161 tons of asphalt and crushed 109,810 tons of aggregate in 2011 used in their paving operations.

The mission of the **Human Resources** Department is to create an environment that promotes positive employee relations, encourages equal opportunity and provides quality customer service. The Department’s responsibilities include labor relations, administering employee benefits and developing personnel policies and procedures. The legal developments surrounding Act 10 and its implementation made 2011 undoubtedly the most eventful year in Wisconsin public sector collective bargaining since at least 1977. Throughout the year the Human Resources Department stayed at the forefront of legal developments, interpreting numerous provisions, planning implementation in the County, and communicating with the County Administrator, County Board members, managers, and employees about various issues. Since under collective bargaining reform many issues currently controlled by labor agreements will in the future be controlled by County policy, a major overhaul of County personnel policies was undertaken, with about 50% of the process completed in 2011. The County’s Employee Strategic Benefits Planning Committee continued to meet regularly throughout the year to seek ways to improve the manner in which the County benefits are structured and administered. The InHealth Clinic, which opened in June of 2008, continues to provide basic health care for employees and dependents at a significantly lower cost than available in the community. A full-time chiropractor was hired to expand the services provided. The clinic has met with strong acceptance and use by employees.

The **Planning & Conservation** Department is committed to providing the public with information and knowledge on environmental issues that affect our community, and protecting and enhancing our County’s natural resources and recreational facilities. The Department continues its coordination role in the federal Superfund hazardous waste cleanup efforts of 14 miles of the Sheboygan River. The dredging began in April 2011 and there will be a great amount of activity in the coming year when nearly 400,000 cubic yards of material will be removed. The successful completion of this project will advance the aquatic habitat improvements needed to improve fisheries, recreation, and create opportunity for economic growth in the County. The Department continues to administer the Federal Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program and witnessed implementation of eight of the nine projects planned for 2011. The Department issued 145 sanitary permits—a 2.11% increase over 2010, 56 shoreland permits and 4 conditional use permits—a 32.53% decrease over 2010, and reviewed 33 certified survey maps creating 68 new lots encompassing 900.09 acres. No new subdivision plats were approved in 2011.

The ***Register of Deeds*** Office is responsible for recording and providing a variety of legal documents to the public including birth, marriage and death certificates, real estate ownership, military records, probate instruments and business documents such as corporate filings. Recorded land records are the basis of the real estate property tax. The land records in the Register of Deeds office represent \$8.8 billion in real estate within Sheboygan County. The Department's revenue collections in 2011 exceeded \$1.5 million and the value of real estate conveyed in Sheboygan County during the year was \$238.5 million.

***Rocky Knoll Health Care Center*** offers a full range of services including short-term rehabilitation and out-patient therapy, traditional long-term care and specialized care for the chronically mentally ill. During 2011, Rocky Knoll continued to reduce its tax levy subsidy to support its operations. The 2011 adopted budget authorized \$720,991 in tax levy to support Rocky Knoll, which compares to a high of \$6.1 million in tax levy to support nursing home operations in 2006. Rocky Knoll continues to be recognized as a leader of providing high quality service and is meeting the challenge of serving residents that require an increasing level of care.

The ***Sheriff's Department*** responsibilities include keeping the peace, enforcing the law, administering the jail and providing bailiffs for the Circuit Courts. The Department continues to enhance its revenue by housing state prisoners. During 2011, there were 4,478 adults and juveniles booked in. On average, the Detention Center houses 200 adult and 7 juvenile inmates each day. The Department completed the implementation process for the computer aided dispatch records maintenance system (CAD/RMS) software.

The ***Treasurer's Office*** effectively distributed tax bills and collected property taxes while minimizing the amount of time people had to stand in lines. The Treasurer has a variety of tax payment options available to make payment of taxes more convenient. The office maintains the tax rolls in a central file for Sheboygan County. Tax rolls are open to the public and are consulted daily by representatives from real estate companies, title insurance companies, financial companies and the general public.

The ***UW-Extension*** Office's mission is to help the residents of Sheboygan County apply university research, knowledge, and resources to meet their educational needs wherever they live and work. The Department provides quality educational programming in four broad program areas: Agriculture and Natural Resources; Community, Natural Resource and Economic Development; 4-H Youth Development; and Family Living Education.

The mission of the ***Veterans Service*** Office is "Serving Those Who Served." The office provides access to local, state and federal benefit programs designed specifically for former members of the U.S. Armed Forces, their qualified survivors and dependents. The office's client base consists of approximately 10,000 veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, 1st Gulf War and our current military involvement in Operation Enduring/Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF), as well as those of the "Cold War" and peacetime service. The Veterans Service Office also counts in their client base qualified survivors and dependents of disabled and/or deceased veterans. In 2011, the office provided assistance to County veterans and their families and helped to bring over \$23 million in state and federal benefit dollars into the County.