



Sheboygan County News

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The State of the County and 2011 Budget Process

by Adam Payne, County Administrator

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Sheboygan County is a leader of providing responsive and cost-effective local government. We have healthy fiscal reserves, an excellent bond rating, and hard-working, caring staff who are effectively meeting the demands of 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 significant 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.

2011 Budget Process

The All Liaison Committee Chairpersons, Executive, and Finance Committees established the goal of no property tax levy increase in excess of 3%, and the following guiding principles: 1) Preservation of the County's bond rating; 2) No reliance on fund balance; and 3) Any increase in wages or benefits would necessitate reductions in programs and services. However, even with a 3% increase in the property tax levy, Sheboygan County is faced with a \$5.1 million gap. Our fiscal challenges and gap are no surprise, for the County Board is well aware of our fiscal

challenges, status and outlook.

Earlier this 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 will certainly have that opportunity as we proceed with the 2011 budget development process. It will no doubt be a challenging budget process, and I know that stress levels are on the rise.

County Leadership Meetings

I am pleased to share that recently seven bargaining unit presidents, the County Board Chairman, Finance Committee Chairman, Human Resources Committee Chairman, HR Director and I met to discuss how we can more collaboratively problem-solve. We all want to continue to provide cost-effective, quality services, and we all want Sheboygan County government to be fiscally responsible and strong in 2011 and years to come. It was a positive, respectful exchange of perspectives and ideas.

During our meeting, we discussed three keys to our organization's 2011 and long-term success. First, we must continue to seek opportunities to streamline and reduce expenditures. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on strategic planning, department operational reviews, and our program evaluation and prioritization process. Second, all employees

need to contribute more towards the cost of their benefits. It isn't our employees fault that health insurance costs have skyrocketed the last decade, but it also isn't fair that the full burden be placed on the shoulders of taxpayers either. And third, the County Board needs to diversify our revenue streams. It is crystal clear from the State's sorry track record that it is not going to take responsibility and provide sufficient funding for the state-mandated programs we are required to provide. To pass the buck and place the full burden on local property taxpayers is not equitable, nor is it likely politically acceptable.

Though we may all not be on the same page, we are all on the same team. I am encouraged with the discussions, and looking forward to working with good people to help make good things happen.

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 2011 budget process will be very challenging, we certainly are not alone. Unemployment is hovering around 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.

Thank you for all that you do.

Employees Recognized for Years of Service at Rocky Knoll

by Jennifer Lloyd, Nursing Shift Supervisor

Rocky Knoll Health Care Center held its annual Employee Recognition Dinner on Wednesday, May 26, 2010. The event was held at Amore, the new banquet facility in Plymouth, where employees enjoyed dinner and celebration, receiving their service pins and small gifts to honor their service to Rocky Knoll and to Sheboygan County. Employees were honored for years of service ranging from 10 years to 40 years. One dedicated em-

ployee, Kristine Berken (pictured receiving her award), celebrated 40 years of service with Rocky Knoll, having been employed with the facility since age 18.

Rocky Knoll would like to take this opportunity to thank each individual who was honored Wednesday as well as all of our employees for their dedication, commitment and impressive leadership while providing quality of care each and every day

for the citizens we serve.



Health & Human Services Helps Those in Need

by Thomas Eggebrecht, Director of Health & Human Services

Being familiar with the full scope of responsibility that the Health & Human Services Department holds is no small challenge. That's true for the 180 employees who work for the department as much as for those who have less contact. Part of the reason for that is found in the department's size, the fact that it operates out of three separate office locations (its main offices on 8th Street, the Job Center on Wilgus Avenue, and the new Aging & Disability Resource Center in Sheboygan Falls), and that its work is divided among four operating divisions governed by varying laws, rules, priorities, and guidelines of multiple state and federal authorities.



Each day, hundreds of persons pass through the department's doors, and others are served in a variety of community settings under the auspices of state statutes that were authored to assure the health, safety, well-being and protection of persons at risk as well as the general community. Chapter 48 of the statutes, for example, holds the county responsible for providing child protection

services, Chapter 51 requires the provision of services for persons with developmental disabilities, mental illness, or alcohol and drug abuse challenges, Chapter 251 requires the protection of public health, and Chapter 938 mandates the provision of juvenile justice assistance.

Last year, that work involved unprecedented demands as the economy faltered, new health concerns arose, and additional social stressors emerged. During the year the department's FoodShare caseload grew by 68 percent, the number of vaccines provided grew by 59 percent, and requests for Energy Assistance and ADRC help each grew by 34 percent over the prior year. At year end, the department was providing access to more than \$10 million in economic assistance benefits per month, had handled more than 5,000 behavioral health crisis, child protection and juvenile justice referrals, and performed nearly 1,300 environmental health inspections among other activities.

Despite these demands, staff achievements were heralded on regional, state and larger levels. The department's Economic Support Division received a mid-west regional Big Ten Special Achievement Award for exceptional accuracy and timeliness of FoodShare application processing, a state-led Quality Service Review of the county's Child Welfare practice demonstrated significant gains over 2006 levels, the number of children and youth placed in residential and other institutional settings was held to an all time low, and the department's Public Health Division was recertified as a Level III program—the highest standard possible.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the tremendous talent, dedication and teamwork of the staff and community partners involved, including the other departments in the county family. A big debt of gratitude and thanks goes out to all.

Long & Winding Road Brings Eggebrecht to a New Home

by Thomas Eggebrecht, Director of Health & Human Services

It's hard to explain what it's like to land in a place surrounded by such good, caring, and talented people that was never part of a life plan but ends up feeling like it was always meant to be. That's the way I have felt in my first months here in Sheboygan County and am extremely grateful to be a part of the Sheboygan County family and team.

I grew up in Wausau, or Big Bull Falls as it was known by its native residents, in the Wisconsin River Valley. It was there that I learned to love nature, married my high school sweetheart, Pam, played guitar in a handful of bands, experienced the 60's, and pondered my future.



As very young people, Pam and I exchanged the comfort of Wausau for the adventure of Milwaukee—Pam to work with inner city kids and me to go to school or find another band, whichever came first. School eventually won out and I had the opportunity to join Pam in the work she was doing as well as forge a career working in a number of other community non-profits in the greater Milwaukee area, earning Bachelors of Fine Arts and M.S. in Management degrees along the way.

Since then, I served Manitowoc County as Developmental Disabilities Coordinator for

10 years and Brown County as Director of Community Programs for nearly 11 years before arriving here. Pam and I recently purchased a beautiful home in Howards Grove where we have absolutely wonderful neighbors and love the community. We hope to see our three boys—Christopher who works for a defense contractor in Orlando, Collin who works as a Physical Therapist in Atlanta, and John who is following in his parents footsteps as Associate Director with a Milwaukee non-profit called America Scores-stop in for visits occasionally.

I still love nature, still dabble in music and photography, and can't think of a place that I would rather be. Sheboygan County is an exceptional place to live and work, and I feel blessed to be able to call it home.

Sheboygan County Awarded Trophy for National Health & Fitness Day

On Wednesday, May 19, Sheboygan County participated in National Health & Fitness Day. The purpose of the National Health and Fitness Day is to encourage people to incorporate physical activity in their daily lifestyle.

Participants are encouraged to participate in 20 minutes of physical activity during the day. Sheboygan County received the traveling trophy due to the highest percentage of participation.

Thank you to all those who participated and assisted with the events of the day.



Operational Review Aids IS in Strategic Planning

by Joyce Schneider, Director of Information Systems

The pressure is on to reduce the budget. Cutting costs can be an overwhelming and painful task, but knowing where to focus efforts can make it easier. We're all trying to squeeze the most from our budgets and yet the requests for automation and technology changes continue to expand in departments as they try to reduce their budgets and serve increasingly more people.

Each year the County Administrator has requested that an independent operational study be conducted for one of the various departments. The Health Care Centers, Health & Human Services, Sheriff, Highway and Child Support departments have all had operational studies done in the past few years and Information Systems has been

selected this year as the next department for an operational study. Changes in technology are happening rapidly and users want more access to more applications, webinars at their desktops which require sound and video, quicker access response times and more mobility just to name a few of the expanding needs. This potentially increases operational expenses because it relates not just to staffing, but processor power requirements, disk expansion needs, backup requirements and licensing costs.

Because the economy currently dictates that we tighten our belts, we must look at ways to reduce spending without reducing Informa-

tion Systems' ability to deliver core services to the user departments. We must also assess Information Systems service levels to individual departments and examine factors that can be both reduced and approved upon.



Some of the factors that will be covered in the operational review include a department needs assessment, the budget allocation method, capacity planning and review of virtualization of the desktop, just to name a few. Taking the initia-

tive to plan now should help to prioritize a strategy that will assure technology expands and grows into the future.

Making Your Money Work for You

by Penny Buchanan-Elsner, Human Resources Analyst

Make the most of your hard-earned dollars by attending this series of workshops developed especially for Sheboygan County employees. Financial Coaches Margaret Wittkopp and Jeremy Burri have a combined total of more than 20 years of experience in the financial advi-

sor industry and are sharing their expertise with you. This fall will be the third time the series has been offered, with new topics added each time. Those who attended have said things like, "wonderful, helpful and presented in a positive manner," "excellent," "informative," "valuable,"

and more. Can you afford to miss out? What you don't know can hurt you, but what you do know can help you! Watch for more information about specific dates, times and topics.



Hanson Brings Government Finance Experience to Sheboygan County

by Adam Payne, County Administrator

Please welcome our new Finance Director, Terry Hanson! Terry began his employment with Sheboygan County on June 7th. He has 13+ years of government finance experience, most recently as the Finance Director for the City of Sheboygan. Prior to that Terry worked in municipal government as a Finance Director and also worked for the State of Minne-

sota. He is a licensed CPA in Minnesota and has applied for a Wisconsin license. Terry is pleased to have the opportunity to work for Sheboygan County and looks forward to meeting and working with the employees as well as serving the citizens



of the county. Terry and his wife, Kelly, have four children ranging in age from 6 to 14. As a family they enjoy a variety of outdoor activities and continue to enjoy the beautiful Sheboygan area that attracted them here two years ago.

Health & Human Services Biggest Loser Contest

This past winter and into early spring, employees of the Health & Human Services Department had a "Biggest Loser Contest." A total of 26 people participated in the 13 week program and had a total loss of 237 1/2 pounds. First place winner was Ed Lauer from the Building Services Department and second place winner was Bob Brion, also from the Building Services Department. Congratulations Ed & Bob and to all of the others who participated in the outstanding loss!



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