

State of the County

By: Adam Payne, County Administrator

Sheboygan County is a leader of providing responsive and cost-effective local government. We have healthy fiscal reserves, an excellent bond rating, and a hard-working, caring staff providing quality services in a fiscally responsible manner.

The County has approximately **835 employees** working in **19 Departments**, administering **over 200 programs and services**, with an overall budget of **\$146 million**.

The Health and Human Services Department (\$34 million), Sheriff's Department (\$23 million), Transportation Department (\$21 million) and Rocky Knoll Health Care Center (\$13 million) are the four largest departments and comprise nearly 2/3rds of the entire County budget. The remaining Departments include: Building Services, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Planning and Conservation, Treasurer/Real Property Listing, County Clerk, Register of Deeds, Medical Examiner, Corporation Counsel, Clerk of Courts, District Attorney, Court Commissioner, UW-Extension, and Veterans Service.

The most important public policy document developed is the annual budget. Out of the \$146 million budget, the County property tax levy is \$48 million. The balance is primarily state and federal revenue, private pay and fee or service charges.

What Have You Done for Me Lately?

Top 10 list of 2016 accomplishments, working our way to number one...

10 Active Threat Drills & Training - Sheboygan County is committed to providing a safe work environment for all employees and the people we serve. Unfortunately, unexpected crisis's, including an active threat, robbery, assault, emergency evacuation, or need to provide medical assistance can happen and does in our society. The past year Sheboygan County provided training to all employees including Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) provided by the Sheriff and HR Departments. "Active Shooter Drills" were held at County facilities, which provided employees the opportunity to practice what they learned. The drills definitively increased ones adrenaline, and for most employees, it was the first time they experienced hearing gun shots in a building. We are now better prepared to respond to such emergencies, and the training was well received.

9 Leadership Development & Pay for Performance – Leadership Development Training was provided for all County Department Heads and managers, with a focus on strengthening our collaborative culture and team development. Training topics included the importance of effective communication, leadership, conflict resolution, employee recruitment, performance management, coaching, and providing feedback. In addition, training was provided on attracting, selecting and retaining the best employees. Sheboygan County recognizes and supports professional development and continuous learning as crucial components of being an effective leader and successful organization.

The Pay for Performance Evaluation process has also continued to improve through ongoing training to foster goal setting, performance evaluation and feedback, as well as employee recognition which all help assure employee and organization success. The County's Pay for Performance Plan recognizes employee contributions, and those that exceed expectations earn a higher performance rating, which provides for a higher wage increase.

8 Courthouse Security Enhancements Approved – In 2016 the Sheboygan County Administrator appointed an ad hoc committee charged with evaluating the Courthouse security and to suggest opportunities for improvement. Courthouse employees were surveyed in the spring of 2016, with 90% responding that they favored having a centralized secured entrance. As a result of the ad hoc committee's work and review of other courthouse security measures, the County Board authorized funding for one secured entrance equipped with scanning and x-ray equipment, video, and personnel. Additional renovations include a circle driveway off North 6th street, repairs to the front courthouse steps, and a wheel chair ramp to accommodate handicapped access.

7 Partnership with GHT - The County realized over \$1,000,000 in savings last year by moving to the Wisconsin Counties Association Group Health Trust (WCA/GHT). Our Strategic Benefits Planning Committee continues to provide valuable input, suggested improvements to our health plan design, and as a result, the County continues to provide an attractive health insurance plan with increased emphasis on offering employee wellness programs. In addition, our InHealth Clinic continues to provide cost effective health care service, which is a win-win for our employees and taxpayers alike.

6 Strong Fiscal Track Record Continues – Sheboygan County has an impressive fiscal track record. We have healthy fiscal reserves, an excellent bond rating and are effectively meeting the demands of providing high quality services in a fiscally responsible manner. In November 2016 the County Board enacted a 1.03% levy decrease. The 2017 budget reflects the 5th property tax levy reduction in the last ten years. Due to ongoing streamlining, consolidation, establishing priorities, and employees' hard work, our total payroll is less today than it was ten years ago. In addition, for the 3rd consecutive year, the County received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

5 Ring of Fiber Installed – In partnership with the City of Sheboygan and the Sheboygan Area School District, Sheboygan County completed the construction of a 23 mile, \$2.5 million underground fiber optic network in October 2016. The network replaces the aging and sometimes unreliable radio tower equipment that previously connected County facilities to the Internet. The enhanced speed and reliability of the new network will support the construction of a disaster recovery and data backup site at the Detention Center in 2017, vastly improving the security of the County’s data assets and its ability to recover from data loss. In addition, this network forms the communication backbone for collaborative projects between the County and City, such as the Combined Dispatch Center and Emergency Operations Center. Owning this fiber optic network guards against price volatility associated with commercial network providers, and the County is already realizing savings.

4 Transportation Complex Approved & Ground Breaking - In 2016 the County Board authorized proceeding with building a new Transportation Complex. The Complex will consolidate the Plymouth Highway Shed, the Elkhart Lake Highway Shed and the main Department Headquarters into one facility more centrally located in the County. Earthwork began in November 2016 and construction is slated to begin in April 2017. The Complex will be approximately 163,000 square feet, or about the size of two football fields. The facility will address a number of problems and costs associated with our aging infrastructure, and allow us to enhance service, centralize operations, better protect and maintain our equipment, reduce our building footprint, and offer three prime pieces of property for redevelopment.

3 Drug & Alcohol Treatment Court Launched - After nearly two years of discussion and planning by the County’s Criminal Justice Advisory Committee and other community stakeholders, a Sheboygan County Drug and Alcohol Treatment Court was successfully launched in July 2016. Under the leadership of Judge Ed Stengel and through the coordination of the Health and Human Services Department, the effort reflects a close collaboration between the Court, the District Attorney’s Office, the State Public Defender, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, local law enforcement, and private treatment providers. Through this initiative, Sheboygan County now offers a more effective blend of treatment and justice that has proven to be effective in reducing recidivism, promoting family unity, and achieving positive outcomes for both participants and communities.

2 Radio Upgrade and Combined Dispatch Project Complete - Sheboygan County invested nearly \$15 million to enhance emergency response and improve public safety with a new radio system, 911 system, and uniform procedures and policies for dispatching law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services for all citizens of Sheboygan County. The new Combined Dispatch Center went live in November 2016 with a staged move from the Sheboygan Police Department to the new dispatch center at the County Law Enforcement Center. This move coincided with the upgrade to a new digital radio system. The new radio system provides better coverage and greater voice clarity than the old analog system which was no longer supported by the manufacturer. With these two major changes, we eliminate duplication of services, eliminate the need to transfer calls from one dispatch center to the other, improve emergency response, and long-term efficiencies are gained through staffing, training and equipment replacement.

1 Implementing County Sales Tax & Revenue Sharing Program - In order to support 450 miles of County roads, 73 bridges, and be fiscally responsible, a proposal was developed that provides the financial resources to pave 30 miles annually, as well as fund bridge and road reconstruction. In addition, recognizing that we are not the only unit of government falling behind on maintaining our transportation infrastructure, the County is also sharing some of the revenue with our local municipalities (the first County to do so in the State). By implementing the ½ percent county sales tax, the Sheboygan County Board established a sustainable revenue source to help maintain a safe and reliable county transportation system, be fiscally responsible, reduce borrowing, reduce debt service, provide direct property tax relief, and share sales tax revenue with our local municipalities to help support their transportation needs.

What is the State of the County?

Strong. Though there is always room for improvement, ongoing challenges associated with State unfunded mandates, and escalating costs associated with providing services and maintaining our transportation infrastructure, Sheboygan County continues to be a leader of providing responsive and cost-effective local government. We have a team and track record we can take pride in.

Challenges Ahead

If the State continues to erode local control, dictate rigid one-size-fits-all property tax levy caps and doesn’t adequately fund state mandated programs, Sheboygan County will not be able to sustain its present level of programs, services and staffing.