

Event: State of the County Address
Location: Waukesha County Courthouse
Date/Time: Wednesday June 23, 2010 – 7:00 p.m.
Speech: 15 Minutes
Topic: State of the County Address

Welcome

Chairman Dwyer, distinguished Supervisors, Citizens of Waukesha County: Good evening and thank you for attending tonight's State of the County Address. I'm honored to have the opportunity this evening to address you about the state of Waukesha County and our outstanding position as a leader in Wisconsin. I'd like to address the state of the economy in Waukesha County and the opportunities that lie ahead. It is with great pride that I stand before you and proclaim that the state of Waukesha County is outstanding.

I would like to thank our special guests that are with us this evening.

I am proud to have a number of representative's from Waukesha Electric here with us today. Waukesha Electric has decided to expand their business further in Waukesha County resulting in the creation of approximately 250 local jobs and implications for a number of suppliers in Waukesha County to grow their businesses as well.

Tonight, with us is:

- Waukesha Electric President Tom Brockley
- CFO Bill Hegeman
- And Vice President of Business Development Trent Spear

Please stand so we can all recognize your commitment to Waukesha County.

In March, Waukesha County celebrated the 100th Alcohol Treatment Court graduation. I would like to congratulate the Criminal Justice Collaborating Council, the Wisconsin Community Services and all 100 graduates for this outstanding achievement.

When the program began in May 2006, it was the first Alcohol Treatment Court in Wisconsin. Since then, recognizing how successful these programs can be in reducing the number of repeat drunk drivers and jail days served, several other Wisconsin communities have begun their own Alcohol Treatment Court. In 2009 alone, 40 Waukesha County residents graduated from this important and successful program.

With us this evening, is one of the graduates from the program – Paul.

Paul is an outstanding example of the positive impact this program can have on the lives of individuals. Paul, please stand so we can applaud your success.

I would like to thank some of the leaders that make Waukesha County so successful: This year, we merged the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Aging and Disability Resource Center into the Department of Health and Human Services. I would like to thank the leaders of those departments Tom Ludka, Cathy Bellovary and Peter Schuler for a successful merger without any disruption to service delivery. In fact, our service delivery is better than ever.

I want to congratulate the efforts and teamwork by Waukesha County employees and volunteers in making the H1N1 Vaccination Clinics an incredible success. Under the leadership of Public Health Manager, Dr. Nancy Healy-Haney, employees from many departments came together and contributed their individual expertise. In total over 500 Waukesha County employees and volunteers vaccinated approximately 16,000 Waukesha County residents and, as a result, the spread of disease was greatly limited.

I am constantly receiving accolades for our outstanding dispatchers and the work of the Waukesha County Communications Center. In fact, a few months ago, I received a call from the mayor of Wauwatosa thanking us on behalf of all Wauwatosa citizens. She thanked me for the quick response by our dispatchers and Sheriff's department when Wauwatosa dealt with a shooting of one of their police officers. I would like to thank all of our dispatchers, under the leadership of Richard Tuma, and our outstanding Sheriff's Department, under the leadership of Sheriff Trawicki, for their exemplary service.

I am very proud of Waukesha County. We have committed Department Heads and employees who constantly strive for excellence and act in the best interest of the County. We have a dedicated County Board and we all work as partners to deliver excellent service to Waukesha County residents. It is our partnership that not only makes us so successful, but makes us unique. With the next budget cycle approaching it is this dedication of employees and our partnership that will help us continue our success and leadership.

Fiscal Health

I am proud to tell you today that Waukesha County is in outstanding fiscal health. Last month we were informed that Moody's Investor Services and Fitch Ratings renewed our AAA/aaa bond rating, the highest rating given. This marks the 22nd consecutive year that we have received this rating from Moody's and the 13th consecutive year we have received this from Fitch. This rating helps Waukesha County maintain lower borrowing costs and assist with keeping taxes low.

Fitch Ratings highlighted Waukesha County's conservative budgeting practices as justification for the rating. It is because of this conservative budgeting that we are in the position we are in. I am proud to tell you that we ended the 2009 budget year with a favorable result of \$2 million.

This was achieved in spite of recession based revenue shortfalls of \$1.5 million. This success must be attributed to our outstanding budget team and Department Heads and employees who are constantly seeking innovative ways to save taxpayers money. I would like to highlight some of these budget successes:

Examples of personnel cost savings include:

- Department of Public Works saved \$299,000 mainly due to positions that were held open;
- Clerk of Circuit Court operations saved nearly \$200,000 from position turnover and by holding positions vacant;
- Register of Deeds office personnel costs were \$104,000 under budget mostly due to the department management's decision to hold open 2 full-time clerical positions; and
- An additional savings of nearly \$160,000 in personnel costs was achieved through a voluntary employee furlough program that ran from June through December of 2009.

Investing in energy efficient equipment at the County was not only an effort to be more environmentally conscious, but ultimately to save tax dollars. We are now seeing cost savings and a return on our investment from these initiatives.

Some discretionary cost savings came from lower than budgeted spending on postage and printing costs due to greater utilization of technology to send emails and save documents electronically. Also, the Public Health Division was able to save \$105,000 mainly due to under spending for the H1N1 mass vaccination clinics on outside nursing pool staff, clerical support coverage and paramedic services that were not needed due to coverage provided by County staff.

Additionally, the Department of Parks and Land Use achieved higher parks fee revenues mostly due to the popularity of the Minooka Dog

Park, favorable weather conditions and individuals seeking relatively inexpensive recreational opportunities during the economic recession.

Investments in energy conservation and favorable weather conditions that resulted in lower energy consumption led to utility expenditures being under budget by approximately \$546,000. The Department of Parks and Land Use set aside more acres of naturalized parkland, requiring less mowing and maintenance efforts. This single initiative saved the County nearly \$108,000 in personnel costs and additional dollars from the decrease in fuel consumption.

Wellness

I am also very proud of our employee wellness program that is providing employees the tools to upgrade their lifestyle. Last year Waukesha County experienced an increase of less than 2% in health insurance costs. Part of this outstanding achievement must be attributed to Waukesha County's employee wellness program. The County's Health Advancement Program has been incredibly successful with over 500 employees participating in biometric screening and many other is additional wellness programs, this year. As part of this initiative Waukesha County offers employees on site fitness classes, smoking cessation and weight-loss programs, "lunch and learns" with topics such as managing stress, fitness and healthy eating.

Investing in employees is one of the most crucial things an employer can do to improve and sustain a successful workplace. The health of employees, in many ways, dictates the success and longevity of a business. Healthy employees are productive employees, healthy employees are happy employees and healthy employees are dedicated employees.

Sustainability

Our sustainability efforts continue to be an important part in our overall strategic plan. Efficient use of energy has been an ongoing goal for Waukesha County, and we continue on that path this year. As you all have heard me say before, ultimately, being “green” saves green. By using energy more efficiently, we are also using tax dollars more economically.

Included in Waukesha County’s 2010-2014 Capital Plan is the construction of an energy efficient and sustainable Retzer Nature Center facility. This building will include sustainable enhancements in design and construction. The heating and cooling of the space will be provided by a Geothermal system. It is expected that utility costs will be entirely offset by incorporating renewable energy systems in this new, energy-efficient building. Imagine: a building without a utility bill.

Also, when discussing our sustainability efforts, I must applaud the work of Waukesha County employees in their efforts to reduce paper usage. Employee paper usage was reduced by 14% in just one year after launching the paper usage initiative in 2008. It is estimated that last year paper usage by employees was reduced by 20%.

Last month I had the honor and privilege of accepting the Water Star award on behalf of Waukesha County. We were one of the first communities to receive this award honoring our outstanding efforts to protect our waterways and conserve water usage in the County.

In February, Waukesha County was awarded \$45,000 from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG), the first of its kind in the nation, under the Wisconsin Energy Independent Community Partnership. This grant provides the funding to further expand and update our Sustainability Plan.

The Sustainability Plan sets a strategy to attain and maintain a place of leadership in environmental stewardship and sustainability at our facilities, in our operations and in the larger community of which we are a part.

Cooperation

Cooperation and collaboration continue to play a key role in our success.

Over the course of the last few months I have had the opportunity to meet with municipal leaders throughout Waukesha County. While meeting with these leaders, I have told them about the wonderful things that we are doing in Waukesha County and learning more about what is going on in their communities. These meetings have been an outstanding opportunity to discuss ways to work together to strengthen our relationship and our countywide initiatives.

The Medical Examiner's Office currently provides contracted autopsy coverage for Racine County and Washington County and has a memorandum of understanding with Walworth County to provide some contracted assistance. About one quarter of all autopsies performed in Waukesha County are for counties outside of Waukesha that have contracted with the Department.

The recent contract between the Sheriff's Department and the City of Pewaukee to provide law enforcement services to the City of Pewaukee is another great example of cooperation. This agreement, the first time a Sheriff's Department has contracted with a city in the state of Wisconsin, has been projected to save city taxpayers approximately \$800,000, and is working great!

In the public health area, Waukesha County Division of Public Health launched an H1N1 awareness campaign last fall in conjunction with thirteen other health agencies in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Currently, Waukesha County is exploring recycling facility options with the City of Milwaukee and the City of Wauwatosa. All three of our communities have the same needs and it makes sense for us to coordinate as a region and use one facility instead of three.

Our Federated Library system continues to seek out new ways to be cooperative and efficient. The shared purchase of ten information databases has saved libraries over \$1 million in the past 8 years. County residents used them over 100,000 times during 2009 – just 80 cents a use.

The System's van delivery service to member libraries handled over 900,000 items in 2009, a nine-fold increase since 2004. The delivery service saved all libraries hundreds of thousands of dollars in postage and handling costs.

Capital Plans

This year, the much anticipated Waukesha West Bypass project has entered a new stage, the Environmental Impact Study stage. In this stage of the project, the County will gather data such as the location of property lines, topography of the area and the general environment in an effort to determine alternate routes and their impacts.

The Department of Public Works is using a community sensitive approach to the project by forming an advisory committee made up of a range of project stakeholders to assist the study team. These stakeholders, include local landowners (residential and commercial), city, town and county officials, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources, the Southeastern

Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), community groups and employers.

At the end of May, the Department of Public Works hosted its first Waukesha West Bypass Public Information Meeting. Over 200 people attended the meeting which provided an opportunity for stakeholders to visit with the project team, learn more about the study, review displays and share ideas and concerns.

The new Health and Human Services Building is now in the design phase. The design team has been meeting with HHS staff and other stakeholders to design a building that will serve Waukesha County for generations to come.

Future

As you all know, we are still coming out of the recession and it will take some time until the economic climate improves. The economy is slowly recovering, but the growth in property values continues to lag behind the economic recovery which has an impact on the County budget. Despite this fact, the County's portion of the property tax on the average home has only increased \$4 in the last 5 years.

We have a great team in Waukesha County, and we are positioned to come out of this recession strong. Our budget team is outstanding and they exercise great fiscal management for Waukesha County. We have committed department heads and employees who, last year, did an outstanding job managing department budgets which puts us in a good position for this year's budget.

I am very proud of our employees who took advantage of last year's voluntary furlough program. This program was incredibly successful and resulted in \$160,000 of savings for Waukesha County.

The Waukesha County Airport is an incredibly important asset to Waukesha County and vital to future economic development in the County.

Recently the Waukesha County Airport participated in an economic impact study. The study found that the airport is responsible for over 900 jobs in Wisconsin, both directly or indirectly. Directly, the airport provides over \$10 million in payroll and over \$42 million in direct sales. In total, the airport provides over \$20.7 million dollars in wages and salary and over \$74 million in sales for the state of Wisconsin.

Tonight, you, the County Board will vote on an ordinance to bring the Airport into the Department of Public Works as a full division. If this ordinance passes, which I hope it does, this will be another example of Waukesha County's work toward continued collaboration and efficiency.

I would like to thank the Airport Study team, under the leadership of Supervisor Dave Falstad, and the many members including Supervisor Dave Swan, Airport Commissioner Mike Crowley and many others for their commitment and support for this project.

Waukesha County Business Growth and Opportunity

In closing, I would like to recognize Waukesha County's continued business growth and development.

In addition to the contributions from Waukesha Electric, BuySeasons, located in the City of New Berlin has added 150 jobs over the last year; Dickten-Maasch and Triad have each added 100 jobs to Waukesha County and the Shoppes at Fox River shopping complex has been recognized as the only mall built in Wisconsin in 2009.

Closing

I would like to thank my administration and all of our devoted employees, appointed Board and Commission members, and elected officials for their dedication to Waukesha County. I am so very proud of Waukesha County and look forward to many years of continued fiscal health and success. Waukesha County is leading the way in Wisconsin and nationwide. Thank you.