

SEPTEMBER 8, 2009 SESSION  
OF THE  
WALWORTH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Walworth County Board Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order by Chair Russell at 5:02 p.m. at the Government Center, 100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin.

**Roll Call**

Roll call was conducted: Supervisors Present: 11 - F. Mark Bromley, Vice-Chair Jerry A. Grant, Randy Hawkins, Claudia J. Holst, Kathy Ingersoll, Daniel G. Kilkenny, Joe Schaefer, Rick Stacey, Jim Van Dreser, David A. Weber, and Chair Nancy Russell; Supervisors Absent: 0.

- **The purpose of the meeting will be for the administrator to present his proposed 2010 budget and to hold a budget workshop**

David Bretl, County Administrator, presented an overview of the 2010 Administrator's Budget. A copy of the Budget was distributed to those present. Bretl said this budget raises the total County levy by 2.89% and is consistent with the guidance provided by the County Board on May 12, 2009 to prepare a budget that limits the overall levy increase to 2.9% or less. Bretl said this is the lowest levy increase in 15 years in Walworth County.

Bretl said that this year the 2010 Administrator's Budget letter highlights eight County employees. He said these employees were selected for inclusion into this document by County department heads and elected officials for their extraordinary dedication and professionalism. He said these employees are representative of the 874 full and part-time employees who comprise our workforce, which is Walworth County government's most valuable asset.

Bretl outlined the 2010 Budget Themes:

**Local Impacts of a National Recession:** Investment Income, Reduced Revenues – Sales Tax, Reduced Revenues – Permit Fees, Pressure on Taxpayers, Increased Demand for Services: Bretl said that because of the reduced revenues in investment income, sales tax, and permit fees, he is recommending a reduction of a position in each of the following offices: Finance, Land Use and Resource Management, and Register of Deeds. Bretl said the same recessionary forces that impact the financial condition of County government also affect its citizens and the pressure on taxpayers. He said he believes the modest levy increase associated with this budget is responsive to the concerns of taxpayers. Bretl said when the economy is at its worst, demand for County services increase in the areas of Health and Human Services and Sheriff Department.

**Monitoring our Most Sensitive Programs:** Lakeland Health Care Center: Bretl said this budget continues to fulfill the promise made to taxpayers when the new LHCC facility was built. This budget includes an LHCC levy in 2010 of \$3,626,361. He said in order to maintain that levy, he is proposing the elimination of a Lead Service Worker and a reduction of a Ward Clerk

from full-time to half-time at the nursing home. **Special Needs Education:** Bretl said that in 2006, the County Board committed to replacing its aging Lakeland School and the same year the County entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the County's fifteen school districts regarding the future of special needs education. Under the agreement, the County turned back to the school districts the responsibility for providing services in their schools. Under that plan, the districts are responsible for hiring all new teacher and aide positions working in the school districts as well as replacing vacancies that occur. As a result, the tax levy associated with Children with Disabilities Education Board (CDEB) operations decreased in 2009 by nearly one percent and the 2010 tax levy associated with County special needs will decrease by approximately 3.0 percent.

**Strengthening our Financial Position:** **Other Post Employment Liability (OPEB):** Bretl said Walworth County is continuing to address the OPEB liability and the total will be \$8.2 million at the end of 2009. He said that the 2010 budget proposes a deposit of \$2.7 million into the locked box for retiree liability. **Debt:** Bretl said we should take every opportunity to retire our debt as aggressively as possible.

**Planning for the Future:** **Corrections:** Bretl said he is concerned about the crowding in the jail and the need to construct an addition to the county jail. He said this budget includes \$25,000 to begin a study of a potential jail expansion. He said he has also included \$50,000 for jail expansion as a 2011 project in our capital improvement plan and \$9.6 million in 2012. He said the addition of jail space will have significant consequences on our tax levy and Corrections already comprises the fastest growing part of the Sheriff's budget. Bretl said he encouraged the Board to study this issue carefully. **Community Initiatives Budget:** Bretl said these are programs run by other than County government, improve the quality of life for our residents, and are not services mandated to be provided by any County department. He said that programs included in the budget are: Walworth County Agricultural Society (County Fair), Walworth County Housing Authority, Association for the Prevention of Family Violence (APFV), and the Walworth County Historical Society (operations). **Technology:** Bretl said that as a result of substantial investment in new technology in financial, payroll, and accounting systems, he has proposed the reduction of a position in the Finance department. He said that this budget proposes a number of information technology projects. A summary of those projects is contained in Exhibit B of his budget letter. **Accommodating the New Mission of Public Works:** Bretl said that to better accommodate the changed role in Public Works, he included the sum of \$600,000 to provide for a modest expansion of the Public Works office area. He said that funding for the project is proposed to come from Public Works fund balance.

**Expanding our Tax Base:** Bretl said that the burden on property taxpayers has increased, statewide, as State funds provided to local government have decreased. He said we need to continue to expand our property and sales tax bases to provide relief to homeowners and this budget attempts to accomplish this through support of tourism and economic development. **Tourism:** Bretl said this budget includes an appropriation of \$130,000 for the Visitors Bureau. **Economic Development:** He said he is proposing a \$50,000 appropriation for Walworth County Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) and continued funding of the CNRED position in UW-Extension.

A final theme of the Administrator's Budget was an update of new programs and projects introduced in 2009.

**Special Projects:** Veterans Memorial and Second Floor Committee Room; and **Special Programs:** Volunteerism; Bus Pilot Program; and Financial Consolidation.

**Conclusion:** Bretl expressed his gratitude to department heads and staff who worked on this budget. He said people were very responsible and asked for just what they needed. He also thanked the Board members and said that he would be available to help them understand any part of or all of this and to help with any appeals.

**Adjournment**

On motion by Supervisor Weber, seconded by Supervisor Van Dreser, the Committee of the Whole adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Kimberly S. Bushey  
County Clerk

STATE OF WISCONSIN     )  
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COUNTY OF WALWORTH)

I, Kimberly S. Bushey, County Clerk in and for the County aforesaid, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings of the County Board of Supervisors Committee of the Whole for the September 8, 2009 meeting.