

**WALWORTH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
OCTOBER 30, 2012**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Russell at the Walworth County Government Center, 100 W. Walworth St., Elkhorn, Wisconsin.

Roll call was conducted and the following Supervisors were present: Richard Brandl, Tim Brellenthin, Vice-Chair Jerry A. Grant, Daniel G. Kilkenny, Kenneth H. Monroe, Carl Redenius, Joe Schaefer, Tim Schiefelbein, Rick Stacey, David A. Weber, and Chair Nancy Russell. A quorum was established.

Approval of the Agenda

On motion by Supervisor Brandl, seconded by Supervisor Weber, the agenda was approved by voice vote.

Motion to Convene as “Committee of the Whole”

On motion by Supervisor Schaefer, seconded by Supervisor Stacey, the Board convened as a “Committee of the Whole.”

Finance Committee Chair to Conduct Public Budget Hearing

Chair Russell turned the meeting over to Administrator Bretl.

Presentation of the Executive Summary:

Administrator Bretl welcomed everyone to the Public Budget Hearing. He said this is an opportunity for Supervisors to hear comments from the public to formulate budget amendments before voting on the budget on November 13, 2012. He introduced Nicki Andersen, Deputy County Administrator-Finance, to deliver the presentation of the preliminary budget.

Deputy County Administrator-Finance Andersen welcomed everyone to the hearing. She thanked the County Board and Administrator Bretl for their work on the budget. Andersen turned the hearing over to Jessica Lanser, Comptroller of Walworth County, to present the 2013 Preliminary Budget.

Ms. Lanser began the presentation by stating the county achieved a budget with no increase from last year’s total tax levy. She explained the different parts that make up the Property Tax Bill, which are: State of Wisconsin; County of Walworth; City, town, or village; Gateway Technical College; School District(s); and Special Taxing Districts. The county portion of the tax bill is approximately 23% of the total tax bill, and depending on the municipality in which you reside, the county portion of the property tax bill can be as low as 10% or as high as 29% of the total tax bill. The county portion is broken down further into two to four parts depending on the municipality in which you reside. Those parts include Library Levy, Debt Service, Children with Disabilities Education Board (CDEB), and Operating Levy. There is a 2.35% increase in the library levy from last year. Townships are the primary source of county library funds; however, the newly incorporated Village of Bloomfield will receive a portion of the library tax this year as it does not have its own library resources available.

The Debt Service Levy has decreased \$2.2 million, or almost 62%, from last year, which has been achieved through the strategic planning on part of the county over the last couple of years. Many

governments have chosen to refinance debts; however, Walworth County has decided to go one step further and make payments early. Ms. Lanser stated the second part of the debt service success story is the complete elimination of anticipated new borrowings. The county has implemented a plan to remove the final \$8 million of road construction borrowing expected in 2015 from last year's Five-Year Capital Plan. The new Five-Year Capital Plan consists of creating an even tax levy amount over the next several years to save for road construction years. The CDEB levy is listed as a separate tax levy line as some school districts are exempt from this tax. The CDEB levy has gradually declined over the last couple of years to its current levy of \$8.3 million. This decline is primarily due to the transition agreements with the individual school districts signed in 2006. This transition agreement requires students outside of Lakeland School to become the responsibility of the individual school districts rather than the county by the end of the 10-year agreement.

Ms. Lanser discussed the changes and strategies that have driven the 2013 budget, which have been identified through a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis, a strategic planning tool used to help identify factors that affect the county and can be used as a guide by management and elected officials when making budgetary or operating decisions. She also discussed the 2013 preliminary revenues and expenditures as well as the impact of the poor economy and the tough steps the Board has taken in the past like reduction of the OPEB liability and reduction of FTE's to positively position Walworth County budgetarily. She also discussed new initiatives and projects being done in anticipation of the future.

Ms. Lanser concluded the presentation by stating the 2013 Preliminary Budget is available for viewing in the County Clerk and Finance offices as well as the on the county website (www.co.walworth.wi.us).

Public Comments and Questions

Charlene Staples, W7898 Creek Road, Delavan. Ms. Staples addressed the board regarding union budget issues. She is the President of newly merged American Federation State County Municipal Employee (AFSCME) Walworth County Public Employee Union Local 1925. She said a letter was sent to Suzi Hagstrom, Employee/Labor Relations Director, on behalf of Local 1925's members stating its desire to enter into negotiations with Walworth County. She also said that AFSCME is willing to work together with Walworth County to find a solution that equitable and fair to all parties involved.

Linda Eastburg, 5751 State Road 50, Burlington. Ms. Eastburg addressed the board regarding the proposed wellness center. She stated she retired from county employment in January 2011 and while she was an active employee, she served on the Labor Management and Insurance Committee. She said while serving on this committee, they were often advised by the county's insurance consultant that a substantial fund reserve was critical for payment of claims when experience was excessive. She also said that in the past, the ways of ensuring this reserve were increased deductibles and copays and increased premium share on part of employees. She stated she was disappointed to hear that no one from the general employee population was asked to serve on the focus group for the wellness center initiative. She said that one way to encourage a buy-in by employees is to involve them from the beginning so they have some ownership and they feel their contribution is valued. She stated she is supportive of this initiative, however, she urged the board to be cautious when it comes to a capital expenditure before the program has been tested to see if utilization is where it needs to be in order to realize the projected cost. She asked the board to consider renting or leasing space for a year or two to judge the utilization. She also encouraged the board to focus on incentives to encourage employee utilization.

Bruce F. Kepner, 6 North Strathfield Circle, Madison. Mr. Kepner is the President of Walworth County Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) and the Economic Development Manager of Alliant Energy. He asked the board for its continued support of WCEDA and thanked the board for their consideration.

Richard Telfer, 304 Woodland Drive, Whitewater. Mr. Telfer is a member of the board of WCEDA and the Chancellor of UW-Whitewater. He spoke in support of the proposed intern position for WCEDA. He stated it will be a good opportunity for WCEDA as well as the student to learn more about economic development.

Motion to Close Public Hearing

On motion by Supervisor Weber, seconded by Supervisor Brandl, the Public Budget Hearing was closed.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Russell reminded Supervisors of the next County Board Meeting, which is Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment

On motion by Supervisor Schaefer, seconded by Supervisor Brandl, the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Kimberly S. Bushey
County Clerk

STATE OF WISCONSIN)
) SS
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 for the October 30, 2012 Public Budget Hearing.