

**SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 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 5:01 p.m. at the Government Center, 100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin.

**Roll Call**

Roll Call was conducted and the following Supervisors were present: Richard Brandl, Tim Brellenthin, Kathy Ingersoll, Daniel G. Kilkenny, Kenneth H. Monroe, Joe Schaefer, Rick Stacey, Charlene Staples, David A. Weber, Paul Yvarra, and Chair Nancy Russell. A quorum was established.

○ **Presentation of County Administrator's proposed 2016 budget and budget workshop**

Administrator Bretl presented an overview of the 2016 Administrator's Budget. A copy of the 2016 Administrator's Budget was distributed to those present.

Bretl stated this budget proposes a 0.65% increase in the overall levy, a slight increase following approximately four years of levy freezes. He explained the important dates in the budget process as outlined in the budget book.

Bretl gave an overview of the 2016 Budget Themes. He referenced the sidebar articles including the County's roads and bridges.

Equalized Value: Bretl gave an overview of the historical equalized value changes and stated the banking crisis in 2008 had a significant impact on Walworth County property values and stated there has been little new construction within the County since that time. Since the property tax cap is based on the value of net new construction, we are capped at a fairly lower rate. He also said, psychologically, home owners are not seeing their homes are worth more. This reinforces our need to ensure taxes are as affordable as possible.

Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB): Bretl gave an overview of OPEB, which is the County's commitment to provide health care to its retirees. He stated the actuarial present value (APV) is in excess of \$23 million and the APV will be recalculated in December 2015. Bretl stated the County has funded this over the required schedule and he is not recommending any extraordinary deposits.

Employee Health Care: Bretl stated that the County has been proactive in making design changes and keeping a cap on this fund. He said this is the sixth consecutive year recommending there be no increase in the healthcare premiums and to accomplish this, the County will draw down on reserves.

Maintaining our Infrastructure: Bretl gave an overview of the facilities infrastructure. He stated during the decade of the 2000s the County replaced or upgraded many of its buildings and in 2014 the County approved a plan to start saving money towards major building improvements/replacements. He said the County has been paying down debt, but that there are no bonds to call until 2017 and 2018. Bretl stated the need to borrow funds is not projected through 2020.

**Maintaining Transportation Infrastructures:** Bretl gave an overview on maintaining transportation infrastructure and bridges and reported that the Beulah dam has been replaced and should last approximately 100 years. He said in the past, the County relied on the State's Local Bridge Program for grant funding when a bridge needed to be replaced. Under the program, the State would pay 80% and the County would pay the remaining share, and that the grant cycle occurs every two years. Bretl stated in the last grant cycle the County was unsuccessful in obtaining State funding. He stated the County should continue trying to obtain State funding, but if unsuccessful we should begin to rebuild the infrastructures ourselves. He then reviewed the Bridge/Replacement Schedule.

**Fleet:** Bretl reported on the results of the Public Works department study that was performed to determine the optimal time to trade/replace tandem axle trucks and stated that the budget proposes replacement approximately every eight years. He stated there will be the need to replace four vehicles in 2016.

**Large Capital Projects:** Bretl stated the plans and specs are to be approved in December for Phase I of the Public Works facility which is proposed to proceed in 2016. He said the Health and Human Services facility is scheduled to be engineered in 2018 and built in 2019 for a total upgrade of approximately \$9 million, including engineering. He stated the Sheriff's communication project includes an estimated \$5.5 million to be spent between 2018 and 2020.

**Proactive Solutions to Challenges:** Bretl stated it is anticipated that the County Agricultural Society strategic planning process will be completed this fall. He said the budget includes \$80,000, which will allow \$20,000 for operation expenses and \$60,000 to winterize the North Exhibit Hall for the purpose of holding year round events.

**Treatment Courts:** Bretl gave a brief overview of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee. He stated the budget provides a net increase of 0.75 FTEs for the Clerk of Circuit Court to support treatment courts in the amount of approximately \$196,000. Bretl encouraged the support of the Board for that amount.

**Economic Development:** Bretl stated the Walworth County Economic Development Association (WCEDA) has asked for an additional \$8,000 to expand a youth program they are working on. He stated WCEDA is partnering with the County's K-12 schools, higher education institutions, the Job Center, and area employers to improve workforce development through the Walworth County Career Awareness Campaign.

**Strategic Planning:** Bretl gave a brief overview of the long-term planning. He stated that the plan was developed through the cooperative efforts of all County departments and many of the goals will align with one or more of the longer-term budget areas.

Bretl then reviewed the Areas of Board Interest section of the report.

**Tax Levy:** Bretl stated that the tax levy calls for an increase of .65%. He said if the levy were to be cut, it would be the new starting point for next year. Bretl urged that the Public Works plan remain intact to help keep the levy lower in the future.

**District Attorney:** Bretl stated \$32,000 has been budgeted for a new assistant district attorney position which is to begin the second half of the year. If approved, this would be a State employee, funded by County property tax dollars. He said the District Attorney is willing to eliminate a County

administrative support position in his office when two individuals are expected to retire in July 2016. Bretl stated the District Attorney has indicated his office is short 3.34 attorney positions, based on state statistics.

Community Initiatives: Bretl stated the community initiatives have significantly increased spending over the years and we continue to receive requests. He said he has included an additional \$10,000 for the Visitors Bureau for the purpose of bidding in the Circle Wisconsin Midwest Marketplace, which will allow for an upcoming convention for bus tour operators. He stated an additional \$7,500 was included for the Historical Society due to the increase in utilities as a result of the additional space at Heritage Hall.

Indoor Range: Bretl stated in cooperation with Sheriff Picknell, the County's indoor range was closed due to unsafe conditions. He said the old building will be torn down and replaced with another, which has been included in the 2017 Capital Plan.

Planning for the future: Bretl referred to Appendix A of his Preliminary Budget, which gives an overview of the Major Personnel Actions and Appendix B, Long Range Plan.

Bretl concluded by thanking the department heads for their team efforts and assistance in preparing the budget. He commended the Finance department for the many hours they put into the budget and Nicole Hill and Kate Willett for their efforts in the production of the report.

Bretl turned the meeting over to Chair Russell. Chair Russell announced that the budget amendment forms were distributed to the Supervisors.

Supervisor Weber inquired about the Zoning Committee and the short term rental issue, as he did not see it referred to within the budget. Bretl stated the short term rental issue is viewed as a levy neutral impact.

Supervisor Ingersoll stated she would like to hear from Sheriff Picknell relative to current events and the possible need for the indoor shooting range earlier than 2018. Sheriff Picknell stated that in light of everything going on he is comfortable holding off for the 2017 budget as the outdoor facility is still available.

## **Adjournment**

On motion by Supervisor Stacy, seconded by Supervisor Weber, the meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

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 September 8, 2015 Committee of the Whole Meeting.