

April 2023 | VOL. 8

OUR GREAT COMMUNITY

Quarterly newsletter of Washington County, Wisconsin
DISCOVER. CONNECT. PROSPER.



COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JOSH SCHOEMANN



Re-envisioning Higher Education in Washington County

Over fifty-five years ago our county fathers strongly advocated for the placement of a two-year campus of the University of Wisconsin System here in West Bend. After successfully fighting for the widely coveted brick and mortar affiliation with the UW, the Board of Regents approved the request in the late 1960's. For the better part of the first fifty years the campus grew from a relatively modest structure and a small faculty, into a robust entry point into the UW System for students of all ages. Also, during its first fifty years, the campus served as a key community resource for businesses, local governments and non-profit organizations to benefit from the resources of the UW education right here in Washington County.

The past decade, however, has proven to be a much different story for our campus, and higher education as a whole. Prompted by the confluence of declining enrollments (caused by a variety of circumstances), and fiscal restraints from a combination of declining tuition and state-imposed austerity measures, 2015 to present has produced a nearly endless series of changes to our campus and the entire UW System. Most recently, during the pandemic, and the resulting innovative improvements to remote learning, this challenge has become even more acute. Worse yet, given the demographic challenges on the horizon in the next two decades, it is simply time to re-envision higher education in Washington County.

In May of 2021 I commissioned a Task Force of key community leaders to consider the future of our campus. After changes to the UW System, the Task Force got to work in earnest in October 2022. As they began their work, I implored the Task Force to find a solution that fits the needs of our kids, employers and community without any additional taxpayer burden. As one of only two counties on the east side of Wisconsin, from Illinois to Green Bay, without a four year institution of higher education, we have to get this right!

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In pursuit of a Washington County solution, over the past six months co-chairs Paul Stangl and John Torinus have ushered the group through a series of eight conversations and presentations by stakeholders all across the community. They carefully considered a variety of approaches and perspectives, and throughout it all stayed focused on the interests of taxpayers, and the needs of future students and employers. Everything became a bit more acute, when in the midst of their work current UW System President Jay Rothman announced the effective closure of UW - Platteville at Richland County.

With a renewed vigor, in March the Task Force adopted a resolution, and an accompanying white paper, proposing to merge the resources of UW-Milwaukee at Washington County and Moraine Park Technical College (MPTC) - West Bend Campus. This new “community college concept” as we call it, will reinvigorate higher education in Washington County and create a fiscally and demographically sustainable model that is responsive to the needs of our county. Furthermore, the Task Force’s proposal is a proactive approach, not waiting for the UW or the state to determine our fate.

In the coming months we will work closely with all partners throughout the community and state to create a path to execution. We hope to create a strong partnership between the county and MPTC, similar to our previous relationship with the UW for the past 55+ years.

I want to thank each and every member of the Task Force for their no-nonsense, get-it-done approach to finding a solution, and to our partners at MPTC and UWM for their support and professionalism. This topic and others will be discussed at my listening sessions in June. Please see the schedule in this newsletter.

UWM-WC Higher Education Task Force:

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Co chairs: | • Amy Campbell | • Tom Hostad |
| • Paul Stangl | • Allen Ericson | • Kraig Sadwonikow |
| • John Torinus | • Michael J. Faley | • Dave Stroik |
| | • Christina Fiasca | • Jen Wimmer |
| | • Scott Henke | • Craig Wolf |



Josh Schoemann
County Executive

County Board's Corner - Serving Our Great Community

At a recent presentation to the County Board, EDWC gave an update on the Impact Revolving Loan Fund, which the board established in 2018 by investing a portion of the county’s share of sales tax revenue. As background, in 2011 we saw the value of a revolving loan fund, and began moving some sales tax income, in excess of what we had budgeted, to begin that fund. After doing this several years in a row, we saw the early results, and decided to fully fund the process.

Our county budget currently uses 47% of our sales tax to fund Capital Improvements (equipment, highways, buildings, etc.), and 53% to reduce the property tax levy, based on projected sales tax income. With a biennial budget, that means our finance department is projecting sales tax amounts up to 2 1/2 years ahead. We approach this very conservatively, and the fund was grown by \$1 million each year, until it was fully funded at \$18.5 million at year end 2022.

The beauty of this is that this self-sustaining loan fund is used to fund improvements to local businesses, which in turn result in more employment, which should bring more workers to our county. This economic growth engine creates more spending and additional property taxes and sales tax, which pays the process forward. The county has not added sales tax to the fund since it reached the target set of \$18.5 million, but, through good management by EDWC, it has continued to grow. This should now be a fund that will continue to feed itself in the coming years. We feel very good about how we have leveraged some of our sales tax income over the years to add to our local prosperity.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Schleif, County Board Chair



County Clerk's Office
Register of Deeds Office
Treasurer's Office

Beginning April 3 4-10s Schedule

Hours of operation will be
4 days a week/10 hours a day,
Monday through Thursday,
7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The Washington County Board of Supervisors approved a request from the County Clerk, Treasurer, and Register of Deeds to implement a pilot program to change their office hours to a “4-10s” schedule – working four days a week, 10 hours a day, to better serve the public.

This proposed pilot program will be an expansion of the limited pilot program undertaken by County Clerk Ashley Reichert last summer when her office used the “4-10s” schedule. The results of that initial pilot program were positive, with 43% of all appointments scheduled outside of the normal appointment times - before 8:15 a.m. and after 3:45 p.m. The success of this program led to consideration of an expanded pilot program.

The County Clerk, Register of Deeds, and County Treasurer’s offices will adjust their operation hours to a four-day work week, Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and will be closed on Fridays. The three county offices will begin the new hours on Monday, April 3.

The pilot program will analyze improvement to customer service, recruitment advantages, and cost-savings. Other county functions that may be affected, support functions and payroll will also be studied.

No other county departments will be adjusting work hours at this time.

Washington County Anti-Crime Plan 'B'

Last fall, Washington County Executive Josh Schoemann and Sheriff Marty Schulteis met with citizens throughout the county to talk about public safety and the supporting Anti-Crime Plan referendum which was under consideration on last year’s November ballot.

While the referendum was rejected by the voters, we heard loud and clear from the voters that we need to live within our means, but our quality of life and the safety of our families is still a top priority. We understand that it's your money, not the county's.

They then began discussions to develop a modified Anti-Crime Plan, one that ensures we live within our means, to the County Board which was approved at its January meeting.

This “Plan B” is a scaled down version and will add 11 positions to the Sheriff’s Office to include three Co-Responder Units (CRU) to respond to behavioral health-related calls, two deputies on patrol, and three correctional officers.

In order to fund this \$1 million plan within our budget without raising taxes, difficult reductions were made throughout all departments by eliminating vacant positions. Public safety is our highest priority, and this plan still provides important resources the Sheriff’s Office needs to keep crime down in our community.



Agricultural Round Table Listening Sessions



County Executive Josh Schoemann held the 3rd Annual Agricultural Round Table Listening Sessions in March. About 50 attendees heard an update on county-related agricultural issues from Chief Community Development Officer Jamie Ludovic along with moderated table discussions led by UW-Madison Extension Community Development Educator Paul Roback.

Several themes were identified as areas of concern. Many participants cited the need for changes to local zoning regulations to improve friendliness to agriculture, including allowing niche market farming to supplement revenue. Of major concern are worker shortages and fewer people interested in farming. Some suggested the need to educate youth at the high school level through programs or school counselors so they are aware of careers in agriculture. The group would like to directly connect the farm community with fire departments to be better prepared in emergencies at farms.

Schoemann said a big leap forward for agriculture in the county was the just announced revisioning of the Fair Park Agricultural & Industrial Society (AIS) to concentrate its focus on agricultural issues.

WASHINGTON COUNTY PARKS April - June Event Schedule

DATE	EVENT	PARK
Saturday, April 22 nd	Celebrate Trails Day	Washington County Trails
Wednesday, May 3 rd	The Tap Yard - West Bend Opening Day	Ackerman's Grove
Sat/Sun, May 13 th /14 th	Tough Mudder	Heritage Trails
Sunday, May 21 st	Explore Our Parks	Leonard J. Yahr
Friday, May 26 th	1840 Traveling Beer Garden Show	Homestead Hollow
Wednesday, June 14 th	Bridal Open House	Sandy Knoll
Saturday, June 24 th	Neon Lights Mountain Bike Ride	Heritage Trails
Friday, June 30 th	1840 Traveling Beer Garden Show	Homestead Hollow

Highway Department is Going Green!



Although the Washington County Highway Department always tries to be environmentally conscious, it's going green in a different way. You will start to see green strobe lights on the truck and equipment fleet rather than just the traditional amber yellow.

Last year, a state law was signed enabling use of fluorescent green warning lights on county or municipal maintenance vehicles, in addition to red or amber lights. **Green light configurations are restricted to county and municipal maintenance operations only and not for private use**, as stated in Wisconsin State Statute 347.07(2) and 347.26(7).

Why green? There is science behind the change. It has to do with color spectrums and how they work with the human eye. Studies have proven that green strobes create more contrast and are more visible in low-visibility conditions such as fog and snowy white-outs.

The Highway Department reminds drivers to give the road maintenance vehicles plenty of room to operate safely. Your help is appreciated in keeping our roads safe for our community!

Horse Owners Workshop

Farms, like industries, must follow environmental requirements to control runoff from fields, pastures and livestock facilities. Otherwise this pollution may harm our lakes, streams, wetlands and groundwater.

Earlier this winter, over 50 people gathered at the Fair Park for Washington County's first ever Horse Owners Workshop. Presentations focused on a Total Systems Approach to pasture, feeding, horse health and manure management were given by Mark Renz-UW Madison Weed Science, Don Gallo-Erin Meadows Farm and Stephanie Egner-Washington County Land & Water Conservation.

They educated the group on weed control and good pasture management, impacts herbicide may have on composting systems; managing pasture and paddock runoff, haylage feed to keep horses, and composting/manure management that is used to keep good fertility in pastures. They also covered manure storage management and composting opportunities for landowners and how a nutrient management plan can improve pasture management with on-farm manure resources.

With the growing number of equine sites in our area, the number one goal was to educate equine clientele that conservation/nutrient management professionals are available for technical assistance. In cooperation and help with local citizens and guidance from the DNR's Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions, Land & Water Conservation is responsible for protecting the surface and groundwater resources of Washington County.



THE TAP YARD - WEST BEND RETURNS ON 5/3 AT ACKERMAN'S GROVE COUNTY PARK!

NEXT GENERATION HOUSING INITIATIVE



EXPANDING HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION



As of March 2023, there were a total of 9 homes under \$300K available for purchase in Washington County! (Per Realtor.com)



The Next Generation Housing Initiative was launched in October of 2021. Washington County Executive Josh Schoemann recognized the need for high quality attainable housing and established this initiative to create more "missing middle" housing in the County. The main goal of this initiative is to create 1,000 new owner-occupied dwelling units in Next Generation Housing developments with 75% selling for under \$320,000 and 100% under \$420,000, including home and lot/site, by 2032. Washington County is providing \$10 million in incentives for Next Generation Housing developments and a Next Generation Housing Down Payment Program.



The Next Generation Housing Fund Framework details how Washington County and participating local governments will achieve the goal of providing housing opportunities for working individuals and families to grow their roots in the County and build equity through homeownership.

Scan the QR code to access the Framework.



VILLAGE OF JACKSON PILOT

- 20-acre site
- 101 proposed dwelling units (53 Single-Family Homes, 40 Townhomes, and 8 Twin Homes)



Progress So Far

- Engineering firm selected
- Planned Unit Development zoning approved
- Subdivision ordinance amendment approved
- Preliminary Plat approved

Next Steps - May 2023

- Infrastructure construction to start
- Builder selection

“I'm extremely excited that Washington County is moving forward on the Next Generation Housing Initiative. I believe it will help many achieve homeownership while still living within their means. We just want a small, new home with a small yard to call our own. We'd finally have our own space. Everyone deserves a chance to feel proud of owning their own home.”

City of Hartford resident

For questions, contact the Community Development Department at 262-335-4445 or cddinfo@washcowisco.gov

April 22, 2023

Celebrate Trails & Earth Day

The Eisenbahn Trail

WASH CO TRAILS DAY
APRIL 22, 2023



Washington County Parks Upcoming Events!



TOUGH MUDDER WISCONSIN



SIGN UP NOW

5/13 & 5/14
HERITAGE TRAILS



EXPLORE OUR PARKS

SAVE THE DATE!

May 21, 2023

Leonard J. Yahr County Park

11:00am - 3:00pm



April 2023 | VOL 8

OUR GREAT COMMUNITY

Listening Sessions with County Executive Josh Schoemann

Thursday, June 8, 2023



Coffee Conversations

7:30AM - Java Dancer

Coffee Bar and Café

1333 State Rd. 175, Ste. B
Richfield

9AM - Sheryl's Club 175

3545 Hwy. 175 - Slinger

11AM - JC's Corner & Grill

1855 Hwy. 83 - Erin



Community Town Halls

1:30PM - Germantown Village Hall

N112W17001 Mequon Rd.
Germantown

3PM - Jackson Town Hall

South Conference Room
3146 Division Rd.
Jackson



Cheers and Chats

5:30PM

Great Outdoors
Supper Club

8906 Forest View Rd.
Kewaskum

Please join County Executive Josh Schoemann to
voice your concerns, ask questions, or just listen!
Questions or need for special accommodations? Call 262-306-2200

For more details visit:

www.washcowisconsin.gov/departments/county_executive/events

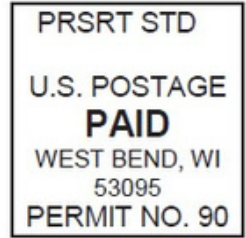


SCAN ME





HERBERT J. TENNIES GOVERNMENT
CENTER 432 EAST WASHINGTON STREET
WEST BEND, WI 53095



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