

WISCONSIN COUNTIES UTILITY TAX ASSOCIATION
44 East Mifflin Street, Suite 605A, Madison, Wisconsin 53703
Phone: (608) 250-4685

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD

March 21, 2014

**DeWitt Ross & Stevens S.C.
Madison, Wisconsin**

2013-2014 Officers

The following members were present:

President
JOHN H. TRAMBURG
(920) 484-3534
Columbia County

John Tramburg
Lawrence Willkom
William Goerhing
Richard Ott
Nick Osborne
Kaye Shillin
Linda Sinkula
Chuck Hoffman

Columbia County
Chippewa County
Sheboygan County
Rock County

Vice President
LAWRENCE WILLKOM
(715) 723-5804
Chippewa County

Buffalo County
Kewaunee County
Manitowoc County

Secretary
WILLIAM GOEHRING
(920) 994-4749
Sheboygan County

Via Phone: Jon Pazynski

Staff: Alice O'Connor, WCUTA

Excused: Herbert Cornell, Kyle Christianson, Sharon Hampson,
Jon Hochkammer, Del Twidt and Larry Wolf

Treasurer
LINDA SINKULA
(920) 388-3251
Kewaunee County

Executive Director
ALICE O'CONNOR
Direct(608) 252-9391
aoc@dewittross.com

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Chairman Tramburg

Minutes

The minutes of December 13, 2013 were accepted on motion by Supervisor Tramburg, seconded by Richard Ott.

Member Counties

ASHLAND
BUFFALO
CHIPPEWA
COLUMBIA
DOUGLAS
DUNN
GRANT
JEFFERSON
KENOSHA
KEWAUNEE
LA CROSSE
MANITOWOC
MARATHON
MARINETTE
OZAUKEE
ROCK
SHEBOYGAN
VERNON
WASHINGTON

President's report

Supervisor Tramburg asked for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee for 2014-2015. Supervisor Willkom and Hoffman volunteered. They need to present a slate of officers for consideration at the May meeting. Supervisor Tramburg thanked them for volunteering. Supervisor Tramburg next asked for volunteers to serve on the Audit Committee. Supervisors Linda Sinkula, Kaye Shillin and Bill Goerhing volunteered. They will review WCUTA books prior to the next meeting.

Supervisor Tramburg next said he would be talking to WCA Executive Director Mark O'Connell about creating and adopting a model resolution for each county to pass and send to their own legislators that will affirm the need to protect funds for the county utility tax. Alice was directed to work with Kyle Christianson of WCA as well. A draft resolution will be shared with the WCUTA Board before it is finalized for further action by the WCA staff. A motion by Supervisor Hoffman seconded by Supervisor Willkom asking WCA to create a model resolution that would be passed by individual counties and shared with their own legislators, was adopted.

Supervisor Tramburg also mentioned in his county Alliant Energy is building two new libraries that will be coal, not natural gas.

Treasurer's Report - Linda Sinkula

Supervisor Linda Sinkula presented the Treasurer's Report. She said the checkbook balance as of February 28, 2014 was \$26,222.90. Expenses for November 2013 through February 2014 were \$7,980.13. The total balance in all WCUTA accounts as of March 21, 2014 was \$67,541.72. The balance in CD #737927 is \$40,242.77

The Treasurer's Report was accepted on a motion by Supervisor Goerhing, seconded by Supervisor Hoffman.

WCA Report

Alice gave Kyle Christiansen's report in his absence. Alice said Kyle said the reason for so many pieces of legislation being introduced by the Towns Association at the tail end of this biennium had to do with the retirement of long-serving Towns Association Executive Director Rick Stadelman. The belief is by getting a ton of bills introduced now basically for next session, the new Executive Director of the Towns Association will have an easy road map of what needs to be worked on. Alice also mentioned Kyle has an excellent map refuting figures used by the towns showing property values declining in towns, not counties. It was suggested by Kyle that we share this data at the next board meeting.

Executive Director Report – Alice O'Connor

Alice reported the counties had over 500 pieces of legislation introduced this past session while towns had 258. She said efforts to charge the utility tax formula are likely to return. If the towns were to lobby for an increase in funds coming from the general funds, counties would not object. The issue is towns seeking additional funds by taking them from counties.

She also reported there have already been several announcements of incumbents not running again with more to follow. It is safe to assume at least one-third of the legislature will be new, requiring education on our issue.

Speakers

Claude Lois, DOR State and Local Director 266-0939 Claude.Lois@revenue.wi.gov

Zach McClelland, DOR Field Auditor, Utility Bureau 264-6889 Zachary.McClelland@revenue.wi.gov

Valeah Fox, Director, Local Government Services Bureau, Division of state and local finance. 608-261-5360
valeah.fox@revenue.gov.wi

The three speakers from the Department of Revenue reviewed the current status, the methodology used for computing the utility tax formula and the gross revenue assessments and utility and distributors from 2006 to 2013.

They said some power plants are still appraised at netbook value. However, once a plant receives funds based on its megawatt or nameplate capacity, it never reverts to the netbook value formula again.

The PSC says more plants will be retiring in 2015 and the PSC has a strategic electricity assessment report we should look at in the future (2015).

Action items for DOR to get back to WCUTA:

- DOR will provide us the exact dollar value the state collects from utility tax assessments and then what counties receive. They thought the State collected \$270 million and returned \$69 million to counties. They will verify this.

There was also discussion about changing the law so the State continues to provide property assessments that locals are not qualified to do, once decommissioning occurs.

They provided several handouts.

Speaker Rep. Paul Tittl (R-Manitowoc) 608-266-0315 rep.tittl@legis.wisconsin.gov

Rep. Tittl, as a former member of the WCUTA Board, said the Assembly had adjourned at 5:30 a.m. that morning and he didn't understand why an all-night session was necessary. He also said 95% of the legislation that passes is bipartisan. When the press and cameras are present, he said it is far more partisan. He said he would continue to remember his roots in county government and be a champion for us.

Future Speakers Suggestions

It was agreed future potential speakers could discuss:

- PSC Dan Sage – update on controversial projects in western Wisconsin
- PSC future electricity generating needs of Wisconsin,
- Sen. Lasee or Rep. Thiesfeldt to discuss formula language for wind regulations.
- Kyle Christiansen, WCA to discuss property values and assessments and wind projects developed.
- Kyle to discuss WCA model resolution.

The next meeting will be held May 9, 2014 in a hearing room at the state Capitol in hearing room 201SE.

Parking will be at the ramp located behind Alice's NEW office building on the square. It is the same parking lot used by the WCA. If you attend meetings at the WCA the directions are the same. Alice will provide directions and you can stop by her office on the 6th floor and everyone can walk over to the Capitol together or you can go directly to the Capitol and meet in the hearing room. Parking vouchers will be provided.

A call in phone will be available and lunch will be provided as well.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. on a motion by Nick Osborne, seconded by Richard Ott.