

WISCONSIN COUNTIES UTILITY TAX ASSOCIATION

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February 5, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 by Chair Larry Willkom. The minutes from the October 9, 2015 were approved on a motion by Supervisor Goering seconded by Nick Osbourne.

Attendance: The following members were present: Larry Willkom, Chippewa County, William Goering, Sheboygan County; Herb Tennis, Washington County; Walt Christensen, Jefferson County; Chuck Hoffman, Manitowoc County; Robert Keeney, Grant County, Linda Sinkula, Kewaunee County.

Via Phone: Don Pazynski, Marinette County

Excused: John Tramburg, Columbia County; Richard Ott, Rock County

President's Report:

Chair Willkolm summarized the testimony before the Assembly Utility Committee and our discussions with Rep. Thiesfeldt on AB 490. He complimented Supervisor Walt Christensen and Supervisor Chuck Hoffman for their testimony as well and testimony presented by WCUTA Executive Director Alice O'Connor did an excellent job of letting the committee know that towns and counties should not be fighting with one another but rather, the state should be sharing more of its dollars they collect from power plants who don't pay local taxes.

Treasurer's Report - Supervisor Linda Sinkula

Supervisor Sinkula said the Beginning check book balance as of October 31, 2015b is \$26,137.33 with a CD (#7379279) that matured January 31 and was rolled over until July 31, 2016 with a balance of \$40,303.07.

This leaves a total of \$66,440.40 in the checkbook. Expenses since October 31, 2015 were as follows:

November 2015 (\$4,110.74); December 2015(\$1,920.00); January 2016 (\$1,940.00) for a total of \$3,860.00

2016 Dues checks continue to come in. This leaves a balance of \$ 66, 440.40 in the Association bank account. The Treasurer's report was accepted on a motion by Supervisor Tennes, seconded by Supervisor Christianson.

Executive Director Report: End of session issues regulatory reform issues

Alice shared pages from the recent Legislative Fiscal Bureau Jan 30, 2016 showing the state had projected a budget based on a growth rate of 3.1 percent. But the state had only grown 2.94 percent. This has resulted in a \$93 million dollar state deficit. With the failure of this legislature to deal with and replenish the broke Transportation Fund, the next legislature will face a \$1 billion dollar problem.

The LFB report also said that utility tax revenue to the state in 2014 and 2015 were \$381.8 MILLIONDOLLARS . These are projected to be reduced to \$270.8 million in the 2015-2016 Session and \$382.4 million in 2016-2017. The decrease in 2015-2016 reflects lower energy prices and last year's relatively warm winter.

Speaker Paul DE Wolfe Customer service manager We Energies- Discussed how their company delivers natural gas to rural areas. Mr. DeLong said there will continue to be discussion about the health effects of wind in the Fond du Lac and Brown County areas. He said when We Energies sites a project it goes through many phases. There are teams of people who study needs, environmental impact, and economic impact. Rock, wetlands, size of pipeline needed, load capacity, how to share costs if anyone is not current user, all are analyzed. He said they can't spread the cost of a project across all rate payers. It has to be those who are benefitting from it so they try to have as many people as customers as possible.

Tomah to Warrens want access to better gas. There is an agrument that the cost replacing LP gas with natural gas can be really costly. They like working joint trenches in rural areas to allow for other wires like broad band and phones lines too.

It was asked if a developer puts in so many lots and expands natural gas, will they get free pipes? Answer was no.

WPS and We energies are blending their connections.

Asked if they were involved in converting street lights to LEDs. He said until recently PSC had not approved rates for street lights and there is no standard rate. It depends on supply and cost to replace bulbs. That may change.

He suggested we have Joel Burrow (spelling?) come to discuss specific about the Riverside Power plant in Rock County, and if there will be repurposing. He said wind siting in St. Croix County and more windmills is likely three years down the road

After the speaker was done it was suggested the WCA reach out to the towns Association to see if there can be a discussion about increasing the utility tax funding for both counties and towns.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 on a motion by Supervisor Tennies, seconded by Walt Christiansen

Next board meeting date: May 6, 2016, 10:30 at the Madison office