



Intercounty Coordinating Committee

Columbia, Dodge, Green Lake, Jefferson & Sauk Counties
ICC Minutes for 10/20/2008
Columbia Co. Annex, Portage

Participants: **Columbia County** – Harlan Baumgartner, John Tramburg, Bob Westby, Debra Wopat, Kathleen Haas (scribe); **Dane County** – Bill Rizzo; **Dodge County** – Russel Kottke, Ray Seaholm, Jeff Hoffman; **Green Lake County** – Orrin Helmer, Jason Kauffeld, Dan Priske; **Jefferson County** – Steve Nass, Steve Grabow; **Marquette County** – Marty Havlovic; **Sauk County** – Paul Endres, Jen Erickson, Karna Hanna; John Reinemann/WCA; Cecil Pittack – Newprot Township, Columbia County; Luther Olsen, State Senate; Steven Sobiek, City of Columbus; Lyn Jerae – Portage Daily Register; Rafael Carbonell, Thrive

Call to Order @ 9:30 a.m. by ICC Chair Russell Kotke

Certification of Open Meeting Notice

The Secretary confirmed that the requirements of the WI Open Meetings Law were met.

Adoption of Agenda

Motion by Green Lake, second by Columbia County to approve the agenda. Approved.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion by Columbia County, second by Sauk County to approve the minutes of the August 2008 meeting of the Intercounty Coordinating Committee. Approved.

Reports from Visiting Legislative Officials

Senator Olson

- Budget: the Governor's proposed budget is estimated to be \$3 billion short to cover the cost to continue WI state services for the 2009-2011, this figure may not include increases being requested by state agencies; another budget challenge is the pending patients compensation law suit.
- Discussions are occurring regarding raising sales tax. 1982 is the last time sales tax has been raised. Question: Has there been any interest in reviewing sales tax exemptions to even the taxation playing field?
Response: currently, we tax goods not services; it might be easier to raise the taxes on goods rather than tax exempt services or goods; This is tied to tax fairness with great political implications

WCA Update—John Reinemann/Legislative Director

- Update on Wisconsin Way: strategic planning initiative for WI; looking for more long term recommendations for WI.
- Impact of economy and how it will affect WI State budget, counties and municipalities
- Elections: waiting to see what party will have legislative leadership; there is some speculation around regarding the possibility that if Sen. Obama is elected president this might place Gov. Doyle in Wash., DC and Barbara Lawton becomes WI's Gov.

- WCA 2008 Annual conference – Deb Wopat/Columbia County, will be on the WCA board; more than 1000 people attended
- WCA policy recommendations will be forwarded to the WCA board for their recommendations on 10/31/08
- WCA has been working with a special *County Revenues group* to investigate giving counties more options to meet budget shortfalls, especially as it pertains to county levy limits.
 - Question: What about taxing goods purchased on-line (and catalog sales)?
 - Response: There is no enforcement mechanism in place to charge on-line or catalog sales tax; If WI had an enforcement mechanism in place it could capture \$500,000,000 extra
- *Steam line blind sales tax revenue* proposal: in order to move this proposal forward more states need to pass, currently WI has not signed on
 - When does something cease to become a food and become a snack and eligible for sales tax
 - WI has tried to pass this proposal but it has failed in pass years; there may be a chance that this proposal maybe passed during this year.

Open Discussion of County Issues

- Question: Is there a possibility that counties could be given more freedom to generate their own revenue?
 - Response: This ties into Sen. Jolt's government under emergency circumstances committee (2008 flooding and 2007 winter); Currently, this is an advisory referendum pending in Brunette Co. to bump up county sales tax by ½%, right now counties are not allowed by state law; instead of a fixed allowance for levy limits, could we have a rolling average?
 - Another option that counties are exploring the premier resort tax, WI Dells is eligible, used to defray infrastructure tax. Right now it is a municipal tax not a county tax.
- The inclement ICC contact list is being finalized

Program: Regional Economic Development

- Global Economic Mega Trends
Steve Deller, Professor of Applied Ag Economics @ UW-Madison
PowerPoint presentation available:
<http://columbia.uwex.edu>
- Thrive: Regional Economic Development Initiative
Rafael Carbonell, Thrive Executive Vice President
PowerPoint presentation available:
<http://columbia.uwex.edu>
Thrive web site: www.thrivehere.org

Open Discussion of County Issues

Adjourn @ 11:55 a.m. approved by Dodge and Sauk

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Haas

Community Development Educator, UW-Extension, Columbia County