



Issue 18

# County Administration Newsletter

*Vision & Stewardship*

September 2015

## Administration

At the September Administration Committee meeting, the Committee discussed the 2016 proposed budget. As you may recall, in the spring the Committee approved several budget guidelines (see May 2015 Newsletter). Once those guidelines were approved and communicated to Department Heads the challenging work began. I'm extremely pleased with the work the County Department Heads completed on their budgets. The budgets provided to their standing committees were not only in-line with the guidelines, but proved that reviewing trend history of expenditures can lead to a more realistic budget figure. Thank you to all Department Heads and Standing Committee members for your tireless work on the 2016 budget. Here are some highlights that are

reflected in the proposed 2016 budget:

-Levy limit resulted in a net increase of \$39,352 (Planned on \$40K)

-1% increase in base wages for all non-represented staff with another 1% value paid out in the following manner; PTO, lump sum check, or lump sum in deferred comp. (Pending IRS regulations)

-Compensation Plan was adopted and is funded for 2016

-\$1,000,000 allocated for highway infrastructure projects (using fund balances)

-Reduced the reliance of investment income by roughly \$40K (part of the midterm guidelines)

-Funded most requests, and all requested capital equipment purchases that were on the replacement schedule

-Pays the maintenance cost associated with the communication system operation, as well as the necessary leases (roughly \$80K annually).

-Absorbs a 3% health care cost increase for 2016

-Prepares the County for 2017 and beyond.

Final budget approval by the County Board is anticipated in November.

## Airport

Saturday September 19, 2015 was the first of a proposed series of annual time trial events at the Airport. These trials allow owners of cars of all classes to run their vehicles 1/8 mile (660 ft.) to achieve a maximum speed. The purpose of this first event was not to compete but to provide a safe legal venue for racers to run

their vehicles for fun. The event was held from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and racers could run as many times as they wanted during the allotted time.

Between 70 and 80 cars registered and more than 500 spectators attended. Reviews from competitors, spectators, the organizers, and the community were

overwhelmingly positive. Several local businesses were positively impacted by the influx of travelers attributed to the event. This event was intended to be a relatively small one to set the stage for potentially larger events in the future.

## County Clerk

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled the photo ID law will be enforced for all elections in Wisconsin starting April 15, 2015, which will require a voter to show valid photo ID to vote at an election. Every person voting MUST show a photo ID or they will not be able to vote.

If you already hold a Wisconsin driver's license or identification (ID) card, you have what you need to vote. The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board – Election Division, advises anyone who does not have a driver's license or state ID card to take advantage of the opportunity to get one for free. The Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles has a process to allow people to obtain a FREE State ID card for voting purposes, even if the person does not have a birth certificate. A person without one or the other of these two forms of photo ID can apply for a FREE ID card for the first time for voting purposes.

Eligibility requirements:

1. ID Card applicants must be

- U.S. Citizens, at least 17 years of age, and indicate that the ID Card is required free of charge for the purposes of voting; and
- 2. ID Card applicants must claim that documents required to prove U.S. Citizenship, name and date of birth and/or legal name change are unavailable and require a fee to a government agency to obtain.

Applicants using this process to obtain an ID must:

- Apply at a [DMV customer service center](#)
- Complete a Wisconsin Identification Card Application form [MV3004](#). Social Security number must be included on this application
- Complete a Document Verification Process (DMV Administrator Petition) form [MV3012](#)
- Present documents to prove:
  - [Identity](#)
  - [Wisconsin residency \(where you live in Wisconsin\)](#)

The information provided on

this form is used to communicate with state and federal partners to verify unavailable documentation. Once verification is received, the ID card will be processed and mailed to the applicant's address.

The DMV will attempt to process applications in less than seven business days, but completion time may be longer depending upon the responsiveness of the entities being contacted for verification. If you have questions regarding this process or your status, please feel free to contact the Wisconsin DMV at (608) 266-1069.

If verification is not received, the applicant will be contacted regarding what additional information may be required to complete an alternate method of verification in cooperation with the DMV.

Questions? Contact us: [Wisconsin DMV email service](#)

Call: (608) 266-1069

Burnett County Clerk's Office call 715-349-2173 or email County Clerk Wanda Hinrichs

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## Emergency Management

Are you, your family and your business safe and secure online? Chances are you know someone who has been targeted by cyber criminals.

Despite warnings, nearly a quarter million people in the

U.S. each year fall victim to cyber scams resulting in over \$800 million in losses. Wisconsin ranks 22nd in the nation for the number of internet crime complaints filed with law enforcement. Officials say last year,

more than \$9.2 million in cyber theft occurred in the state, impacting more than 3,200 Wisconsin consumers.

Cyber security is more than just

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internet crime. Our nation's electrical infrastructure is tied together with cyber connections and could be vulnerable to cyber attack. The impact of a cy-

ber attack on our electric grid could be devastating. There could be long term disruption of services that provide heating, cooling, transportation, communications and health. As a result of these impacts, each family

should be prepared to survive without essential services for at least 72 hours.

Cyber security involves education, awareness, prevention and preparation. Do your part to become "Cyber Savvy"!

## Forestry and Parks

I am pleased to announce that in late July our new boat ramp at the Devils Lake landing was installed. From watching and talking to people landing their watercraft, we conclude that the ramp is working very well. We were also able to repair the retaining wall and guard rail, as well as install some new black top to help with the water diversion. Overall the ramp and beach area is in good working condition. With the lake being as high as I have ever seen it, we shall see how the ramp and wall holds up to this next year's winter.

Another project that was completed in early August was the construction of two fishing piers at Clam Dam Park. These piers were installed to help minimize

erosion issues in these two areas, as well as provide for a better place to fish for the park users. We have received compliments from the public thanking us for these fishing piers and the opportunities that they create for those that cannot easily fish from the steep banks. If these piers hold up to the users and the elements, I could foresee more of these being built in our parks.



Clam Dam Park fishing pier



Devils Lake boat ramp

## Health & Human Services

Did you know that September 7th -13th is recognized as National Suicide Prevention Week? And that September 10th is World Suicide Prevention Day?

The Burnett County Behavioral Health Department would like to take this opportunity to re-

mind everyone that help is available and that asking family, friends, and loved ones about suicidal thoughts/depression, although difficult, is strongly encouraged. Giving a suicidal person the opportunity to express feelings can provide relief and release of negative feelings,

and may prevent a suicide attempt.

Suicide remains a significant public health problem in Wisconsin, and nationwide. In 2013, (the most recent year for which full data are available)

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41,149 suicides were reported, making suicide the 10th leading cause of death for Americans. In that year, someone in the country died by suicide every 12.8 minutes. In Wisconsin there were 853 suicides reported in 2013 making suicide the 11th leading cause of death here.

If a situation arises where you are planning to speak with someone regarding thoughts of suicide/depression here are some suggestions:

When talking to a suicidal person

DO:

- Be yourself. Let the person know you care, that he/she is not alone. The right words are often unimportant. If you are concerned, your voice and manner will show it.
- Listen. Let the suicidal person unload despair and ventilate anger. No matter how negative the conversation seems, the fact that it exists is a positive sign.
- Be sympathetic, non-judgmental, patient, calm, accepting. Your friend or family member is doing the right thing by talking about his/her feelings.
- Offer hope. Reassure the person that help is available and that the suicidal feelings are temporary. Let the per-

son know that his or her life is important to you.

- If the person says things like, "I'm so depressed, I can't go on," ask the question: "Are you having thoughts of suicide?" You are not putting ideas in their head, you are showing that you are concerned, that you take them seriously, and that it's OK for them to share their pain with you.

BUT DON'T:

- Argue with the suicidal person. Avoid saying things like: "You have so much to live for," "Your suicide will hurt your family," or "Look on the bright side."
- Act shocked, lecture on the value of life, or say that suicide is wrong.
- Promise confidentiality. Refuse to be sworn to secrecy. A life is at stake and you may need to speak to a mental health professional in order to keep the suicidal person safe. If you promise to keep your discussions secret, you may have to break your word.
- Offer ways to fix their problems, or give advice, or make them feel like they have to justify their suicidal feelings. It is not about how bad the problem is, but how badly it's hurting your friend or loved one.
- Blame yourself. You can't

"fix" someone's depression. Your loved one's happiness, or lack thereof, is not your responsibility. (Adapted from: *Metanoia.org*)

HelpGuide.org suggests that: If a friend or family member tells you that he or she is thinking about death or suicide, and a suicide attempt seems imminent, call a local crisis center (Burnett County 1-888-636-6655), dial 911, or take the person to an emergency room.

Furthermore, it is reported that despite the desire for the pain to stop, most suicidal people are deeply conflicted about ending their own lives. They wish there was an alternative to committing suicide, but they just can't see one. This only reinforces the need to be proactive, talk with those around you, and offer assistance in getting badly needed help.

**Common misconceptions about suicide**

**FALSE: People who talk about suicide won't really do it.**

Almost everyone who commits or attempts suicide has given some clue or warning. Do not ignore suicide threats. Statements like "you'll be sorry when I'm dead," "I can't see any way out," — no matter how casually or jokingly said may indicate serious suicidal feelings.

**FALSE: Anyone who tries to kill him/herself must be crazy.**

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Most suicidal people are not psychotic or insane. They must be upset, grief-stricken, depressed or despairing, but extreme distress and emotional pain are not necessarily signs of mental illness.

**FALSE: If a person is determined to kill him/herself, nothing is going to stop them.**

Even the most severely depressed person has mixed feelings about death, wavering until the very last moment between wanting to live and wanting to die. Most suicidal people do not want death; they want the pain to stop. The impulse to end it all, however overpowering, does not last forever.

**FALSE: People who commit suicide are people who were unwilling to seek help.**

Studies of suicide victims have shown that more than half had sought medical help in the six months prior to their deaths.

**FALSE: Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.**

You don't give a suicidal person morbid ideas by talking about suicide. The opposite is true — bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do.

Source: *SAVE – Suicide Awareness Voices of Education*

If you suspect someone is struggling with depression, or may

be contemplating suicide, please speak with them. Encourage them to seek help and remind them that help is available.

Burnett County Crisis Line:  
1-888-636-6655

National Suicide Prevention Helpline: **1-800-273-TALK** (8255)

Burnett County Health and Human Services: 715-349-7600

911 for those in immediate crisis

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Part of the State Budget Act 55 includes directives to make changes to Family Care and IRIS programs. One of the goals of the redesign is to integrate long term care and medical services including primary, acute and behavioral health care. These services would be provided through regional, Integrated Health Agencies (IHAs). The Division of Long Term Care in DHS has clarified that “the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) considers IHAs to be doing the business of insurance and therefore, State insurance law requires all IHAs to be licensed insurers.”

Another goal is to require choice in providers so the directive includes service regions that are larger than the current long-term care regions. The requirement is for IHAs to be the provider of the consumer-directed option currently served by the

IRIS Program. There is to be no change from the currently eligibility requirements nor the benefit packages of the programs.

The Department of Health Services is seeking public input as required through Act 55. They have held several public hearings across the state and are requesting people to send in written testimony.

Please send testimony by October 30th to:

Department of Health Services  
Division of Long Term Care  
P.O. Box 7851, Room 550  
Madison, WI 53707-7851

Or email: [DHSFCWebmail@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSFCWebmail@wisconsin.gov)

A website has been created to provide up-to-date information on this process. You can find the locations and times of the remaining public hearings and more information regarding the information they are seeking at: [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycareiris2/index/htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycareiris2/index/htm)

Please pass this information along to anyone who would like to give input on this development.

## Highway Department

As the summer season passes, we look back to evaluate the improvements that we accomplished this year. We conducted improvements on County Road E with a new drainage system, intersection correction and surface that should last another 20 years with minimal maintenance.

We also performed surface maintenance treatments on another 21 miles of county roads. We improved approximately 12 miles of town roads for several townships.

Switching gears, our shop personnel are busy getting our trucks ready for the winter season by conducting inspections and installing anti-icing tanks and wings. This process takes several weeks.

We have a new employee within our ranks: we welcome Jason McNearney. This the first time since last August (2014) that we have a full staff.

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## Land and Water Conservation

There are many kinds of snails found on lake shores. Unfortunately two that are invasive and becoming more common in the county are the Chinese Mystery Snail (CMS) and the Banded Mystery Snail (BMS). The CMS is native to Asia; the BMS is native to the southeastern part of the United States and some of the Mississippi River but invasive in Wisconsin. Chinese Mystery Snails were first brought to the United States as a food source, and later they were dispersed through the aquarium market. There is no official record of how Banded Mystery Snails entered Wisconsin however. Both the Chinese and Banded Mystery Snails are larger and a different color than native snails.

These invasive snails desire productive lakes, ponds, and slow moving streams that have muddy or sandy bottoms with limited vegetation. These snails eat algae, fine organic matter, and suspended matter competing for food and space with native species. This competition may eliminate native species, change the food chain, and change the shorelines of our beautiful water ways. As an intermediate host, they are pathways for parasites and diseases that could infect and endanger humans. However, they are not a host for swimmer's itch. These snails' shell are very sharp and can cause cuts on feet. There are no methods to control or exterminate these snails.

Some chemical control methods are possible but have ramifications for many other species. Since CMS and BMS are found in shallow waters, they are easy to gather, net, or bait. This will thin the population, but it will not completely eliminate them. The best way to control this problem is prevention. One can prevent spreading by draining and cleaning any plants or animals off of boats before entering or leaving a body of water. Plants, animals, or water from aquariums should not be dumped into any body of water to minimize the possible spread of any invasive species. If there are any questions about these snails, call the Burnett County Land and Water Conservation Department.

## Register of Deeds

New regulations by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau go into effect regulating how title companies and settlement agencies conduct business. The new regulations are to ensure that banks are held accountable for all aspects of the loan process. The new rule integrates forms required under the Truth-in-Lending Act (TILA) and Real Estate Settlement and

Procedures Act (RESPA). A Loan Estimate will replace the current Good Faith Estimate and early TIL disclosure, while a Closing Disclosure will replace

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the HUD-1 and final TIL disclosure.

For more information on the new regulations please go to:

<http://www.consumerfinance.gov/>

[regulatory-implementation/tila-respa/](http://regulatory-implementation/tila-respa/) and <http://www.alt.org/cfpb/#testimony/>

## Sheriff's Office

We are pleased to introduce the newest members of our agency: Deputy Lizz Berres, and Deputy Travis Murphy. Both Lizz and Travis are working as seasonal recreation patrol deputies this summer and will be out keeping our lakes and trails safe.

As many of you are aware, Burnett County has been hit especially hard with burglaries and other property crimes this year. According to FBI statistics; nationwide, a burglary occurs every 15.4 seconds. Burglaries are fueled by the narcotics trade, and those involved steal property to support their drug habits. Most are opportunists, and will rarely enter a residence which appears occupied or appears to be protected by a security system. Many burglaries occur during the daytime and look completely innocent to the casual observer. The thief will pull into your driveway, get out of their vehicle, and knock on your door. If you don't answer,

they will first see if the front door is locked. If it is, they will make sure they are not being watched and then move to a concealed area behind your residence and either kick a door, or break a window to gain entry. Most of the time, they will be in and out in less than 10 minutes!

The most common items that are stolen are: guns, jewelry, televisions, tools and other high-end electronics like iPods and gaming systems.

What should you do if you arrive home and find that you've been a victim of a burglary?

If you arrive at your residence or cabin and discover that it has been burglarized, or something just doesn't feel right:

1. LEAVE! Leave the area and call law enforcement.
2. DO NOT touch anything or clean up prior to law enforcement arriving. Physical evidence is extremely impor-

tant in connecting suspects to crimes, and is easily destroyed. Law enforcement will be looking for footwear impressions, tire tread impressions, latent fingerprints, biological (DNA) evidence, and any trace which can connect an individual to the crime.

3. TALK with your neighbors. Law enforcement will canvass your neighborhood, but may not be able to reach everyone. Often, someone may remember something they think is too trivial to pass onto law enforcement. NOTHING is trivial in a criminal investigation!
4. NOTIFY your insurance company and create a detailed list of stolen items; including make, model, serial numbers, color, value and any distinguishing marks of any property that has been stolen.

## Treasurer

The July tax collection process is almost complete. Settlement amounts have been calculated

and the settlement checks will be mailed to the towns, villages, schools and vocational district

by August 20th. Delinquent tax statements have been sent out.

## Zoning/Land Information

We are still waiting for guidance from the DNR for all the shoreland changes from WI ACT 55.