

FOCUS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE DESK OF WAUKESHA COUNTY EXECUTIVE
DANIEL P. VRAKAS



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Dear Friends,

Last month, I introduced my 2012 Executive Budget to the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors which freezes the County portion of the property tax bill. In order to freeze the County portion of your tax bill, under the proposed budget, Waukesha County will reduce the operating budget by 1.4% and personnel costs by 2%. Seeking partnerships between departments, other governments and the private sector to implement efficiencies and ultimately save tax dollars has been key to Waukesha County's strong fiscal health.

In many ways, some of the positive changes that we're seeing other local governments now make, are changes that Waukesha County made long ago. For instance, the caps on levy increases related to new construction growth, which the state is now requiring of local governments, is something that we have focused on for years.

The proposed budget maintains investments in roads and buildings to preserve their safety and functionality, while anticipating and planning for future growth. By maintaining infrastructure, Waukesha County will help retain, grow and attract businesses while continuing to provide a high-quality of life for residents. In an economic downturn, there is a tendency for some in government to cut back on maintenance or eliminate upgrades on buildings and roads. However, in Waukesha County we keep up with repairs and do not push-off routine maintenance into future years.

We operate our County like a business. When we invest in a road or a building project, we put a minimum of 20% down, we receive the lowest interest rate available because of our AAA/aaa bond rating and we pay off the project in ten years or less.

We pay our bills on time, we balance our budgets and we respect the Waukesha County taxpayer. We can feel confident moving forward that Waukesha County is on rock solid footing.

Sincerely,



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LEVERAGE LOAN PROGRAM

Earlier this week, the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance creating a small business gap funding program for Waukesha County. The program, aimed at small business in Waukesha County, will help companies wishing to expand their operations within the County.

Under the program, businesses will be able to borrow up to \$50,000 to help fill their capital requirements to secure larger funding needs through banks and other financial sources. Acceptable uses of funds will include working capital for a specific project, inventory, equipment and facility build-out. The first phase of the program will be capped at \$300,000.

“This program will provide an outstanding opportunity for businesses located in Waukesha County to ‘leverage’ their capital to secure full funding to expand their business,” said County Executive Dan Vrakas. “My hope is that this program will fill a recognized need to ultimately increase job creation and employment as well as retain businesses in Waukesha County.”

Funding for the program will come from funds returned to the County that were no longer required by Tax Incremental Districts (TID). Over the past several years, the County has received money from TIDs that have closed out earlier than projected.

FALL GOLF RATES AT WAUKESHA COUNTY PARKS

Waukesha County’s Golf Courses will be starting their \$1 a hole rates starting Oct. 31. Enjoy all three courses for this great rate. Naga-Waukee Golf Course is located ½ mile north of I-94 in Pewaukee, W307 N1897 Maple Avenue. Moor Downs is located at 438 Prospect Avenue in Waukesha and Wanaki Golf Course is located in the Village of Menomonee Falls, at N50 W20830 Lisbon Road. To reserve your tee time log on to www.golfwaukeshacounty.com.

Starting November 1st through December 23rd, receive a 9-hole weekday voucher for every \$75 in gift cards OR \$75 in proshop merchandise purchased. (Limit \$600 and cannot be purchased with gift cards). Gift Cards are available at all courses and the Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use Office (515 W. Moreland Blvd, Room AC230, Waukesha).

To view rates or reserve a tee time, go to www.golfwaukeshacounty.com. The Waukesha County Golf Courses are part of the Waukesha County Park System, which is a natural resource based park system that demonstrates stewardship while providing recreational and educational opportunities.



The 4th hole at Wanaki golf course is especially beautiful in fall, surrounded by the changing colors of the trees.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

DRUG COURT GRANT

Waukesha County was recently awarded a grant to implement a drug court program by the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. The grant is for \$350,000, to be spent over 3 years.

The program will serve 75 non-violent, adult offenders who have a history of drug abuse that is linked to their criminality. The program is a “deferred prosecution model,” meaning the defendant will enter into a plea agreement that states successful completion of the program will result in a lesser charge.

Participants will be required to attend substance abuse treatment, submit to frequent drug testing, attend weekly or biweekly judicial status hearings and meet regularly with their case manager for at least one year.

The grant application was prompted by a recommendation from the Criminal Justice Collaborating Council Drug Abuse Trends Committee. The committee analyzed the rising opiate abuse trend within Waukesha County. The Drug Court Program will address this emerging problem by getting drug addicted offenders into a rigorous treatment and supervision program to address the underlying cause of their criminal behavior, thereby reducing recidivism.

16TH ANNUAL COUNTY EXECUTIVE AWARDS

Last month, 300 people came to the County Springs Hotel to honor the Waukesha County Executive Award winners recognized for their success and contribution to the greater Waukesha County community. This year marked the 16th annual awards presentation. This year’s winners were:

- Business of the Year - First Bank Financial Centre
- Large Non-Profit of the Year - Waukesha Family Practice Center
- Small Non-Profit of the Year - Christmas Clearing Council
- Government Agency of the Year - Lake Country Fire and Rescue

An independent panel of judges that includes business executives, community leaders and past award winners, select award recipients each year.

Secretary of Tourism, Stephanie Klett, addressed the attendees and FOX 6 news anchor, Brad Hicks, acted as Master of Ceremonies alongside County Executive Dan Vrakas.

The 17th Annual Waukesha County Executive Awards Luncheon will take place on October 16, 2012 at the County Springs Hotel.



County Executive Dan Vrakas is pictured with keynote speaker and Secretary of Tourism Stephanie Klett and Deputy Secretary of Tourism Dave Fantle.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

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WINTER AWARENESS

Though we are enjoying a beautiful, warm fall here in Waukesha County, winter is right around the corner. Governor Scott Walker has declared the week of November 7-11 Winter Awareness Week in Wisconsin.

Winter weather in Wisconsin poses a serious threat and is responsible for more total damage than other types of severe weather in the state. It is important that all residents start planning now for severe winter weather coming in the months ahead. Here are some tips to help you and your family prepare:

- Update your emergency supply kit to include rock salt to melt ice on walkways, sand to help with traction and blankets to keep you warm.
- Prepare your home to make sure that it is well insulated and that doors and windows are well sealed from the cold.
- Learn now how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts.
- For more information on staying safe in winter weather visit www.ready.gov.
- Sign up for Waukesha County's weather alert system by visiting www.waukeshacounty.gov and clicking on "Emergency Alert Sign-Up" under "Spotlights."



**Follow County
Executive Dan
Vrakas on Twitter!**

**Username:
CoExecDanVrakas**

ALTERNATIVE USE OF LEAVES

Municipalities in Waukesha County spend more than \$2 million a year collecting and processing yard debris. Residents who manage even a portion of their leaves on their property can directly reduce that cost. Here are some alternative uses for leaves:

- **Compost Them** - Composting is the natural recycling process that you can begin at home with leaves, grass clippings, and other lawn and garden waste. Leaves are high in carbon and can be used as one of the brown yard wastes when making a compost pile.
- **Use Them For Mulch** - Mulches offer your garden and landscapes many benefits from moisture retention to temperature moderation to erosion prevention. Yard wastes such as grass clippings, leaves, and chipped or shredded brush and branches can be used as organic mulches. Organic mulches are usually applied 3 inches deep over the soil and around plants to achieve the benefits of mulching.

For more information and to view a demonstration video, visit www.waukeshacounty.gov/leaves.

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