

Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive



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**WAUKESHA COUNTY EXECUTIVE DAN VRAKAS PRESENTS
FISCALLY SOUND 2011 EXECUTIVE BUDGET TO COUNTY BOARD**

WAUKESHA, Wis. – Waukesha County Executive Dan Vrakas introduced his 2011 Executive Budget to the Waukesha County Board at its meeting this evening, September 28th at 7 p.m. Vrakas' budget restrains tax levy spending and limits the impact on the homeowner to 1.2%.

“I am proud to tell you that the budget I am presenting to you tonight continues our legacy of certainty and stability,” Vrakas said in his address to County Board Supervisors. “Earlier this year, in confirming Waukesha County’s AAA/aaa bond ratings, Moody’s noted that Waukesha County is in a ‘strong financial position,’ and Fitch Ratings noted that ‘Waukesha County’s financial performance is strong and supported by conservative budgeting practices.’”

Additionally, a recent study by the Wisconsin Taxpayer’s Alliance showed that Waukesha County has the lowest per capita spending among all of Wisconsin’s counties. The proposed budget will maintain Waukesha County’s position as a low tax leader, Vrakas said.

“With the passage of this budget, County taxes on a median valued home in Waukesha County will have gone up by less than half a percent per year, since I took office as County Executive five years ago,” Vrakas said. “That is the equivalent of \$2 per year in the last five years.”

Waukesha County is working to limit tax increases through a number of initiatives including investments in environmentally sustainable initiatives which, this year alone, will save the County \$200,000 in energy savings.

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“Vrakas Presents 2010 Budget to the County Board,” continued . . .

Strategic partnerships between departments and with the private sector to increase efficiency remain a key tool in limiting spending in the budget. These partnerships include formally making the Airport a full division of the Department of Public Works and, following a workgroup recommendation of the Criminal Justice Collaborating Council, the Sheriff’s Department and Circuit Court Judges, the County will expand it’s Day Report Center to provide offenders access to job training, Alcohol and other Drug Abuse (AODA) and mental health services. This program will increase the daily number of participants by over 25% next year.

“Our County is committed to efficiency,” Vrakas said. “Departments are consistently seeking innovative ways to work with our most important asset – our employees – in the most efficient way possible. Departments are identifying ways for their employees to collaborate, they are cross-training their employees, and where possible, they are keeping positions open in order to limit the size of our government while still providing uninterrupted, high-quality service.”

State and federal mandates, in which 45% of the County’s tax levy is dedicated, continue to be a major cost driver for the County. For example, costs to continue jail operations will require additional tax levy of over \$600,000 to continue the same level of service as last year.

Personnel costs also continue to be a cost driver. Though this year employee healthcare and retirements costs will increase, Vrakas said he is proud that Waukesha County is able to limit the overall increased cost of labor to about 2%.

“Waukesha County is able to do this because, unlike many other government entities, we do not subsidize health insurance for retirees and, for the past several years, Waukesha County has required all new, non-represented employees to contribute to their pensions,” he said.

A budget priority is to continue investing in County’s infrastructure to maintain safety and functionality, while anticipating and planning for future growth. These investments include roads, buildings and technology upgrades.

“By maintaining our infrastructure we are working to keep and attract businesses and jobs to the County and maintain our commitment to a high-quality of life for our residents,” Vrakas said. “In an economic downturn there is a tendency to cut back on maintenance or upgrades on buildings and roads. However, in this budget, Waukesha County is keeping up with maintenance and not deferring what must be done. This commitment to properly maintain what we have will pay-off in the future.”

The County Board will review Vrakas’ 2011 Proposed Budget in committee with final passage expected in November.

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