

2010 Executive Budget Message

Intro Slide

Good Evening and thank you for providing me the opportunity this evening to present my 2010 budget which is committed to “Maintaining Excellence” despite the challenging times that are upon us.

I would like to thank the greater Waukesha County community for their continued commitment to Waukesha County:

- Our municipal partners for their continued willingness to collaborate on countywide initiatives.
- Our exceptional schools for providing education for future generations of Waukesha County leaders.
- Our outstanding businesses for their role in ensuring the vitality of Waukesha County.
- And I would like to thank all of our residents for making Waukesha County an excellent place to live, work, raise a family and retire.

Waukesha County is recognized as a leader in Wisconsin and a leader among counties nationwide. This reputation has been earned through hard work by all of you in this boardroom today, as well as, all of Waukesha County’s nearly 1,400 employees.

I’d like to thank County Board Chairman Jim Dwyer, Finance Committee Chair Pat Haukohl as well as all other Committee Chairs and Supervisors that sat side-by-side with me in countless meetings to work with our budget team to prepare a budget that provides outstanding services to Waukesha County while keeping taxpayers in mind. I appreciate your continued willingness to work with my administration on the passage of the County’s 2010 Budget.

In June, I had the opportunity to travel to Emmitsburg, Maryland alongside representatives from the County and 10 of our municipalities. During our time in Emmitsburg, I was very proud of our ability to work together as one, cohesive team. Though we represented many different entities, we worked together as a single Waukesha County. That experience provided all of us with the skills to be the best functioning team possible. It is the ability to work together that positions Waukesha County as a leader in Wisconsin and the United States. As we maneuver through these difficult economic times, it is important now, more than ever, that we work together to provide top-notch services to all Waukesha County residents. I can’t imagine a team that I would rather be part of than this one.

Executive Budget Outcomes Slide

When developing this year's budget I thought about Waukesha County residents who have been affected by the current economy. Due to the recession and the high unemployment rate, it is more important than ever that we hold the line on County taxes and spending. It is crucial to maintain our fiscal discipline during these tough economic times. My administration has worked hard to prevent the elimination of essential County services while keeping taxes low by limiting spending.

The proposed budget provides funding for fifteen fewer positions than last year – this will result in a savings of approximately \$1 million.

This proposed budget continues our pledge to further develop strategic partnerships and focus on infrastructure and sustainability. Also, we continue to work to protect our coveted AAA/Aaa bond ratings.

Restraining County Spending Slide

I am proud that my 2010 Budget maintains our reputation as a low tax leader and limits overall expenditures to 1.5%, which is below the rate of inflation.

Despite the first tax base decrease in over thirty years, if you, the County Board, adopt the proposed budget, Waukesha County's tax rate will remain among the lowest in the state.

During tough economic times, the need for services provided by the County significantly increases. This fact, combined with current and future projected state and federal budget uncertainty, puts tremendous stress on County dollars.

Budget Drivers (External) Slide

County provided mental health care, alcohol and drug treatment, economic support and food stamps, adult and juvenile human services, jail, corrections and law enforcement services, as well as Circuit Court services, are in greater demand.

A number of State and Federal funding sources have been reduced causing additional pressure on the County Budget. These reductions include: Health and Human Service Community Aids reduced by over \$400,000, a reduction in General Transportation Aids by \$170,000 and a reduction in State shared revenue by \$150,000.

Although the state has eliminated funding for an Economic Support Fraud Investigator, this important safeguard has been maintained in my budget with a combination of income maintenance and County dollars.

With more than 44% of the County's budget dedicated to State and Federal mandates our spending flexibility is limited. Revenue reductions in Health and Human Services, Parks and Land Use, the Register of Deeds and the Airport, put additional pressure on the current budget.

Budget Drivers (Internal) Slide

There are also a number of internal factors that have an affect on the budget.

As you know, the largest cost to government is the cost of employee salaries and benefits. I am proud to report that our personnel costs have increased by only 1.1% in this budget. This would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our County employees who help us find better and more efficient ways of providing essential services.

This budget continues our investments in energy conservation. I am pleased to announce that my budget includes a federal Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant. This will enable the County to continue and accelerate the implementation of our first generation County Sustainability Plan. This funding will also allow us to create a revolving loan program to assist small businesses in Waukesha County and help them become more profitable by reducing energy costs.

County Tax Levy Funding Slide

As shown on this slide, this budget, like past years, makes public safety my top priority and effectively serves at-risk individuals and families. Over sixty percent of our County tax levy is dedicated to Justice, Public Safety and Human Services in this budget.

Due to an unprecedented reduction in revenue from Real Estate Transaction Fees, additional County Tax Levy will be dedicated to the Parks and Land Use functional area to replace some of this lost revenue during the recession.

Capital Projects Plan Slide

The proposed budget includes strategic investments in our roads and buildings to maintain their safety and functionality while anticipating and planning for future growth.

This budget provides the funding for a number of important and anticipated projects. The proposed budget allocates dollars to begin the Waukesha West Bypass project as approved by the County Board in July.

Included in the 5 Year Capital Plan is the widening and reconstruction of Janesville Road, which is our largest County highway project to date.

Also included, is the construction of an energy efficient and sustainable Retzer Nature Center facility and the building of a secure corridor that will protect the public by separating them from inmates as they are transported from the jail to the courthouse.

In addition, the 5-year capital plan calls for the construction of a new Health and Human Services Center that will serve Waukesha County residents for generations to come.

Partnerships and Efficiencies

It is more important now than ever before that we, as a County, work as efficiently as possible in order to deliver high quality services to our residents while keeping taxes low. A major component of efficiencies is strategic partnerships and teamwork.

In order to better serve our growing population of veterans and seniors in the most efficient way possible, my Budget implements a merger between the Department of Health and Human Services, the Aging and Disability Resource Center and Veterans Services Office.

This partnership will:

- Leverage resources
- Facilitate even more cooperative teamwork
- Take advantage of back office efficiencies (and)
- Save County taxpayers money

Following a successful study of strategic alliances between the Departments of Public Works and Parks and Land Use, the departments are working together to share expertise and utilize workforces in complementary services to increase efficiency.

The Criminal Justice Collaborating Council will create a task force to examine the future of the Huber facility and its programming.

We will study a strategic alliance between the Airport and the Department of Public Works to identify ways to provide better service and support to our airport users.

Executive Proposed Budget

I am so proud to represent a County where the Executive and Legislative branches are able to work together to create a balanced budget that both guarantees high quality services are available to our constituency but also keeps the taxpayer in mind.

As you can see from this slide, the proposed budget is a balanced budget.

2009 Employees Per Capita

When comparing Waukesha County to similar counties in the state, the efficiency in which we function is clear. Waukesha County has significantly fewer employees per 1,000 residents than similar sized counties.

I am very proud of my administration and their commitment to efficiency. Departments are holding positions open to meet budget constraints and cross-training employees, where necessary, to reduce the number of personnel needed to provide County services.

Although this proposed budget discontinues the funding for 15 positions, I am confident that departments will shift workloads accordingly so that service delivery is uninterrupted.

2009 Comparative Property Tax Rates

I am proud to tell you that Waukesha County continues to remain a low-tax leader in Wisconsin. Waukesha County has the lowest tax rate among counties without a County sales tax.

Not having a County sales tax has worked in our favor during the current recession. We, unlike most other counties statewide, are not dependent on a sales tax to balance our budget and therefore are not affected by a drop in sales tax revenue.

To get a true perspective on how we are making our tax dollars work for Waukesha County citizens, it is important that we compare our tax rate to that of other counties in Southeastern Wisconsin.

I am proud to tell you that Waukesha County has the lowest property tax rate among our surrounding counties.

2009 Comparative Property Taxes

To support economic development in Waukesha County and to help keep jobs in the County it is important that property taxes remain low for businesses.

When comparing our County tax rate on businesses to that of contiguous counties, Waukesha County is once again the low tax leader among surrounding counties.

Statistics & Trends

Beyond our reputation as a low tax leader, Waukesha County has a reputation as a leader in Wisconsin in so many other ways:

Waukesha County is the 3rd largest County in the State for population and lowest for property values;

We have the 2nd highest household income in the State;

We are now the only County in the state of Wisconsin to receive the coveted AAA/Aaa bond ratings. Not only are we the only County in the state to receive this rating, but we are one of less than 50 counties nationwide to receive this recognition.

I am also very proud that, despite the current recession and high unemployment rate, Waukesha County remains well below the state and national average for unemployment.

Conclusion

The bottom line to all of this is how the taxpayer will be impacted. We can talk about inflation and state mandates, discuss statistics and trends, but at the end of the day, what matters most is how our constituents are impacted. What Waukesha County residents want to know is 'what is happening to my tax bill?' They want to know that we are continuing to provide high quality services while keeping taxes low.

It is our constituents that were on my mind when crafting this budget, many of whom have been greatly impacted by the recession and are faced with economic challenges of their own. I am pleased to tell you that this budget greatly limits the impact on the homeowner. In the four years that I have had the honor and privilege to serving as your County Executive, I have kept my promise to Waukesha County taxpayers by working with you to provide low County taxes and high quality services. In fact, taxes on a typical home will have gone up by less than \$1 per year in the last four years.

I would like to thank my administration and all of our devoted employees, appointed Board and Commission members, and elected officials for their dedication in helping me prepare a 2010 budget that maintains our standard of providing high quality services for a relatively low cost to our constituents. I am confident that we will maintain our reputation of excellence through these difficult economic times and for generations to come. Thank you.