



## Waukesha County Budget Task Force FAQ

**\*Updated September 2024\***

### Task Force Overview

#### **Why was the Task Force created?**

The County Executive created the Task Force to gather public input and provide direction for future county budgets. Waukesha County is a fiscally conservative, well-planned county that for decades has held the highest attainable bond rating (AAA/Aaa) as a measurement of its credit worthiness. Its data-driven decision making and conservative approach to budgeting have made it stand out as one of the nation's top performing counties. Gathering public input into the budget process has always been an important part of the county approach to fiscal management and the Task Force's final report will play an important role in continuing that practice.

#### **What was the goal of the Task Force?**

The Task Force examined the county's future capital and operating needs, reviewed all revenue options available to the county under state law, and made recommendations to the County Executive and the County Board as to how it believed the county should approach its budgets over the next 5-10 years.

#### **What was the Task Force timeline?**

Task Force Meetings:

May 14<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm-8:30pm (Ruekert & Mielke. Inc. W233 N2080 Ridgeview Pkwy, Waukesha, WI 53188)

May 29<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm-8:30pm (Ruekert & Mielke. Inc. W233 N2080 Ridgeview Pkwy, Waukesha, WI 53188)

June 4<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm-8:30pm (Ruekert & Mielke. Inc. W233 N2080 Ridgeview Pkwy, Waukesha, WI 53188)

July 30<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm-8:30pm (Ruekert & Mielke. Inc. W233 N2080 Ridgeview Pkwy, Waukesha, WI 53188)

Presentation of the Final Report:

August 24<sup>th</sup> The Task Force Final report was presented to the County Board

## Task Force Membership

### Who served on the Task Force members?

The Task force was comprised of 34 Waukesha County residents including a number of County Board Supervisors, municipal elected officials, business leaders and the public. Other County Board Supervisors and members of the public attended meetings but were not considered members of the Task Force.

### How were Task Force members be selected?

The County Executive selected Task Force members that collectively represented a broad base of backgrounds, experience, and prospectives as well as geographic balance across the county.

## Task Force Operations and Outcomes

### Are the final Task Force recommendations binding?

No. The Task Force made recommendations in the form of a final report to be considered for action by the County Executive and the County Board. The Recommendations will be considered along with other important factors that go into the county's budget and planning process.

### Will county services be reduced as a result of the Task Force recommendations?

Any recommendations, like service reductions, contained in the final report will be considered for action by the County Executive and the County Board.

## About Waukesha County

### Is Waukesha County facing a financial hardship?

While Waukesha County has adhered to an award-winning, fiscally conservative approach to budgeting and financial management, like all local municipalities, the county has made tough decisions to cut services in order to effectively manage the high cost of inflation and conform with new state regulations and mandates. Despite these priorities, and the county's track-record fiscal prudence, the state imposes limits on the amount of taxes the county can levy each year. That formula-based limit results in levy increases that are far below what the county needs to operate our government and has led to yearly cuts in services and an estimated \$5M annual shortfall.

### How was the County Board of Supervisors involved in the Task Force?

The County Board played an important role in the Task Force. Not only did some County Board Supervisors serve as members of the Task Force itself, but the full County Board was presented the final report in August of 2024 and will likely be asked to take action on individual Task Force recommendations in the form of county ordinances and future county budgets.