

Legislative Committee
October 22, 2012
JAMES P. COUGHLIN CENTER

Present: Stan Kline, Bill Wingren, Pat Brennand, Ken Robl, James Kozokowski, Tom Ellis, Kathy Lennon, Nancy Barker, Tim Hamblin, Chuck Farrey, Jerry Finch, Larry Smith, Patrick O'Brien, Claud Thompson and Tom Snider

Also

Present: Assemblyman Spanbauer, John Casper – Chamber of Commerce, Mark Harris – Winnebago County Executive, Morgan Hinckley – Park View Health Center Administrator, Assembly Person Penny Bernard Schaber, State Senator Jessica King, State Representative Gordon Hintz, Supervisor Paul Eisen and Mark Nielsen – Senator Johnson's Office

Excused: David Albrecht and Bill Roh

Absent:

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 A.M. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

T. Ellis motioned to approve the minutes from the August 27, 2012 meeting. This motion was seconded. Carried by voice vote.

UPDATE ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS:

Penny Bernard Schaber from the 57th Assembly District told the committee that the biggest issue facing the new legislature/state will be the budget. She asked the committee to let her know what the county is looking for in the next budget. What happens with the budget will depend on who is in control. Right now there is a Democratic Senate and a Republican Assembly, so a bi-partisan budget may be the best of both worlds.

State Senator King spoke about being bi-partisan. She has an over 80% record of working with the republican side of the aisle. Ms King discussed with the committee the Economic Development Corporation that over the last 2 years has not recovered over \$8 million in loan payments. The other area of concern is the Federal government not acknowledging Wedex as an appropriate agency to deal with HUD money.

The Governor is receiving budget proposals at this time and Ms King stated that we need to be going to bat for the technical colleges. The state needs people being trained for the jobs that currently exist. In Wisconsin there are 39,000 job vacancies because people do not have the technical training or credentials to take these jobs. There is a waiting list of 1600 to get into technical training. It would take an investment of \$12 million dollars to development the capacity to improve taking in 1600 more people a year. This is an investment that is worth the money. The need will keep expanding. In Fond du Lac County, 19000 workers in the next 15 years will retire. Those people will need to be replaced.

Representative Hintz from the 54th Assembly District discussed with the committee regarding the next legislative session and the need to focus on a new set of challenges. Representative Hintz and Representative Kaufert co-authored a bill to help school districts and libraries work with monies bequeathed to them by working through community foundations. Mr. Hintz told the committee that \$31.6 million to be given to people frauded by banks was used to balance the budget. Also used to balance the budget was \$24.5 millions dollars given by the federal government for the push for Badger Care to get as many people covered as possible. There is really no surplus. Mr. Hintz told the committee that the Winnebago County Clerk – Susan Ertmer is a real asset to the county. He had a meeting with her in August and was impressed with her professionalism.

Representative Spanbauer of the 53rd District told the committee that programs are suffering for the sake of saying the State has a surplus. He feels that education and Badger Care need their funding levels restored. Mr. Spanbauer urged the passage of the campaign finance reform bill. There is a need to know who from out of state is donating to local campaigns. Mr. Spanbauer feels that county elected officials should be non-partisan offices. There is no need for those jobs to be connected to a political party. Wisconsin's way of voting in a primary was discussed. Frustration level is high with voters who cannot vote for the candidate of their choice.

Mark Nielsen representing Senator Johnson told the committee that it is quiet in Washington DC, since everyone is campaigning. Limiting money for campaigning was discussed with the committee. Senator Johnson's view is that the Social Security holiday needs to end.

Mark Harris – Winnebago County Executive told the committee that more engineering degrees are needed. Mr. Harris discussed the federal mandate to expand the 700/800 megahertz radio system. We were one of the few counties to buy all the towns/villages/cities the emergency radios needed. This cost the county \$2 million. The county was able to borrow that money and spread the cost over the whole county at 1 ½ % interest. Many smaller communities would have been unable to get that rate.

Morgan Hinckley – Park View Health Center Administrator was invited to the meeting to discuss Park View Health Center. The new therapy room for short term therapy is being built and close to being done. The state survey of Park View was done and 4 citations were given. This is a very low. Ms Hinckley was very pleased and proud of the staff and what they do each and every day. The census remains steady with about 96% occupied. This is a little higher than most local nursing homes. There will be planning for more staff changeover due to retirements.

Next on the agenda was discussion and action on a resolution endorsing on-line retailers with subsidiaries or affiliates in Wisconsin to collect and remit Wisconsin and local sales tax. Discussion followed with the committee on the merits and drawbacks of this legislation. Many felt that a national sales tax would be the most fair. After discussion, P. O'Brien moved and it was seconded to endorse this legislation. Bill Wingren moved to table this resolution until more information is received. This was seconded. This item will be tabled until next month's agenda.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 am.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Bill Wingren
Secretary

Recorded By:
Jean Mahy
County Clerk's Office