



*Office of County Administrator
County of La Crosse, Wisconsin*

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Memo To: La Crosse County Board of Supervisors
From: Steve O'Malley, County Administrator
Date: August 4, 2011

Re: August Monthly Report to the County Board

Attached is the August Monthly Report to the County Board, providing monitoring information about department activities to the full County Board instead of reporting only to governing committees.

REMINDER **Monthly Reporting by roughly half the organization every other month.** While you will receive this report each month, the reports do not cover every department each time.

February, April, June, August, Oct. & Dec.

Planning, Resources & Development
Public Works & Infrastructure
Judiciary & Law Enforcement
Corp Counsel & Child Support

January, March, May, July, September, November

Health & Human Services
Aging & Long Term Care
County Clerk, Finance, IT,
Printing, Personnel, Treasurer

“OF INTEREST”

Policy Planning Agenda for Monday August 8, 2011

I will provide a report on the overall 2012 County Budget challenges and Jason Witt will provide a more detailed overview of the 2012 Human Services Budget challenges.

Triangle of Achievement Award by La Crosse Area Development Corporation

The Triangle of Achievement Award was given to La Crosse County (Emergency Management), the city of La Crosse, Xcel Energy, CenturyLink, the Salvation Army and the Scenic Bluffs Chapter of the American Red Cross. The award recognizes their collaboration during the May 22 tornado that tore apart homes and numerous businesses. Our County Board Chair Tara Johnson accepted on behalf of the County and recognized the work of the Emergency Government and Dispatch employees, in particular highlighting Jay Loeffler, Keith Butler and Al Blencoe.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail.

*County Administrator direct line: 785-9789, cell phone 608-385-3316
or e-mail steve.omalley@co.la-crosse.wi.us*

MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

Planning, Resources & Development Committee August 2011

Metropolitan Planning Organization

On August 23, 24 and 25, I will be hosting a combined Minnesota / Wisconsin MPO / RPC (Regional Planning Commission) / DOT conference. This annual conference is an opportunity for transportation planning staff from various agencies to get together for educational opportunities, sessions of interest and networking, generally with Wisconsin's finest food and beverages.

This year, with the federal transportation funding bill up for "re-authorization," there will be plenty of discussion of the future of funding of local road and transit projects. All County Board members are invited to attend; please contact me, Tom Faella, for more information.

2011 Conference Highlights include:

Tour of New Multi Use Transit Center "[Grand River Station.](#)"

Minnesota and Wisconsin FHWA Educational Sessions on Financial Planning and Sustainability.

High Speed Rail Update.

Panel on Re-authorization and other transportation topics. Invited speakers include:

- Secretary Mark Gottlieb, WisDOT
- Commissioner Tom Sorel, Mn/DOT
- Craig Thompson, TDA Wisconsin
- Ron Chicka, Executive Director, MIC
- DeLania Hardy, Executive Director, AMPO

Invited guest speaker Congressman Tom Petri of Wisconsin, member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

"Ed the Fed" on Census 2010 and CTPP.

[La Crosse Queen](#) Paddlewheel Cruise on the Mississippi River.

For more conference information please contact:

Tom Faella, (608) 785-5977, Faella.Tom@co.la-crosse.wi.us

*Submitted by
Tom Faella*

UW-Extension

- The carcass evaluation at Holmen Locker was attended by 63 youth and numerous adults to hear the results from the 2011 La Crosse Interstate Fair carcass show. UW-Extension, in cooperation with the local locker plants, provides this opportunity for fair exhibitors to learn what factors are important to producing a quality livestock animal, where each meat cut originates, and how a livestock carcass is judged. (SDH)
- Local corn and soybean producers and professionals participated in a Summer Field day in Mindoro. Topics included: Corn Disease and Plant Health Management Decisions for 2011, Weed Management Considerations for the growing season & beyond, and Insect Pests: The season so far and what to be looking for. Attendees walked fields looking at issues for this growing season and learned ways to manage those issues. Many producers brought samples for identification and solutions for problems they were seeing on their farm. (SDH)
- The youth that participated in the 4-H Curious Kids day camp learned about plant and soil science as well as the environment. Topics included what worms do for the soil, why it is important to live sustainably, what it takes to get plants ready for the season, what is involved with being a floral designer as well as other fun activities. In the end it was a great day for "learning by doing". (JH)
- La Crosse County 4-H was selected as one of fifteen counties in Wisconsin to receive a grant to offer a Gateway Academy science and engineering day camp. This cooperative venture with the La Crosse School District was attended by 25 middle school aged students. The 5 days of program offered many hands-on activities including the building of solar-powered model cars, water rockets, gliders, bridges and towers. Evaluation results showed youth attending increased their knowledge and interest in science and engineering for future education and as possible career choices. (RM)
- The second of four sessions on Food Preservation was offered via the Interactive Television (ITV) by Extension Family Living Agents in La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties, in partnership with Western Technical College. Twenty-seven participants were presented the correct procedures and processing for pickling cucumbers and other vegetables for home use and selling at farmers markets. The trainings are designed for individuals planning to sell home-canned products without obtaining a license as provided in WI Act 101. (MMS)
- Jasmine Fitzsimmons and Carly DeBruin are summer staff working with the Summer Teens at Risk Initiative, a joint program effort with the School District of La Crosse and La Crosse County Human Services. (MMS)
- WNEP educators are working with the La Crosse Aging Unit Nutrition Coordinator to promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables to area residents by demonstrating quick, easy, and healthy vegetable snacks at eleven sites where vouchers for farmers market produce are distributed to qualifying local seniors. Over 60% of the 298 participants took home a sample recipe handout and other helpful brochures like Vary Your Vegetables. (SH)
- From April to June, WNEP provided education for 1537 individuals (a 9% increase over last year) in La Crosse County on nutrition-related topics including healthy eating, food safety, food resources management and physical activity. Forty-one percent were Seniors Adults, 46% were Youth age 4 to 11, 7% were Youth age 12-17 and 5% were Adults with or without Children. (SH)
- Developed seven housing metrics for the city / county joint housing task force. These metrics were adopted by the Taskforce, and will be used for gauging the outcomes. (KG)

- Assisted baseline sustainability committee in developing 10 sustainability goals for inclusion in the sustainability plan. These goals were adopted by the Sustainability Commission at their July meeting.(KG)

JH – Jenny Holm, 4-H & Youth Assistant

KG – Karl Green, Assoc. Prof., Dept. of Comm. Resource Dev., Community Resource Dev. Agent

MMS – Mary Meehan-Strub, Prof., Dept. of Family Living, Family Living Agent / Dept. Head

RM – Robert Matysik, Prof., Dept of Youth Dev., 4-H & Youth Agent

SH – Sheila Harding, Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program Coordinator

SDH – Steve Huntzicker, Assoc. Prof., Dept. of Agriculture, Ag Agent

Department of Land Conservation

The Department of Land Conservation is in the middle of the construction season with the installation of conservation projects. Hot weather and heavy rainfalls have made earthmoving construction very difficult. Many of the conservation practices that are installed in La Crosse County require some measure of earth moving activity. Construction sites that have not had time to re-establish vegetative cover are susceptible to erosion during heavy rainfall events. Straw mulch and erosion control mats are used on all exposed earth moving construction jobs to quickly establish vegetative cover and resist erosion. Storm intensities above and beyond average events can exceed the protection capabilities of the mulch or mats. Some failures of erosion control practices, especially while construction is in progress, can damage a site and require that repairs are made to the conservation practice. The warm weather is good for fast plant growth and quick cover establishment but the rainfall needs to come with less intensity.

Soil and water conservation planning continues for those landowners who participate in the State's Farmland Preservation Program. By 2015, according to administrative rule, all participants must be in compliance with the state's agricultural performance standards and prohibitions. There are currently 261 farmers in La Crosse County that are participating in the program which provides a \$7.50/acre tax credit for landowners who agree to keep their farms in agricultural production and implement a soil and water conservation plan. The Department of Land Conservation assists these landowners in meeting the conservation requirements of the program by providing technical and planning assistance, nutrient management planning services and, in some instances, financial assistance. By implementing a soil and water conservation plan, the Farmland Preservation Program participants will be helping to protect the County's valuable surface and groundwater resources while improving soil tilth, and crop production. Conservation staff half completed conservation compliance assessments on 60 landowners in the Farmland Preservation Program and will need to complete an estimated 200 more before the 2015 deadline.

Erosion control permits for new home construction is up this year compared to last year. There has been an increase that is mild but indicates that there is some new growth in the housing industry in La Crosse County. The Department of Land Conservation assists builders, developers and homeowners with erosion control practices on their construction sites. Soil losses can be extremely high on construction sites and have a direct impact on lakes and streams if not controlled. Department staff provide erosion control plans and issues permits for approved sites. They also conduct site inspections to ensure that erosion control plans are being implemented and practices maintained during construction.

*Gregg Stangl, Director
Land Conservation*

County Surveyor

SCANNING PROJECT: We continue to scan, rename and index survey maps located in the County Surveyor files. We are currently focusing our efforts on maps in the Town of Campbell and the Village of West Salem. We are also formulating a plan to create a unique numbering system for survey maps found in the City of La Crosse. These maps are presently filed by location and do not have a unique identifier which will be necessary when we incorporate these maps into the Geographic Information System (GIS).

GLOBAL POSITIONING SATELLITE SYSTEM EQUIPMENT (RFP) PURCHASE: We have been working closely with the Purchasing Department to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for new GPS equipment. The final RFP is available on the County Website with all vendor proposals due by August 9, 2011. Vendor interviews are scheduled for August 23 with equipment testing to follow. If all goes as planned, a final recommendation will be made to the Planning, Resources and Development (PRD) Committee on October 3, 2011. Funding for this purchase will come from the Land Records program.

CERTIFIED SURVEY MAP, PRELIMINARY PLAT REVIEW AND MAP FILING: So far in 2011, we have had 29 Certified Survey Maps submitted for review. Of these 29 maps, 18 are located in the unincorporated areas of La Crosse County and are subject to a review fee of \$50. We have also reviewed three preliminary plats since the beginning of the year. We continue the intake of Plat of Survey maps submitted for filing in the County Surveyor files.

SECTION AND QUARTER CORNER VISITS: We continue our annual effort to visit a minimum of 5% of our Section and Quarter corner locations throughout the County. This year we are concentrating on the monument locations in T17N, R5W in the Town of Burns. We also visit other corner monuments that may be at risk of disturbance or removal (for example road construction). If you know of a survey marker that may be endangered, please contact our office.

ONGOING RESPONSE: As always, we continually respond to the public, other County Departments and other governmental agencies to assist them with surveying and land ownership questions. These interactions take place via e-mail, telephone and face-to-face visits and can illustrate some very unique situations and raise some interesting and complex questions.

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan Meyer
La Crosse County Surveyor

MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

Public Works & Infrastructure August 2011

Highway Department

- The Highway Department has been working on seal coating projects on several County Highways as well as on various Town roads and Streets in the Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska.
- We have recently completed one of our two large WisDOT projects this year. This particular project consisted of the repair of the concrete along STH 16. The work was performed at night to minimize impacts on traffic in this area.
- The County Crew is in the process of performing various maintenance projects on our County System, such as crack filling and shoulder maintenance.
- The State Crew will shortly be again working along STH 162 to widen shoulders out in preparation for a reconstruction on 162 from I90 south to STH 33 currently scheduled for 2015. This is our other large WisDOT project this year.
- The WisDOT has revisited the mowing of medians in urban areas, such as those medians along 16 by the mall. We are currently allowed to mow more frequently in an effort to maintain safety and sight distance in these areas.

Respectfully Submitted
Ronald Chamberlain

Solid Waste

- Mediation with Landfill Contractor – Meetings and mediation with the St. Joseph Construction Company continue regarding operations of the landfill contract. Progress is being made in various areas, while some issues remain unresolved.
- HHM – Usage of the HHM facility continues to be strong in 2011. While the number of households served remains nearly the same, the total weight of waste collected has increased by over 25%. The average weight delivered by a household user is 67 pounds; 13 pounds heavier than last year. Michelle Werner recently resigned to take a job closer to her hometown. HHM has been able to maintain its level of service by increasing the hours of seasonal help and by the manager assisting during busier times.
- Green Tier Certification – On June 1st WDNR Secretary Cathy Stepp presented the Solid Waste Department with its Green Tier certification. Information and photos can be found on La Crosse County's Green Tier webpage.
<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cea/environmental/participants/LAXcounty/index.htm>

- Safety Inspection - Jerry Vanevenhoven, La Crosse County Safety Consultant, conducted a safety inspection on 5/3/11. Three items were discovered and corrected. Lockout/tag out procedures are being established. As a follow up to the inspection, the Solid Waste Department met with Jerry, Personnel and Corporate Counsel to discuss the appropriate relationship between the Department and the site contractor, St. Joseph Construction Company, regarding safety.
- Entrance Area – Data gathering and evaluations on how to change the entrance area continue. Traffic counts, accident reports and criteria to evaluate alternatives have been developed. Appraisal of the Schroeder property has been completed. A neighborhood meeting is scheduled for July 27 to obtain additional input. A report summarizing the evaluation of alternatives and providing a recommendation is expected to be ready in September.
- Solid Waste Evaluation – The Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska are working to set up a joint implementation committee to review information contained in the Solid Waste Assessment Report jointly prepared by the Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska and La Crosse County. A critical time line will face this committee since little activity has occurred from late 2010 when the assessment was presented.
- Gas to Energy – Jadd Stilwell (Solid Waste Operations Coordinator) is the construction project manager for the gas to energy project. He is requiring weekly meetings and updates from all parties including Gundersen Lutheran. Boring of the 6” gas line and 4” fiber optic conduit has been completed under I-90 and N/S Kinney Coulee. Trenching for the 6” gas line from N Kinney Coulee into the Landfill is currently taking place. Construction of the compressor building is underway with the pouring of the footers and foundation. Operational testing of the compressor is currently taking place at Unison and an August 1 delivery is scheduled. A meeting was held with Gundersen Lutheran, La Crosse County Solid Waste, Consultants and Contractors and an updated construction/project schedule has been requested. At this point we have had three change orders resulting in zero increase to contract price. Problems and issues have been encountered that could have affected the schedule, but because of our proactive efforts significant delays have been averted. The County consultant (Foth) has an engineer on site validating compliance with all rules and regulations. On July 13 WXOW TV 19 did an interview with Nick Nichols (Sustainability Coordinator) on the construction of the pipeline underneath I-90.
- Sustainability – Nick coordinated a TV interview done by WKBT TV 8 news that covered the shingle recycling program. Channel 8 also interviewed Mathy Construction and showed where the shingles end up in the construction process, emphasizing their value as a recycled material. Nick attended the Urban Sustainability Leadership Academy in Washington D.C. from July 18-20. This was an intensive training session put on by the Institute for Sustainable Communities. Nick was nominated by the Wisconsin Office of Energy and required to submit an application. Nick was the only applicant selected from the entire State of Wisconsin. The Academy training was completely paid for by the institute including air fare and hotel accommodations. Nick stated that he was very impressed with the professionalism and information received at this academy and it will benefit his sustainability work within the County.
- Tonnage and Revenue – Tonnages and revenue are exceeding budget projections. Small users (citizens and contractors) have increased landfill traffic by 50 percent over 2010.

Shingles have exceeded total 2010 tonnages in less than 6 months. Tonnage at Xcel is expected to exceed the 73,000 ton minimum.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry A. Koch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "H".

Henry A. Koch, P.E.

MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

Judiciary & Law August 2011

Emergency Services

It is not uncommon for manufacturers to discontinue service support for equipment they consider obsolete, sometimes as soon as five years after it has been installed. That was the case in 2011 when Public Safety Communications needed to upgrade its required logging system that records public safety telephone calls and radio transmissions. The department is also facing this challenge with other phone and radio equipment.

Our contract with CenturyLink that provides service for 9-1-1 and non-emergency phone systems will expire in 2012. The server and computers that operate our phone system has been used extensively for five years (more than 1.5 million phone incoming and outgoing phone calls) and is in need of a hardware/software refresh. Some of the equipment is obsolete and the software version used in our dispatch center for five years is no longer supported.

On the radio side, our simulcast equipment that allows us to broadcast law enforcement radio messages to four tower sites simultaneously is no longer supported by the manufacturer. Currently the system continues to function; however new parts are no longer available. A desired advantage to upgrading is that this advancement would also allow for simulcast operations with our fire and emergency medical services paging and operations. Currently dispatchers must choose one of four single transmitter sites when doing fire fighting/EMS broadcasts and do multiple pages to ensure the best geographical radio coverage.

As part of the 2012 budget process, Emergency Services is reviewing the options to pursue upgrading our critical telephone and radio infrastructure to the latest software/hardware so our systems remain robust.

Public-Safety Communications (Al Blencoe, Manager)

May

Telephone Calls

9-1-1 Calls 2,782 (average of 90 per day)
 Answered within 10 seconds: 94.84%
 Answered within 20 seconds: 99.42%
 * 0 calls more than 30 seconds

Total Calls 26,271 (average of 847 per day)

Calls for Service

Law Enforcement 9,033
Fire Fighting 265
Emergency Medical 551

June

Telephone Calls

9-1-1 Calls 2,741 (average of 91 per day)

Answered within 10 seconds: 95.29%
Answered within 20 seconds: 99.45%
* 0 calls more than 30 seconds

Total Calls 25,230 (average of 841 per day)

Calls for Service

Law Enforcement	8,631
Fire Fighting	222
Emergency Medical	532

**National Emergency Number Association Standards:*

- 90% within 10 seconds (during the busy hour)
- 95% within 20 seconds.

Emergency Management (Keith Butler, Coordinator)

Gary Simenson, long serving Emergency Management Director for the Town of Campbell, was honored as a "Home Town Hero" during a presentation at the Days Inn on June 1.

The May 22 tornado event required significant adjustments to the Emergency Management activities during June and July. A letter was sent to each of the five City of La Crosse Council members from the affected districts regarding the County's assistance and damage assessment information. Several follow-up damage assessment tours were required to obtain data regarding the extent of the tornado and to prepare GIS-enhanced mapping products. All Special Needs Population Registry participants in the tornado's path were contacted by Emergency Management and a door-to-door assessment was conducted with Human Services Dept staff assisted by CERT volunteers. Considerable efforts were made to apply for State Disaster fund assistance.

The 2012 Emergency Management budget was prepared and submitted during this reporting period using the new TEAM BUDGET on-line system. Efforts were made to keep budget levels the same as the preceding three years.

Numerous summer storms required site /damage inspections however none were severe enough to require a disaster declaration or any expectation of State or Federal disaster assistance.

Emergency Management participated in an Amateur Radio (ARES/RACES) exercise on Sunday, June 26 which provided additional 'points' for the local ARES RACES team.

Emergency Management prepared and delivered the Communications & Command Vehicle to Riverfest for use as the La Crosse Police Command Post, including support of expanded River Watch operations.

Emergency Management and the County Health Department worked with several public safety partner agencies to prepare for the July Heat Wave. Emergency Management clerk and GIS Specialist contacted all of the known special needs facilities to ensure adequate planning measures were in place to deal with the extended heat situation.

Emergency Management successfully tested a regional portable public safety radio transmitter in the Shelby and City of La Crosse area on July 8 in preparation for the October narrow band conversion of all local, regional and state public safety radio channels. Al Blencoe and Keith Butler prepared for the La Crosse Area Radio Group meeting on July 27 to review progress made towards narrow band compliance county-wide.

The Communications & Command Vehicle and the Mass Casualty Team were deployed to the Globe University EMS Days celebration on Saturday, July 9.

A grant application was submitted to fund a five-year update to the County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Every municipality was contacted and work begun to determine appropriate changes to the plan which allows communities to receive substantial funding assistance to reduce natural hazard disaster losses and expenses.

Emergency Management Coordinator completed Wisconsin Emergency Management training for "Emergency Planning for Special Needs Populations" at the State Emergency Operations Center on July 13-15.

**Jay Loeffler, Administrator
Emergency Services**