



Department Updates

Barron County

Treasurer's Office

Vonnie Ritchie, Treasurer

Unpaid Taxes

On September 1st of each year, the current year unpaid taxes are transferred to certificates. This is the first step in the tax foreclosure process. Listed below is a spreadsheet showing the totals of the certificates for the past 9 years.

September Sale Book

Tx Year/Yr Due	Total Tax Roll	Delq Tax Total 9-1	% Un-paid	Balance Sept 1, 2008
2000/2001	45,391,631.68	992,784.06	2.1872%	32.90
2001/2002	49,572,130.81	1,057,898.01	2.1341%	36.28
2002/2003	51,880,053.45	1,144,145.38	2.2054%	255.59
2003/2004	56,516,231.63	1,076,048.09	1.9040%	298.07
2004/2005	60,131,880.83	1,235,374.57	2.0544%	322.59
2005/2006	61,924,118.88	1,671,870.18	2.6999%	326.90
2006/2007	64,981,123.96	1,298,997.84	1.9990%	272,210.53
2007/2008	69,598,313.20	1,492,011.09	2.1437%	662,777.37
2008/2009	71,258,276.57	2,133,601.83	2.99%	2,133,601.83

The In-Rem Tax Deed process starts two years from the September 1st certificate date.

Tax Foreclosure Property Sale

Our property sale was held on 8-12-09. The following parcels were sold:		The following parcels were sold by Alliance Realty:	
Town of Cedar Lake		City of Barron	
010-4244-18-000	6,500	206-1201-32-000	14,000
010-4379-34-000	7,000	City of Chetek	
Town of Cumberland		211-1604-32-000	19,000
018-3000-24-010	7,000	Town of Rice Lake	
Town of Rice Lake		038-4485-19-000	60,000
038-0100-33-000	45,000		
Parcels still available for sale at the County Treasurer's Office:			
016-3500-23-000	11,400	276-2380-02 thru 13 (12 lots) City of Rice Lake	20,000 each
Town of Crystal Lake			
018-1900-06-000	10,500	276-2380-48-000	50,000
Town of Cumberland		City of Rice Lake	
211-2380-02-000	9,000		
City of Chetek			



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Soil & Water Conservation Department

Dale Hanson, County Conservationist

Numerous conservation projects continue throughout the county and there are several others to be started this fall in hopes of getting all the projects done by freeze-up. Two significant projects just began. The first, funded by the Wetland Reserve Program which is administered by NRCS in Barron County, is a 56 acre wetland restoration project in Dallas Township which started on September 10. This project, funded entirely by federal dollars that come into our local economy, will create habitat for waterfowl, fur bearers and numerous other wildlife. It will also improve flood control in the watershed of Lower

Pine Creek.

Another NRCS funded project is a barnyard runoff management system which also started this week, just west of the City of Rice Lake on the headwaters of Barker Creek. This project will keep considerable volumes of animal waste from entering Barker Creek.

The SWCD has been assisting the Sheriff's Department on the investigation of human remains found on an island of Prairie Lake. A team of archeologists visited the island along with SWCD, Sheriff's Department and

Emergency Government personnel and conducted an archeological investigation of the site. Now the SWCD is preparing a plan to stabilize the erosion that has been occurring on the island; it is the erosion that exposed the human remains in the first place. The island will be treated as an historic burial site and will be preserved as such.

The afternoon of September 10, a bid opening was conducted for the reconstruction of the Moon Lake Dam. The intent is for the reconstruction project to begin by the end of September and be done within a couple of months.

Office on Aging / Aging & Disability Resource Center

Charlene Oftedahl, Director

Thirty-seven people attended public hearings held on the Barron County Plan on Aging for 2010 - 2012 at senior centers in Barron, Rice Lake, and Chetek on August 27. Attendees were asked to express issues of concern for older persons living in their communities now and for the future. It was not a surprise that transportation, housing, and healthcare were topics brought up most frequently. An overview of the proposed plan for county aging programs to be available during the next three years was given. Priorities include Senior Dining, meals-on-wheels, family caregiver support services, Daybreak adult day care, transportation, benefits counseling, and emergency preparedness planning. No

negative comments were expressed on the plan or current programs.

Open Houses at the new resource centers in Ladysmith and Spooner in August were well attended. The resource centers, co-located with the county aging units, were developed as part of the regional Aging and Disability Resource Center of Barron, Rusk, and Washburn Counties. The regional governing board meets on September 29. Barron County Supervisor Andrew Mommsen is the chairman. Check out the website: www.adrcconnections.org Resources service directories are now available on the website and in printed form for all three counties. Staff of many local service providers throughout the region request these

directories for distribution to their customers.

SeniorCare, Wisconsin's alternative to Medicare Part D, has been officially granted an extension of the program through 2012. SeniorCare, initiated in 2002, had been scheduled to end on December 31, 2009. SeniorCare will continue to provide services for the 86,000 Wisconsin residents signed up. Currently Barron County has 1,363 residents enrolled in SeniorCare. The Benefit Specialists in the ADRC can help people explore their many options to determine if this is the best coverage for their prescription drugs.

County Clerk

DeeAnn Cook, County Clerk

The listening session regarding communication that GAB held in Eau Claire was very worthwhile. Each attendee was asked what prompted them to come to the meeting and to give specific examples of problems they have encountered with communication to and from GAB. They were very attentive, took lots of notes, and seemed very sincere about making improvements in their communication at both the municipal and county levels.

New Website Update: The several month long project of the Barron County Web

Design Group to design and develop a new Barron County website is nearing completion. Members of the Web Design Group included: Judge James Babler, DeeAnn Cook, David Gifford, Tim Jergensen, Mark Koenecke, Traci Petersen, Yvonne Ritchie, Jeff Sirek and Catherine Tuminaro. This group assessed the website needs of current and potential Barron County residents and visitors and Barron County government employees; evaluated and chose a cost effective, easy to use website content management system that provides each department with a means to maintain website content; evaluated, chose and customized a design that will give the Barron

County site a professional and unique look; and designed a navigation menu that will direct site visitors to the information that they are looking for. Department content managers are now in the process of reviewing, editing and entering content on the new website. This process will be completed soon and the site will be ready to be released to the public within a few weeks.

Just a reminder to please pay \$10 to the County Board Bereavement/Retirement fund if you have not done so already.

Register of Deeds

Joyce Kaseno, Register of Deeds

We have a new intern to do scanning for the microfiche project. She is doing a great job and we now have 19 volumes scanned. These are available for viewing and printing from a desktop folder on all public computers in our office. The searchers can now check that folder before going to the microfiche drawers and viewers. The next step is to import those documents into the Laredo system and index and verify them.

They will then be available to all Laredo and Tapestry users on the internet. Tapestry is the part of the internet access for occasional users. It is accessed through www.landrecords.net.

We are now in the second month for Domestic Partnerships to be filed. It is reported 218 were filed on the first day throughout the state. To date there are 5 filed in Barron County. The largest number

filed on the first day in a county was 50 in Dane County. Milwaukee County and Winnebago County had 20 each.



Human Resources

Rachael Richie, HR Director

New / Replacement Positions				
<u>Position Title</u>	<u>Office / Department</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Date Filled</u>	<u>New / Replacement</u>
Social Worker	Health & Human Services	Kelly Peterson	10/19/09	Replacement

- The County will meet again with the bargaining units on 9/23/09 to review the health insurance and wages.
- There were 5 responses to the health insurance RFP which are currently being analyzed.
- The Employee Recognition Picnic will be held October 1st beginning at 4:30pm at the Kiwanis Shelter/Kittelson Field located on the corner of N. Mill and E. Birch Street in Barron. Everyone is welcome to attend! Employees reaching an employment milestone of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 & 30 years with Barron County will receive a certificate! Please RSVP to Administration by 9/22/09. In addition, the County is participating in the Lee® National Denim Day on 10/1/09 in which employees pay donate \$5 towards the fight against breast cancer and wear jeans.
- Flu Shots will again be offered on-site on **October 6th** at the times/locations listed below. Non-WPS members must provide a photocopy of their insurance id card (front & back) and will have their insurance billed at a non-discounted rate. There will also be a \$25 cash option available. Anyone is welcome. Mark your calendars!

Flu Shot Schedule

10:30am – 1:00pm: Government Center, Room 110

1:45pm – 3:00pm: Justice Center, EOC Room

3:15pm – 4:00pm: Highway

4:15pm – 6:45pm: Justice Center, EOC Room

Land Information

Mark Netterlund, Surveyor

Land Information staff has been assisting the County Highway Department with the county highway road sign inventory. Ken Filter has been collecting the location of each county sign with a GPS unit. Ken also collects important information about each sign such as the side of road, material, sign code, post type and size. Rhonda Sukys is taking the data collected in the field and creating a digital sign mapping layer. The

digital sign mapping layer will be added to the existing county mapping system. Sign locations with labels can be placed over other county data such as aerial photography. Having this data will allow the Highway Department to create reports that will make sign maintenance more efficient. Another use of this data is when a sign is knocked down and covered with snow in the winter it can be used to locate the sign so it can be repaired or replaced. This

should not only help the Highway Department in maintaining signs but may also help other offices such as the Sheriff's Department.



Health & Human Services

Judy Demers, Director

- Income limits for the Energy Assistance program this benefit season beginning October 1, have increased by about 25%. This will substantially increase the number of households qualifying for the program. The process for taking applications will be the same as last heating season with applications being taken every Wednesday beginning October 7, 2009.
- Due to the immense backlog of applications the State received for the Badgercare Plus Core program, counties have been offered compensation for helping to key the applications.

Several Economic Support Specialists have agreed to help with processing the applications. The number of applications received far exceeded projections. The state anticipated a capacity of 41,000 applications, and the number of applications has already exceeded 44,000. To date, over 400 applications have been received from Barron County residents.

- The Safe and Stable Families' Coalition has been awarded a Drug-Free Communities grant in the amount of \$125,000, which is renewable for a period of 5 years. DHHS is serving as the fiscal agent, and Laura Sauve, Public Health Nurse, and Kaye Thompson,

Health Officer have time allocated to administering the grant.

- Interviews are currently being held for a social work vacancy in the Youth and Families' Unit which was created as a result of transition to Northern Bridges. Another vacancy has just been created in the same unit by the resignation of Social Worker, Hillary Boten, who plans to return to work in her home county of Washb

Economic Development

Dave Miller, Director

I hope you're enjoying our Northwest Wisconsin Summer.

Current and New Projects: There are 40 start-up projects in addition to the 30 start-up activities that rolled over to the 2009 from 2008. Expansion projects have leveled at 10 since the first of the year. The latter half of August also brought continued action and completion of the following: the Vacant Land along the RR marketing project took a bit of a delay, but all is back on track, for now. Yes, you read it correctly, I did "back on track". The initial preparation for reprinting the county's highway map for 2010-2012 has begun. An "ALL MEMBERS" email was sent asking for any changes that might be considered for the reprint and some of the newspapers did print the PSA on the project. If your newspaper did not print it, then complain to the newspaper.

The Energy Related Stimulus Program is the focus of this report to the County Board. The Program is STILL nearing its competitive stages for municipalities. As of this writing (**again**), the competitive application is **still nowhere in sight**, but the WI Office of Energy Independence and the WI Department of Commerce folks will tell us when it becomes available.

The "Rat Rails" photo project was completed. This involved a 4-1/2 hour trek in a Hi-Rail vehicle along the rail corridors,

shooting photographs of the areas where repair is needed. And oh, what repairs are needed. One hundred fifty-eight photos should tell the story, all in dramatic high resolution showing disrepair, uneven tracks, ties that date back to the last century and so on.

The Annual "7-Industry" Trade Show is upcoming in September. I will be leaving on Sunday the 20th, for the mega-event in Rosemont, Illinois to setup on the 21st. The show runs through Thursday with a return on Friday. This is a BCEDC sponsored event and will focus on the Medical Device element of the show. Nearly 1,000 exhibitors have registered this year for the event.

Brush Dumping and Grinding: Of the six potential sites across the county that were identified, the Property Committee is considering three. A fourth might be eligible but it is on private land. The project is moving along

"Be A Kickin' Ash Borer" Supporter. The "Emerald Ash Borer" Prevention Enhancement Project" is a program from the Property and Recreation Committees. The Committees asked for input on advertising using the extensive outdoor billboard network across the county. Beginning on August 4th and ending just the 9th of September, "windshield surveys" were completed, identifying all the commercial and private billboards on Highways 8, 25, 48, 63, 8 and "V". A grid was created showing the billboards in use, bill-

boards that are available, major commercial billboards by name those used for private use. The major outdoor advertising companies were also contacted requesting information on their Public Service Announcement programs. The data was compiled and presented to the each of the Committees for their review and handling.

The Governor was in town last week and met a group of folks at the Barron High School. Many of you knew he was to talk on Alternative Energies and Woody BioMass Heating systems and a sizeable crowd of folks provided histories, activities and needs to the Governor's Team. He was happy to hear that the County passed the 2025 Alternative Energy Resolution.

Other Activities:

The "25th Annual Rice Lake Chamber of Commerce Salute to Industry event at Turtleback on August 19th. The Department provided its full trade show exhibit for the event. Although a bit wet and rainy...like all day..the event was very well attended.

The 16th and 17th of September, the 9th Annual Synergy Conference will be held on the UW-Barron County and WITC campuses. As mentioned last month, the Department will provide its full trade show exhibit for the event. Come by the UW BC Campus Commons area the evening of the 16th and you'll be able to see the updated display.

Administration / Committee Update

Jeff French, Interim Administrator

Extension/Land Conservation

Committee:

- Approved the 2010 budgets for both Soil & Water and Extension with no changes.
- Discussed Arland Township Sand Mine; to date we have not received a reclamation plan.
- Approved the following vacancies to be filled:
 - Family Living Agent .8 to 1.0 FTE, depending on most qualified candidate.
 - Nutrition Coordinator, this is a federally funded position Barron County costs are for office expenses.
 - 4-H Youth Development Agent, (Annette Bjorklund), will be returning to Washburn County full-time beginning 1-1-2010.
- Approved closing office on State imposed mandatory furlough days; 11-27-2009, 1-4-2010, 3-22-2010, 5-24-2010, 11-26-2010, 1-3-2011, 3-21-2011, 5-23-2011.

Property Committee:

- This Committee will be meeting the same morning as County Board.

Executive:

- Received 2008 Audit report from Dan Thole, unqualified opinion, highest possible. The General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance is \$4,886,760 or 27% of General Fund Expenditures. Barron County Policy is to maintain this at 25-33%. Executive Summary will be presented to the Full Board when we meet.
- Highway Grievance – pulled due to schedule conflict with union business manager.
- Consent agenda was approved without changes.
- First draft of the 2010 Budget was presented and will be presented again on the 21st. Non-union salaries were discussed, with no action taken. This item along with other budget matters will be discussed again on 10-1. Approved increase in public health nurse,

State grant funded, from .6 to 1.0 FTE with Supervisors Stavran and Horstman opposed.

- Approved offer of \$ 62,000 for tax deed property in Campia without inspections and provide warranty deed. Treasurer Ritchie reported that only 4 of 23 tax deed properties had sold as of the date of the meeting.
- Approved the following payments:
 - \$ 4,700 HHS/Child Support consolidation study
 - \$ 4,500 purchase from CICOP for TimberBase Software for County Forester
 - \$ 1,867.63 to former Administrator for legal fees not covered by our insurance carrier. This was previously discussed by Executive in November of 2008 but no formal approval was allowed.
 - \$ 200 monthly mileage stipend to Interim Administrator, retroactive to date of hire, which is identical to that allowed the former incumbent.
- Approved hiring of managing consultant to oversee general contractor(s) for rail rehabilitation, per RFP as developed by State DOT.

Consolidations:

- SWCD/Zoning/Land Information/Economic Development/Forest & Rec: Tabled until next meeting when more facts will be presented.
- HHS/CSA: Tabled until such time as financial facts are available and report back to Executive.
- Supervisor Olson presented information on the Administrator's job description, advertising, application process, scoring of applicants and the interview process. Application deadline is 10-23; final selection target date is 2-2010. All Board members will be included in the process.
- Approved carryover of not more than 40 hours of vacation for Interim Administrator.
- Discussed redistricting per the 2010 census and formation of 3-5 member committee.

- Voted to support Highway Committee and recommend to Property and County Board to purchase property in the City of Barron.

Lastly, I informed the Committee of two issues:

- #1. The Department of Workforce Development/Equal Rights Division determined no probable cause regarding the complaint of discrimination that was filed by Mr. Dave Brodt.
- #2. A concealed camera was stolen; replacement will be covered through our insurance carrier.

Other Pertinent Information:

As outlined in Resolution 2009-25; I attended a meeting in Menomonie on 8-28 to receive information pertaining to the expansion and multi-module use of the I-94 corridor; Eau Claire to St. Paul. The group in-question represents the eastern suburbs of the twin-cities metro area and the western Wisconsin counties adjoining I-94. Broadly speaking the purpose of this group is to have a coordinated effort to solve how and in what manner transportation will exist in the future from Eau Claire to the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul. Expansion of interstate I-94 to six lanes is part of the process but high-speed rail is also being discussed. What I found most interesting and unique is that Minnesota cities and Counties are actually asking for our input and participation. The next meeting for this group is scheduled for 9-25; again in Menomonie. I will present information on this topic at the next Executive Committee or as agenda space permits.

