

**Intercounty Coordinating Committee (ICC)**  
**August 20, 2007**  
**UW-Extension, Jefferson County Office**  
**Jefferson, Wisconsin**

**1. Introductory Business**

Call to Order – Chair Steve Nass called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**Attendance**

See attached sheet

**2. Certification of Open Meeting Notice**

The Secretary confirmed that the requirements of the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law were met.

**3. Adoption of Agenda**

Motion by Columbia County, second by Green Lake County to approve the agenda. Approved.

**4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Green Lake County, second by Dodge County to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2007 meeting of the Intercounty Coordinating Committee. Approved.

**5. Visiting Officials**

Senator Scott Fitzgerald:

- Conference Committee on Budget has made some progress; half of budget completed; controversial issues will be discussed for some time; hopes the Governor will be more engaged with more give and take.
- The health insurance proposal is the biggest issue and challenge; more details are coming out on this.
- This week there will be a couple of budget meetings; the pressure is that school districts need the budget number from the State.

Q: Any movement on tax levy limits and shared revenue?

A: It has been discussed, but not much has resulted so far.

Q: Any chances of more federal money for infrastructure?

A: This is not known.

Q: Has Joint Finance been a superfluous committee?

A: This year it was difficult because of the 8-8 ties, with ties going back to the Governor's recommendation.

Assembly Representative Steve Nass:

- Had hoped that the process for budget could have been speeded up.
- The Governor's participation is critical.
- Does not see any real funding opportunity with infrastructure.
- Believes the key issue is around "do not want more taxes" or not.
- The deficit is \$2 billion
- The bond rating is in trouble.
- Believes the health insurance proposed has many flaws, and from his perspective this is dead.
- Shared revenue is important, and should be moved forward "piece by piece".

- Would not be surprised if the levy limit will be slightly higher than 2% (i.e. 2½% or maybe up to 3%).
- 46 or 58 credits can be given to Veterans which has some limits on “advanced degrees”.

Q: Is the Governor still advancing a smoking ban?

A: Believes yes, but Representative Nass and Senator Fitzgerald are not in favor of this. The cigarette tax may make it through, although the Senator believes this not needed. The dollars/revenue from this tax cannot be counted on. There is a large philosophical difference in the legislature now.

Q: Can a beer tax ever be looked at?

A: Probably not now. Taxes should have a purpose and a justification.

Q: What is opinion on funding of UW and losing professors?

A: Representative Nass – Yes, to some extent, they are losing some professors. Should focus on Building Plan for academic buildings and not dorms.

UW is getting a 3% increase in the budget above the \$1 billion. He believes that there is only “doom and gloom” from UW administration. He believes that UW is protecting administrators. UW will have to tighten its belt. He believes that there are problems of leadership at UW.

Q: Is there talk of revamping the tax structure (i.e. looking more at sales tax) while keeping a revenue stream?

A: Senator Fitzgerald: Only if democrats control both chambers. Not while there is a split chamber. Anything sweeping would be difficult, and this would have to come from the Executive Branch. A sales tax is very volatile and not as stable as income and property tax.

Q: Why is median income higher in Minnesota?

A: The Twin Cities is different than Milwaukee. It brings in more revenue than Milwaukee. Milwaukee is not the economic engine that the Twin Cities are. Perhaps this will change.

Q: Jefferson County believes that Stewardship Fund should be fully funded. How do you stand?

A: Senator Fitzgerald believes that the DNR is out of control and needs more oversight on Stewardship. Believes this program has been a “cash grabbing” fund. Wildlife groups are not fundraising.

Representative Nass: Needs to be more targeted in land acquisition. Need public access for land purchased by Stewardship Fund.

Senator Fitzgerald: Some proposals are “mind-boggling” (such as purchase for golf courses).

Q: Wisconsin taxes on pensions. How do you react?

A: Representative Nass: There is a proposal to phase in, and hopefully something will be part of the budget.

6. **WCA** – Mike Blaska, Director of Programs and Services
- Provided an overview of services and information through WCA.
  - Provided an update on the State budget:
    - Very little progress has been made.
    - Will probably need the Governor to intervene.
    - Health care is a big issue and will likely have to be taken “off the table.”
  - Senate Bill 122 (property tax exemption for waste treatment facilities); eliminates this exemption for private waste treatment facilities.
  - Assembly Bill 438 (Reduction of counties from 72 to 18); the WCA observes that other cost-saving areas could be looked at before considering something like this.
  - Sales Tax Exemptions: If eliminated this could create a revenue stream of over \$3 billion dollars.
  - WCA working on “The Wisconsin Way” which is looking at tax structure changes that respond to the changes in the Wisconsin economy from a manufacturing economy to a service economy. More press will be coming out on this, and there will be listening sessions around the State. The intended outcome would be “acceptable potential changes and proposals” for tax structure changes. This is intended to be a “bottom-up” approach.

7. **PROGRAM:**

**The Glacial Heritage Area and Land Legacy Initiative – John Pohlman, Land Management Specialist, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

- At the end of the first 10-year round of stewardship, the DNR was commissioned to do a 50-year needs assessment for land protection and conservation.
- 229 legacy places were identified, and western Jefferson County was identified as the highest priority area in Wisconsin.
- See attached PowerPoint.

**The Groundwater Flow Computer Monitoring System (G-Flow) – Suzanne Wade, Rock River Basin Educator, University of Wisconsin-Extension**

- UW-Extension educator Suzanne Wade provided a foundation for understanding the importance of protecting groundwater in Jefferson County and the ICC region.
- See attached PowerPoint.

8. **Evaluation of ICC:** An evaluation/assessment of ICC along with 2007-2008 program planning will be the focus of the September 17<sup>th</sup> ICC meeting.

9. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Dodge County, seconded by Columbia County. The ICC meeting was adjourned by Chair Nass at 12:03 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Grabow  
Community Development Educator  
UW-Extension, Jefferson County Office

ICC Meeting  
August 20, 2007

... Sign-In Please ...

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Steve Grabow	UWExt., Jefferson Co.
John A Trumbury	Columbia Co
Nebra Wopat	Columbia Co.
GARY PETRE	JEFFERSON - Admin.
Rep Steve NASS	31 <sup>st</sup> Assembly District
ORRIN HELMER	GREEN LAKE Co.
JOHN BRENNAN	" " "
Jim Hobbe	" "
Jeff Hoffman	GREEN LAKE Co UWEX
Russell Katke	Dodge County
Ray Scalpelo	Dodge County
Judy Ashford	Sauk County
Beth Klotz	Jeff. Co. Parks Dept.
Helen Baumgard	Columbia
Mike Blaska	WCA
Senator Scott Fitzgerald	
Supervisor Steve Nass	Jefferson County