



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

County Administrative Center  
400 4th Street North • Room 3300 • La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601-3200  
(608) 785-9700 • Fax (608) 789-4821  
[www.co.la-crosse.wi.us](http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us)

**Memo To: La Crosse County Board of Supervisors**  
**From: Steve O'Malley, County Administrator**  
**Date: February 9, 2012**

**Re: February Monthly Report to the County Board**

Attached is the February 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”**

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting We've received written notice that the Government Finance Officers Association has awarded the La Crosse County Finance Department the Certificate of Achievement for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row for the 2010 Comprehensive Financial Report. The Certificate is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. I will make a formal presentation of the plaque to the staff at a future County Board meeting.

*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](mailto:steve.omalley@co.la-crosse.wi.us)*

# MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

## Planning, Resources & Development Committee February 2012

### Zoning, Planning and Land Information:

#### **Ordinance Updates:**

1. Zoning ordinance: The County Board has now adopted by first and second reading the Zoning Ordinance. It will become official when it is published. However, it must also be accepted by any one of the 12 towns. We will now have approximately 12 months of working with the Towns to implement these changes and work with DATCP to attain certification.
2. Sign Ordinance: First reading of the proposed Sign Ordinance was approved with 5 amendments by County Board. Will go for second reading at the February County Board meeting.

#### **Staff changes:**

Our Department Head, Jeff Bluske, has retired. Department organization is being reviewed and the a decision as to the result of that review should come soon. The department is in very capable hands as Nathan Sampson has been appointed the interim Department Director.

The County has hired Mike Harding as a Land Use Specialist. We feel very lucky to have hired such a qualified individual to assist with our department. Mike is a registered land surveyor and has a unique set of skills in mapping, field work and GIS. He is also very familiar with many of our county residents, and is a good fit with the department.

*Charlie Hardy*  
*County Planner*

### UW-Extension

- The Community Financial Educator Intern presented Money Talk\$ presentations for four UWL 100 classes and five Economics and Microeconomics classes at Central High School. Post program evaluations showed that 92% of the 92 UWL students and 87% of the 120 high school seniors found the information on credit scores, sources of college funds, credit cards, credit scores, budgeting and savings, and on vs. off campus housing useful. (MMS)
- Family Living Agent facilitated several Strategic Planning Sessions with the Human Services Management Team and Supervisors. The Management Team reviewed their Mission, Vision, and Values, and both the Management Team and Supervisors completed a SWOC Analysis—Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges

for their department and programs, and have begun to develop their objectives for 2012. (MMS)

- Eleven local farmers learned about safe handling of pesticides and how to properly post areas that had been sprayed to avoid unnecessary exposure to others at the January 2012 Pesticide Applicators Training. After the teaching material was presented, a test was given which the farmers must pass in order to receive their license. All farmers passed the exam and are therefore licensed for the next five years. A second training will be held in February in Mindoro. (SDH)
- The weekly news segment "Hands on Gardening" is now into its sixth year of providing timely information to the general public regarding a host of horticulture related topics. To date 234 non-duplicated, horticulture related, educational segments for WKBT's "Hands-On Gardening" have aired. (SDH)
- In 2011, 44 new adult 4-H leaders were added to the nearly 385 leaders that have completed the orientation and certification process required of volunteers. Leaders completing the certification process learn about child development principles, experiential learning, the basics of 4-H and watching for signs of child abuse/neglect. (RM)
- Over 75 youth ages 5-19 participated in the 4-H Communication Arts Festival involving individual speeches and group drama performances. Communication skills are among the most frequently mentioned skills learned in 4-H and the participants meet with the judges to receive verbal as well as written feedback to help them improve their speaking and drama presentation skills. (RM)
- The nutrition educator taught a class which included planning and preparing cost effective meals, time saving tips, and ideas to incorporate more vegetables and fruit into family meals at 4 La Crosse Head Start centers. Of the 33 parents and 24 children in attendance, 89% are going to try to eat more fruit and vegetables each day and 89% had listed at least one new idea that they learned and plan to use in the near future. (SH)
- Between October and December 2011, WNEP staff educated 1,429 individuals throughout La Crosse County on nutrition topics including food safety, diet quality, physical activity and how to purchase/prepare economical healthy foods. (SH)
- Presented Frac Sand Mining information to the La Crosse County Board – public informational meeting, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, the La Crosse Towns Association, the Town of Farmington and the Workforce Development Board. Those present learned why frac sand mines are an issue for La Crosse County, impacts to the local governments, and the various regulations that may apply to frac sand mining operations. In addition, a television news story, and a radio presentation on WIZM helped get the message out to the public. This educator continues to receive requests for this presentation due to public's interest. (KG)
- Presented the City of La Crosse Challenging Housing Trends data, to the Wisconsin Women's Alliance and the La Crosse Landlord's Association. Attendees indicated increased knowledge of the issues affecting the City of La Crosse's tax base. In addition, the majority of attendees acknowledged that the City of La Crosse needs to address its housing stock. (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

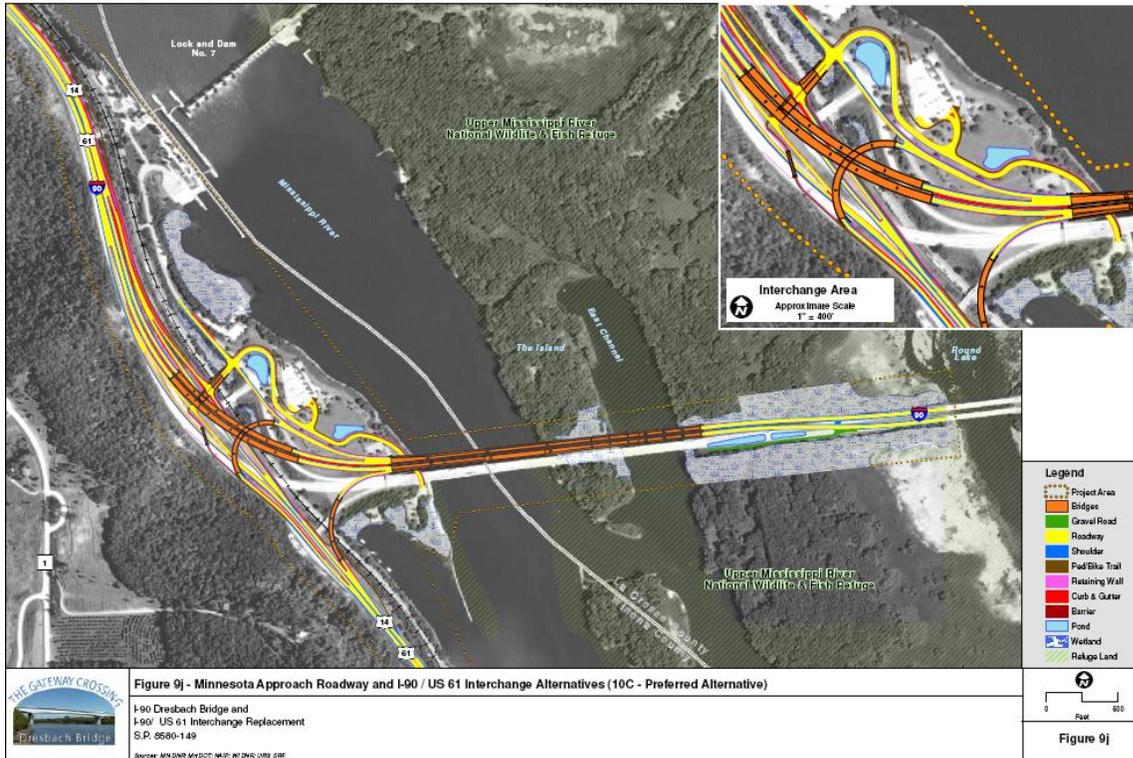
SDH – Steve Huntzicker, Assoc. Prof., Dept. of Agriculture, Ag Agent

## Metropolitan Planning Organization

Planning continues for the I-90 Dresbach Bridge replacement. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) have selected a preferred alternative and completed an environmental assessment document which is required for selecting and contracting with a construction consultant. The document and other interesting information on the project can be found at:

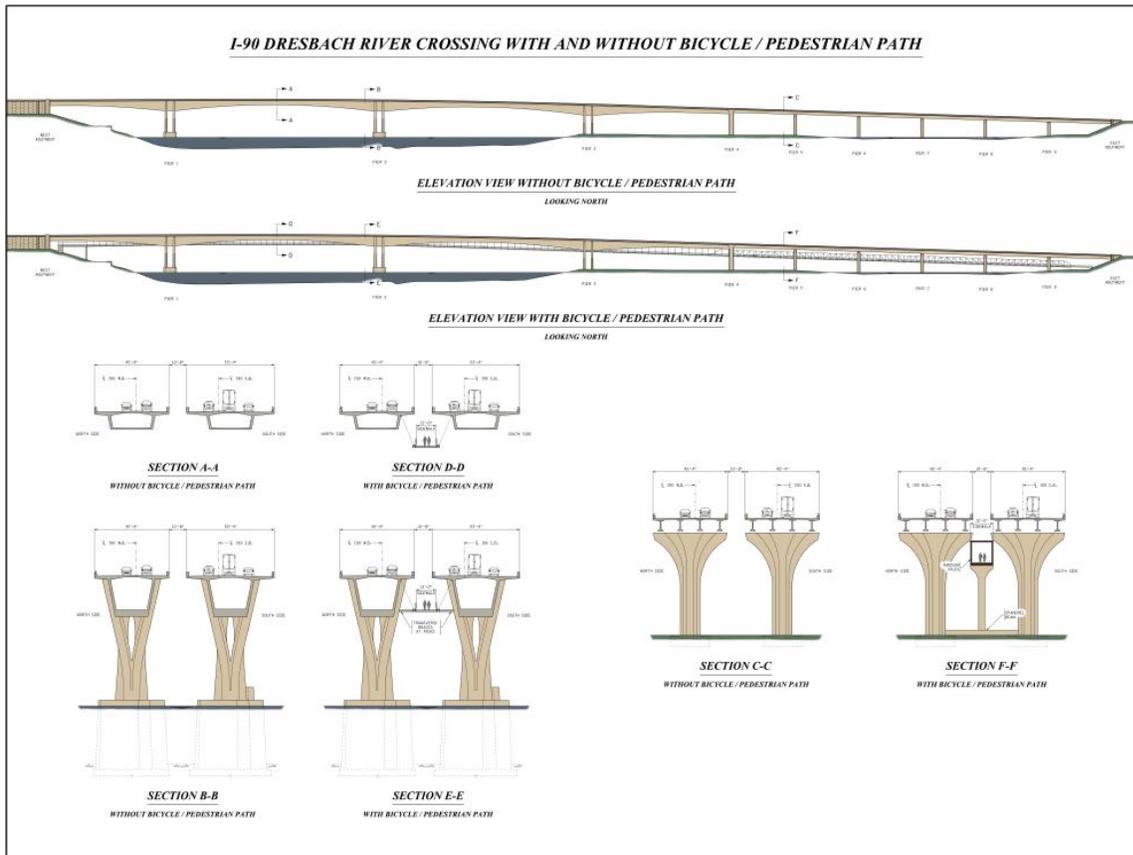
<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/projects/dresbachbridge/>

The preferred alternative for the Mississippi River Bridge and I 90 / USH 14/61 interchange are illustrated below:



The interchange design features “free flow” exits from I 90 westbound to USH 14/61 toward La Crescent and from La Crescent to eastbound I – 90, eliminating safety concerns with the existing interchange. Also included are bridges for safe bicycle travel for north / south travel through the interchange along the Mississippi River Trail. One traffic movement that is not included is the ability to directly access I 90 eastbound from the Minnesota rest area, lock and dam and boat launches.

Planning for future bicycle / pedestrian accommodations on the interstate bridge has been included. The bridge piers and structures will be strengthened and brackets will be installed to support a bike path when funding can be lined up at some point in the future. The path will be suspended below the bridge structures as illustrated here:



It is anticipated that construction on the new bridges will begin in the fall of 2012 with completion in 2016. A “maintenance of traffic” plan is under development to keep traffic flow safe and orderly during construction. The plan calls for “head to head” traffic, one lane in each direction, for much of the construction. No extended detours through the La Crosse area are anticipated. Details of the maintenance of traffic plan will be presented to the La Crosse Area Planning Committee at our regular March meeting.

*Tom Faella*  
*Executive Director, La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)*

## **Department of Land Conservation**

The Department of Land Conservation is currently holding its annual Nutrient Management Workshop for county farm owners and operators. This year's group includes 15 new participants in the workshop. The workshop is a two day learning session where staff from the Department of Land Conservation, UW-Extension Services and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service assist farmers to develop their own nutrient management plan. There will also be a one week session in early February open to farmers who have developed a nutrient management plan in the past and want to up-date it with assistance from workshop staff.

Nutrient management planning is a process that helps farmers decide where and when to apply nutrients to the soil to meet the needs of their crops. Commercial fertilizers and animal manures contain nutrients that sustain plant growth. Knowing how much nutrients to apply to a particular crop is the purpose of the nutrient management plan. Too few nutrients in the soil and the crop struggles to grow and reach maturity. Too many nutrients can lead to excessive levels in the soil that is easily eroded away during rain events. These nutrients can pollute lakes, rivers and streams causing harmful algal blooms and oftentimes, fish kills.

The nutrient management workshops have been conducted annually since 1999. Today, there are over 75 La Crosse County farmers who are implementing a nutrient management plan on more than 30,000 cropland acres.

*Gregg Stangl*  
*Director of Land Conservation*

# MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

## Public Works & Infrastructure February 2012

### Solid Waste

- **HMM** - In 2011 there was a 2% increase in residential users and a 21% increase in the weight of wastes received. HMM expanded the time of operation in 2012; adding hours for walk-ins on Tuesday's from 8:00 – 4:00 and for appointments on Monday's from 11:00 – 4:00. Because the electronics recycler has given the program a better price, e-waste is now accepted for free from residents.
- **Solid Waste Evaluation** – The Solid Waste Evaluation committee has met several times and are requesting outlines for suggestions to change the solid waste and recycling collection system. The City of Onalaska and La Crosse Directors of Public Works will make presentations to the committee at the next meeting on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Then Hilltoppers refuse and Harters will make a presentation on March 13<sup>th</sup>.
- **Gas-To-Energy** – Construction is completed on the G2e project and gas is being supplied to Gundersen Lutheran. Commissioning is being done on the system and will take approximately 2-3 weeks before the system is fully functional.
- **Landfill Contractor** – Public Works and Infrastructure has approved rebidding of landfill contract operations in 2012. Purchasing Department will lead efforts which are expected to take 9 months or more.
- Xcel Minimum Tonnage for 2011 were met and revenues from ferrous and aluminum recovery are greater than expected.
- Financial Assurance – All WDNR requirements for financial assurance for closure and long term care of the landfills have been fulfilled for 2011.

Respectfully Submitted,



Henry A. Koch, P.E.

### Highway Department

- November and December were very mild months which helped us out in the winter maintenance materials area as well as being able to minimize overtime. The mild start to the winter also allowed us to wrap up various little projects that needed to be addressed. So far the month of January has been fairly typical for the number of winter events, although we have been lucky enough not to have any major storms.

- Crews are crack sealing and patching on various county trunk highways. They are also sealing cracks and patching for WisDOT on the state highways in the county.
- Crews are also cutting brush on various county trunk and state highways.
- There are several legislative efforts going on in Madison right now that would have good ramifications for Highway Departments:
  - Pothole Liability legislation has again been introduced in Madison. For those of you unfamiliar with this issue, currently the County is subject to greater liability for highway defects than is the WisDOT. This legislation would level that liability risk such that it would be the same for both. This legislation has passed both houses of the Legislature twice in the past only to be vetoed by Governor Doyle.
  - Senator Vinehout and Representative Doyle have sponsored Legislation that would reverse some of the provisions of Act 32 and again allow County Highway Departments to work cooperatively together on improvement projects.
  - On another legislative issue, Representative Billings is working on legislation that would open up the State and thus National Scenic Byways program to include county and local roads. This would allow for additional tourism destinations and provide for the opportunity to obtain funding for various projects along a designated National Scenic Byway. Senator Schilling has also sponsored a bill toward this end.
- I am happy to report that the reorganization of our shop that you voted to support in 2011 is progressing well. The new Shop Superintendent really has a good handle on what is going on and he is approaching any changes in a manner that has resulted in the buy in from most if not all of the shop employees. Production is up, employee skills and knowledge base are increasing, equipment downtime is reduced, and our parts and material inventories are in great shape.
- We have started planning and scheduling our workload for the upcoming construction season. In addition to day to day maintenance, many small projects, crack filling and seal coating the Department will be working on the following large projects:
  - STH 162 from Bangor to Middle Ridge – this is our big WisDOT project this year, we are working to widen shoulders, clear brush and perform various shaping needs along the ditches, side slopes and back slopes.
  - CTH DE – from CTH E to Balmer Road – this a reconditioning in which we will be pulverizing the existing road, adding more base aggregate to increase the strength of the road, and finally placing a new asphalt surface.
  - Various maintenance overlay projects - CTH B (CTH O to CTH M), CTH B (City Loop to STH 162), CTH E (STH 162N to McCrae Rd), CTH II (Hill Area), CTH JB, CTH NN, CTH Q (STH 108 to CTH M) and CTH S (CTH SN to Top of Hill). Keep in mind that these will be ultra-thin overlays (3/4”), and they are a maintenance tool which aids in extending the life of our roads thus maximizing our investment.

Respectfully Submitted  
*Ron Chamberlain*

## **Facilities Department**

Below is a summary of cost and saving projections for the West Salem Highway Shop Lighting Retrofit Project. The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee approved this project at their January meeting. The project is scheduled for completion by May, 2012.

.82 watts per square foot	Existing watts per square foot
.48 watts per square foot	New design watts per square foot
\$ 12,260.00	- Estimate of existing annual lighting costs
\$ 7,232.72	- Estimate of new design annual <u>reduction</u> in lighting costs
\$ 34,769.00	- Estimated project cost
\$ 9,426.00	- Focus on Energy Incentive
3.63 years	- Estimated project payback with annual energy savings and incentive

The annual electric energy cost reduction is calculated based on two primary factors:

- 1) Difference between existing/proposed fixtures and associated wattages.
- 2) Reported hours of operation.

Variations in these values will directly impact the estimated annual energy savings.

### **LAKEVIEW FARM BUILDING DEMOLITION SUMMARY**

The La Crosse County Highway Department crew did an excellent job demolishing and disposing of the old farm buildings at the Lakeview Farm in West Salem in the months of October and November 2011. A total of 1,924 tons of material were hauled to the County Highway Shop in Midway. The material was crushed for reuse and diverted from the landfill for a disposal savings of \$113,516.00. A total of 34.5 tons of material were recycled for revenue of \$9,025.00 and diverted from the Landfill for a disposal savings of \$2,057.00. A total of 141.5 tons of material was disposed of in the County landfill. I think the County Board and the citizens of La Crosse County can be very proud of the County staff that worked on this project as they are very knowledgeable with the equipment they used and the safe practice they displayed while performing this project for La Crosse County. Below is a recap of cost and pictures associated with the demolition of the old farm buildings.

Environmental cost:	\$42,890
- Environmental consulting, removal of asbestos, lead, underground fuel tank, well and boiler	
Demolition of buildings and trucking (Highway Department)	\$65,688
Disposal costs for demolition material (Solid Waste)	\$9,190
Misc. Water meter and supplies (estimated)	\$500
Recycling revenue from scrap metal (Runde Recycling)	<u>(\$9,025)</u>
Total project cost for demolition of farm buildings	\$109,243



Pictures show uncovering of unknown underground tank and contents of tank after removed from ground located under middle building and about 25 feet from well. Contents were determined to be of an unknown petroleum product. County crew over excavated this area to remove any contaminated soil that may have been present. Midwest Environmental took soil and liquid samples for analyzing. Soil was determined to be slightly contaminated and was hauled to and disposed of at the County landfill. Liquid was hauled away and disposed of by a certified waste hauler.



Picture of discovered 500 Foot deep water well located inside and under middle building.

Pictures of one of two large high pressure steam boilers, a barrel of asbestos pipe insulation, and old light fixtures that were removed and disposed Of.



Picture of metal that was stripped from the buildings and recycled for scrap metal.

Picture of footing walls that were removed and crushed for future use.

Submitted by: James Speropulos, Facilities Director

# MONTHLY REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

## Judiciary & Law February 2012

### Emergency Services

#### Public-Safety Communications

##### November

###### Telephone Calls

9-1-1 Calls 2,210 (average of 74 per day)  
Answered within 10 seconds: 96.24%  
Answered within 20 seconds: 99.59%  
\* 0 calls more than 30 seconds

Total Calls 25,480 (average of 849 per day)

###### Calls for Service

Law Enforcement	7,663
Fire Fighting	202
Emergency Medical	513

##### December

###### Telephone Calls

9-1-1 Calls 2,283 (average of 74 per day)  
Answered within 10 seconds: 96.32%  
Answered within 20 seconds: 99.74%  
\* 0 call more than 30 seconds

Total Calls 21,681 (average of 699 per day)

###### Calls for Service

Law Enforcement	7,106
Fire Fighting	164
Emergency Medical	527

###### *\*National Emergency Number Association Standards:*

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

In 2011, Public Safety Communications experienced the busiest year for 9-1-1 calls in its 29-year history, falling just eight calls short of 30,000. This record was set despite a mild start to the winter which held down the amount of 9-1-1 calls for November and December. As an example, December is traditionally an active month; however in 2011 the Dispatch Center averaged only 74 9-1-1 calls per day, down 19% from December 2010.

Although 2011 saw a record number of 9-1-1 calls, non-emergency calls and public safety calls for service in general, both dropped from previous years. Last year was the first time since 1987 that the Center averaged less than 800 calls per day. This resulted in 8% less calls for service, although emergency medical calls increased by 2% and fire fighting-related calls increased by 4%. Another contributing factor is that Communications Center is

receiving less informational calls from citizens, who can use Great Rivers 2-1-1 for community information and referrals as well as the Internet from smart phones.

Another interesting statistic from 2011 is that more than 72% of all 9-1-1 calls now come from wireless sources. This figure jumps dramatically each year and is up from 69% in 2010 and 65% in 2009.

Lindsey Matthew is the newest telecommunicator of the Public Safety Communications staff. Lindsey comes to our team from Missoula (MT) County where she had worked as a 9-1-1 dispatcher for three years. Missoula County's 9-1-1 Center is similar to that of La Crosse County's both in population served and in calls for service totals. Lindsey is certified by APCO (Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials) in basic communications, communications training officer and in emergency medical dispatch. Her orientation and training began in January on second shift. Lindsey replaces Cory Lynch who was promoted to Supervisor at the start of 2012.

Although Public Safety Communications is currently fully staffed, the annual process for establishing an eligibility list will take place in February. This process begins with a four-hour simulated telecommunicator's test, followed by additional testing and interviews. Any openings in 2012 will then be filled from this list.

After 14 years, the carpet was replaced in the Dispatch Center in the end of December. This may seem like an insignificant event, but much coordination is needed to maintain the vital public safety communications services during the transition. The project had to be done in four installments over four days. Each day, a quarter of the work stations needed to be dismantled before the old carpet could be removed and the new carpet installed. Then each work station is put back together and tested before moving on to the next quarter. Thank you to the Facilities and Information Technology Departments for assisting in making the project flow smoothly.

### **Emergency Management (Keith Butler, Coordinator)**

The La Crosse County Emergency Management Coordinator was selected as the Exercise Director for a Federal public safety communication exercise that will be held on March 1 and will involve responders and dispatchers from three states. An exercise planning meeting was held in Winona, MN on December 1. (Tri-State HazMat Group exercise)

Local Amateur Radio volunteers assisted the Emergency Management Coordinator with the removal of an antenna from the County Administrative Center roof on December 2. The antenna will be re-mounted on the antenna tower mast later in 2012.

Emergency Management, Health Department, and Human Services Department representatives met with local officials on December 6 to discuss homeless person sheltering needs and a new Severe Cold Weather Shelter plan and policy will be developed to follow the Severe Heat (Cooling Center) Plan that was developed in 2010.

The Emergency Management Coordinator was selected to serve on the Great Rivers 2-1-1 Advisor Board and met with that group in Onalaska on December 6.

Emergency Management Coordinator evaluated Winona State University law enforcement student terrorism exercises on December 7.

The West Central Wisconsin Region Emergency Managers met in Black River Falls on December 13 to receive training on the new on-line hazardous materials reporting program known as WHOPRS.

The Emergency Services Communication vehicle received a new LED lightbar and traffic control lightbar on December 19, replacing an old light bar that had been borrowed from the Sheriff Department.

The Emergency Management Coordinator attended his final State WISCOM radio system Board meeting in Fitchburg on December 22. Keith Kessler, from Douglas County Emergency Management, will assume the representative role that Keith Butler has held for several years.

The West Central Wisconsin Region Emergency Managers met in Eau Claire on January 24 and the County Emergency Management Coordinator completed his Wisconsin Professional Development Achievement examination.

An exercise to examine the emergency plans for a hazardous substance release at the Kwik Trip complex in the City of La Crosse was held on January 25, with planning meetings held on January 10 and 17.

The Emergency Management Coordinator met with area Amateur Radio volunteers on January 23 to discuss their involvement with the Tri-State HazMat Group exercise and a final planning meeting with all of the exercise planners was held in Caledonia, MN on January 26.

**Jay Loeffler, Administrator  
Emergency Services**

## **Register of Deeds**

End of the year totals for vital records & real estate documents.

2011 statistics

	Birth Certificates	Death & Marriage Certificates	Real Estate Documents	Total Revenue
Jan.	428	1417	2038	\$ 50,549.12
Feb.	429	1079	1510	\$ 46,560.96
Mar.	495	1046	1519	\$ 51,874.28
April	514	1304	1345	\$ 45,518.11
May	447	1178	1418	\$ 51,585.51
June	418	1260	1639	\$ 59,376.62
July	419	909	1564	\$ 45,206.01
Aug.	598	1323	1713	\$ 50,611.81
Sept.	519	1210	2051	\$ 66,251.07
Oct.	295	1314	2323	\$ 65,030.00
Nov.	336	1246	2069	\$ 50,568.78
Dec.	324	1173	2180	\$ 55,689.29
TOTALS:	5,222	14,459	21,369	\$638,821.56

*Cheryl A. McBride  
LaCrosse County Register of Deeds*

## **Medical Examiner**

During the months of December 2011 through January 2012, there were 58 deaths investigated by the Medical Examiner's office:

Natural Deaths: 42

Deaths by Unnatural causes: 16

Accident: 2 Motor vehicle accident, 3 drug overdoses, 9 other deaths

Suicide: 1 Hanging

Homicide: 0

Undetermined: 3

## **Drug Deaths La Crosse County 2010-2011**

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Substance</u>
<b><u>2011</u></b>		
Male	24	Oxycodone/Alcohol
Male	57	Morphine/Oxycodone
Male	46	Heroin/Alcohol/Cocaine
Male	24	Heroin/Amphetamine
Male	22	Heroin/Clonazepam
Female	47	Benzodiazepine/Alcohol
Male	23	Heroin/Cocaine/Amphetamine
Male	40	Fentanyl
Male	50	Cocaine/Methadone
Female	47	Cocaine

### **2010**

Female	45	Fentanyl
Male	46	Heroin
Female	55	Fentanyl
Male	44	Morphine
Male	26	Oxycodone/Alcohol
Female	20	Heroin
Male	36	Fentanyl

## **Suicide Statistics for La Crosse County 2011**

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Male	46	GSW	Relationship Issues
Male	66	GSW	Chronic Health Issues
Female	56	Train vs Ped	Depression/Domestic Issues
Male	87	Hanging	Health Issues/Chronic Pain
Male	30	Hanging	Alcohol Abuse/Chronic Depression
Male	18	Hanging	Loss of employment/Relationship issues
Female	44	Hanging	Alcohol abuse/Chronic Depression
Male	71	GSW	Depression/Health Issues
Female	32	Train vs Ped	Alcohol Abuse/Relationship Issues
Male	28	Hanging	Legal Issues/Relationship Issues
Male	40	Hanging	Depression/Chronic Alcohol abuse
Male	79	GSW	Relationship Issues/Legal problems
Female	57	GSW	Chronic Depression
Male	18	Hanging	Relationship Issues

*John Steers*

*Medical Examiner*

## **Clerk of Courts**

After 41 years, La Crosse County has a new Register in Probate. Jillian Just was appointed by the Judges and began working on November 28<sup>th</sup> to fill the vacancy left by Lois Groeschel in February. Jill has is welcome asset to the office as she has a law degree and has worked with probate in the past.

*Pamela Radtke*  
*Clerk of Courts*

## **Corporation Counsel Office**

### **1. Office Changes**

After Bill Shepherd retired on January 3, 2012, I was named the new Corporation Counsel, and we have hired a new attorney, Amy Flottmeyer, as the new Assistant Corporation Counsel. Amy's duties include processing Chapter 51 mental commitment and Chapter 54/55 guardianship and protective placement cases, handling child support cases, advising the health department on various matters, zoning issues, and also issues involving Hillview and Lakeview. Amy has past experience as an assistant district attorney in La Crosse and Monroe Counties and also worked for the Hale, Skemp, Hanson, Skemp and Sleik law firm. Megan DeVore is the Deputy Corporation Counsel. She continues to provide legal services in CHIPS (Child in Need of Protection or Services) cases and Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) cases. Megan will also prepare ordinances and resolutions and fill in for me when I am not able to be present at committee or County Board meetings. Megan will also be handling the zoning matters, matters involving the County Treasurer's Office, and other County legal matters as they arise. Megan has several jury trials scheduled for early 2012 that are TPR and CHIPS cases.

### **2. Sandra Orzechowski v Hillview Health Care Center**

The plaintiff filed a complaint on December 10, 2010, alleging that Hillview was negligent in allowing another person to enter the plaintiff's room and engage in unauthorized physical conduct. Our attorneys filed a motion for summary judgment to dismiss the complaint based on improper service. Judge Dale Pasell entered on order on January 23, 2012 dismissing the complaint for lack of personal jurisdiction.

### **3. Hillview Claim**

Hillview has been paid in full for amounts owed from a former resident. This is a case where the Corporation Counsel office prepared several mortgages and notes and filed the documents with the County Register of Deeds because there were several properties owned by a patient and most of the patients assets and equity were tied up in property. The reason for doing this is that if the patient qualifies for medical assistance, if a mortgage is not recorded prior to the State lien, the State will receive payments first for any medical assistance payments made on behalf of the patient before the County receives any payments when the property is sold. La Crosse County, in cooperation with the family of the patient, filed several mortgages and was paid \$30,000 on one mortgage and received an additional payment of \$80,431.36 after the property was sold covered by the second mortgage. In addition, the County received a check in January, 2012, from the patient's estate in

the amount of \$26,230.68, which meant that the bill for the patient was paid in full. The reason I'm putting this in the report is because it is good news on a large outstanding account and because it illustrates some additional work done with Hillview staff to help make sure the nursing home bills are paid.

**4. Sign and Zoning Ordinances.**

Over the last several months, Corporation Counsel Office has been involved in numerous drafts of the Sign Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance which have come before the La Crosse County Board and the Planning, Resources and Development Committee. Our office has also worked closely with staff in the development of these ordinances.

Respectfully submitted,  
David L. Lange, Corporation Counsel