



Neighbors

Newsletter of the Walworth County
Intergovernmental Cooperation Council (ICC)

Volume 1, Issue 2

June 2008



Ratibida pinnata (prairie coneflower)
Walworth County Price Park, July 2006

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Upcoming Council Agendas

- **August 2008.** Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 26, 2008 at 6 PM. The focus of the meeting will be boundary agreements. The meeting agenda will be mailed out and posted on the County website as we get closer to the meeting date.
- **Email.** If you would like anyone else from your organization to receive this newsletter electronically, we would be pleased to include them in our email distribution. If you are receiving a "hard copy" of the newsletter but would be willing to receive this electronically, just drop us an email. Thanks for helping us save postage and copying costs. Finally, if you want to be removed from our distribution list, just let me know.

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Cooperative Purchasing Efforts

Last month's meeting of the ICC featured a short presentation on cooperative purchasing. As a follow-up to that meeting, I wanted to underscore three points.

1. County purchasing staff can answer any questions you might have about the ability of your organization to "piggy-back" on County contracts that already exist. By the same token, if you have a contract that is working particularly well for your municipality, please let us know about it. The county's purchasing manager, Peggy Watson can be reached at 262.741.7261.
2. The State of Wisconsin is spreading the word that it has contracts in place that may be of use in obtaining goods and services in response to recent flooding. Even if you are not in need of those particular contracts, there are many other contracts, let by the State, in which you can participate. Contracts available to municipal governments can be found on the Department of Administration web page at <http://www.doa.state.wi.us>. Look for the Quick Find section and click on "Contracts for Local Government Use." Larger purchasing groups can translate to lower prices.
3. As Ms. Watson mentioned in her presentation, you may wish to consider joining the VALUE Cooperative Purchasing Program of Southeastern Wisconsin. VALUE is a collaborative group of local governments in the region, including school districts. Members of VALUE develop specifications for the purchase of goods and services. Contracts awarded by member communities typically contain language to allow their members to take advantage of pricing and terms. The VALUE web page address is <http://www.value4gov.org>.

Shared Municipal Facilities

As we learned from the excellent presentation by Ed Vander Veen, Chuck Dorn and Mark Ruosch at our last meeting, one way to save money is through the joint use of a single facility. The Town and Village of Sharon have saved costs by constructing a single firehouse. Those municipalities considering new facilities may want to give some thought to the Sharon example. For those interested in doing additional research on the

topic, the town and village of Fredonia in Ozaukee County are working collaboratively on the construction of a shared town-village municipal building. According to a November 13, 2007 story appearing in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, the \$780,000 facility will contain 2,600 square feet of common space, as well as 800 square feet for town offices and 1,100 square feet for village offices.

Help Us Prepare for Future ICC Meetings

August 26, 2008. Speakers from the Wisconsin League of Municipalities and the Towns Association are scheduled to attend our meeting to discuss boundary agreements. If you have a boundary agreement that you would be willing to share with the group, please forward it to my attention.

November 25, 2008. Phil Evenson, Executive Director, South-eastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), is scheduled to speak at our meeting in November concerning regional water quality and quantity issues. If you have any studies, articles or

information that would be useful to help the group focus on this topic, please forward them to me.

January 27, 2009. Our January meeting has been reserved for discussion concerning legislative issues of common interest. Although January seems like a long time away, it will be here before you know it. At an upcoming meeting of your town, village or city, you may wish to discuss the legislative priorities for your organization. As Mike Miller stated in his presentation regarding the Mid-Moraine Association, there

will certainly be legislative issues that will divide our group. I would suggest, however, that it will be more productive to promote those issues of common interest to all local governments in our county.

April 28, 2009. The Council will evaluate its accomplishments and determine whether to continue or disband.

Representatives of the UW-Extension Local Government Center have expressed interest in our effort. I am hopeful they may provide us with a framework and assistance to evaluate our progress to help us determine if we should continue our efforts.

Shared Police Services in the News

The Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance (WTA) recently released a study on police staffing and expenditures throughout the State of Wisconsin. Although it was not the sole focus of the study, the WTA spent some time looking at the cost impacts of joint police departments. According to the study, in 2006, six joint police departments served nearly 62,000 people in Wisconsin. The municipalities with joint departments are: Abbotsford-Colby, the Town and Village of Cottage Grove, Everest Metro, Fox Valley Metro, Hobart Village-Lawrence Township, and Sauk Prairie (villages of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac). The study found that joint departments had fewer officers per 1,000 residents than the average municipal department (1.33 versus 2.04). Joint departments also had lower per capita expenses (\$152.33 versus the average of \$235.88). The study suggests that one reason for the lower cost may be economies of scale that a larger department offers. Like any study, however, other factors may contribute to the result. Check it out yourself at www.wistax.org.