LEAGUE OF WISCONSIN MUNICIPALITIES

Looking Ahead to the 2017-18 Legislative Session

League's 2016 Annual Conference

League's Lobby Team

Curt

Gail

Jerry

Contract lobbyists: Steve Lyons and Mike Rogowski, Husch Blackwell S.C.

Plus, Municipal members lobby team: 400 municipal officials

First, a Quick Look Back at the 2015-2016 Session

We had a good session.

Of the 53 bills the League supported, 31 were enacted into law. ***58% of bills we supported were enacted.***

Of the 17 bills we opposed, only 5 were enacted. ***70% of the bills we opposed did not become law.***

When municipal officials talk legislators listen!

And we are doing more talking!

A Few Good Bills Enacted into Law

Act 317, Charge-back of property tax refunds.

Act 392, Restoring $3 million to the recycling grant program.

Act 219, Prohibiting persons from acquiring municipally owned land by adverse possession.

Four TIF Study Committee Bills

Act 286, Providing New Options for Municipalities to Issue Above-Quota Liquor Licenses.

Are your legislators municipal champions?

- Rep. Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville)
- Rep. David Steffen (R-Howard)
- Sen. Rob Cowles (R-Green Bay)
- Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green)

Other Strong Supporters of Municipalities.

- Rep. Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam)
- Rep. Rob Brooks (R-Saukville)
- Rep. Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh)
- Rep. Paul Tittl (R-Manitowoc)
- Rep. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit)
- Sen. Janice Ringhand (D-Evansville)
- Sen. Julie Lassa (D-Stevens Point)
- Sen. Devin LeMahieu (R-Oostburg)

Priorities for Next Session

Core Principles

- Preserve local control
- Preserve local revenue sources, including state shared revenue, the property tax, and the property tax base

Priorities for Next Session

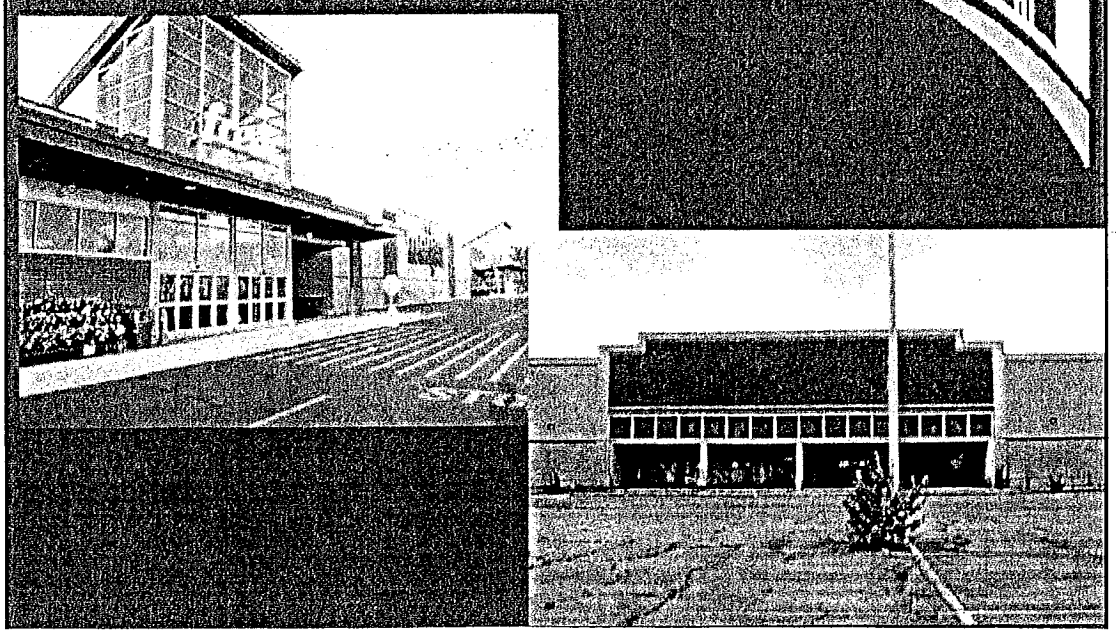
- Increase funding for shared revenue program.
- Fix the shortfall in transportation funding.

Priorities for Next Session

Stop more of property tax burden from being shifted to homeowners:

- Oppose repeal of personal property tax without holding municipalities harmless.
- Close **Dark Store tax loophole** used by commercial property owners like Walgreens and big box chains.

End Dark Store Strategy



Priorities for next Session

- Restore municipal authority to regulate location of cell towers in residential districts.
- Enact four remaining TIF study committee bills, particularly:
  - Bill increasing equalized value threshold from 12% to 15%; and
  - Bill eliminating any statutory obstacles to allowing successful TIDs to share tax increment with poorly performing TIDs.
- Make it easier for communities to invest in replacing underground infrastructure, including lead water service laterals.

Priorities for next Session

- Pursue levy limit technical changes.
- Phosphorus -- Create more flexible options for complying with phosphorus water quality standards. Create incentives encouraging farmers to implement best practices for reducing run-off.

Looking Ahead – The Political Lay of the Land

Forecasting the make up of the 2017-2018 Legislature.

Mike Rogowski and Steve Lyons – League's contract lobbyists.

Political Landscape

-OR-

"The Amazing (Presidential) Race" (to the bottom)

- Presidential race sucking all oxygen out of room
  - Both candidates leaving electorate "breathless"
  - Weighty issues = Jobs/Economy, Trade, Immigration, Crime, Nation Building, Gun Control, Climate Change

-BUT-

  - Personality/Behavior/"Fitness" Dominate

-AND-

  - Recent Trump "hot mic" *Turbulence*

Distraction <u>OR</u> **DEATH KNELL?!**

Political Landscape

- Two of the most unpopular candidates in Wisconsin in decades – *Marquette Law School September Poll*
- ***Unhappiness with their presidential nominee is prevalent among registered voters in both parties***
- GOP Voters
  - *Among Republicans and Independents who lean Republican, **68 percent say they would have liked their party to nominate someone other than Trump,** while 29 percent say they prefer Trump as the nominee.*
- Democrat Voters
  - *Among Democrats and Independents who lean Democratic, **48 percent would prefer Bernie Sanders** as the nominee while 43 percent prefer Clinton.*

Political Landscape

Wisconsin Presidential Ballot

- Presidential race in Wisconsin recently tightened
  - Wisconsin listed as one of 16 "battle-ground" states
  - Trump *was* closing the Gap...*pre* "hot mic"
- Regardless Wisconsin will likely go "Blue" i.e. for Clinton
- No Wisconsin GOP presidential win since '84 Reagan landslide
- US Senate in Presidential year has not gone GOP since 1980
- Recent Polls
  - Marquette September Poll 43-38 Clinton
  - "Anti-Trump" conservative talk radio
- Governor Walker approval edging upward at 44%
- Overall dynamics in presidential favor Democrats

Pre "Hot Mic"

- Real Clear Politics average of recent polls:
  - National: Clinton 45.3 to Trump 39.0
- September Marquette Law School Poll:
  - Wisconsin likely voters: Clinton 44 – Trump 42
  - Wisconsin registered voters: Clinton 43 – Trump 38

Post "Hot Mic"

- October Marquette Law School Poll (Oct 6-9)
  - Wisconsin likely voters: Clinton 44 to Trump 37
  - CAVEAT: *post*-"hot mic"/*pre*-2nd debate (Oct 10)
  - "The *["hot mic" incident]* appears to have caused a significant shift in Wisconsin voters' attitudes, across several different demographics" - Charles Franklin, Dir. Marquette Law School
  - Most recent *post*-"hot mic"/2nd debate polls
    - LA Times/USC Tracking: Tie
    - NBC News/Wall St. Journal: Clinton +10
    - Rasmussen: Trump+2
    - Reuters/Ipsos: Clinton +7

More to Come

- POST "hot mic" AND 2nd debate polls (Oct 10 – ?)
- Trump may have "slipped the noose" for now with better 2nd debate performance
- More October Surprise(s)??
  - More "Hot Mics"?
  - Wiki-leaks: Catholic Comment; Collusion with Media
  - What's next????!!!
- Final Presidential Debate, October 19th
  "Trick or Treat"?!?
  - "Must See" TV?
  - OR A bad "B" level horror film?

Wisconsin U.S. Senate Race

- Marquette Law School October Poll:
  - Wisconsin likely voters Feingold 48 to Johnson 46
- Only 1 poll has shown Johnson in lead (Loras College)
- National Republican Senatorial Committee canceled $800K in ads for Johnson
- But race appears to have tightened

8th Congressional District

- The *"surprise"* race in Wisconsin
- Mike Gallagher v. (popular Outagamie County Executive) Tom Nelson
  - Nelson favored early, fading fast
  - Gallagher up by 16 points in a poll by Public Opinion Strategies
  - DCCC canceled a week of television reservations for Tom Nelson.

State Level Election Dynamics

- In Senate and Assembly Races, GOP still has advantage:
  - Senate and Assembly has substantial GOP majority control:
    - State Senate: 19 – 14
    - Assembly: 63 – 36
- GOP has $$'s and redistricting map advantage
- Dems would have to turn over:
  - 14 seats in Assembly to gain control – tall order
  - 3 seats in Senate – difficult given incumbents/resources/district make-up
- If all breaks well for Dems:
  - Assembly turnover = 6 – 7 seats
  - Senate turnover = 1 – 2 seats

State Level Election Dynamics

- Post "hot mic" / October 9th debate impact
  - Speaker Ryan abandoning GOP nominee
  - Focus on protecting GOP House majority
  - Some Wisconsin congressional delegation sticking with Trump
  - Senator Fitzgerald said he still backs Trump, but comments were "disgusting and embarrassing"
- Wisconsin Unknowns
  - Voter turnout – low based on unpopularity of top of ticket? Or high based on intensity of campaign?
  - Will any state/local issue break through the Presidential noise level?
  - Will Trump hurt GOP down ballot?
  - Will Clinton help down ballot?

Conclusion

- Coming to a "theatre" near you on Tuesday, November 8th

The League's Strength is in its Membership

The only way to preserve local control and our revenue sources is to work together.

How you can help – First Step

Sign up for the League's Lobby Team

- In person lobbying four times a legislative session
- Legislative Update Webinars
- First Lobby Day in Madison – February 15
- Voter Voice – quick lobbying provides you with the opportunity to advocate for your community

How you can help – Second Step

Develop and nurture relationships with your legislators:

- Sign up for your Legislator's Newsletters
- Make sure they receive your Municipal Newsletter if you have one
- Invite them to your next Council/Board meeting to talk about the budget
- Give them a tour of municipal facilities

How you can help-Third Step

Stay Informed about legislative developments.

Subscribe to the League's Legislative Bulletin and Capitol Buzz

By working together and speaking with a unified voice we can make a difference.

Thank You!