



Rice's Record 2007-2008

Committee Attendance
and Voting Record

100%

County Board Meeting
Attendance

100%

Committee Assignments

Judiciary, Safety &
General Services, Vice Chair
Parks, Energy & Environment
Economic and Community
Development

Member

Milwaukee County
Research Park Board, Director

How to Reach Me

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Joseph A. Rice Milwaukee County Supervisor

November, 2008

Dear Friends,

Once again I take this opportunity to inform you of my work as your representative on the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. In this edition of the Rice Report you will find useful information about the county budget, an upcoming sales tax referendum and ongoing activities in Milwaukee County.

Our nation's less than favorable economic conditions are undoubtedly on everyone's mind. It is becoming increasingly difficult to make ends meet and many are forced to live on stricter budgets. Reflecting these circumstances, I have sought ways to protect taxpayers' interests by having Milwaukee County provide needed services efficiently and cost effectively. I commend County Executive Scott Walker for introducing a budget that does not raise the existing tax levy. If families across Milwaukee County are tightening their belts to meet their needs, Milwaukee County government should do likewise.

I thank you once again for providing me with an opportunity to represent you and I wish that the upcoming holiday season be filled with health and happiness.

Joseph A. Rice

Milwaukee County Supervisor – District 6

Join My E-mail Friends List:

Would you like to receive updates on issues and events concerning Milwaukee County? If so, I invite you to enroll in my E-mail Friends List. You can join by indicating so on the provided talk back cut-out section or by sending me an e-mail message at: joseph.rice@milwcnty.com indicating that you would like your name to be added to the list of E-mail Friends List. Please be sure to include your name and address.

Rice Report

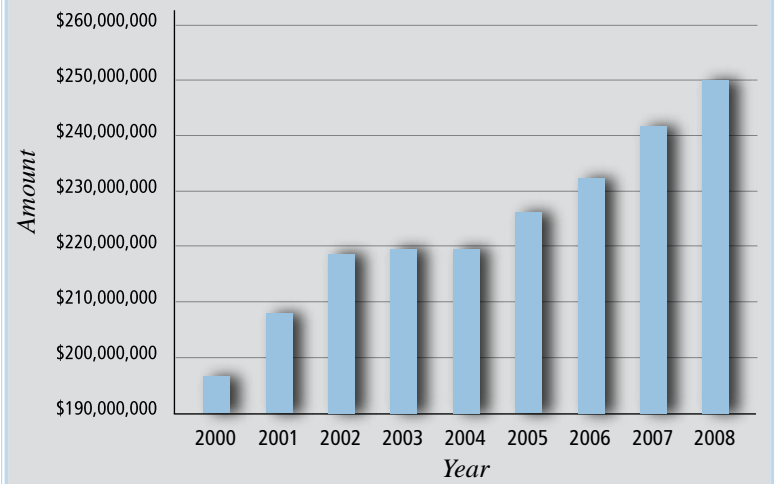
Milwaukee County 2009 Budget

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker presented his 2008 Recommended Budget to the County Board on September 25. Once again, the County Executive's Recommended Budget does not increase the tax levy from the previous year. The total expenditure of the Recommended Budget is \$1,426,815,977.

The Milwaukee County 2009 Budgeted adoption process will unfold as follows:

- The County Board's Finance and Audit Committee will review all aspects of the 2009 Recommended Budget through public meetings in Room 203-R of the Milwaukee County Courthouse. Amendments will be considered at these meetings, which continue throughout the month of October.
- The County Board's annual Public Hearing on the County Executive's 2009 Recommended Budget is scheduled for 7 p.m. Monday, November 3 at the Washington Park Senior Center.

Milwaukee County Property Tax Levy (2000-2008)



- The County Board of Supervisors will adopt an amended version of the 2009 County Budget on Monday, November 10 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 200 of the Milwaukee County Courthouse.
- Possible vetoes from the County Executive will be considered on Wednesday, November 19 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 200 of the Milwaukee County Courthouse.

\$130 Million Sales Tax Referendum On November Ballot

Pros

- Removes approximately \$67 million from property tax levy
- Shifts additional tax dollars to support mass transit; parks, recreation and culture; and emergency medical services (paramedics)
- Some portion of sales tax paid by non-county residents

Cons

- Would result in approximately \$60 million of new taxes
- No guarantee of continued property tax relief
- May create "tax island" and reduce sales at certain county businesses

On Tuesday, November 4, voters in Milwaukee County will be asked to vote on an advisory referendum question concerning the creation of a new one percent sales tax within the county, estimated to raise \$130 million per year. Advocates have proposed this as a means to shift the revenue source for certain county programs (transit; parks, recreation and culture; and emergency medical services - EMS) from the property tax to the sales tax.

The Yes or No question will read:

"Shall the State of Wisconsin grant Milwaukee County the authority to provide property tax relief of at least sixty seven million dollars (\$67 million) by levying a one percent (1%) county sales and use tax to be used to remove the following three items from the property tax levy: parks recreation and culture; transit; and emergency medical services (EMS)?"

The results on the referendum will be non-binding, as an increase on the sales tax would require authorization by the State Legislature. Please investigate the advantages and disadvantages of this proposal and express your opinion on November 4.

The Most Confusing Tax Issue of All

Hands-down, one tax issue confounds citizens more than any other. Few people, including many in the media and government, correctly understand the relationship between property assessments and taxes. A common misconception is that an assessment increase means a property tax increase—or that, alternately, during a market downturn, a reduced assessment means a tax cut. Given the widespread confusion, it cannot be said often enough: A rising (or falling) assessment does not necessarily mean higher (or lower) property taxes.

Value share, tax share

Unfortunately, this reminder leaves the taxpayer unsure of how to interpret an assessment change. Perhaps eavesdropping on a conversation in Littleton will help. Clarice and Dumford, the tiny village's only residents, recently received new assessment notices . . .

Clarice: *G'morning, Dumford, did you get your assessment notice in the mail yesterday?
Mine doubled—from \$100,000 to \$200,000.*

Dumford: *Yeah, it came. My assessment doubled, too. I don't know what I'll do when my property taxes double. I'm already paying \$1,000.*

Clarice: *Dumfie, don't worry. Your taxes are not going up one cent.*

Dumford: *You've got to be kidding. My assessment skyrocketed. Surely, my taxes are going to go through the roof.*

Clarice: *No, dear. The village is not increasing its tax levy for the coming year. Littleton's only expense is street plowing and maintenance, and those costs have remained the same.*

Dumford: *Yes, Clarie, but . . .*

Clarice: *Dear, think about Littleton. It has only two properties, yours and mine. Last year, both were assessed at \$100,000.*

Clarice: *So, \$100,000 for my house and \$100,000 for yours adds up to \$200,000 for the village.*

Clarice: *That's right. I own half the town's value and so do you. Now, you said your property taxes were \$1,000, right? That means the village's total property tax collections last year were \$2,000. I paid \$1,000, and you paid \$1,000.*

Dumford: *Oh . . . I own half of Littleton's total property value, and I paid half the taxes. Does it work like that everywhere, Clarie?*

Clarice: *Yep. No matter how many properties a community has, no matter what its total property value. You pay the same share of a municipality's tax levy as your share of its property value.*

Dumford: *But, Clarie, my assessment has doubled. What will happen to my taxes?*

Clarice: *Dumfie, dear. Our houses and yards are identical. My assessment doubled, too. Both our properties would now sell for \$200,000. Littleton's total value is now \$400,000—\$200,000 for me and \$200,000 for you. My property is half of the village's value, and so is yours. Nothing's changed.*

Dumford: *So, I'll pay half the property taxes . . . like before?*

Clarice: *That's right. And since the village still needs only \$2,000 in taxes, I'll pay half—\$1,000—and you'll pay half—\$1,000.*

Budget up, taxes up

Dumford: *So, even though our assessments doubled, our tax bills won't change. But . . . what happens if the village starts garbage pick up? There's been talk, you know. That would cost Littleton another \$1,000.*

Clarice: *Then both our tax bills would go up. They'd increase because village spending and taxes increased. The village levy would grow to \$3,000—\$2,000 for streets and \$1,000 for trash pick up. We'd both have to pay \$1,500 in taxes. Half the property value, half the taxes, right?*

Dumford: *Right! Property taxes would increase for budgetary reasons—and not because our assessments grew.*

Values down, taxes down?

Dumford: *Clarie, I was talking to my cousin, the real estate agent. She said that, with the weak housing market, homes are not selling and home prices could drop as much as 50%. Wouldn't that be good news? Lower assessments, lower property taxes, right?*

Dumford: *Dumfie, dear. Then we'd only get \$100,000 if we sold our homes. Besides, our tax bills wouldn't change at all. We'd each own half the village's value—\$100,000 of the \$200,000 total. We'd each have to pay half the taxes—\$1,000, just as before.*

Rule of thumb

Dumford: *My brother lives in Bigville, where they just reassessed all properties. He told me yesterday that his assessment jumped 15%. Clarie, what should I tell him about his taxes?*

Clarice: *Ask him how much the total assessed value of Bigville changed. If the city doesn't increase its tax levy, there are three possibilities. First, if the city's assessed-value increase was more than your brother's 15% increase, his taxes would fall because his home's share of total city values would fall. Second, if Bigville's values increased 15%, his share of both valuation and taxes would remain unchanged. Finally, if city values rose less than 15%, his taxes would be higher. His home would be a larger share of the city's valuation. Larger share of value, large share of taxes, right?*

*Focus, No.2, Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, June 18, 2008
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Rice Report

Rice-Led Ethics Reform Signed Into Law



County Executive Scott Walker signed the revised Milwaukee County Ethics Code, containing an improved ethics enforcement regulation for Milwaukee County government.

Standing behind Supervisor Rice and County Executive Walker are Study Committee Members Rick Ceschin, Charles Mulcahy, Hannah Dugan, Robert Andrews, and Susan Shields. Not pictured is Dr. Joan Prince who was also a member of the Ethics Code Study Committee.

Emergency Medical Services for Children



The Milwaukee County chapter of General Federation of Women's Clubs embarked on a mission to provide Pediatric Jump Kits to the Milwaukee County Emergency

Medical Services to ensure that county ambulances have the proper emergency equipment when treating children. A total of nine different women's clubs in Milwaukee County raised over \$30,000 to purchase 29 emergency medical kits. Supervisor Rice is pictured here presenting one of the Pediatric Jump Kits, along with GFWC members D'Ann Malloy, Nancy Neslon, Elizabeth Davy, and Helen Witte, as well as Dave Berousek, North Shore Fire Department Chief.

Things to do in Milwaukee County on a Budget

Ice Skating at Red Arrow Park

Whatever your reasons for coming to Slice of Ice, you'll enjoy a beautiful downtown park setting, a long skating season at an outdoor rink open from December through February (or March if the weather allows), and a warming house filled with creature comforts. Season opening is scheduled for December 7th.

Grand re-opening of the Mitchell Park Domes



Following extensive restoration, made possible by a generous gift from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Milwaukee County's Mitchell Park Domes will re-open to the public starting November 5th, 2008. Experience the new lighting system at the domes, featuring the new and fascinating programmable light emitting diode (LED) technology that is guaranteed to impress.

Titanic Exhibit at the Milwaukee Public Museum

Ninety-six years ago, on an otherwise calm April morning in 1912, the world's largest ship, the RMS Titanic, sank during her maiden voyage after a colliding with an iceberg in the North Atlantic. No one believed it could happen. Today, this epic story is revived through Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition, which will take place at the Milwaukee Public Museum from October 10, 2008 until May 26, 2009. Viewed by more than 18 million people worldwide, the Exhibition is among the highest attended in history.

For complete information on the tickets for the event, please call (414) 223-4676 or visit the Milwaukee Public Museum Web Site (www.mpm.edu/titanic)



Milwaukee County 6th District Constituent Survey

One of the most important parts of my job is to find out your opinions on various issues facing Milwaukee County. Please complete and send your survey using one of the following methods:

- **Mail:** 901 N. 9th Street, Courthouse RM 201 Milwaukee, WI 53233
- **Fax:** (414) 223-1380
- **Online:** Complete the survey online at www.joerice.org/survey

Please know that I value your opinion and read each survey personally.

1. Please rate the following county government functions on a scale of 1 to 5 for performance, with 5 meaning the county does an extremely good job of providing that service, and 1 meaning the county does an extremely poor job.

	Extremely Good		Extremely Poor		
Parks	5	4	3	2	1
Zoo	5	4	3	2	1
Highway Plowing and Maintenance	5	4	3	2	1
Human/Social Services Programs	5	4	3	2	1
Court System	5	4	3	2	1
Mass Transit	5	4	3	2	1
Airport	5	4	3	2	1
Jail and House of Correction	5	4	3	2	1

2. Should Milwaukee County create an independently-elected Park District with responsibility to manage all park operations and authority to levy taxes?

- Yes No Unsure

3. In the face of projected structural deficits (the difference between ongoing revenues and expenditures), Milwaukee County should balance its budget by:

- Increasing taxes
 Reducing spending
 Other: _____

4. Currently, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the overall quality of life in Milwaukee County?

- Very satisfied
 Somewhat satisfied
 Somewhat dissatisfied
 Very dissatisfied
 Unsure

5. Do you support the proposal to establish a long-term lease of the operations of General Mitchell International Airport with a private entity, the receipts

from which (estimated to be as much as \$1 billion) to provide a revenue stream to support transit and other Milwaukee County programs?

- Yes No Unsure

6. Do you think Milwaukee County...

- Is a good place to raise children? Yes No Unsure
 Has good government? Yes No Unsure
 Is a good place to visit? Yes No Unsure
 Has good leadership? Yes No Unsure

7. What do you think are the two biggest issues facing your community? (Check two)

- Inadequate Public Transportation Race Relations
 High Level of Taxation Parks - Adequacy of Funds
 Quality of Schools Traffic Congestion
 Crime Rate, Drugs Preserving the Environment
 Bad Infrastructure Political Leadership
 Lack of Funds or Services

8. Based on what you have heard, do you think Milwaukee County government needs major restructuring, minor restructuring or do you think county government operates pretty well the way it is?

- Needs major restructuring
 Needs minor restructuring
 Operates pretty well the way it is
 Unsure

9. For each of the following statements, please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree or are you not sure. (Circle one)

There are too many layers of local government in Milwaukee County.

- Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Unsure

It makes no difference to me which level of government is providing critical services such as fire, police, transportation, and social services as long as those services are available and efficient.

- Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Unsure

I'm not really sure what county government does.

- Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Unsure

I would be willing to consider higher taxes if I knew county and municipal services were efficiently administered.

- Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Unsure

10. How would you rate the performance of Milwaukee County in expenditure of taxpayer's dollars?

- Excellent Good Fair
 Poor Very Poor Unsure

Become a Foster/ Adoptive Parent

Every month, about 100 Milwaukee County children enter foster care. About 80% of them will be reunified with their parents once their safety and well-being in the home has been assured. In the meantime, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW), which is responsible for their care, asks the community to provide safe and nurturing families.

We need foster homes for all kinds of children, but especially for sibling groups, infants and teens. You can work full time. You can be single, married, or partnered.

May is National Foster Care Month. Because placing children in homes where positive connections to schools, friends, and extended family can be maintained reduces trauma in children, recruiting city residents is desirable.

Please consider opening your heart and home to one of Milwaukee's children in need. Attend an orientation meeting to learn more about foster care and adoption.

Call 414-264-KIDS for a schedule of orientation meetings.

New Aquatic Center

Milwaukee County is in the process of constructing a new aquatics center at Lincoln Park, expected to be opened in Spring of 2009. The park will be the North Shore equivalent of the Cool Waters Aquatic Center in Greenfield.

The new aquatic center will be named after former County Executive David Schulz. As a Milwaukee County Parks Director in 1980s, Mr. Schulz championed the water park concept in Milwaukee County.

The new aquatic center will offer various water-based recreation, including zero-depth to 5-foot-deep pool with lap lanes, water slides,

diving well and interactive water toys. The center will also include a "lazy river" circular path adjacent to the pools.



DAVID SCHULZ AQUATIC CENTER AT LINCOLN PARK

Get More Involved with Government

If you have concerns about your community and would like to dedicate time to contribute to the decision making process in addressing some of those concerns, consider being a part of a Milwaukee County commission or task force.

For more information on opportunities to join a commission or a task force, please contact my office at (414) 278-4795 or e-mail me at joseph.rice@milwcnty.com.

Oak Leaf Trail Update

The Milwaukee County Parks Department is currently finalizing plans to extend the Oak Leaf Trail by connecting it with the Ozaukee Interurban Trail through Kohl Park. Construction will begin in Spring of 2009 and is expected to be completed by early July. The trail will also be connected with the segment of the Ozaukee Interurban Trail that leads to the Nature Preserve in Mequon.

Legislative Roundup

Mental Health Complex -

On September 25, 2008 the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors voted 11-8 to reject County Executive Scott Walker's proposal to move the county Mental Health Complex, currently located at the Milwaukee County Grounds in Wauwatosa, to a remodeled St. Michael's Hospital. The Board instead opted for constructing a new Behavioral Health Division facility on County-owned land on the County Grounds. A veto is expected from the County Executive. I voted against this measure and will vote to sustain the veto.

Savings on Medical Benefits -

Milwaukee County stands to save \$13.5 million annually in employee medical and prescription drug costs by switching to new providers - United Health Care for medical plans and Medco Health Solutions for prescription drug plans. The transition was realized through the newly created Employee Benefits Division. It is projected that this transition will save \$40.5 million of taxpayers money from 2009 to 2011, on top of \$10 million already saved in 2008.

Ensuring Disclosure - The County Board approved a measure to require full disclosure regarding potential conflicts from contract administrators and evaluation panel members when awarding or managing a contract.

Savings on Maintenance - The County Board voted to enter into a ten-year agreement with the Canadian Pacific Railroad, with an option for two additional five-year periods, for roadway access for the railroad's employees and maintenance vehicles to its offices north of the Mitchell Park Domes, in exchange for a graduated annual fee and continued maintenance of the roadway by the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

Ensuring Safety - The County Board voted to authorize the Sheriff's Office to apply for grants available under the Homeland Security Grant Programs to assist with homeland security preparedness.



Supervisor Joseph Rice
Milwaukee County 6th Supervisory District
 901 N. 9th Street, RM 201
 Milwaukee, WI 53233-1425

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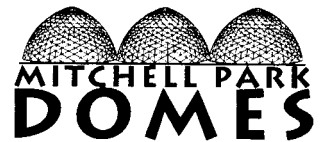
Expires September 30, 2009

milwcnty

Milwaukee County FREE Days!
 Complimentary admission to Milwaukee County Residents only with valid photo ID on the following days:



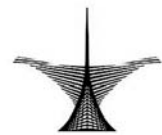
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