
◆ WEXFORD WATCH ◆

Issue 125

December 2003-January 2004

WEXFORD WATCH
I S F O R
NEIGHBORHOOD
EDIFICATION AND
D O E S N O T
SPONSOR ANY
PERSON OR
ACTIVITY LISTED
HEREIN, UNLESS
SO NOTED.

EDITOR: SUNNY
HSU / ROGER
KONG, 1114 N.
WESTFIELD RD.
SUBMISSIONS IN
WRITING BY THE
FIFTEENTH OF
EACH ODD MONTH
TO wexfordwatch
@yahoo.com

ALSO AVAILABLE
ON THE WEBSITE:
[http://www.
wexfordvillage.
org](http://www.wexfordvillage.org)

Table of Contents

<i>Board News</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Alder News</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Wexford News</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>More News</i>	<i>4</i>

Wexford Board News by Don Michalski

We welcome all new Wexford residents that have joined us within the past year. We also thank all of the individuals who have undertaken the task of being on the Wexford Welcoming Committee. These individuals take the time and make the efforts to inform new residents of the local resources and to offer a new friendship .

The Wexford Village Annual meeting was held at the Alicia Ashman Library on Monday November 24. Guest speakers alderperson Paul Skidmore and Madison Police Chief Richard Williams spoke on city and local issues Paul Skidmore expressed concern about some aspects in the City budget, but supported the heavy emphasis on adequate funding for police, fire, and emergency medicine services. Also maintenance of support services, i.e. public works , street services, refuse collection, etc are services that are vital to comfortable community living.

Police Chief Williams identified the rapid growth of the City of Madison with minimal growth in the police force. Traffic and speed are a constant concern of everyone " Speed is the great equalizer of time" and we must emphasize education and responsibility in all of our drivers to ensure safety for all citizens. The City Police force will be doing some major reorganization early next year into "Teams" that will be better able to respond to various district needs . Police Chief Williams asks all individuals to continue to maintain a dialogue with members of the police force. The traffic calming effort for the intersection of Sawmill and Westfield is getting serious consideration by the City The Wexford Village budget is not expected to change for year 2004.

Individual assessments will remain at \$75 per individual home and \$37.50 for condos. Again, the greatest portion of the budget , about , 75% (38,000) ,is spent in the maintenance of our greenways including ,grass mowing, trimming , weed and feed, and light and bike paths

***Wexford Village Website: <http://www.wexfordvillage.org>
Submission to Wexford Watch: wexfordwatch@yahoo.com***

Free advertising on the Wexford Neighborhood website. Update your directory information online at <http://www.wexfordvillage.org/associationUpdate.htm>

Alder News:

Greetings from your Alder,

As I write this, we have still received no snow accumulation, but I would like to remind everyone that alternate side parking regulations are in effect throughout the City. Alternate side parking means that between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. you must park your car on the odd numbered side of the street on odd days and on the even numbered side of the street on even days. Failure to do so could result in a parking citation. If you have any questions on this policy you can contact me or the City Streets Division. Speaking of snow, not all streets are plowed or salted when it snows. In particular, cul du sacs are only plowed or salted if there is 3" or more of snow (in one snow fall or in several snow falls). If you live on a street that is not regularly plowed, and there is an accumulation of snow and/or ice that makes it difficult or dangerous to drive, you can call the City Streets Division and ask them to plow it. Please contact me, if you need further help.

Recently, the City Council approved the 2004 capital and operating budget for the City of Madison. After much thought and discussion, I agreed to be a cosponsor of a resolution to cap the property tax levy at \$8.00 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation, and to cosponsor specific amendments to cut spending and keep taxes down. Our efforts met with stiff resistance from the mayor, many other City Council members, and numerous community service organizations who receive money from the City to operate. Our 'tax cap' resolution was defeated on an 11 to 9 vote. All of our proposed spending cuts were defeated. Two spending cut amendments had tie votes on the council (10 to 10). Both of the amendments were defeated when the mayor cast the tie-breaking vote to maintain funding and raise your taxes. Several amendments lost on 11 to 9 votes.

In the end, the City Council approved an operational budget that has a property tax levy of \$8.00 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation. Supporters of this budget claim to have managed the budget and kept taxes down. I don't agree with them. Proponents of the adopted budget approved an amendment that transfers more than \$800,000 from property tax revenues to fee revenues. City residents, on the whole, will still be paying the same amount of money, only it will be recorded differently. Also, as you may have heard, the operating budget includes transferring money from the dedicated golf enterprise account to help fund general park operations. This transfer of fees paid by golfers could delay improvements to Madison's four public golf courses, and it could hinder their operations. The operating budget also includes reduced levels of funding of the Madison Police Department. The Police Department requested seven additional police officers be hired in 2004 to meet needs identified in their recent staffing study. Initially, the Mayor was willing to fund only three officers, but he eventually agreed to hire five officers. Even though we were not successful in cutting spending, I am pleased that we brought our concern for managing spending and property taxes forward. My 'tax cap' colleagues and I will continue to monitor public spending and work to make sure that City is responsible in managing your tax dollars.

This past year Governor Doyle negotiated a gambling compact extension with the Ho



Chunk Nation. That extension includes a provision that would allow the DeJope bingo hall in Madison to offer Class III (full casino) gambling, unless a county wide referendum supporting the effort to expand gambling at this facility is defeated. Recently, the Madison City Council approved a resolution asking Dane County to place this referendum before voters in February of 2004. Additionally, the City of Madison and Dane County have negotiated an agreement with the Ho Chunk Nation that would provide payments, as well as public improvements and other considerations to the City and County, if the referendum supporting expanded gambling at DeJope is approved. The County Executive has expressed her support for the expansion of gambling at DeJope. The Mayor has expressed his opposition to the expansion of gambling at DeJope. I support the Mayor in this matter. I am philosophically opposed to gambling but support placing the issue before Dane County voters in a referendum. I would like to know your opinions on whether we should support expanding gambling in our City.

Traffic management continues to be the number one complaint and topic of discussion in the ninth district. While I still get many complaints, I feel that we are making our neighborhood streets safer. Recently, the City installed some traffic calming islands on Westfield Road, at Colony Drive. In August, the City made some major improvements to the turning and traffic lanes on Gammon Road at Tree Lane. Additionally, through the efforts of Alder Steve Holtzman and myself, the Traffic Enforcement Safety Team (TEST) of the Madison Police Department has stepped up traffic enforcement on our neighborhood streets. In fact, recently the TEST team issued 16 speeding citations in a two hour period on North Gammon Road, near the site of an accident that seriously injured a pedestrian. While these enforcement efforts and street improvements are important, it is critical that drivers be careful and obey our traffic laws.

There is a proposal offered by the Mayor, some City Council members and others to increase the minimum wage paid to workers in the City of Madison to \$7.75 per hour. Currently, the minimum wage is \$5.15 per hour, as established by the federal government. If this new proposal is approved it would raise the wages of some workers, but could have other consequences. It could make Madison too expensive for some businesses to be competitive and thereby help them decide to relocate to nearby communities. A higher minimum wage that is not consistent with state or federal minimum wage guidelines could also create problems with individuals who receive Social Security or other benefits. There is an effort in the Wisconsin Legislature to prohibit municipalities from passing minimum wage increases that are not consistent with state or federal levels. I support discussing an increase in minimum wages at the state or federal level, but I oppose the effort to raise minimum wages by individual municipalities. I would like to know your opinions on this subject.

Recently, I have been receiving complaints about signs being placed in the right-of-way (the public terrace between the curb and City sidewalk) of residential streets. Signs in the City of Madison are regulated by State law and Chapter 31 of the Madison General Ordinances. Generally, it is illegal to place business signs in the public right-of-way. If you see a sign in the right-of-way that you think is not legal, you can contact the City Building Inspection Department or contact me.

Thanks to all of you who have called or e-mailed me with your comments or questions. Please feel free to contact me with questions, concerns, announcements (to be included in my newsletter), or issues at:

E-Mail: district9@council.ci.madison.wi.us
Phone: 829-3425

Paul Skidmore

Ashman Library News:

- The Alicia Ashman Book Group will meet again on Tuesday, Dec. 9. The book we'll be discussing is "The Eyre Affair," by Jasper Fforde.
- Our Anime Film Club (Japanese Animation) continues to meet on a monthly basis; please call 824-1780 to hear details about our next screening.
- On Sat., December 20, the library will host a Gingerbread House program for children ages 2 to 15. Call 824-1780 to register, starting December 5 (call early; we've had a lot of interest in this one).
- The Alicia Ashman Branch Library is open on Mondays through Fridays, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call us at 824-1780 with any questions, to register for our programs, or to suggest .

More News:

- **A New West Madison Senior Center**

The West Madison Senior Coalition is planning for a new Senior Center to serve older adults and the community for another 25 years. Currently at 602 Sawyer Terrace, the Senior Center, an extension of the West Madison Senior Coalition, is in its 24th year. The 2600 square foot, one-room center can no longer accommodate needs of the growing senior population. The current senior center is limited by the number of activities that can be held per week, by extremely limited parking, and by the challenge of occupying a separate location from the West Madison Senior Coalition offices, which house programs that help seniors maintain their independence. We have gotten input from 500 area seniors about their ideas for a new senior center through focus groups and surveys. Most have asked that the new senior center remain in the Hill Farms neighborhood, so we are focusing our efforts on a location there. Initial conversations with the City of Madison about our plans are favorable, and they recognize the need for a new center to serve West side seniors. If you are interested in more information, please contact Sara Braun at the West Madison Senior Coalition, 238-7368 or Marian Todd at 238-2289.

- Thinking of joining Highpoint Swim Club in 2004? Please call Lori at 831-1416.
- **Come skate!**
Your neighbors are going to flood the ice rink in Wexford Park again Dec 20-Jan 25 (weather permitting). There is also skating on Stricker's and Tiedeman's ponds, as well as the retention ponds between Sawmill Rd and the pool. The Wexford Park site has a water connection so we can keep the best surface. If you are willing to help with ice maintenance for two nights, please contact Chris Hunt at 831-3133. See you there!