

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 18.94 Wis. Stats., a special meeting of the **Brown County Executive Committee** was held on Tuesday, April 26, 2011 in Room 200, Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay.

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**Present:** Mary Scray, Guy Zima, Jesse Brunette, Bernie Erickson, Pat Evans, Tom Lund, Tom De Wane  
**Also Present:** Supervisors Kaster, Fleck, Andrews, Dantine, Carpenter, Van Vonderen and Schuller, Fred Mohr, Aaron Schuette, Chuck Lamine, Other Interested Parties.

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I. **Call Meeting to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Zima at 6:33 p.m.

II. **Approve/modify agenda.**

**Motion made by Supervisor Evans and seconded by Supervisor Lund to approve agenda. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1. **Review of Redistricting Options and Recommendation to County Board re: Tentative Supervisory District Plan.**

**Motion made by Supervisor Lund and seconded by Supervisor Evans to open the floor to interested parties. Vote taken. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Dotty Juengst, 846 Cornelius Drive, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Juengst, a representative from the League of Women Voters of Green Bay, informed that she had sent a letter to Chair Scray with regard to redistricting and was present to highlight a few points. The main concern from the League was the County Board size. The League had taken the position that the Board should remain at 26 supervisors, or if possible reduce the number. She noted that none of the plans shown on the County website were for 26 or fewer districts and wondered if there would be a possibility for the public to see what those plans may look like. The league felt the Board had run efficiently at 26 and could even work with less depending on how the districts measure up with regard to population. Their group had looked at this issue for several cycles and informed that in the past the County Board size had been reduced. She further felt that in terms of constituency responses could be appropriately handled.

Supervisor Zima questioned if Juengst and other members of the League of Women Voters regularly attend County Board meetings, she replied yes on occasion but also have the luxury of watching it on TV. Zima indicated that he is the longest serving member on the Board and when he started there were 43 supervisors. In 1980 that changed to 46 and this number was reduced to 24 in 1990 and then ten years ago the number was increased to the current size of 26 supervisors. Zima advised Juengst that the average number of constituents per district is 8,600. He questioned if Juengst would like to see more people participate in local government and she indicated that she would, but she felt that there are different ways to participate in government whether a district has 10,000 constituents or 8,000 constituents. Zima asked if it was a fair statement that the larger the district, the more difficult it would be for the average person to participate. His opinion was that the smaller the district, the more the average person has a more fair opportunity to participate and become involved in their government because the bigger the district, the more expensive they become to campaign in, the more difficult it is to meet people and talk face to face. He felt the smaller the district, the better the representation.

Supervisor De Wane asked Juengst if she had spoken with her City Alderman as this affects the City as well. De Wane indicated that whether an alderman or county supervisor, the main thing you want is to keep in communication and make time and contact with your constituents. It is too hard to do this if the districts are too large. Juengst indicated that she kept in contact with her alderman and county supervisor when they do things such as attending neighborhood association meetings. She also felt it's important to recognize that people speak to their neighbors and friends and get information that way.

Supervisor Evans asked that since the League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization and he wondered if Juengst considered her coming forward and addressing the Board was political. Juengst explained that the League of Women Voters is non-partisan and they are not endorsing candidates nor do they support one party or another. However, they do study issues and bring the information to their members to discuss and make a decision so that when legislation comes forward, they decide whether it fits their position or does not and then they lobby for or against the bill, depending on what their position is.

Evans asked Juengst to give the three main points for the rationale they have for keeping the Board size at 26 or reducing it. Juengst's response was 1) efficiency in that things can go forward in a timely fashion and have decisions to be made in a timely fashion; 2) less costly and, 3) the ability for the public to know who the supervisors are.

Joan Mills, 1131 Pleasant Valley Drive, Oneida, Wisconsin

Mills stated that she was on the County Board for 16 years representing De Pere and continued to follow the County Board news closely. She was around when there were 54 people on the Board as well as when there were 48 and then when it was cut in half. As a supervisor she did not feel she did any more work when there were 24 supervisors as opposed to 48. She also stated that in the 16 years she was on the County Board, she may have received 10 – 15 phone calls. She felt county representatives didn't receive as many calls as the city. She went on to discuss committee assignments and noted that the County website showed board members were only on one to three committees and felt one to three meetings a month was not considered being overworked. She felt this was a fiscal issue, people have to sacrifice and that County Board should do the same thing as well as pay a minimum of 50% of the health benefits offered. She believed it wouldn't hurt to represent more.

Erickson appreciated her coming forward but informed that many supervisors including him served on several committees that aren't listed on the website. He is on eight a month and there are more that he can't attend because he works full time. His comments like those that make supervisors look like they do nothing. There is speculation that all supervisors get an abundance of benefits. He informed that he doesn't use the insurance nor receive mileage. To do a good job you have to go out and talk with people. It takes approximately four months to get around and you don't always reach people and when you do you can spend lots of time with one person. Mills replied that her experiences were much different and noted that she never got invited in.

Lund informed that he had gone door to door for 10 years. He had the experience of talking with people for 15 to 45 minutes. He always asked people what they expected of him and got in depth with people. In a district that is 38 square miles, it's hard. If you want more participation in government you make the districts smaller and add more people. Keep local government local. Lund preferred to see 29 supervisors. More advantages with more people, more perspective.

Zima stated throughout the years they had cut the number of supervisors and consolidated all the committees into five very important committees with lots of responsibility. This worked out very well. Zima reiterated that today constituents expect to see their representatives. He felt that these days supervisors don't have the luxury of meeting all the people in the area. The larger the district

the more difficult to get to know everyone, get feedback and represent them. Supervisors are supposed to provide leadership.

De Wane felt that so much is happening within the County, committees are taking on so much work. So much is involved in county government now and people want to know what is going on.

Scray thanked Mills for her years of service. She informed that each supervisor took their position seriously. A lot of research is involved as a member of a committee and several people held full time jobs. She felt that tonight they were defending their positions and candidacy which makes her feel uncomfortable, she believed they were doing a good job and this is not what redistricting is about. She felt nationally people were more involved in government and receives several calls and emails.

**Motion made by Supervisor De Wane and seconded by Supervisor Lund to return to regular order of business. MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Supervisor Van Vonderen informed that she was in favor of keeping the Board the same. This was her first year campaigning and knows what its like to go door to door. As a supervisor, with regards to phone calls, some weeks there are a lot, it depends on the issue, and others there were none. She informed that she had a full time job as well as another representative position and you do the best you can. Her main concern was that they are in a leadership position and they are asking staff to take a cut in pay, pay in more for their benefits and do more with less. Departments are asked to hold positions open for three to six months and to even eliminate positions. Why is the County Board the exception? Van Vonderen informed that she is willing to do more. Not only does it make financial sense at this time but as a point of leadership, what they have asked other people to do, the Board is supposed to lead and lead by example. She felt all she was hearing was excuses as why they can't do something and felt it was not appropriate for this body with everything that they had asked from staff to department to personnel. The Board needed to step it up and will do more with less. Its unfortunate the percentage of people that are eligible to vote and who actually vote so even if the population had gone up but everyone would still put on their priority list to contact the ones who vote. She believed she got more comments from people watching the meetings on TV than anything

Supervisor Fleck agreed with Van Vonderen. He felt they could do it with 26. He stated he gets very few calls but had received two calls from constituents and spoke with two people in public regarding this issue. They questioned why the Board was adding when everyone else is cutting. Fleck would like to see an option for 26 as well as the cost option for salaries, benefits, and the increased cost to redo City Hall to accommodate extra supervisors.

Supervisor Dantine agreed with Van Vonderen and Fleck. He informed he attended other town meetings and felt it wasn't hard to get your message out. Dantine felt it made no sense to cut staff and add supervisors. He would like to see an option of 26.

Supervisor Carpenter agreed with Van Vonderen, Fleck, and Dantine. He had no problem adding more. He already covered Howard, Hobart, Lawrence, De Pere and Ashwaubenon. For him to cover that and talk to more people, he felt it was not a problem. Carpenter explained that he had received numbers from Administration. If they were to add more supervisors it would cost more per year: \$37,000 for 29, \$61,000 for 31, \$86,000 for 33. He felt those were big numbers when asking Department Heads to cut their budgets and do more with less. He would also like to see an option for 26 before a final vote.

Responding to comments, Zima stated that he had felt that politics were going on. He informed that if they were to stick with 26 it would add roughly 1,000 extra people per district, increasing the districts by 11-12%. (*Handout attached re: Example Brown County Supervisory District Options based on 2010 Census Results.*) After reiterating his previous comments Zima stated that he felt 29 or 31 is

probably the best. 29 would stay the same but had more variation. 31 had least variation.

Supervisor Andrews informed for a point of comparison she would like to see the option for 26. Supervisor Kaster and Lund agreed. Schuette informed that the process of developing each map can take five to six hours to prepare from scratch. With 26 districts, city aldermen would go from 12 to 11, same as with 27 districts. De Wane asked that a star be placed at the location of where the City Council members live on the new maps.

Discussion ensued with regards to the jail and college population in certain districts. Prisoners at the reformatory and jail had to be included as part of the redistricting effort. Scray informed that it was State law that they had to count them. It was Board Attorney Fred Mohr's opinion that there were too many variables involved to know whether or not to dispute and go outside the deviation.

**Motion made by Supervisor Lund and seconded by Supervisor Erickson to look at option of 26 also adding cost increases for every supervisor added and the cost to renovate City Hall if needed.**  
**MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Evans stated he heard a lot about campaigning and can appreciate it and there's a lot to be said about having a lot of money because it does have an effect. He doesn't consider campaigning when looking at redistricting. He considered the amount of people he had to represent. In looking back at what Ms Mills stated, things have changed. Thinking about all the emails and calls he received, and maybe it's because he lives in the city and may be more high profile, he gets a lot interesting phone calls to say the least. He had no problem going with the 26 noting that districts 4 and 5 and 8 and 9 can run against each other. Look at 14 supervisors. The problem is once you get into a very large constituency it will take away from that personal feel. He informed that a vast majority of his calls are city issues. Any contact with an elected official is now at the local level. Supervisors have the best chance of reaching anyone at the federal level because they know who they are. He's talked to Reed Ribble and can call Dave Hansen, he knows them, they know him... it's easy. When his neighbor tries to do that, it doesn't happen, they get staff or a form letter sent back to them and then Evans gets a call because they are basically untouchable. County supervisors are not untouchable. If he could represent 2,000, it would make his life better than to change what he's doing on the County Board. The budget he oversees as Chair of Human Services Committee is larger than the City of Green Bay. What he worries about, is the constituents. His mantra is the less people he can talk to the more he can talk to them and be proactive and the more of a voice they can have.

It was the consensus of the committee to adjourn until next Monday, May 2, 2011 @ 5:00 p.m.

2. **Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law:**

**Motion made by Supervisor De Wane and seconded by Supervisor Brunette to adjourn at 6:49 p.m.**  
**MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia A. Loehlein  
Recording Secretary