



Getting the Most “Bang for the Tax Buck”

The state's financial crisis threatens to further squeeze town budgets, including Kinnickinnic's. Tom Harnisch, Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA) education director, notes that shared revenue and transportation aids are declining, and the revenue picture for largely rural townships is also distorted by exemptions that, while well intentioned, have shifted the property tax burden toward residential property owners already frustrated by declining values.

The dilemma facing towns, Harnisch notes, is how to support necessary services and infrastructure in the face of rising costs and steady-to-declining revenue. Increasing local taxes is an understandably unpopular option and last resort. The WTA official urges towns to look first at getting the most “bang for the buck” by cutting the short- and long-term costs of road maintenance, repair, construction and reconstruction -- which for most towns, like Kinnickinnic, represents the largest budget expense.

His recommendations include the following advice:

- Implement an aggressive public bidding program for road and bridge repair, construction and reconstruction, and maintenance costs.
- Maintain roads properly to prevent future road damage.
- Legally abandon town roads that do not need to be public roads.
- When needed, close roads to prevent additional road and/or bridge damage.
- Use timely weight restrictions to prevent damage.

Kinnickinnic is already using several of these cost-saving techniques, and others are under consideration. Competitive bids are currently sought for all major road maintenance and reconstruct projects. Exceptions are snow removal, ditch mowing and emergency services such as pothole filling, washout repair, etc., which are efficiently and ably handled through a long-standing arrangement with the St. Croix County Highway Department.

The Town road program focuses heavily on both road and ditch maintenance, with a goal of extending the maximum useful life of our town roads. Ditch and culvert cleaning, timely pothole repair, crack filling

and seal coat/chip sealing are all key preventative maintenance measures. All town roads are posted with weight restrictions each spring, when the thaw/freeze cycle leaves them most vulnerable to breakup from heavy traffic. More recently, the town has been exploring permanent weight limits on town roads that serve as “shortcuts” for through truck traffic. The goal is to reduce heavy truck traffic on these roads while not hampering local deliveries, farm operations, etc.

Abandonment of existing public roads is a limited option in Kinnickinnic. However, the possibility of allowing more private roads in the town as part of future development is currently under discussion by the plan commission, land use and road committees, which are wrestling with the pros and cons, along with limitations that may be imposed by the county.

In the end, there are no easy answers to stretching tight budgets, but oversight of Kinnickinnic's network of town roads -- which while not perfect are the envy of many surrounding townships -- is a critical concern for your Town Board and is the primary charge of the town's road committee. Harnisch points out that town officials have a municipal common law responsibility to protect public health and safety, and safe, passable roads are a critical ingredient.

Kinnickinnic continues to look for ways to get the most “bang for the buck” without compromising that responsibility.

by Bill Gnatzig

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Earth Day Event:

We had an event last year and a number of residents participated, so let's do it again. A township wide ditch clean up! It will work like this, starting April 5th.

- Pick up a special bag from the town hall, at the Clerk's office; either at the Spring Election or anytime during regular town hall hours, Tuesday or Thursday from 9 am to 2 pm.
- Get a bag and clean the ditch in your neighborhood.
- Bring your trash bag to the town hall during the last week of April and dispose of it in the dumpster we will have available.

We will only accept the special trash bags that the town gives out and they can only be deposited the last week of April, the 25th thru the 29th. Thanks for your cooperation on this matter. Last year we had about 20 participants and all of them picked up trash in a large area of their neighborhood. Each year if just a few more residents participated we could have our town clean. The more participation the less work for any one family. Any questions, call me at the town hall, Lola Higgins; 715-425-8082 or 715-821-0382.

From the Desk of Roger Van Beek; Town Chair of Kinnickinnic

Hello again, another year has passed and spring is slowly arriving and things are heating up like this years town election. This spring two of our existing board members will not be running for re-election.

Supervisor I; Mary Murphy has been a board member for ten years with four of those years as being Town Chair. Also she has served on many committees such as road committee, plan commission, rural fire association board and work on the census background information gathering.

Supervisor II; Milo Opegard has also been a board member for the last four years and has volunteered additional time for State and County seminars and taking on the task of establishing the best possible safety measures for bicyclists traveling through our town.

Serving with these two Supervisors has been truly an honor I have learned much from their experience and have the utmost respect for their opinions. I thank them for their many years of dedication to these positions and for all of their hard work and the many things that the board has accomplished.

As this years election approaches many new faces and names will emerge. I will be running for re-election of Town Chair opposed by Gordon Awsumb. Axel Bogdan will be running unopposed for Supervisor I. Running for Supervisor II will be May Wolfe and Dave Nelson.

I hope this year many of our residents will take the time and opportunity to vote in the coming spring election.

It has been an honor and a privilege being the Town Chair for the last four years and I hope to continue representing you as a resident in the fairest and most productive way possible in these challenging economic times. Much work has been accomplished but there is much yet to do. So I urge you to come out and vote for the candidate of your choice.

A GREAT EXPERIENCE!

April will be the end of my fourth year on the Town Board, I have decided not to run for another term. Three reasons on my mind for this decision include 2 yr old twin granddaughters in Alaska and a new granddaughter here in River Falls. My time on the Board has been an education to the amount of work and decision making for the health and prosperity of the Township that is made at this local level of government. I encourage all Town citizens to consider serving on the Board.

During my time on the Board I was involved in identifying and having installed road signs for designated bike routes through the township. These signed routes begin with Liberty Road at the junction of Cnty Rd M to River Drive. At River Drive the bike route goes East to Cnty Rd JJ, a county designated bike road, and also West to Quarry Rd. At Quarry Rd the bike route goes North to State Hwy 65. At Hwy 65 the biker must go about 1/2 mile West to Cnty SS, also a county designated bike road. The signed bike routes serve to give bikers a suggested roadway through the township. The bike signs are also a reminder to motorists to expect bicyclers, those on horseback, joggers, trout fishing folks, and those out for a walk. So keep your speeds down.

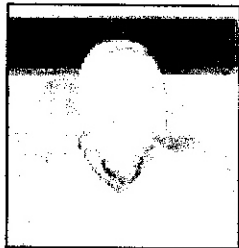
This winter has not disappointed with lack of cold and dreariness. Now is a good time to think about home heating improvements that can be made for next winter. The Federal Tax credits of 30% expired December 31, 2010. However, the Federal Tax energy efficiency incentive program has not totally gone away. Briefly, a tax credit remains of 10% of cost to \$500 or a specific amount from \$50 to \$300. This credit expires Dec 31, 2011. The tax credit remains for Geothermal Heat Pumps, Solar Systems and Wind Turbines at 30% of cost. This tax credit expires Dec 31, 2016. More information is available off the Internet: http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index

Thank you for this opportunity to serve you.
Milo Opegard

Kinnickinnic Town Website:

Have you checked out the Kinnickinnic town website? Go to www.kinnickinnictwp.org and check it out. Get answers to frequently asked questions, recycling schedule, and what you can and cannot recycle at the towns recycling center. Pictures of last Septembers Family Fun Day, effective ordinances and resolutions, financial information, and contact information. Also see the notices for Town Board and Plan Commission meetings as well as minutes from previous meetings. Use the contact button to contact us at the town hall via email. Lola Higgins, Clerk

Hi, my name is Axel Bogdan, and I am running for Supervisor in Kinnickinnic Township. You may find the following background information interesting and hopefully decide to support me with your vote.



My wife and I moved to Kinnickinnic Township from Germany twelve and a half years ago. In 2006, we became US citizens (What a great day that was - we finally could vote!). We live on a hobby farm on County Road J with an assortment of animal companions. Our two dogs are registered therapy dogs and visit two local nursing homes on a regular basis. We belong to the River Falls Sportsmen's Club and enjoy the great shooting sport opportunities we have in this country. One of my other interests is reading, mostly books on science, current affairs, and politics.

I hold a graduate degree (equivalent to M.S.) in chemistry (University of Duisburg, Germany) and a Master of Science in industrial health (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor). I am a Board certified industrial hygienist (CIH) and Board certified safety professional (CSP). For close to 20 years, I have worked for a multi-national company based in the Twin Cities in a variety of safety and health positions. My current responsibility focuses on product safety and risk management of medical devices. As you can imagine, this position requires a high degree of analytical skills, critical thinking, absolute integrity, and uncompromising ethics. In my professional career I have learned that data driven decision making is the best way to bring legitimate, reliable and lasting results. This is the operating style I will bring to the table if elected town supervisor. If you want to learn more about me, please do not hesitate to call (715-426-6119) or email (axelbogdan1@gmail.com). I hope you vote for me on April 5, but if you don't at least please take the time and vote for somebody else. A right not exercised is a right lost!



As a citizen of Kinnickinnic Township for many years, I am seeking a position on the town board to contribute to the best of my ability to a balanced governance of this township. Acknowledging that there will always be conflicting needs and wishes, I believe that every citizen has a voice and a duty to step forward if they have constructive ideas. I believe good government begins locally and involves as wide a participation as

possible on decisions for the common good. If elected, I would do my best to listen carefully and consider all inputs on decisions before the Board. My qualifications for this position come from many years of analytical work in the high tech industry. I grew up on a farm in Wisconsin, and graduated with a BA and MBA from UW-Madison. I would appreciate your support.

If I am elected I will help stop unnecessary spending of tax payers' money and help the people of the town to have a voice. Please come and vote on April 5th.

Thank you,
Dave Nelson



I am running for town chairman to keep taxes under control and maintain our rural character. Neighbors have asked me to as well. My background is as follows:

35 years in various businesses including sales, management, construction, and redevelopment. My current business specializes in redevelopment of blighted urban areas and historic buildings. I have been elected to the St. Croix County Board of Supervisors, The St. Croix County Public Health Board, the St. Croix Economic Development Board and a Watershed District Board I have also served on two nonprofit boards; The Northeast Minneapolis Community Development Board and a Religious Organization's Board. Please see my web site www.voteawsumb.com



For ten years I've operated RDP Builders, a residential home building company. In 2004-05 I was the president of the St. Croix Valley Home and Builders Association. I also was a Chairman for the St. Croix Valley Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; President of the St. Croix Central Wrestling Club and I am currently employed at Asphalt Associates in Roberts.

I enjoy the outdoors and my hobbies include hunting, fishing, and camping. I like to cook and many of you may have tasted my barbeque chicken at the Kinni Family Fun Day. Being a lifelong resident of Kinnickinnic for many years, I have seen Kinnickinnic grow with many changes from primarily a dairy farm atmosphere to now a mix of residential and more crop farming atmosphere. As a member of the Board I would like to continue to be a part of the development of a new subdivision ordinance that will try to mesh together all the important features of our township; such as protecting rural character, open spaces, the Kinnickinnic River and property owner rights.

I am proud to be a resident of Kinnickinnic. Having called this area my home, I look forward to working with the residents to continue improving our township and keeping the rural flavor for all to enjoy.

I'm asking for your vote in April. If you have questions or comments you can reach me at; 715-760-0202, or Roger@asphalt-associates.com I have enjoyed serving our community for the last four years.

Thank You
Sincerely,
Roger Van Beek



Town of Kinnickinnic

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River Falls, WI 54022

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kinnitownhall@presenter.com

NAMES AND NUMBERS

Town Chair Roger Van Beek 715-760-0202

Supervisor 1, Mary Murphy 715-425-6174

Supervisor 2, Milo Oppedard 715-425-7136

Supervisor 3, Bill Gnatzig 715-426-7386

Supervisor 4, John Humphrey 715-426-9493

Treasurer, Brenda LaValley 715-425-1180

Clerk, Lola Higgins 715-821-0382

Town Hall Office, 715-425-808

Tax Assessor, Ron Meyer, 715-232-9068

Building Inspector, Brian Wert, 715-386-5410

Lottery Credit Information

In order to receive a Lottery Credit on your property tax bill for 2011 (to be paid in 2012), you must have resided in your residence on January 1, 2011. Contact the Town Treasurer, Brenda LaValley, at 425-1180 with questions. An appropriate form can be found online at <http://www.revenue.wi.gov/forms/lottery/index.html>. If you did not receive a Lottery Credit on your 2010 tax bill and you think you should have, also call the Treasurer.

DOG LICENSING – Contact the Town Treasurer

All dogs must be licensed annually, 5 months of age or older or 5 months old within the license year. Proof of Rabies shots must be submitted when purchasing the license. This may be done through the mail. The form for requesting a dog tag was included in with the 2010 tax bill mailed out in mid December. If you lost the form, just call the Treasurer for additional information and for obtaining a tag. Fees are \$3 if neutered/spayed - \$8 if not.

To report stray dogs, call the Town Chairman. The Town has no process for dealing with stray cats.