

**Outagamie County Services  
1988**

## CONSENSUS

### APPLETON L.W.V. COUNTY SERVICES STUDY

1988

OBJECTIVE: A survey of payment for and distribution of county services among municipalities of Outagamie County.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) Are there significant areas of county service that are being paid for by taxpayers who are not utilizing the service?

It was <sup>felt</sup> that, yes, especially in the area of police protection, the county is underwriting a significant amount of sherriff's department services for the urbanized areas of the town of Grand Chute. There was also discussion concerning Outagamie/Waupaca Library System and County Health Department with no consensus of opinion.

- 2) Are there services which are provided by the county and various municipalities in the county which could be consolidated to better ~~serve~~ the taxpayer?

All three units felt a county assessor's office would more uniformly deliver service to municipalities and eliminate the need for every municipality to have its own assessor. A county sewer-water commission with service districts would eliminate parallel service and influence county planning.

A county wide 911 service was endorsed as a necessity. Although a county wide police department was considered politically impractical, it was felt some areas of police service could be consolidated; A) A central communications set-up would result in more efficient investigative work, B) Drug investigation and enforcement should be consolidated but not necessarily along strictly county boundaries, C) In some localities, certain arrangements could be made to consolidate municipal services (i.e. Grand Chute could contract with Appleton to deliver police protection). County wide planning was considered desirable. But, given the County's reluctance to enforce ordinances in effect, the group felt consolidation of planning departments under the county not beneficial at this time.

- 3) How can services be more equitably distributed and assessed?

Efforts at equity should include cooperation and consolidation. The discussion included user fees and charge backs such as landfill tipping charges and use of county highway department to service state and town roads for a fee. It was felt these are not classic user fees, as municipalities pass costs along to residents through property tax. A county sales tax was endorsed as an equitable means to charge for services. The possibility that the sales tax could be earmarked for county highway and sherriff's departments was supported. One unit suggested a

a credit to municipalities for services not used.

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS:

- 1) Should League encourage equitable assessment for services provided by the county?

Resounding yes.

A strong minority felt the most equitable services are minimal services. In an effort to maintain equitable assessment we might have to settle for minimal service from the county.

- 2) Should League encourage municipalities to consider using existing county services in lieu of creating new municipal service units?

Yes, but we would also encourage municipalities and the County to consider arrangements with adjacent municipalities or counties for services. And if there are services that could be better consolidated at the county level, League should encourage municipalities to use those newly consolidated services.

A strong minority felt this study did not lend itself to consensus, but was intended to be a survey of county and municipal services. Views of this minority are, however, represented in the discussions.