



Legislative Update – A look Back and
Ahead
June 6, 2016

A Quick Look Back at the 2015-2016 Session



We had a good session.

Of the 53 bills the League supported, 31 were enacted into law. ***58% of bills we supported were enacted.***

Of the 17 bills we opposed, 5 were enacted. ***70% of the bills we opposed did not become law.***

A Few Good Bills Enacted into Law

Act 317, Charge-back of property tax refunds.

Act 392, Restoring \$3 million to the recycling grant program.

Act 219, Prohibiting persons from acquiring municipally owned land by adverse possession.

Four TIF Study Committee Bills

Issues to Focus on next Session



- Fixing the shortfall in transportation funding.
- Dark store issue -- clarifying law regarding assessment of commercial properties like Walgreens and big box chains.
- Blocking Repeal of Personal Property Tax
- Investing in replacement of underground infrastructure, including lead water laterals.

Issues to Focus on next Session



- Creating other tools beyond TIF for financing public infrastructure necessary for private sector growth. (WRA very interested in this)
- Phosphorus – Financing municipal compliance and creating flexibility for obtaining compliance. Getting farmers to implement best practices for reducing run-off.
- Increase funding to Expenditure Restraint Program. Also, establish 2.5% floor on CPI for ERP purposes.

Issues to Focus on next Session



- Exempt stormwater utility fees used exclusively for debt payments from levy reduction requirement.
- Full funding of Payment for Municipal Services Program.
- Restrict ability of newly incorporated communities to immediately acquire town remnant through annexation or boundary agreement.

Other Legislative Issues, Questions and Comments?



Political Landscape



- Governor Walker – *The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly*
 - *The Good*
 - Presidential bid now becoming ancient history, but Governor still in National spotlight
 - Vice Chair RGA
 - Chair of RGA in 2017
 - Vice President Consideration (?)
 - Recent polls show job approval trending upward:
 - 37% in September 2015
 - 43% in March 2016
 - If trend continues, competitive for 3rd term in 2018
 - Power of incumbency
 - Will author and introduce the 2017 Budget Bill
 - Still popular among GOP – Cruz defeated Trump in Wisconsin with Governor’s Endorsement
 - Walker Appointee Supreme Court Justice Bradley won convincingly
 - “Bully Pulpit” on major issues, including Transportation, tax, etc.
 - *The Bad*
 - Approval still low at 43%
 - GOP Presidential primary forced him to the right on certain issues
 - *& The Ugly*
 - Presidential Race will be UGLY
 - “Trump Factor” – Straddling GOP nominee in a state where Trump performed poorly
 - Speaker Ryan and GOP nominee Trump currently at odds

Political Landscape: State Legislature



- State Senate has 33 members
 - 19 GOP & 14 Dem
- State Assembly has 99 members
 - 63 GOP & 36 Dem
 - GOP Majority is the largest since 1956
- Presidential Election year favors Democrats in Wisconsin
 - GOP has not carried Wisconsin since 1984 – Reagan
 - US Senate in Presidential year has not gone GOP since 1980

Political Landscape: Senate



- State Senate – 33 members (19 GOP – 14 DEM)
 - The 16 even numbered districts will be up for election in 2016 (Competitive districts underlined)
 - 8 GOP Senators Cowles(2); Darling(8); Gudex(18)*; Harsdorf(10); Lazich(28)*; Olsen(14); Stroebel(20); Tiffany(12)
 - 8 Dem Senators Hansen(30); Harris(6)*; Lassa(24); Miller(16); Risser(26); Shilling(32); Taylor(4); Wirch(22)
 - * Denotes Open Seat
 - Presidential year typically favors Democrats, but Senate seats will likely not be greatly impacted

Political Landscape: Assembly



- State Assembly – 99 members (63 GOP – 36 Dem)
 - Democrats need a net of 14 seats to take majority
 - All Representatives are up for Re-election
 - Many Legislator Retirements / Open Seats:
 - Rep. Al Ott (R–Forest Junction) District 3
 - Rep. John Murtha (R–Baldwin) District 29
 - Rep. Dean Knudson (R-Hudson) District 30
 - Rep. Andy Jorgensen (D–Milton) District 43
 - Rep. Kahl (D—Monona) District 47
 - Rep. Tom Larson (R-Colfax) District 67
 - Rep. Dave Heaton (R – Wausau) District 85
 - Presidential Year typically favors Democrats
 - Luxury of GOP large majority allows for swing districts to not vote with majority at times

Political Landscape: Primaries



- Eleven Legislators are “primaried”
 - 9 of the 11 are Democrats
 - 3 of the 9 are Milwaukee Democrats (Taylor, Young, Zepnick)
 - Dem’s Senate Leader, Jennifer Shilling
 - Primaries (sometimes) cost money and distract

Political Landscape: “Unknowns”



- Impact of:
 - Straddling the “Trump Factor” down ticket
 - Sanders drop out / or runs as an independent
 - Redistricting map favor incumbents
 - Republicans \$ advantage
 - Local / Wisconsin issues