



TOWN OF WYOMING NEWS

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TAXES UP – BUT NOT LIKE LAST YEAR

Taxes levied against property in the Town of Wyoming increased \$58,022 to \$1,826,820, an increase of 3.2%, not too bad compared to last year's increase of 14.2%, and more in line with the increases of 3.5% and 3.0% from the two years before. Most levies were up or down a few percentage points, except for the Iowa County levy, which was up 5.5% to cover the long term funding for the new Health & Human Services Building that opened in December of this year. MATC was up 9.6%, and that was before the passage of a referendum in November to approve borrowing of \$133.8 million.

<u>Levies</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
Town	\$ 98,700	\$ 96,254
Fire – Spring Green	74,932	72,025
Fire – Dodgeville	9,624	9,640
Ambulance – Dodgeville	<u>2,580</u>	<u>2,630</u>
Total Town	185,836	180,549
State	16,720	17,086
County	561,191	531,791
School – River Valley	700,296	694,259
School – Dodgeville	357,748	345,422
Voc. – MATC	99,465	90,769
Voc. – SWTC	<u>65,978</u>	<u>67,197</u>
TOTAL LEVIES	1,987,234	1,927,073
State School Cr – RV	(109,823)	(108,673)
State School Cr – DV	(50,591)	(49,602)
PROPERTY TAXES	1,826,820	1,768,798
Lottery Credit	(8,868)	(8,119)
First Dollar Credit	(19,484)	(19,314)
TO BE COLLECTED	1,798,468	1,741,365
State Aids	1,137,713	1,140,369
Lottery Credit – RV	90.33	81.35
Lottery Credit – DV	100.17	88.67
First Dollar Credit RV	71.64	71.31
First Dollar Credit – DV	79.44	77.73
ASSESSED VALUE	88,931,700	89,213,200
EQUALIZED VALUE	98,523,700	100,681,700
AVE ASSESS. RATIO	90.26	89.63

The Total Town Levy was up 2.9%, just under the state imposed cap of 3.0%, in an attempt to squeeze out a little more money for seal coating roads and to cover the \$4,000 cost of a reassessment in 2011. Salary levels for elected officials will remain unchanged for the next two years. The last increase for the Clerk and Treasurer was 10 years ago in 2000, and 20 years ago in 1990 for the three members of the Town Board. The electorate, usually at a Special Town Meeting held with the Budget Hearing, sets compensation levels.

WORKING LANDS INITIATIVE UPDATE

The last biennial state budget bill completely revised Chapter 91, the statute covering Farmland Preservation Plans (FPP) and gave the program a new name - Working Lands Initiative (WLI). The goal of this new state program is to preserve Wisconsin farmland through tax credit incentives, prescribed land uses, and penalties for converting farmland to non-agriculture uses. To implement the changes, the Iowa Co. Office of Planning & Development, with oversight by the Iowa Co. Planning & Zoning Committee of the County Board, has been working in conjunction with the 14 towns in the county and the Iowa Co. Land Conservation Dept. for the past year and one half.

The existing provisions of the Iowa Co. Zoning Ordinance do not mesh well with the intricacies of the new WLI, generating unintended and unwanted outcomes. Also, towns are struggling with mapping the lands that are to be preserved for agriculture as they try to follow the guidelines of the new WLI rules.

To move the process along, the Co. Planning & Zoning Com. has taken an interim position to complete the revision of the County's FPP and accompanying mapping, but not adopt Farmland Preservation Zoning to implement the Plan. If this position prevails, for those areas mapped for

preservation, (1) tax credits will not be available except for properties set up in Agriculture Enterprise Areas (AEA), (2) participation in the Purchase of Conservation Easements (PACE) program could take place, and (3) conversion fees would not apply if property was zoned out of A-1 to another zoning category such as AR-1.

For a refresher on the features of WLI for those interested, reference can be made to last year's Town of Wyoming News, which one would expect is filed in an easy to find place. But if not, it is posted on the Town's website. Also, go to DATCP's website <http://workinglands.wi.gov> for complete information.

Another and better alternative is to attend one of six Public Information Meetings to be presented jointly by the Iowa Co. Office of Planning & Development and Land Conservation Dept. **The one targeting Wyoming and Clyde will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 9, 2011 from 7 to 9 PM in the County Board Room of the Iowa County Courthouse.**

E-CYCLE WISCONSIN

Consumer electronics are the fastest growing waste stream on the planet, with multiple hazardous materials, and multiple valuable substances. In response to this, Wisconsin passed Act 50 to establish a statewide program called E-Cycle Wisconsin. It is based on a product stewardship approach, which assigns primary responsibility for collection and recycling to the manufacturer, if they wish to sell their products in the state. Also, as of September 1, 2010 it is illegal for anyone to put consumer electronics and cell phones in the trash, because these items are banned from landfills and incinerators.

To participate in E-Cycle Wisconsin, a collector is required to be registered with the DNR, and presently the Town of Wyoming is not, due to low volume and the procedures that are required to participate. But there are numerous registered collectors. Collection sites by county can be accessed at <http://dnr.wi.gov/ecyclewisconsin>. Presently, there are none in Iowa County, one in Richland, six in Sauk and 23 in Dane. An example of a convenient registered collector is the Best Buy Store on the west side of Madison. They accept most electronics for recycling, no matter where purchased, at no charge, except for a \$10 charge for products with video screens which is offset with a

\$10 gift card. As an additional service, there is a Recycling Kiosk in the entrance with separate compartments for plastic bags, CDs, DVDs and cases, rechargeable batteries, cords and cables, ink and toner cartridges, gift cards, and remotes and controllers.

There are also special collection events in the area to be on the lookout for and which will be posted at the Recycling Stockade. For example, Cardinal Glass in Spring Green had a one-day event this fall for their employees and the entire community.

"If it can't be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, resold, recycled or composted, then it should be restricted, redesigned or removed from production."

Resolution adopted by the Zero Waste Commission of Berkeley, California and passed by the City Council in 2007, put into song by Pete Seeger in his CD, *Pete Seeger at 89*. The resolution definitely has more impact and is more fun, set to music.

Berkeley is generally not considered part of mainstream America, (some think it is out in left field) but Wal-Mart is mainstream, and they got the jump on them, when in 2005 the retail giant, working with the Environmental Defense Fund, Conservation International, and other groups, set ambitious targets to create zero waste, rely solely on renewable energy, and sell only products deemed "sustainable", by 2015.

WYOMING ELECTION COMPARISONS

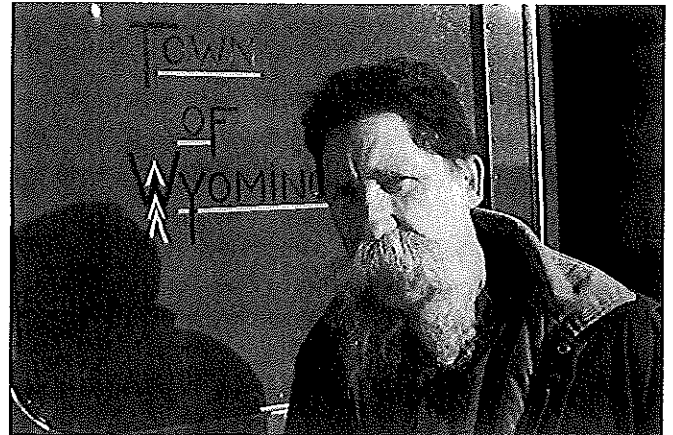
The seemingly endless and sometimes contentious 2010 election season came to an end on November 2, a pleasant fall day, with 151 voters coming to the Town Hall to cast their ballots. Another 17 voted in absentee, for a total turnout of 168. The total of registered voters was 242, with 12 registering on election day. (Wisconsin is one of only a few states that allow same day registration.)

Voter turnout is not based on registered voters, but on the estimated voting age population as determined by the Wisconsin Dept. of Administration. Wyoming's is 306, (total population 392) resulting in a turnout of 55%, better

than the state turnout estimate of 50%, but nothing to brag about, as in the 2004 Presidential election when the turnout was 83%. Wyoming's turnout for the 2008 Presidential election was 68%, and the 2006 Governor's election was 58%.

The election results in Wyoming, as shown below, usually differ significantly from national, state and county results. The lopsided margins in Wyoming are similar to Dane Co which voted 68% for Barrett and 70% for Feingold and opposite of Washington Co's even larger lopsided margins of 75% for both Walker and Johnson.

**THIS YEAR MARKS 25 YEARS OF
SERVICE TO THE TOWN BY
"THE BIG MUSTACHE"**



Patrolman Dean Fahrni, hired in November 1985 by former chairman John Mack, completed 25 years of employment with the Town this year. Dean, the son of Ernie and Gloria Fahrni, has lived and worked in the Town of Wyoming his entire life. He grew up in the living quarters above the Wyoming Cheese Factory, which was owned and operated by his parents. He attended the Hillside School on Hwy T as well as the Wyoming Valley School next to the Town Hall. After graduation from High School in Spring Green, he was employed as a licensed cheese maker at his parent's factory, and ran the business with his mother after his father's death in 1979. He continued in the cheese business until the factory closed in 1985. Dean was married in the Wyoming Valley Church, lives in Wyoming, and will be buried in the Wyoming Cemetery.

The Patrolman's job description covers snowplowing and sanding the 29.59 miles of town roads, mowing the road right-of-ways three times a year, and beating back the invasion of box elders, honey suckles and other brush along town roads. Also, maintaining road signs, markers, ditchlines and culverts; maintaining the Town Hall and shop area, supervising the recycling and solid waste program on Saturdays, mowing the Town's two cemeteries, clearing trees from the roads at night when calls come in from the sheriff or residents, and putting up with the Town Chairman.

The Wyoming Patrolman's position offers independence and variety, but it is often hard, dirty and dangerous work. A big thank you to Dean for his 25 years of service.

Stay informed with Iowa County Public Safety Alerts, Advisories, Community Info and Traffic Alerts

*Sign up today at www.nixle.com
An e-mail and text messaging service provided by Iowa Co
Emergency Management and the Sheriff*

GOVERNOR	TOWN	CO	ST
Walker (R)	(48) 27%	44%	52%
Barrett (D)	(113) 69%	55%	47%
Others	(4) 2%	1%	1%

US SENATE	TOWN	CO	ST
Johnson (R)	(52) 31%	42%	52%
Feingold (D)	(114) 68%	57%	47%
Taylor (CST)	(1) 1%	1%	1%

US HOUSE 3 RD DIST.	TOWN	CO	DIST
Kind (D)	(113) 69%	56%	50%
Kapanke (R)	(45) 28%	41%	47%
Krsiean (IND)	(5) 3%	3%	3%

STATE SENATE 17 TH	TOWN	CO	DIST
Schultz (R)	(60) 36%	55%	63%
Beals (D)	(107) 64%	45%	37%

STATE ASSEMBLY 51 ST	TOWN	CO	DIST
Marklein (R)	(59) 36%	49%	52%
Simonson (D)	(104) 64%	51%	48%

ATTORNEY GENERAL	TOWN	CO	ST
Van Hollen (R)	(55) 34%	47%	58%
Hassett (D)	(108) 66%	53%	42%

RIVER VALLEY SCH REF	TOWN	DIST
<i>Should the district exceed its spending limits each year by \$1.2 million</i>		
Yes	(102) 71%	(1954) 50.2%
No	(42) 29%	(1939) 49.8%

In another election result, Curt Peterson now represents Wyoming on the Iowa County Board. He defeated incumbent John Lind for the District 7 position in the April, 2010 election.

With a total of four elections in 2010, four public testings of the electronic voting machine, and

various training sessions, Clerk Mary Lloyd-Jones had a busy year, which she handled in fine fashion with Chief Election Inspector Wendy Dunagan her invaluable partner. Poll workers Londa Pronold, Janis Crook, Eve Knop, Sharon Crook and Keith Symon were gracious and efficient. No one should complain about it not being any fun to go to the polling place. County Clerk Greg Klusendorf along with Kris Spurley provided vital training and support services. And retired Chief Election Inspector Warren Hoyer and Poll Worker Mary Parsons are recognized and thanked for their many, many years of civic contribution.

The year 2011 will be a breather, with only the Spring Election on April 5, and possibly a Primary on February 15.

WHAT'S LAND WORTH IN WYOMING?

There were five land transactions totaling \$1,727,790 in the town in 2010, the same number as in 2009. While many asset classes have fallen in value since the start of the Great Recession, "good" farmland in Wisconsin increased 3% during the 3rd quarter from a year ago, offsetting a 3% decline from the previous year, per the latest quarterly survey of bankers by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Wyoming land values are hanging in there since the big jump in 2005, per the table below.

<u>Year</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Av. Price</u>	<u>Price Range</u>	<u>Range*</u>
2010	5	411	\$4204	\$3547-4500	16-227
2009	5	732	4154	3820-4238	53-236
2008	No transactions				
2007	4	264	4301	4074-4500	53-88
2006	6	415	3862	3254-4640	38-109
2005	3	298	3893	3649-3998	42-205
2004	5	389	2536	1671-3414	40-134
2003	7	830	2761	1788-3704	43-203

*Parcel size in acres

<http://www.townofwyoming.org>

Check out the Town's website for notices, agendas, minutes, ordinances and other town business, including the date for next September's Town Picnic and Pig Roast put on by the Plan Commission. Local webmaster is Laurie Baruch.

REASSESSMENT IN 2011

Market values (ie. Equalized Values) in Wyoming were stable in 2010, per the calculations of the Wisconsin Dept. of Revenue (DOR). But they are still in excess of the Assessed Values that were assigned to individual properties in 2005, which are now outdated, out of compliance, and also skewed. Forest lands are assessed at only 78.4% of market value, and the other categories of property are assessed in the low 90% range.

Assessor Randy Edge will be assigning new values to land and improvements to bring them in line with current Equalized Values. He will not need to view interiors of properties. A "Notice of Assessment" will be sent out this Spring to all property owners in which values are changed. Dates for Open Book (to question values) and Board of Review (to object to values), will be on the notice.

Any tax impact? Expect a shift to forest parcels from residential and commercial parcels as forest property values will be raised proportionately more than other categories. Agriculture properties are assessed at "Use Value" by the Wis. DOR and will not be affected by the reassessment.

The Town of Wyoming is comprised of 25,389 acres, of which 13,306 or 52% are classified as forested. 5,621 acres are enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program and are not taxed. 2,858 acres are classified as "Agriculture Forest" and valued at 50% of market value, so the tax shift will be halved. "Productive Forest" consists of 4,826 acres. Look for the full impact of the tax shift on this category.

TOWN CAUCUS SET FOR JANUARY 11

With an election for town officers coming up on Tuesday, April 5, 2011, a caucus to nominate candidates for the Town Board will be held on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at 7 PM at the Town Hall.

TOWN OFFICERS		
Chairman	John Hess	588-7082
Supervisor	Len Olson	588-2064
Supervisor	Mike Degen	588-5346
Clerk	Mary Lloyd-Jones	588-9000
Treasurer	Laurie Baruch	753-9247
Assessor	Randy Edge	623-2719