

PERSPECTIVES

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State of the county continues to be strong

AT THE JANUARY COUNTY Board meeting, County Administrator Adam Payne gave his annual “State of the County” address to the supervisors.

As usual, Payne’s message was upbeat and he summed up the state of county government in a single word — “Strong.”

It may not be true at all levels of government, but Payne’s summary fits for Sheboygan County.

As part of his presentation, Payne listed what he considered the county’s top 10 achievements of 2017. The list pretty much covered the gamut of the services provided by the county, from transportation to emergency services to law and justice, and more.

Many of them emphasized how the county is meeting its goal of providing the quality services needed and requested by citizens in the most efficient and effective manner possibly, controlling costs and spending to keep taxes in line.

For the record, Payne’s list, from number 10 up to number 1, included:

- Pennsylvania Avenue property sale.
- Information technology disaster recovery system.
- Employee engagement survey.
- 31.7 miles of road work completed due to ½ percent county sales tax revenue.
- District Attorney and HHS Department partner to promote child permanency.

At issue:

‘State of the County’ address

Bottom line:

Upbeat again

- Courthouse security.
 - Emergency medical dispatch training.
 - Opioid detox services established.
 - Strong financial track record and collaborative budget process.
 - Transportation complex underway.
- Many of those affect each and every one of us, while others may impact just a few among us, but what they all have in common is that they utilize tax dollars collected from all of us.

“There are incredible pressures we all collectively work with, yet some way, some how, year after year we find a way to get the job done,” Payne told the board.

They’ve gotten the job done while holding the line on spending, the property tax levy and the tax rate, cutting them some years and showing only modest increases in other years.

That the county operates more efficiently is evident in the fact that the total county staff has decreased by close to 40 percent over the last decade and county payroll costs today are less than they were 10 years ago.

“Your fiscal track record is second to none,” Payne told the board, and he was right.

With strong leadership at the top, caring commitment at all levels and a common dedication to “providing responsive and cost-effective local government,” as it says in the county’s mission statement, everyone in county government has done a remarkable job – as they have for so many years – of serving the people they work for well, giving us the best bang for our buck.

That’s a state of affairs we can all appreciate.