

74th
Annual



WTA

Convention

Kalahari Resort & Convention Center
1305 Kalahari Drive, Wisconsin Dells, WI
October 10-12, 2021

Join hundreds of town officials from around the state as we gather in one place to listen, learn and connect with each other! Our annual convention will be back in person this year and will consist of three days filled with exciting opportunities to network with your peers, learn from experienced educators about the topics that matter most to towns, and become acquainted with state agency staff and other exhibitors that provide the services and products that can make your life easier. Are you ready to have some FUN? After such trying times, we could all use some more laughter in our lives. Towards that goal, we've made an extra effort to work some FUN into the program this year. So, mark your calendar and come spend some quality time with us this October!

Sunday October 10th

Registration will be open from 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. The exhibitor area will open at 1:00 p.m. Come meet, learn from, and build relationships with vendors and companies that provide products and services of interest to towns. There will be a general assembly from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Be seated by 3:30 for a chance to win Game Night tokens! Highlights of the afternoon will include awarding of the WTA, Scott Construction, and Rural Mutual Insurance Scholarships to the essay contest winners, and a town trivia contest, which will offer fun for all attendees and prizes for the lucky winners!

Sunday Welcome Reception & Evening Entertainment

Convention attendees will have the opportunity to enjoy complimentary beer, soda, and snacks from 2:30 p.m. to 6:00 pm. while they visit with the exhibitors. After enjoying dinner on your own Sunday evening, join us for a live show! Hypnotist Jeff Michaels' fast paced demonstrations will mesmerize you as you witness his hypnotizing power.

Monday October 11th

There will be a general assembly from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. with key featured speakers whose names will not be released until confirmed. Be seated by 8:30 a.m. for another chance to win Game Night tokens! Workshops will begin at 11:00 a.m. and run through 4:45 p.m. with a break for lunch.

Monday Spouse Activity

Monday afternoon, registered spouses and guests will have the opportunity to hop on a shuttle and take an Upper Dells Boat Tour. See the convention registration form for pricing.

Monday Afternoon Exhibitor Reception

There will be a reception in the exhibitor area with complimentary beer, soda, and snacks for all registered attendees. Note that the exhibitors will close down at the end of the day Monday and will not be present on Tuesday.

Monday Evening Banquet

The annual banquet and awards ceremony will be held on Monday night of the convention at 6:30 p.m. We encourage board members to consider nominating their clerk for the special clerk awards that will be presented following dinner. See the Clerk Award Nominations page in this magazine for more information on the nomination process. Long standing town officers will also be recognized for their service. To receive this recognition, please mark your registration form accordingly and indicate you will be attending the banquet. The banquet is an optional event that will feature a buffet dinner at a cost of \$35 per person and is not included in the general registration fee. (Spouses and guests are also welcome to attend the banquet at a cost of \$35 per person.) Because we are providing special clerk recognition this year, ALL clerks who register for the FULL convention will receive a complimentary banquet ticket! Just make sure you indicate that you plan to attend the banquet on your registration form.

Monday Night Entertainment

Following the banquet, try your luck at WTA GAME NIGHT! Be sure to visit the exhibitors on Sunday and Monday to collect the tokens that you will need to use for your chances to play. Who knows, maybe you'll win a prize! All registered convention attendees are invited to join us for GAME NIGHT in the General Assembly area following the banquet. This will be a great time to mix and mingle with fellow attendees. Grab a table. Share some laughs. Bring along a deck of cards or another game to play with your new friends. Enjoy complimentary beer, soda, and snacks. You won't want to miss out on the FUN!

Tuesday October 12th

On Tuesday morning we'll be offering continental breakfast. After you have enjoyed some breakfast, get ready to learn with a variety of workshops that begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 12:00 noon in time for a buffet lunch. On Tuesday morning, a BINGO game for cash prizes will be held for registered spouses and guests at 10:00 a.m.

Registration Fees

Convention registration fees are \$150 for all days or \$80 for single day registrations on Monday or Tuesday. These registration fees include lunch for registered town officers and employees.

Spouses and guests who do not wish to attend workshops pay a \$25 registration fee if they would like to attend the general assemblies, receptions, and evening entertainment. Lunches are not included but lunch tickets are available at a cost of \$12 per person per day for registered spouses and guests and banquet tickets may also be purchased for \$35.

Deputy clerks and treasurers, election officials, plan commissioners and others who wish to attend workshops must pay regular full or single day convention registration fees.

Workshop Schedule

Please Note: There will be a three hour long election training class provided by the Wisconsin Elections Commission on Tuesday. Please indicate on the registration form if you plan to attend the Election Training so we can accurately gauge the number of attendees and plan accordingly.

Workshop Topics

Workshops are scheduled for both Monday and Tuesday. Many have one hour time slots and will be repeated a second time. Some of the workshops will be presented only once, as noted.

Monday: 11:00 a.m. - Noon (Repeated 1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.)

- 1. Legal Cracker Barrel:** Join WTA legal staff for an informal question and answer session on any town topic. This is always a popular session with convention attendees and we encourage you to bring your questions!
- 2. Practical Guidance for Bookkeeping Fundamentals:** This session will cover best practices for establishing or revising your accounting records and the importance of properly handling all money received and disbursed. We will also cover the Wisconsin Department of Revenue Chart of Accounts to help with Report Form C preparation. Presented by Karen Kerber, CPA.
- 3. Wisconsin Broadband Office Updates:** Join Wisconsin Broadband Office staff for an update on all things broadband. Updates include navigating funding sources, gathering maps and data, digital equity and inclusion framework, and how to best convene stakeholders and planning efforts. Come learn more about how to best position your community for broadband success.
- 4. Wisconsin's State Budget and Beyond:** This session will provide an overview of the 2021-23 state budget and other changes to law affecting towns and villages. Learn about WTA legislative priorities and accomplishments, what to expect from the new state budget, and how recent law changes will impact your community. Presented by: WTA Attorney Joe Ruth.
- 5. USDA Rural Development--Rural Wisconsin's Partner in Prosperity:** USDA Rural Development is the lead Federal agency helping rural communities grow and prosper. We increase economic development and improve the quality of life in rural places and small towns. We provide loans, grants and technical assistance to build critical infrastructure like broadband, water systems, and hospitals. Our programs expand access to e-connectivity, electric and transportation infrastructure and support business growth, healthcare, education, housing and other community essentials. Join USDA staff to learn about our program opportunities and how we can help be your partner in prosperity.

Monday 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. (Repeated 3:45 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.)

- 1. American Rescue Plan Act Overview:** This session will provide a general overview of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Local Fiscal Recovery Funds set aside for local governments under the Act. Attendees will be able to walk away with a firm basis of the historical context of ARPA, the allowable uses of ARPA funds, ARPA reporting requirements, and a general update on ARPA guidance. Presented by Jake Langenhahn, WTA Outreach Specialist.
- 2. Clerks and Treasurers Grab Bag:** This session will answer the most frequently asked questions the WTA hotline receives from clerks and treasurers. We'll cover public notice procedures (for meetings, public hearings, ordinances, and other circumstances); minutes; alcohol licensing; dog licensing; paying bills; tax collection; record retention; deputies; and much more. Clerks and treasurers who attend will receive sample documents and reference sheets to streamline the processes discussed and hopefully make your jobs easier. Presented by WTA Attorney Lara Carlson.

3. Refresher 101: Updating your Town's Comprehensive Plan: It's been over 20 years since Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law (Wis. Stat. § 66.1001) came to be. Although much has changed during that time relative to the rural economy and overall country living, the need for an "up to date" comprehensive plan has not. With 2020 US Census data scheduled to be released next year, now is a perfect time to think about updating your comprehensive plan. Specifically, we will discuss plan components (the nine required elements), the mandatory public participation process, available resources to build your comprehensive plan and the level of detail your plan should include. Finally, we will discuss land use law changes and court cases that uphold the value of your comprehensive plan. We will discuss the importance of having a comprehensive plan as a foundation to regulate land use changes. You will find our "lessons learned" discussion very informative. Presented by Ken Jaworski, Senior Consultant, Cedar Corporation.

4. The Reality of Cybersecurity Threats: Cyberattacks are real, one happens every 36 seconds! Every day, people fall for fraudulent emails, texts, and calls. These cyberattacks can include phishing, spoofing, social engineering, and hacking and governments can lose substantial money and their data if not prepared. In this session, we will look at the threats facing local government and how we can implement solutions and social change to reduce risk and protect local governments from cyberattacks. We will discuss the biggest current threat, Ransomware, and how we can use backup and protection to combat its effectiveness. Presented by Lucas Koenig, Chief Technology Officer, Kerber Rose Technology, Inc.

5. GTA, LRIP, TRIP-D, LRIP-S...Oh my: The alphabet soup of town road funding might seem overwhelming, but it's actually quite simple. The savvy town board can maximize town road funding by developing a robust understanding of the programs and crafting strategies to leverage these funds. This sessions will cover the basis of General Transportation Aids, the Local Road Improvement Program (both entitlement and discretionary), and the one-time Local Road Improvement Program – Supplement. Presented by Dan Fedderly, P.E., DJ Fedderly Management Consultant LLC.

Monday 3:45 p.m. (until conclusion)

The Town Advocacy Council (TAC) will hold its Annual Meeting during which it will elect three board members to the TAC Executive Board, review its financial report and discuss other matters related to TAC.

Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (will not be repeated)

Election Training: Wisconsin Elections Commission staff is looking forward to providing clerks with a review of ballot access procedures for the spring elections, appointing election workers, training resources and term deadlines, legislative and agency updates and lessons learned from the last elections. We will also share the latest news concerning the WisVote system, Badger Books and elections security. This three hour session will count for recertification training. Please note on the registration form that you plan to attend this session.

Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. (Repeated 9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.)

1. Large Solar Farm Projects: Coming to a town near you?: Large solar projects seem to be popping up around the state. Could your town be next? This session will explain why solar farms are becoming more popular and what developers are looking for when scouting locations for new solar farms. Hear from both the town and the developer involved in siting the Onion River 150-megawatt photovoltaic facility in the Town of Holland, Sheboygan County. Learn about the siting process and how you can use a joint development agreement to help protect the best interests of your town if a solar farm is on the horizon. Presented by: Don Becker, Former Chair, Town of Holland and Jeff Rauh, Ranger Power.

2. Successful Right of Way Acquisitions: This presentation outlines the process and timeline for completing successful right of way acquisitions. Keys to success include understanding the local agency and consultant roles in a project, document management, stakeholder rights, cost estimating and ordering an appraisal to meet your needs. We will stress the importance of knowing how to develop a successful project schedule and avoid potential pitfalls. A variety of tools will be provided to assist in the facilitation. The goal is to guide towns on the road to having a successful project by acquiring the real estate according to the federal and state requirements. Presented by WI DOT staff.

3. Understanding the Complexities of Zoning: Does your town administer its own zoning ordinance or work with the county to administer zoning? Do you have a basic understanding of zoning, but want to dig deeper? In this session, we'll explore two of the most complex land use decisions – variances and conditional uses. Learn about standards found in state statutes and local ordinances, and the process for reviewing local requests. Members of your town board, plan commission, and zoning board are encouraged to attend, along with clerks, zoning administrators, and others that work with zoning. Presented by Rebecca Roberts and Lynn Markham of the Center for Land Use Education, UW-Stevens Point.

4. Building a Pathway of Ethical Leadership During Politically Divided Times: We live in politically divided times. The political divisions reach well beyond government and these dynamics influence public trust in the work of local elected officials. How can we navigate these dynamics? How can we cultivate emerging leaders who embrace the principles of ethical leadership? This session will focus on four key principles for ethical leadership: a) truthfulness, b) transparency, c) unification, and d) the commitment to serve the interests of one's entire constituency. The session will include practical suggested steps in developing ethical leadership practices. Presented by Lee Rasch, Executive Director of LeaderEthics-Wisconsin.

Tuesday: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (will not be repeated)

1. Enbridge 101: Join us to learn about Enbridge Energy and the benefits our pipeline system brings to Wisconsin. We will discuss our company values, ESG goals, pipeline systems and share updates on current projects in Wisconsin, including our self-solar project in Adams, Portage and Vesper and our Line 5 relocation project in Northern Wisconsin. Presented by Enbridge staff members Michelle Johnson and Jon Eisele.

2. Navigating Drainage Issues for Townships: Managing stormwater and mitigating the impacts of rain and flood events has risen to the top of the priority list for many Wisconsin townships. In these situations, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Join MSA's Andy Zimmer for tips and best practices for ditch maintenance, proper culvert sizing and efficient drainage, with discussion about the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and how relief funding can be applied to stormwater system design and maintenance. Presented by Andy Zimmer, PE, MSA Professional Services.

3. Legal Cracker Barrel: Always popular, this session will offer another opportunity for attendees to ask the WTA Legal Staff questions about any town topic. Bring your questions or just sit and listen to learn more about issues towns around the state bring up for what is sure to be an interesting discussion.

4. Connected and Automated Vehicles: The Future is Present: Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) technologies are expected to have a wide-ranging impact on the transportation system, the public, and industry in Wisconsin. This session will introduce you to what both connected and automated vehicles are, how they could change road construction, maintenance, and right-of-way management, and how Wisconsin's DOT is leading a discussion about how to address this opportunity. Presented by Brad Basten, WisDOT Strategic Initiatives Officer.

The convention registration form follows in this magazine. Please use separate registration forms for each person and send them into our Shawano office as directed on the form. Online registration is also available at www.wisctowns.com.

Note: WTA is no longer providing training for assessors at the convention.