

# 2023



# WTAW

# Convention

**Kalahari Resort**  
**1305 Kalahari Drive, Wisconsin Dells**  
**October 22-24, 2023**

*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 consist of three days filled with exciting opportunities to network with your peers, learn from experienced educators, become acquainted with state agency staff, and enjoy some time away. Mark your calendar and come spend some quality time with us this October!*

## **Sunday October 22nd**

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. Highlights of the afternoon will include projection of the Green Bay Packer Game on the big screen in the Exhibitor Area along with complimentary beer, soda, and snacks during the game. If you are lucky, you might even win a prize at half-time! Dinner is on your own Sunday evening.

## **Monday October 23rd**

Breakfast will be served in the General Assembly Area from 6:45 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. for those attendees who pre-registered for the buffet on their convention registration form. **The cost for breakfast is \$28.00 per person and is not included in the general convention registration fee.** Breakfast will include fresh-cut fruit, muffins, breakfast breads, fruit-filled Danish, scrambled eggs, smoked bacon, turkey sausage links, breakfast potatoes, orange juice, apple juice, coffee, and tea.

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. Workshops will begin at 11:00 a.m. and run through 4:45 p.m. with a break for a deli sandwich buffet lunch.

## **Monday Spouse Activity**

Monday afternoon, registered spouses and guests will have the opportunity to play BINGO for cash prizes from 1:15 p.m.- 3:15 p.m.

## **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. Be sure to visit the exhibitors on Sunday and Monday to collect your Bingo stamps to be eligible for cash and gift card prizes. Deposit your completed Bingo card into one of the designated boxes in the Exhibitor Area by 5:00 p.m.

## **Monday Evening Banquet**

The annual banquet and awards ceremony will be held on Monday night of the convention with doors opening at 6:00 p.m.

Long standing town officers will be recognized for their service. To receive this recognition, please mark your registration form accordingly and indicate you will be attending the banquet. We will also be awarding the WTA, Scott Construction, and Rural Mutual Insurance Scholarships to the essay contest winners.

The banquet is an optional event which will feature a buffet dinner at a cost of \$35 per person and is not included in the general registration fee. The dinner buffet will feature a full salad bar, prosciutto and fontina chicken, pit ham with honey glaze, mashed potatoes, chef's vegetable, and mini dessert buffet. (Spouses and guests are also welcome to attend the banquet at a cost of \$35 per person.)

## **Monday Night Entertainment**

All registered convention attendees are invited to join us for the **Felix and Fingers Dueling Piano Show** that will take place following the banquet. This will be a great time to mix and mingle with fellow attendees. Grab a table. Share some laughs. Enjoy the music. Enjoy complimentary beer, soda, and snacks. You won't want to miss out on the FUN!

Be sure to visit the exhibitors on Sunday and Monday to collect the stamps that you will need to enter the prize drawing. We'll announce the winners on Monday night. Good luck!

## **Tuesday October 24th**

On Tuesday morning breakfast will be served from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 am. as an optional event for **\$28.00 per person** for those attendees who pre-registered on their convention registration form. The breakfast will consist of fresh-cut fruit, muffins, breakfast breads, fruit-filled Danish, orange juice, apple juice, coffee, tea, scrambled eggs, smoked bacon, turkey sausage links, and roasted red bliss potatoes. 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 featuring brats and burgers.

## **Registration Fees**

### **\$200 Full Registration**

Includes lunches, exhibitor receptions, all workshops, general assembly, digital materials, Monday night entertainment.

### **\$120 Single Day Registration (Monday or Tuesday)**

Includes Monday or Tuesday lunch, workshops, General Assembly, digital materials, Monday Exhibitor reception and Monday night entertainment.

### **\$40 Spouse or Guest Registration**

Includes exhibitor receptions, BINGO, General Assembly, and Monday night entertainment. Meals are not included, but you may purchase them separately on the convention registration form. 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 and Topics

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.

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. Except for Shared Revenue)**

**1. Right-of-Way and Utility Accommodation:** This session will discuss town right-of-way authority regarding the permitting of utilities. The applicable state statutes will be reviewed, and the presenter will discuss the WCHA and WisDOT Utility Accommodation Policies, their history, purpose, and benefits. Finally, the presenter will discuss how to implement something at the town level to protect towns against future liability and cost implications. Presented by: Chris Hardy, P.E., Columbia County Highway Commissioner.

**2. ATC's Role in Energizing Your Town's Future:** The energy landscape is rapidly changing across the country due to a shift in public policy and renewable generation goals. To connect these new forms of energy to areas it is used, a safe and reliable grid is needed. ATC is the regional owner and operator of the high-voltage power delivery system for significant portions of Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Learn more about the role ATC plays in the changes to an evolving, modern electric grid and how we're powering the needs of electric consumers today and for the future. Presented by: Sharon Pretorius, Mike White, and Jon Callaway.

**3. Update on the Use of Comprehensive Planning to Guide Utility-Scale (>100 MW) Solar Systems:** Due to the national and global efforts to reduce the dependency on fossil fuel consumption, renewable energy project developers are aggressively seeking acreage to site utility scale solar and wind projects in Wisconsin. Rural towns with large tracts of undeveloped agricultural land next to transmission infrastructure are uniquely positioned to become "hosts" to these large-scale solar energy projects, oftentimes with mixed resident support. Over the last year, growing evidence suggests towns can be pro-active through their comprehensive planning efforts (Wis. Stat. §66.1001), to assess and guide where renewable energy projects may be sited to be most advantageous to the town, residents, and landowners. Solar application reviews continue to point to the importance of towns having a compliant (updated within the last 10 years) Comprehensive Plan and having more local input on siting of solar arrays BEFORE Wisconsin Public Service Commission testimony. This session will discuss, with examples, how towns utilized land use planning to develop criteria that help protect incompatible areas while identifying areas that could accommodate the benefits of renewable energy. Presented by: Ken Jaworski, Senior Consultant, Cedar Corporation.

**4. Shared Revenue and the Wisconsin State Budget:** Presented by Atty. Joe Ruth, WTA Government Affairs Director/Legal Counsel

**Legislative Update Part 1: Shared Revenue (First Hour Only):** 2023 Wisconsin Act 12 marked the first changes to Shared Revenue in decades, providing additional funding and requirements for local governments. This session will dig into the details of Shared Revenue and Act 12 and help you understand what changes are coming and how to leverage those changes to benefit your community. Learn about the bipartisan efforts that led to historic funding increases and answer any questions still lingering about this complex legislation.

**Legislative Update Part 2: The State Budget (2nd Hour Only):** This session will provide an overview of the 2023-25 state budget and other law changes 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.

**5. Clerks Helping Clerks--Learning from Experience:** We invite new and seasoned clerks to share your experiences and consider what you would do to address common town concerns. Network with clerks from other towns and villages as we discuss everyday scenarios and learn best practices for how to handle various clerk responsibilities. Presented by: Lara Carlson, WTA Legal Counsel.

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

**1. You Need to Hire and Engineer—Now What?:** Oftentimes, hiring an engineering firm to help you bring your project from concept to completion can be overwhelming. This presentation will discuss Requests for Qualifications, Requests for Proposals, and Master Service Agreements. Learn which process should be used when, and how you can find the best consultant for your needs. Presented by: Paula Vandehey, Craig Schuh, and other staff from Ayres Associates.

**2. Internet for All--A Federal Update on Next Steps for Wisconsin:** Wisconsin will receive a significant amount of funding for broadband expansion in the next few years through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. In this session, attendees will learn details about the federal Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity (DE) grant programs, gain insight into the overall timeline and upcoming milestones in Wisconsin and leave with an additional understanding of the important role local governments and communities play in connecting everyone in Wisconsin to high-speed internet. Presented by: Carah Koch, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Federal Program Officer.

**3. Common Meeting Misconceptions:** In this session, we will review some common meeting issues that most towns encounter at some point. Routine questions about notices, public comment, minutes, and more will be reviewed, so that attendees will leave with a better understanding of what to do when there are issues. Presented by: Jake Langenhahn, WTA Outreach Specialist.

**4. WISLR & Mileage Certification Basics:** This session will provide an overview of WisDOT's local road mileage certification process and using the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) to view local road data and report your road maintenance. Presented by: Shelly Coleman, WI DOT

**5. 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!

**Monday 3:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**The Town Advocacy Council (TAC) Annual Meeting:** Learn more about WTA's Town Advocacy Council and its efforts advocating for towns and villages in Madison. From listening sessions to Capitol Day, TAC has been essential in WTA's efforts to secure a plethora of recent legislative victories, including the generational shared revenue increase that towns will begin receiving in 2024. The TAC annual meeting is your opportunity to engage with WTA's lobbying team and better understand how WTA navigates the legislative issues important to your community. TAC will also elect three board members to its Executive Board during this meeting. All town and village officials are welcome to attend the annual meeting, although voting will be limited to current TAC member towns and villages.

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

**Elections Update with WEC!** Wisconsin Elections Commission staff is looking forward to providing clerks with a review of the new absentee certificate envelope and the latest news on the Badger Book project. It's never too early to look at ballot access procedures for the spring 2024 elections and appointing election workers for the 2024-2025 term. The Learning Center (TLC) is getting a refresh and we will share some key changes for the training site and what we envision when it goes live next year. 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. Towns and Wisconsin Lake Districts--Working Together for Our Waters:** For nearly 50 years, Wisconsin towns have been partners in governing Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation Districts under Chapter 33 of State Statutes. These unique districts provide a funding mechanism to handle lake management expenses, from aquatic plant harvesting to dam maintenance to watershed management. Every lake district has a municipal-appointed board member, but not every town appointee fully understands how and why districts operate as they do. This presentation provides an overview of Wisconsin Lake Districts and their relations to towns, dispelling myths and offering examples of how lake districts have helped communities better care for lakes. Presented by: Eric Olson, Director and Outreach Specialist, Extension Lakes at UW Stevens Point.

**2. WisDOT Local Programs Update:** WisDOT staff will give an update on recent project solicitations for the various Local Programs including the Surface Transportation Program (STP), Local Bridge, the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ), and the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP).

**3. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding--Assistance for Water Related Projects:** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has received funding to support a variety of project positions for the next four years through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Staff from the storm water, wastewater and water quality programs will provide information on how the department will support and assist communities in the development of and funding for new wastewater and storm water infrastructure as well as assistance for infrastructure improvements to create infrastructure resilience in extreme rainfall events. The BIL funding is intended to help the department provide technical assistance to support small, rural and tribal communities that have not historically been able to implement infrastructure projects due to a variety of barriers. Presented by: Shannon Haydin, Storm Water Section Manager and Tim Asplund, Water Quality Monitoring Section Manager, Wisconsin DNR.

**4. Using WISLR to Submit Pavement Ratings:** WISLR contains all the tools you need to complete your biennial pavement ratings. We will cover how to submit and update your ratings, modify your pavement data, and use your data to respond to public inquiries. Presented by: Isaac Park, Wisconsin DOT.

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

**1. Managing Pavement with WISLR Pavement Analysis Tools:** WISLR can be a valuable tool to manage your road data and plan for future maintenance. We will cover the WISLR Pavement Analysis Module, creating a five-year budget plan, running reports, and adding local priority information. Presented by: Isaac Park, Wisconsin DOT.

**2. 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.

**3. Municipal Storm Water Permit Compliance--Where Do I Even Start?:** Some towns, primarily adjacent to larger urban communities, are required to hold a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) permit for discharges of storm water to waters of the state. Learn from DNR staff what the program is, why you need it and how to comply with this complex program. Presented by: Shannon Haydin, Storm Water Section Manager and Brooke Robinson, Municipal Storm Water Program Manager WDNR.

**4. The Extraordinary Threats to Our Democratic Republic:** January 6th was a wake-up call for all of us. We will discuss the Wisconsin electoral process and its safeguards. We will discuss how Democrats and Republicans have undermined the will of the people and how our politics today is harming our country. The division among us is in the plan of our adversaries. We will explain how Wisconsin Keep Our Republic is educating citizens about the electoral process, one community at a time. Presented by Kathy Bernier, former WI State Senator and State Director of Keep Our Republic.