

Changing Populations Summit II

April 21, 2009

Notes from Mark O'Connell, Executive Director, Wisconsin Counties Association: *Looking ahead and building local capacity...*

Misc. Quotes:

- "how we modify what we have to get where we want to go"
- "WI Way: a safe harbor of public debate"
- "we (Col. Co.) know what point A is now, what is our point B, C, ...Z?"
- "solution (to fiscal concerns) = growing the pie (not necessarily making the pie smaller)"
- "open our eyes...form a vision...will it to happen...anticipate"
- "Col. Co. has consciously decided to engage in conversations with all sectors, this is visionary thinking. Col. Co. has created a space where we will share intelligence and energy to generate thought about solutions. Col. Co. is proactive...is interested in 'what we want to be and where we want to go'"

<http://www.wisconsinway.org>

<http://www.wicounties.org/>

WI Way Emphasis:

- Change WI's tax structure to reflect what is happening in the economy
- Progressive consumption tax
- Re-examine tax exemptions/loopholes
- Modify education system, more emphasis on 3-20 years
- Create and sustain a business climate that supports entrepreneurs

WI's Challenges & Opportunities

- Increase in people over 65 years old; many "boomers not retiring"
- Structural state budget deficit
- Transitioning from an industrial-based economy to a service/knowledge-based economy
- Strengthen collaboration among business, government and education
- Private sector is going to move us from point A to point B,...X; government's role is to create the infrastructure

Changing Population Summit 11 breakout session summary statements in response to “What one change would you identify as the most exciting idea that you would like to see move forward?”

Transportation

Establishment of regional transit authority

Balancing Taxes and Services

Equitable tax collection (certain businesses have been exempt): collect sales tax from internet sales

Synergy with Regions

Optimal use of natural resources, history and human resources to encourage responsible business opportunity. Work in partnership with local government to eliminate artificial barriers and boundaries.

Helping Citizens Know What's Going On

Cities, towns, county have someone whose responsibility it is to share information. Teaching youth about civics, government and community involvement.

Employable Workforce

Business could work more with schools: curriculum, counseling and guidance, teachers learning more about commercial industrial sectors in community.

Connecting People to Resources

Better dialogue between education/government/private sector to avoid duplication.

High Speed Internet

Incentives for companies to have high-speed internet available to more communities/rural areas.

How to address legislation against communities having their own high-speed internet.

Connecting Volunteers

Volunteer database needed: website, time bank. Encourage volunteers of all ages.

Cooperation Between Business/Government/Education

Continue open dialogue about what the future should look like.

Developing Youth and Adult Leaders in Communities

Make it easier to participate by sharing opportunities and providing leadership training

Changing Population Summit II Evaluation Results

- ✓ 96% of those who attended and completed an evaluation form felt that the information presented was useful to them and that the program was a good use of their time.
- ✓ 89% of those who attended and completed an evaluation form felt that their knowledge about building local capacity around *Changing Population* topics has increased.

Comments on how information presented in workshop/program will be used:

How do you plan to use the information presented in this workshop/program?

- Add it to what I already know and understand to help move ahead
- Importance of starting a vision and planning for future instead of just focusing on today's problem
- Develop groups to discuss these issues
- Get on a workgroup and share ideas
- Watch, look, listen to action steps to move forward; share information with others
- Share with Columbia County Connects (CCC) group
- Background knowledge when making future decisions
- Discuss with individuals who have questions about what's going on in the county
- I will share information about this initiative at the various venues that I attend and present at.
- For future planning with Sustain Columbia and other groups I'm involved in.
- Enhance Sustain Columbia's Action and Education goals
- Work, church, shelter, writing, Continue strengthening the community and regional partnerships and make Columbia County a place to visit and stay
- Continue to connect with people in the community
- To influence the activities of Columbia County Economic Development Corporation
- I'd like to see coordination of the topics resources, opportunities, volunteers and leadership development. I will be working from within democratic groups and volunteering to build on this

Tell us about any information presented today that surprised you.

- Nothing surprises me anymore, but it does help to hear what others are concerned about and what they are doing
- The future of technology
- The strength and versatility of neighborhood with groups as a way of creating awareness of community issues
- Mark was great. His information matched my knowledge on the topic
- Tax information shifting away from a property tax model
- How the population is changing
- Not much, unfortunately. I wish there were far more people interested in VISION for the future
- Keep striving to promote sustainability at all levels
- National steps
- I was concerned that natural resources and environment fell off the radar screen. Given all that I thought I heard in conversations at the first summit and the brown bags

What will you do as a result of the Changing Population initiative?

- Become more familiar with resources that are available to citizens
- Keep involved and use what I have learned
- Be involved as much as possible
- Be involved if specific initiatives come from the summit
- Get most of the people to communicate on all effective ways of communication. People need to know that we are human and that we are not controlled by a mafia
- Look toward future opportunities
- Serve as a source of information, viewpoint on sustainability and cautious use of natural resources and being fair to our fellow men, not exploiting them
- Attend another meeting
- I will try to find a suitable center for information about volunteer opportunities for the Portage, beginning with the library notebook.
- Work to develop collaboration between public sector, businesses, education to grow the economy of Columbia County with a long term vision and plan
- I'm hoping to stay in touch with several folks I've met here, become even more involved with politics, and encourage communication between groups I'm involved with. I'd like to identify a few areas to focus on in county- internet, energy, environment, database for volunteering and help them grow in support