

Make The World A Better Place

Scott Liddicoat, BCTA Member

Unhappily, when four critical words are not spoken you know what you're in for. The absence of these words almost guarantees you're dealing with government. They're not spoken where government does its work because government just doesn't get it right.

So, what are the four critical words? And where do you use them? Where do you hear them?

You've just paid for something you bought. The cashier turns to you and says, "thank you!" In return you reply, "thank you!" This four word exchange takes place millions of times every day in shops and stores across our country. You've probably participated in it many times. It's special every time I'm part of it.

The cashier is usually smiling. Most people suppose they're saying, "thanks for shopping here" and "please come back." You're smiling too. You're expressing, "got my stuff." "Thanks for the help today."

But that brief conversation goes much, much deeper.

The cashier, representing the store, is thankful for the money you paid. *The store values the money you paid more than they value the items they sold.* Otherwise, they would not have made the sale. The store benefits.

You, the customer, are thankful for the items you purchased. *You value the items you purchased more than you value the money you paid for them.* Otherwise, you would not have made the purchase. You benefit.

Nothing like this ever happens in matters of government. Have you ever thanked the government for taking your taxes? Has a politician or bureaucrat ever thanked you for the taxes they took? Has a receiver of government money ever stepped up and thanked the taxpayers? Has there ever been a government transaction where the parties involved fully and mutually benefitted? If so, it hasn't happened often.

The reason for this? Government is a zero-sum enterprise. A zero-sum situation occurs when the gain by one person exactly equals the loss suffered by another person. In a zero-sum situation, there is no overall change in benefit. There are simply winners and losers.

Contrast that with what you and I do every day. When we buy, we participate in *non-zero-sum* transactions. They are voluntary exchanges. We have many products and services to choose from. We can walk away from any purchase we've decided against for any reason. Our purchases always represent the best possible use of resources because we get exactly what we want at a price we are willing to pay. And when we make a *non-zero-sum* purchase, we've benefited, and so has the seller. There are winners, and then there are more winners. That's why the seller usually says thank you. As buyers, we usually say thank you in reply.

Government dealings offer few (if any) of these benefits. They suffer from all the defects of every zero-sum transaction. Government makes winners of some people and losers of other people. Whether it's bank bailouts, student debt cancellation, high speed urban rail services, subsidies to grow (or not grow) certain crops, or supporting smart toilets, there are always winners and losers. Sadly, the worst losers are usually the poor. And sometimes there are only losers. Government is the biggest waster of wealth and resources on the planet.

We should all be mistrustful of politicians and the government when they take our money and spend it on their interests. Good government is a government that is limited in scope, and limited in its ability to tax and spend. The world is made worse when government takes our money and makes other people winners with it.

Instead, we should all celebrate everything we buy in a genuinely free market. As individuals, when we spend money freely on what we value and know is important, everyone wins. Even more, our purchases quickly and effectively go on to shape the future. Producers take notice and make more of what is valuable to us. They make less of what isn't wanted and needed, which saves on wasted resources.

This is why with every purchase we make, however large or small, we make the world a better place.

Just listen for the four critical words. They tell you everything you need to know.

"Thank you...thank you!"

Scott

November Meeting Notes

Dan Lennington, of the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty (WILL).

Dan is a Deputy Counsel at WILL and was the lead Counsel for our lawsuit challenging President Biden's plan to shift a portion of Student Debt to the taxpayers.

Dan thanked us for being a client of WILL. This was the first time WILL represented us in a Federal case. For many years, Congress had attempted to pass a law to forgive student debt, but were never able to get a majority vote. President Biden decided he was going to avoid Congress and create the program himself. Some reports put the cost of this at over a trillion dollars. The President does not have authority to do this without going to Congress. Under President Obama, a law was passed to consolidate all student loans to the Department of Education under the US Treasury. President Biden proposed canceling \$20,000 of debt per student for people making under \$125,000/year. Just enough to take care of New York City and Washington DC liberal voters. It was scheduled to take place in October. Several groups wanted to stop this, but there was a legal issue of "standing", meaning in order to go to court, you have to be the party that was injured. An Indiana attorney challenged it on the basis of the loan forgiveness being taxed in Indiana, so he would have to pay higher taxes. Biden then exempted that person, eliminating his standing. Another group of six states, who run their own agency to service the loans, challenged that they would lose money if the loans were forgiven. Again, the administration changed the rules to eliminate their standing.

Rick Esenberg, WILL President, and Dan worked with the BCTA to challenge on the basis of taxpayer standing. The Federal Court has only allowed this in rare instances, such as taxpayer funding of religious themes. So the basis of our suit was that the spending violated the Constitution, harming taxpayers. We had a hearing with Judge Griesbach

in Green Bay. He agreed to rule quickly if he disagreed, so we could appeal to the 7th Circuit Court, and ultimately the Supreme Court via an Emergency Motion, prior to the funds being spent on October 23. That motion was filed on October 19th with Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who is responsible for emergency appeals in Wisconsin and Illinois. At that time, we were the only challenge in the entire country still active. She denied our motion, but within 12 hours the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals in Minneapolis paused the program under the provision the 6 states tried earlier. A Texas judge also issued a hold order. After these two holds, the Department of Education has taken down its website and is no longer taking applications, apparently abandoning its hopes for the program. The website was taken down the day after the midterms, indicating that it was all about politics all along. The issue we were arguing is that no President, Republican or Democrat, has the Constitutional authority to spend that kind of money with Congressional approval. There was also a racial motivation component present which similarly violates the Constitution. Although our case did not prevail, others did, and it's important for taxpayers to stand up against government overreach. The Supreme Court takes the issue of standing very seriously as they want to rule on disputes between affected parties and not on any law someone has an issue with. There were also discussions about the power of one Justice to rule on the denial of an emergency motion. It has grown more common due to Covid issues. Examples are vaccine mandates and religious discrimination against Jewish people. Dan also talked about WILL's suits against the WI Elections Commission. The biggest success was striking down ballot drop boxes, and the fact the initial citizen complaint was denied by a bureaucrat and never ruled on by the Commission which the law requires.

Acting Secretary, Rod Goldhahn

Monthly Meetings @ The Village Grille

Monthly meetings are held at **The Village Grille, corner of Hoffman and East River Drive**, Allouez. The location has no stairs or steps, convenient parking, and a room to better accommodate speakers and conversation. There will be three selections from which to choose lunch - each one will be priced at **\$15 (includes tax and tip)**. Lunch is at 12:00 noon with monthly speakers presenting.

SUPPORT THE BCTA

New Members Welcome

www.BCTaxpayers.Org

The Brown County Taxpayers Association is a local group working to bring information and awareness to issues that affect tax policy or impose regulatory burdens.

December Meeting Notes

Todd Delain, Brown County Sheriff

Sheriff Delain has been with the Brown County sheriff's Office (BCSO) for nearly 27 years. He has served in the jail, road officer, undercover with the Brown County Drug Task Force, road Sergeant, SWAT, Chief Deputy, then elected Sheriff in 2018 and re-elected this year. Previous to that, he was a Counterintelligence Special Agent with the U.S. Army, and a State Correctional Officer. He holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Administration and a Masters in Management and Organizational Behavior. He holds additional certificates from the University of Virginia, Penn State, the FBI National Academy, and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. Sheriff Delain also serves as Chair of the WI Law Enforcement Standards Board, VP of the Badger State Sheriff's Association, and a member of the Community Coordinated Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. He spoke to the particular importance of this group in helping both victims and perpetrators stop the cycle of abuse which often creates generations of abusers. He is also very proud of his work to maintain good working relationships across all of the county's law enforcement agencies, ensuring cooperation, consistent procedures, and the best service to the citizens. Sheriff Delain and his wife of 30 years have two adult children.

The Sheriff went on to talk about the differences between the BCSO and municipal law enforcement agencies. The Sheriff is an elected official and derives his authority from the WI Constitution. His office has jurisdiction across all of Brown County. Municipal chiefs are appointed by Police & Fire Commissions and their jurisdiction ends at the municipal boundaries. To promote efficiency and cooperation, Sheriff Delain has deputized all full-time law enforcement officers across the County so they may do any necessary follow-up outside their area. He is only a handful of Sheriffs that do this but feels he is very successful with it because of the strong relationships and trust built up with those agencies. Some smaller municipalities contract with BCSO to provide their police services. The BCSO provides the jail for the county and is the action arm of the court system, incarcerating or releasing people as the courts direct them. The office also administers civil processing like foreclosures, subpoenas, and restraining orders. The BCSO coordinates warrants and

extraditions, plus transporting prisoners from WI prisons to local courts for hearings and trials. Inmates typically are remanded to jail for sentences of less than a year and prison for longer sentences. However, there are several people in jail for longer than a year due to a number of reasons that cause delays in their trial dates. This results in significant jail crowding. In addition to the unique divisions, like the jail, transports, and Court security, the BCSO also has typical divisions found in most municipalities: patrol, investigations, specialty units (SWAT, Dive, Bomb, accident investigation, computer forensics), and professional standards. The Brown County Drug Task Force is also within the BCSO, but staffed with officers from multiple jurisdictions. Their computer forensics unit was the first in the nation to use "Google Dashboard" technology data from a suspect to solve and successfully prosecute a murder case. Key issues the BCSO is facing include hiring and retention (primarily in the jail) and fentanyl coming up from Mexico. The Sheriff is working with the County Board to allocate some portion of the opiate settlement funds to combat the fentanyl crisis.

The Sheriff was asked questions related to the availability of Narcan, and the enforcement of immigration laws. Relative to Narcan, it is not publicly accessible, such as AED units, due to several factors, but virtually all squad cars, EMS vehicles, and medical facilities have it available to administer. Relative to immigration enforcement, that is a federal enforcement issue. But, if a person here illegally violates a state/local law, they will be arrested and prosecuted.

State Assembly representatives Shae Sortwell and State Assembly representative elect Joy Goeben attended the meeting and updated the group on state issues. A study committee on occupational licensing has completed its work and is recommending several bills to reduce the backlog. Study committees are bipartisan, so their recommendations typically get action since there is less political controversy. The assembly is also addressing shortages in district attorney offices and public defender availability, critical shortage in state correctional officers, and the condition of the Green Bay Correctional facility. There appears to be an air of better cooperation between the Governor and the Legislature.

Acting Secretary, Rod Goldhahn

The TAX TIMES

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Nov Meeting Notes

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Meeting Location

The Village Grille, Allouez

BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

Thursday - Jan 19, 2023 BCTA Monthly Meeting.
12:00 at The Village Grille, Allouez
Justice Dan Kelly, Candidate for WI Supreme Court

Thursday - Feb 16, 2023 BCTA Monthly Meeting.
12:00 at The Village Grille, Allouez

BCTA monthly meetings are held the Third Thursday of each month, 12:00 Noon, at , at The Village Grille, Allouez.

Meetings are open to the public. BCTA Members, their guests and other interested parties are cordially invited to attend and participate in our open discussions.

**COST: \$15.00, Payable at meeting. Includes lunch, tax & tip.
Call Tom Sladek – 499-7701 for information or to leave message.**

Jan - Feb 2023



www.BCTAxpayers.Org
