

Voting and Self-Government

Tom Sladek, BCTA Treasurer

I write today about elections. The 2020 presidential election in Wisconsin was narrowly won by Joe Biden. I have no knowledge -- so can offer no opinion -- about what happened in any other state, but I do believe Biden won in Wisconsin.

At the same time, Wisconsin's 2020 election was irregular. The COVID situation led to the election process being "adjusted" in the interest of public health. These adjustments dramatically expanded absentee voting, voting by mail, and the manner in which ballots were submitted, collected, and counted. Some of the adjustments made here in Green Bay delegated important administrative functions to out-of-state third parties, in exchange for grants of money.

Make no mistake about it: these changes created conditions where election integrity and security were placed at higher risk, as a trade-off for the protection of public health.

Elections are state and local matters. Democratic Party leadership in the House of Representatives is aiming to change that with H.R. 1, a bill which would (1) prohibit states from requiring voter ID and (2) require states to allow permanent mail-in voting.

Why would the federal government prohibit sound voter ID requirements? Of the 47 countries in the European Union, 46 require a government-issued photo ID to vote. So does Canada. And Mexico, which goes a step further and requires a biometric ID with a thumbprint. Recent Rasmussen

surveying found 80 percent of Americans support a voter ID requirement.

Dr. John Lott served in the U.S. Department of Justice where he studied vote fraud. Here's what Dr. Lott says about mail-in voting:

"With loose absentee voting rules, a country is making itself vulnerable to vote fraud. With mail-in voting, a country is almost begging for vote fraud."

Along with another BCTA director (acting as individuals) I have joined as a complainant/plaintiff in a legal effort to address 2020's irregularities and restore election integrity safeguards that were 'adjusted' in 2020.

Mollie Hemingway is a nationally recognized author and columnist who examined the 2020 elections across America – including a look at Green Bay. After her research, here's what she wrote:

"What happened in Green Bay happened in Democrat-run cities and counties across the country. Four hundred million Zuckerbucks were distributed with strings attached. Officials were required to work with "partner organizations" to massively expand mail-in voting and staff their election operations with partisan activists. The plan was genius. And because no one ever imagined that the election system could be privatized in this way, there were no laws to prevent it.

Such laws should now be a priority."

Tom

November Meeting Notes

Brown County Sales Tax Lawsuit Update

The Wisconsin Supreme Court granted a review of a lawsuit championed by the Brown County Taxpayers Association arguing that Brown County violated state law in adopting its sales tax. The BCTA has maintained that by using its tax to pay for a slate of new spending projects the County failed to impose the tax “only for the purpose of directly reducing the property tax levy” as mandated by Wis. Stat. s. 77.70. The Wisconsin Supreme Court held oral arguments on November 15, 2021, in Madison.

The lawsuit, litigated on behalf of the BCTA by the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, was filed in 2018 shortly after the County adopted a 0.5% sales and use tax expected to raise \$147,000,000 dollars over its six-year duration. Although the County prevailed at the circuit court level in March of 2020, the BCTA appealed the decision to the Court of Appeals, which in turn asked the state’s high court to take up the case.

Anthony LoCoco, Deputy Counsel for the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, represented the BCTA at the November 15, 2021, Wisconsin Supreme Court hearing in Madison. He presented his analysis of the hearing to the members present.

The hearing turned into a discussion about whether the state sales tax statute requires anything at all, versus whether it imposes the restriction we're talking about “only for direct property tax relief.”

There was no sort of middle route that was discussed. Counsel for Brown County basically said it doesn't restrict us at all. I think we mentioned in our rebuttal, the line will, as they said that if you enact a sales tax, it's necessarily going to reduce the property tax level. So, you know, Justice Hagedorn made the point. That's a hard argument for them to make. You're essentially saying we don't typically read statutes to not impose any real requirement, but what they're going for as, we have full discretion. And this isn't really a question. This is a ballot box question.

To the justices' credit, there was not a lot of focus on the sky is falling type of arguments that the counties association had been pushing, which is as it should be, because that has nothing to do with the meaning of the statute. We did not get a lot of questions on that. I was expecting more and we didn't get any. So it did focus on the text in the law, which I think is good for us.

What comes next? Typically, it takes around 90 to 120 days for a decision out of the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

Dave Nelson, Secretary

SUPPORT THE BCTA

**New Members are Always
Welcome.**

www.BCTAxpayers.Org

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 \$12 (including tip.) Lunch is at 12:00 noon with monthly speakers presenting.

December Meeting Notes

Dissolve Stadium District Board?

State Representative David Steffen (4th Assembly District) explained his reasoning leading him to propose legislation that would dissolve the Stadium District Board and assign its duties and responsibilities to back to the City of Green Bay. The City of Green Bay continues to own the stadium.

The stadium law that was introduced in 1999, and was eventually passed in May of 2000 created several things. First of all, a referendum would be put in place for September of 2000. If that referendum passed, then a series of things would happen, including the creation of a stadium district board. The Stadium District Board would have three primary purposes: (1) oversee the \$300 million reconstruction of Lambeau Field, (2) oversee the bond sales, the borrowing that related to the reconstruction project, and (3) oversee the sales tax.

Representative Steffen is one of the few people who is still around in public life who has firsthand knowledge of the Lambeau Field reconstruction project's beginnings, people who were part of those initial discussions, initial decisions, and initial intent related to the stadium district. He was hired by the Green Bay Packers one week after the passage of the law. He worked on the effort to tell the community what this was about, why it was important, and what was involved and what wasn't involved. It's one of the reasons why he has standing on this issue as well as a perspective and also a responsibility to do what he is doing today with his legislation.

There is no additional cost to the Green Bay Packers. It is essentially just transferring management of the facility from the Stadium District Board back to the City of Green Bay

There are three main reasons why he believes that this is appropriate. The purpose of the original legislation and the statutes that created the Stadium District have been completed. Second to simplify relation between the City of Green Bay and the Green Bay Packers. Third is to return sales tax over-payment to the residents of Brown County.

The redevelopment of Lambeau Field has been completed. The project bonding has been paid off and the sales tax has ended.

The second reason relates to annual collection of ticket tax. Transparency in the oversight of \$13 million a year is a big concern for him, especially when it is done by appointed, not elected, officials. Over the course of the current lease agreement a minimum of \$200 million will be collected. The expectation in terms of maintenance and operations expenses is limited to about one hundred million dollars. Very conservative numbers project that the amount of revenue generated through that entity is roughly \$100 million above what the expenses will be. This could be a revenue source for the City of Green Bay

The sales tax over-payment has generated about \$81 million, that \$81 million is currently in the Stadium District's bank account. This could be split as follows, \$45 million returned to the Brown County Taxpayers, and the remainder between Brown County, Ashwaubenon, and Green Bay.

The Stadium District Board had three primary purposes: One, oversee the \$300 million reconstruction of Lambeau Field if the referendum passes, two, oversee the bonds, the borrowing related to the reconstruction, and three, oversee the sales tax. Missions accomplished, do we still need a Stadium District Board?

Other business included the reelection of board members and officers

Directors: Dave Dillenburg, Glen Schwalbach, Rick Bowers, and Rod Goldhahn were elected for three-year terms as BCTA Directors.

Officers elected for one-year terms were:

President	Rich Heidel
First Vice-president	Rod Goldhahn
Second Vice-president	Dave Dillenburg
Treasurer	Tom Sladek
Secretary	Dave Nelson

Dave Nelson, Secretary

The TAX TIMES

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Meeting Location

The Village Grille, Allouez

BCTA Meeting and Events Schedule – MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

Thursday - Jan 20, 2022 BCTA Monthly Meeting.
12:00 at The Village Grille, Allouez

Tuesday - Feb 15, 2020 Election Spring Primary

Thursday - Feb 17, 2022 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: \$12.00, Payable at meeting. Includes lunch, tax & tip.
Call Tom Sladek – 499-7701 for information or to leave message.**

Jan - Feb 2022



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