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The GAD Report

IT'S TIME TO INVEST IN RPAC

With the end of the Legislative session, WRA capped a very productive session with the passage of fourteen legislative priorities that affect the real estate industry. From direct lobbying efforts by our Madison based team, to your participation in REALTOR® & Government Day and your continued support of RPAC, both sides of the aisle worked to support our initiatives when they came to the floor for a vote, often with unanimous support.

Among the bills that were passed this session include:

Exempting access easements from the 40-year statute of limitations

Prohibiting local governments from retaining the proceeds from the tax foreclosure sales of non-homestead properties

Creating a statutory framework for homeowners associations

Broadband expansion

Significant income tax cuts and property tax cuts

Home Equity theft

The passage of these and other bills are the result of our members supporting our legislative advocates with RPAC. Every member of the Legislature, from the Governor to the Senate and Assembly have been vetted by WRA and your fellow REALTORS®. Again, this summer, WRA will interview candidates for all thirty open legislative seats and make decisions on their support. You will then be asked to support them with Direct Giver.

Direct Giver is a minimum of \$100 to \$1000 that can be invested on candidates for public office. You determine who gets the investment and how much. You will also receive requests for funding from our lobby team in Madison and can decide if you want to give their recommendation your investment.

You can use Visa, Mastercard or American Express to make your Direct Giver investment. Go to the following secure website today:

<https://secure.wra.org/donate>

Your investment is needed now more than ever in order to support incumbent legislators and vetted candidates for Assembly and Senate seats in Madison.

This edition of the GAD Report contains a special section on the legislative successes from the recently concluded session and how those bills benefit you and your business. These successes are possible by your investment in RPAC.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Legislative Successes.....	1
Eau Claire ARPA Funds.....	2
Orchard Hills Annexation.....	2
Homeownership Month.....	3
Legislative Successes.....	4-5
Candidate Interviews.....	6

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Invest in RPAC
- Eau Claire ARPA Funds
- Barron County Housing
- Orchard Hills Annexation
- Homeownership Month
- Special Section: Legislative Successes

EAU CLAIRE'S PLAN FOR ARPA FUNDS INCLUDES HOUSING

Eau Claire City Manager Stephanie Hirsch has proposed uses for the \$13.5 million in ARPA funds the city has available to it.

Some of the uses would include funding gaps in some programs with the largest being five million to finish construction of the transfer center, which saw its construction cost skyrocket during the pandemic.

The transfer center will have the main transit center on the ground floor, parking on the first

floor, and three floors of privately-developed workforce housing.

In addition, one million would be identified to purchase two buildings, one being a building, vacant church or motel that could be converted into homeless housing and the other \$500,000 would go toward to purchase of a building to start a pilot program for a limited equity cooperative.

A public hearing will be held this month.

“Just Because You Do Not Take An Interest In Politics, Doesn't Mean That Politics Won't Take An Interest In You.” —Pericles (430 B.C)

A copyrighted report by the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* estimates that 1.3 million Wisconsin households don't have access or cannot afford broadband internet service.

An auction to raise money for the Barron County Economic Development Corporation will run from June 23rd until June 27th.

Dollars raised will be used to increase housing, childcare and amenities for young families in the area.

Contact Brandi Nelson at Barron County EDC if you have an item to donate for the auction at:

brandi.nelson@co.barron.wi.us

ORCHARD HILLS ANNEXATION POSTPONED UNTIL JUNE 15TH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Orchard Hills project has evolved into the Stewart/Hauge annexation project with both properties totaling 428 acres being proposed to attach to the City of Eau Claire.

What has changed is that having city water and sewer available to the properties eliminates a neighborhood concern about having over 100 separate wells and septic systems on the property. By being attached to the city, substantially more housing of all types can be constructed in the area moving forward over the estimated 7 to 10 year build out of the area.

Neighborhood concerns remain but are being addressed by the city. They include widening roads, adding bike trails and improving visibility. They are also looking at trying to steer traffic from the proposed development onto Deerfield Road which is better suited for heavier volumes of traffic.

Concerns also were noted about running water and sewer lines through Lowes Creek County Park, which by agreement, will not be developed at any time and will remain a park.

Habitat for Humanity is looking to spend up to one million dollars to construct homes in the development area over the course of the build out. Developers are looking at all different types of housing from twin homes to single family, low income and workforce housing and apartments with a total of 400 to 600 housing units when the project is completed.

The Town of Washington recently wrote a grant to extend broadband into parts of the township that includes Deerfield Road and the Stewart/Hauge annexation.



A well-managed HOA can be a blessing, and a poorly managed HOA can be a curse. State Rep. Rob Brooks (R-Saukville) joins the WRA’s Tom Larson to discuss Brooks’ commonsense legislation to provide needed regulation to current and future HOAs in Wisconsin. Find out more here:

<https://youtu.be/4clcQ3z8vuM>

JUNE IS HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH

June marks the 20th Anniversary of National Homeownership Month.

President Biden issued a proclamation on May 31st to highlight the benefits of homeownership and the work that remains to achieve fairness and equity in access to affordable homeownership for all Americans.

The Federal Housing Administration and HUD’s Office of Housing are working to achieve key goals thru taking action to increase housing supply and access to affordable housing, serving more first-time homebuyers of color, preventing foreclosures for borrowers affected by COVID-19 and removing barriers to homeownership for those with student loan debt.



RPAC AND YOU

Did you know that you can make your RPAC investment securely online using your Visa, Mastercard and now American Express card? And, you can set up monthly payments!

Go to <https://www.wra.org/dgcontribution/>

If REALTORS® do not speak out, get involved and help shape the discussion, someone else will.

Nobody knows a community better than a REALTOR®. You are on the front line as defenders of real estate issues.

Investing in RPAC assures you a seat at the table when critical decisions are made for homeowners and private property owners.

Supporting vetted candidates and incumbents at all levels of elective governance is part of what RPAC is about.

Now more than ever, we need your financial investment in RPAC thru the Large Donor Council or Direct Giver.



WITH THE END OF THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION, THESE ARE THE BILLS THAT PASSED. THESE ARE WRA PRIORITY BILLS, MANY OF WHICH PASSED ON VOICE VOTES WITH BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT

SIGNED INTO LAW

40-year Access Easements (2021 Wis. Act 174)

Protects the freedom to contract and preserve private easements by allowing recorded private access easements recorded on or after January 1, 1960, to run in perpetuity, while also allowing access easements recorded before that date to run in perpetuity if certain events occur, such as re-recording or proof of physical evidence that the easement is being used.

Homeowners Associations (2021 Wis. Act 199)

Creates transparency for Wisconsin homeowners associations (HOAs). Residents living in or purchasing properties within an HOA will now have access to the rules and regulations impacting the property. HOAs can regulate the use of and have a great impact on property owners' rights.

Disclosure Reports (2021 Wis. Act 96)

Offers practical modifications to Ch. 709 and provides clarity to various parts of the seller disclosure law, including the return of earnest money after exercising the right to rescind, any seller condition report with strike-throughs and responses to questions left unanswered is deemed incomplete, revising the disclosure about private not public rights of way, and adding FIRPTA as a new question.

Maintenance and Repair of Private Roads (2021 Wis. Act 99)

Creates a statutory framework to define the responsibility of a property owner in the event there is not a repair and maintenance agreement for a private road or street.

36-month Permit Extensions (2021 Wis. Act 80)

Allows municipalities to waive penalties and interest on late installment of property taxes payables in 2021 and allows a 36-month extension of certain permits for ongoing construction projects.

Foreclosure Equity Theft (2021 Wis. Act 216)

Requires counties to pay any net proceeds in any property tax foreclosure sale to the former owner of the property. Under the previous law, if a property owner was unable to pay their property taxes, counties were authorized to seize the property and sell it to pay the property taxes owed, unless the property was the former owner's homestead.

PPP Loans Not Subject to State Tax (2021 Wis. Act)

Among other things, this bill clarifies that Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans are not subject to state tax.

Private On-site Wastewater Treatment System (POWTS) (2021 Wis. Act 67)

The private on-site wastewater treatment system replacement or rehabilitation grant program and a septage characterization study.

WHEDA Workforce Housing Rehabilitation Loans (2021 Wis. Act 221)

The legislation increases the supply of Wisconsin's workforce housing built before 1980 by authorizing WHEDA to offer low-interest or no-interest rehabilitation loans to update older housing stock. Homeowners must agree to repay the loan upon sale or title transfer.

Limiting Liability for Appraisers (2021 Wis. Act 194)

Limits the time a person has to start a lawsuit for damages against a licensed or certified real estate appraiser to five years from the date the appraiser submits the appraisal report to the client. Establishing a statute of limitations for appraiser liability is good news for all parties in the transaction and also provides certainty for the individuals currently in or considering the appraisal profession.

Right to Place a Pier on Flowages (2021 Wis. Act 47)

In the 2018 Wisconsin Supreme Court decision *Movrich v. Lobermeier*, the court declared that some waterfront property owners did not have the right to place a pier, including all flowages and man-made bodies of water. Act 47 permanently protects pier rights for all waterfront property owners, including those who live on the 260 flowages throughout Wisconsin.

2021-23 State Budget (2021 Wis. Act 58)

- Property tax relief: \$300 in property tax relief for the typical home.
- Income tax relief: Average family will receive approximately \$900 in income tax relief.
- DSPS technology upgrades to simplify online credentialing: \$5 million to pay for long-overdue upgrades to the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) information technology platforms.
- Broadband expansion: \$125 million in additional for the Broadband Expansion Grant Program over the next two years.

Home Inspection Reports and "Defects" (2021 Wis. Act 17)

Requires a home inspector to label in the inspection report items identified as a "defect" during the home inspection and to provide a summary page as part of the report. These simple but necessary changes will provide more trust in the home inspection report for all property transactions.

COVID-19 Civil Liability Exemption (2021 Wis. Act 4)

Creates immunity from civil liability for death, injury or other damages due to any act or failure to act resulting in, or related to, a person's exposure to COVID-19 in the performance of the entity's functions or services. This civil immunity protects entities including real estate firms and independent contractors.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE CANDIDATE SCREENING PROCESS

RANWW and WRA will be conducting candidate interviews for the open 23rd Senate, 25th Senate and 29th Senate districts. All candidate interviews will be via Zoom and will originate at WRA in Madison.

We need five members to help interview the candidates (you will be given questions in advance from WRA and briefed prior to the first interview).

The interviews will be on **Monday, June 27 from 9am to 1pm**, with each interview lasting about 20 minutes. If you would be willing to help, please send an email to Bruce King (bruce@ranww.org).



"We in America do not have government by the majority, we have government by the majority who participate" - Thomas Jefferson

BARRON COUNTY LOOKS TO ASSIST IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS

At Barron County's Executive Committee meeting, a plan was discussed that could secure more affordable housing.

The plan would be to have the county to join a partnership with another municipality or infrastructure by granting it a non-interest bearing loan. The county could borrow money and give it to a municipality which would create a TIF and use a developer to create a residential area.

There are two municipalities that have indicated they could use ARPA funds to assist. The extra tax revenue created would pay the county back in the form of property taxes and the mu-

nicipal would receive gain in net new construction that would in turn raise its mill rate. Members of the committee discussed possible options for a TIF district, areas to build and pros and cons of building in forested areas, municipal areas where costs associated with construction would make housing somewhat less than affordable.

The discussion also touched on other major concerns in the county such as work force and affordable child care restrictions in the county.

While no firm decisions have been made, discussions on ideas to increase the housing stock will continue.

RANWW and WRA have launched our 2022 RPAC campaign.

Three levels of investment...dues billing, Direct Giver and Large Donor Council.

Several ways to pay: personal or LLC check, debit card, Visa, Mastercard or American Express.

Have questions? Contact Bruce (bruce@ranww.org) or Sandy at WRA (sandy@wra.org)

Representatives in the Wisconsin Legislature

29th Assembly
Clint Moses
608-266-7683
Rep.Moses@legis.wisconsin.gov

67th Assembly
Rob Summerfield
608-266-1194
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68th Assembly
Jesse James
608-266-9172
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73rd Assembly
Nick Milroy
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74th Assembly
Beth Meyers
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75th Assembly
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87th Assembly
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91st Assembly
Jodi Emerson
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92nd Assembly
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93rd Assembly
Warren Petryk
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State Senators

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25th Senate
Janet Bewley
608-266-3510
Sen.Bewley@legis.wisconsin.gov

31st Senate
Jeff Smith
608-266-8546
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OUR MISSION:

“RANWW/
NWWMLS UNITE
TO ADVOCATE FOR
REAL PROPERTY
RIGHTS, ADVANCE
PROFESSIONALISM
AND CONNECT MEM-
BERS WITH OUR
COMMUNITIES.”

RANWW GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

The REALTORS® Association of Northwestern Wisconsin is the largest association in terms of area, stretching from Millston, Whitehall and Fountain City to the south all the way to central Bayfield, southern Ashland to the north. We are the fourth largest of the 19 Associations in terms of membership. Your Association covers 395 units of local government, monitoring a wide variety of issues that can and do affect you. In addition to local government, your GAD also monitors issues at the state and national level that will have a direct or indirect impact on housing and the industry, as well as legislation that can affect the consumer. Your Government Affairs Director works with members and affiliates to raise investment dollars for RPAC that help to support elected officials that support your business. RANWW is one of only three REALTOR® Association’s in Wisconsin that have their own PAC, which was started 42 years ago to support candidates at the local and state level. We maintain a Facebook page, called “The GADabouts”, that aims to keep you up to date on political issues that will affect your business. Your GAD also produces a periodic government affairs program posted on our YouTube channel, RANWWTV. And be watching for a podcast coming soon.

**Bruce King, C2EX, AHWD,
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**Enhance your skills.
Empower your future.**

