



# ***GREEN LAKE COUNTY***

*571 County Road A, Green Lake, WI 54941*

---

**Original Post Date: 01/15/2024**

**The following documents are included in the packet for the  
Administrative Committee Meeting on January 16, 2024:**

- 1) Agenda
- 2) Minutes 11/30/2023
- 3) Ethics Update Report
- 4) Annual Reports
  - Corporation Counsel
  - County Administrator
  - County Clerk
  - IT
  - Register of Deeds
  - Treasurer



# GREEN LAKE COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Elizabeth Otto  
County Clerk

Office: 920-294-4005  
FAX: 920-294-4009

## ***Administrative Committee Meeting Notice***

***Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 Time: 4:00 PM  
Green Lake County Government Center,  
County Board Room, 571 County Rd A, Green Lake WI***

### **AMENDED AGENDA\***

Committee  
Members

*Dave Abendroth- Chair  
Dennis Mulder  
Brian Floeter  
Gene Thom-Vice Chair  
Ken Bates*

*Elizabeth Otto,  
Secretary*

Virtual attendance at meetings is optional. If technical difficulties arise, there may be instances when remote access is a quorum attending in person, the meeting will proceed as scheduled.

1. Call to Order
2. Certification of Open Meeting Law
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approval of minutes – 11/30/2023
5. Ethics Committee / Code Revisions
6. Consolidation of Committees for 2024 Term
7. Discussion and Action on Quorum Disclaimer
8. \*Closed Session
  - Move into Closed Session per WI 19.85(1)(c) considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the government body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.
9. Reconvene into Open Session
10. Discussion and Possible Action on Salary for County Clerk, Register of Deeds, and Treasurer for 2024-2027 Term
11. Annual Reports:
  - Corporation Counsel
  - County Administrator
  - County Clerk
  - IT
  - Register of Deeds
  - Treasurer
12. Adjourn

This meeting will be conducted through in person attendance or audio/visual communication. Remote access can be obtained through the following link:

Microsoft Teams meeting  
Join on your computer, mobile app or room device  
[Click here to join the meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 214 982 138 870  
Passcode: stFuUv  
[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)  
Or call in (audio only)  
[+1 920-515-0745..391146293#](#) United States, Green Bay  
Phone Conference ID: 894 021 720#  
[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

Please accept at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

Kindly arrange to be present, if unable to do so, please notify our office. Sincerely, Elizabeth Otto

**Please note: Meeting area is accessible to the physically disabled. Anyone planning to attend who needs visual or audio assistance, should contact the County Clerk's Office, 294-4005, not later than 3 days before date of the meeting.**

## SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

November 30, 2023

The special meeting of the Administrative Committee was called to order by Chairman Dave Abendroth at 3:30 PM on Thursday, November 30, 2023 in person and via remote access at the Government Center, 571 County Road A, Green Lake, WI. The requirements of the open meeting law were certified as being met. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Present: Dave Abendroth  
Ken Bates  
Gene Thom  
Dennis Mulder

Absent: Brian Floeter

Other County Employees Present: Liz Otto, County Clerk; County Administrator Cate Wylie; Corporation Counsel Jeff Mann; Chief Deputy Matt Vandekolk

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 05/08/2023, 06/15/2023, 06/20/2023 AND 07/17/2023**

*Motion/second (Mulder/Bates)* to approve the minutes of the 05/08/2023, 06/15/2023, 06/20/2023 and 07/17/2023 minutes as presented with no additions or corrections. Motion carried with no negative vote.

### **REVIEW PAY FOR PERFORMANCE POLICY AND STRUCTURE**

Supervisor Thom introduced a discussion on the pay for performance policy and the high percentages paid out by the previous administration that were not approved by the County Board. County Administrator Cate Wylie stated that there is currently no policy in place for 2024 so employees will receive a 3% COLA increase across the board. Wylie suggested a wage study next year which could be done in house or in collaboration with another county to control costs and is looking at establishing dashboards and metrics for longevity increases.

### **ETHICS COMMITTEE REVIEW**

Corporation Counsel Jeff Mann stated that the Ethics Committee policy is outlined in the current County Board rules in section 9-75, 9-76, and 9-77. He questioned the “clergy” verbiage and suggested that be changed. Discussion held on the pros and cons of having a board in place or appoint one as needed. The committee advised Mann to review the policy and present his findings at the January meeting.

### **CONSOLIDATION OF COMMITTEES FOR 2024 TERM**

County Administrator Cate Wylie stated she feels that many of the current committees could be consolidated to increase efficiency and gave several suggestions. Discussion held. Wylie will review this further and present her findings at the January meeting.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

- **The committee may meet in Closed Session under Wis. §19.85(1)(c) to consider the employment of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility – review of County Administrator**

*Motion/second (Thom/Mulder)* to move into Closed Session at 4:04 PM. Roll call vote – Ayes – 4, Nays - 0, Abstain - 0, Absent – 1 (Floeter). Motion carried.

County Clerk Liz Otto left the meeting.

### **RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION TO TAKE ACTION, IF APPROPRIATE, ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION**

*Motion/second (Thom/Mulder)* to reconvene into open session at 4:52 PM. Roll call vote – Ayes - 4, Nays – 0, Abstain - 0, Absent – 1 (Floeter). Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Abendroth adjourned the meeting at 4:53 PM.

Submitted by,

Liz Otto  
County Clerk

DRAFT

## **Chapter 9. Board of Supervisors**

### **Article V. Ethics**

#### **§ 9-60 Authority.**

Authority for this ethics article derives from § 19.59(1m), Wis. Stats.

#### **§ 9-61 Statutes incorporated.**

##### **A.**

The following sections of the Wisconsin Statutes, as amended from time to time, are incorporated by reference and made a part of this article: § 19.01, § 19.21, §§ 19.81 to 19.98, § 19.59 and §§ 946.10 to 946.18.

##### **B.**

Board members shall comply with the sections of the Wisconsin Statutes incorporated in this article and failure to do so shall constitute a violation of this article.

#### **§ 9-62 Declaration of policy.**

##### **A.**

The proper operation of democratic government requires that public officials and employees be independent, impartial and responsible to the people; that public office not be used for personal gain; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government. In recognition of these goals, this article applies to all officials and employees of the County, whether elected or appointed, and to members of County boards and commissions. The purpose of this article is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all such officials and employees by setting forth those acts or actions that are incompatible with the best interests of the County and by directing disclosure by such officials and employees of private financial or other interests in matters affecting the County. Nothing contained in this article is intended to deny to any individual the rights granted by the United States Constitution, the state constitution, the laws of the state, or the rights stated by labor agreements negotiated with certified employee bargaining representatives, or the rights accorded individuals by virtue of resolutions or ordinance of the County Board or by any other provision of law.

**B.**

The proper operation of County government demands that:

**(1)**

Green Lake County officials and employees be independent, impartial and responsible to the people;

**(2)**

Decisions be made in the proper channels of the County governmental structure;

**(3)**

County offices should not be used for personal gain; and

**(4)**

County business should be conducted in such a way as to reinforce the public's confidence in its integrity.

**§ 9-63 Purpose.**

The purpose of this article is to establish ethical standards of conduct for all County officials and employees by identifying those acts or actions that are not compatible with the best interests of the County. Because representatives of the County are drawn from society, they cannot and should not be without all personal and economic interest in the decisions and policies of government. Citizens who are appointed to serve as County officials and employees retain their rights as citizens to personal and economic interests. Therefore, the standards of ethical conduct for County officials and employees must distinguish between minor and inconsequential conflicts which are unavoidable and those conflicts which are substantial and material. The provisions of this article, and such rules and regulations that may be established, are to be interpreted in the context of the above principles and are deemed to be in the best interest of the public.

**§ 9-64 Applicability.**

This article applies to every County official and employee, **provided any employee complaint has already exhausted the chain of command, including a review by the County Administrator and in accordance with the Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual (see § 9-70 below).**

**§ 9-65 Definitions.**

In this article, the following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

**ADVISORY OPINION**

An interpretation requested by an official or employee and issued by the Ethics Board regarding the propriety of any matter to which the official or employee is or may become a party.

**ANYTHING OF VALUE**

Any money or property, favor, gift, service, payment, advance, forbearance, loan, or promise of future employment, including without restriction by enumeration tickets, passes, lodging, travel, recreational expense, and admission offered and provided by persons doing business, or interested in doing business, with the County. Anything of value does not include such things as compensation and expenses paid by the state or County, political contributions that are reported under Ch. 11, Wis. Stats., occasional meals and beverages, fees, honorariums and expenses, unsolicited advertising or promotional material such as pens, pencils, notepads, calendars, informational or educational materials of unexceptional value, plaques, or other advertising giveaways, hospitality of nominal value or extended for a purpose unrelated to County business, business-related seminars, trade shows or other training-related activities or any other thing which is not likely to influence the judgment of individuals covered by this article.

**CONTRACT**

All agreements executed between the County or a subunit thereof and another party or parties for the provision of goods, materials, supplies, construction, or services in exchange for valuable and sufficient consideration.

**EMPLOYEE**

All persons filling an allocated position of County employment and all members of boards, committees, and commissions except members of the County Ethics Board and those individuals included in the definition of "official."

**FAMILY**

Any individual related to a public official as spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, parent-in-law, sibling-in-law and step relations of the above, or a legal designee for tax purposes.

**FINANCIAL INTEREST**

Any interest that shall yield, directly or indirectly, a monetary or other material benefit to the official or employee or to any person employing or treating the services of the official or employee.

## **IMMEDIATE FAMILY**

An official or employee's spouse or family member who contributes more than half the support of the official or employee or receives that level of support from the official or employee.

## **OFFICIAL**

All County department heads or directors, County supervisors, and all other County elected officers, except judges and district attorneys.

## **PERSON**

Any natural person, corporation, partnership, proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, organization, joint venture trust, or other legal entity recognized as such by the laws of the State of Wisconsin.

## **PERSONAL INTEREST**

Any interest arising from blood or marriage relationships or from close business or political associations, whether or not any financial interest is involved.

## **PRIVILEGED INFORMATION**

Any written or oral material related to County government which has not become part of the body of public information and which is designated by statute, court decision, lawful orders, ordinances, resolution or custom as privileged.

## **§ 9-66 Responsibility of public office.**

### **A.**

County officials and employees are agents of public purpose and hold office to serve the public interest. They are bound to uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin and to carry out efficiently and impartially all laws of the United States, the State of Wisconsin and Green Lake County.

### **B.**

Each is bound to observe in their official acts the standards of ethics set forth in this article, state statutes and faithfully discharge the duties of their office in the highest standards of morality and regardless of personal considerations, recognizing that the public interest must be their primary concern. Their conduct in both their official and private affairs should be above reproach to foster respect for all government.

## **§ 9-67 Role of County Supervisor.**

### **A.**



The Green Lake County Board of Supervisors is a nineteen-member team responsible for the ensuring that the County is properly managed by planning, implementing policy and making decisions where the Board of Supervisors has reached agreement in a regular or special session. Members of the Board of Supervisors act on behalf of and for the welfare of the people in their respective districts and for the benefit of the County as a whole.

**B.**

Individual Supervisors exercise the authority and responsibility of their position only when the Board of Supervisors is in session, but the public regards the person as a member of the Board of Supervisors 24 hours a day. The Supervisor's own interest and desire to serve the community through membership in the Board of Supervisors continues even when the Board of Supervisors is not in session. An individual Supervisor has no authority and cannot speak for the Board of Supervisors (with the exception of the Chair in certain situations), but the public has the right to expect the member to be able to discuss the County's matters with understanding.

**C.**

The Board of Supervisors can only transact business that is legally binding on the County when the Board of Supervisors is in regular or special session with a quorum present, or at officially designated Committee meetings of the Board of Supervisors, and its proceedings duly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Members of the Board of Supervisors shall not represent, by personal commitment, any special group, interest, or position.

**§ 9-68 Confidentiality: disclosure of privileged information.**

**A.**

No official or employee may use or disclose privileged information gained in the course of or by reason of his or her official position or activities in any way that could result in financial gain for himself, herself or for any other person.

**B.**

No official or employee shall knowingly disclose or permit the disclosure of confidential information to any person not authorized by statute, ordinance, or common law to receive such confidential information.

## § 9-69 **County administration.**

### **A.**

The Board of Supervisors should avoid taking direct action in the administration of the County, thereby keeping the functions and responsibilities of its appointed officials clear to members of the public and staff.

### **B.**

The Board of Supervisors retains full budgetary control, legislative authority and policymaking responsibility in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes and the expressed will of the electorate, but delegates all administrative, supervisory, and instructional authority to the County Administrator under the direction of the County Board Chair and the Administrative Committee.

## § 9-70 **Complaints from public.**

### **A.**

At times, a person or group may confront a single Board member with a problem or complaint that should be handled by management personnel. Each Board member must decide how much time one can spend on complaints and what courtesy is appropriate. The official Board of Supervisors policy is:

“No member, nor the Board of Supervisors itself, will officially consider problems or complaints until they have been submitted to the proper administrative authority and a report by the authority is submitted to the Board of Supervisors or governing Committee, convened in legal session.”

### **B.**

No member of the Board of Supervisors shall consider a complaint from any employee unless the member has determined that the complainant has gone through the normal chain of command, including the County Administrator. Employees should be directed to the Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual for the proper chain of command for complaints.

### **C.**

Public grievances or complaints should be referred to the County Administrator or the County Board Chair. Grievances or complaints will be handled in the following order:

#### **(1)**

Referred to the County Administrator who will investigate the matter along with the appropriate department head and take the appropriate action.

(2)

If not resolved, the County Administrator shall report to the governing committee with jurisdiction over the matter, who then may consider and forward to the next immediate session of the Board of Supervisors for official consideration and possible action.

**D.**

When a Board member seeks information about a specific problem, the member should ask the County Administrator to prepare a report on the matter with the aid of staff, if necessary. No single County Board member may create a committee to investigate a complaint or grievance.

**E.**

If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved by this procedure, the Board of Supervisors may, if it deems advisable, grant a hearing to the person(s) interested and the hearings will be held during either a regular or special session of the Board of Supervisors.

## § 9-71 **Conflict of interest.**

**A.**

Offer or acceptance of gifts. No official or employee, directly or indirectly, may solicit or accept from any person, directly or indirectly, *anything of value* without full payment, if it could reasonably be expected to influence the official or employee's duties and responsibilities or a vote, official actions or judgment, or could reasonably be considered as a reward for any official action or inaction on the part of the official or employee. ~~An item offered or received with a fair market value greater than the amount set by the Wisconsin Ethics Commission (currently \$25) shall give rise to a rebuttable presumption that the item could be reasonably expected to influence the official or employee or be considered a reward.~~

**(1)**

Examples of prohibited gifts: sporting event tickets, vacation trips, hotel stays, televisions, gaming consoles, etc., even if entered into a raffle drawing while engaged in County business.

**(2)**

Examples of permissible gifts: promotional items of a small value with advertising prominently displayed such as baseball caps, calendars, pens, pencils, water bottles, notepads, etc.

**B.**

Financial and personal interest prohibited. No official or employee, whether paid or unpaid, shall engage in any business or transaction or shall act in regard to financial or other personal interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge of the official duties in the public interest contrary to the provisions of this article or state statute or would tend to impair independence of judgment or action in the performance of official duties.

**C.**

Incompatible employment **and/or civic activities**. No official or employee shall engage in or accept private employment, render service for private interests **or engage in civic activities** when such employment, service or **activities** are incompatible with the proper discharge of official duties unless otherwise permitted by law and unless disclosure is provided.

**D.**

Kickbacks. No official or employee may accept payments, gifts, gratuities by, from or on behalf of a potential vendor, contractor, or subcontractor, as an inducement for selection.

**E.**

Financial interest in legislation. Any official or employee who has a financial interest or personal interest in any proposed legislation before the County Board or a committee shall disclose on the record of the County Board or the constituent committee the nature and extent of such interest and shall refrain from participating in the discussion of, and voting on the legislation. A member of the County Board shall request to be excluded by the Board or Committee Chair for the duration of any deliberations and voting on the legislation.

**F.**

Contracts with the County. No official or employee shall, in a private capacity, negotiate, bid for, enter into, make or perform a contract in which the official or employee, immediate family member or any business or organization with which a Board member, employee, local public official or immediate family member is associated, has a direct or indirect financial interest, if the official or employee is authorized by law to participate in the official or employee's capacity as such the official or employee in the making of that contract or to perform in regard to that contract some official function requiring the exercise of discretion on the Board member's, employee's or local public official's part. If the official or employee will not be involved with the contract in an official capacity, the contract may be allowed only if awarded through a process of

public notice and competitive bidding in conformity with all applicable laws. This provision is intended to comply with, and in no way contradict or invalidate, the guidelines in § 946.13, Wis. Stats.

#### **§ 9-72 Fair and equal treatment.**

##### **A.**

No official or employee shall grant any special consideration, treatment or advantage to any person beyond which is available to every other person. This section does not affect the duty of County Board Supervisors to diligently represent their constituency.

##### **B.**

No official or employee shall request or permit the unauthorized use of County-owned vehicles, equipment, materials, privileged information or property for personal convenience or profit, unless those services or use are available to the public generally.

#### **§ 9-73 E-mail.**

##### **A.**

Each Board member will be provided with a County e-mail account. While no Board member is required to conduct County business by e-mail, a Board member who does so is required to use the County e-mail account for all communications that pertain to County business.

##### **B.**

A Board member may communicate with other Board members by e-mail for setting a meeting time, place and agenda; but a Board member should not engage in any substantive discussion of County business with any other Board member by e-mail.

##### **C.**

These standards apply to all members of County governmental bodies.

#### **§ 9-74 Use of technology during board and committee meetings.**

##### **A.**

Cellular and smart phone etiquette.

##### **(1)**

All cellular telephones and smart telephones shall be in silent mode during meetings.

**(2)**

If a Board member is expecting a call on an important matter while attending a meeting on County property:

**(a)**

The Board member shall inform the Chair before the meeting is called to order.

**(b)**

Cellular phones in vibrate mode shall not be placed on the Board member's workstation as the vibration will cause noise and disrupt the meeting.

**(3)**

If a Board member must take a call on an important matter during a County Board meeting, he shall mark himself absent, and immediately leave the County Board Room or meeting room before answering the telephone call.

**(4)**

In no instance shall any Board member answer a personal cellular telephone call while present in the County Board room while the Board is in session.

**(5)**

In no instance shall any Board member answer a personal cellular telephone call while present in a committee meeting.

**(6)**

Smart phones may be used to read and review meeting materials, and access information pertinent to the items being discussed at a meeting.

**(7)**

All notifications/alerts (audible and vibrating) for phone functions shall be turned off during meetings, e.g., incoming calls, text message, e-mails, SMS messaging, etc.

**(8)**

Smart phones shall not be used during Board and committee meetings to surf the web [except as stated in Subsection **A(2)** above], e-mail, engage in instant or text messaging of any kind or to engage in non-county-related business.

**B.**

Laptops, tablets, iPads, and other computing devices.

**(1)**

Laptops, tablets, iPads or other computing devices may be used during Board and committee meetings to read and review meeting materials, and access information pertinent to the items being discussed at a meeting.

**(2)**

Laptops, tablets, iPads or other computing devices shall not be used during Board and committee meetings to surf the web [except as stated in Subsection **B(1)** above], e-mail, engage in instant or text messaging of any kind or to engage in non-county-related business.

**C.**

E-mail, instant or text messaging.

**(1)**

All communications between Board members during a County Board or committee meeting shall be completed verbally. Exceptions to this rule may be made in the case of a disability where the member is unable to communicate by using his voice due to illness, injury or disability.

**(2)**

A Board member shall not engage in any e-mail, instant messaging or text messaging during any Board or committee meeting with County employees.

**D.**

Definitions. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

**E-MAIL**

A system for sending and receiving messages electronically or over a computer network via telecommunication links between computers, terminals, smart phones, or other electronic devices capable of sending e-mail. Also, a message or messages sent or received on such a system.

**INSTANT MESSAGING**

Real-time direct text-based chatting communication between two or more people using personal computers or other devices.

**TEXT MESSAGING**

The exchange of brief written messages between a fixed-line phone or a mobile phone and a fixed or portable device over a network.

**§ 9-75 Ethics Board.**

This ethics article hereby creates an Ethics Board.

**A.**

Membership. The Ethics Board shall consist of five members, requiring a three-person quorum and majority vote required for any action taken by the Board. All five members ~~three members shall be members of the legal or law enforcement community, one citizen member who must be a County resident, and one member of the clergy.~~ Green Lake County residents, with two being current members of the Green Lake County Board of Supervisors. All five members shall be appointed by the chair of the Green Lake County Board of Supervisors. In the event that the County Board chair is the focus of the investigation or otherwise has a conflict of interest, the vice-chair for the County Board shall make said appointments. In no instance may a former County employee be a member of the Ethics Board. The County Administrator or County Clerk shall provide necessary staff assistance to the Ethics Board.

**B.**

Appointment and term. The County Board Chair shall appoint five members of the Ethics Board subject to the confirmation by the County Board of Supervisors. Of those five members, two shall be sitting supervisors on the Green Lake County Board. All members shall serve until the ethics case he/she is appointed for reaches resolution. In the event a member is unable to complete his or her term, a new member shall be appointed in the same manner previously described.

**C.**

Powers and duties. The Ethics Board shall be responsible for investigating complaints and conducting hearings under this article. The Ethics Board will interpret the County Code of Ethics consistent with interpretations handed down by the State of Wisconsin Ethics Commission or its successor boards or commissions.

**D.**

Assistance of counsel. The Corporation Counsel shall furnish the Ethics Board whatever legal assistance is necessary to carry out its functions. The Corporation Counsel may retain outside counsel to provide this assistance as necessary. In all other sections of this article where the term "corporation counsel" is used, it shall include any counsel retained by the Corporation Counsel under this section.

**E.**

Open meetings. The Ethics Board is subject to Ch. 19, Wis. Stats., and shall comply with all open meetings statutes.



## § 9-76 Investigations and enforcement; procedure.

### A.

Complaints.

#### (1)

All complaints shall be verified and in writing. The complaint shall state the specific provision(s) of the County Ethics Code or Wisconsin Statutes section(s) or both believed to have been violated and shall include sufficient information to support the allegations.

#### (2)

The complaint shall also include the following:

##### (a)

The name, address and telephone number of the complainant;

##### (b)

The name, address and position of the individual who is the subject named in the complaint;

##### (c)

The facts constituting the alleged ethics violation(s) set forth clearly and in detail;

##### (d)

If complainant(s) believes that any Board member has a conflict of interest or bias, the complaint shall state it in the complaint.

#### (3)

Complaints that do not meet the minimum pleading requirements in Subsection 2(a) and (b) above shall be dismissed without prejudice.

#### (4)

No action may be taken on any complaint that is filed later than six months after a violation of the Ethics Code is alleged to have occurred.

#### (5)

All written complaints shall be submitted to the County Clerk, 571 County Road A, Green Lake, WI 54941. The County Clerk shall forward the complaint to the **Chair of the County Board**, the Corporation Counsel **and the County Administrator**. The complaint is a public document.

**B.**

Preliminary procedure; notice.

**(1)**

The Corporation Counsel shall review the complaint to assure that it meets all procedural and technical requirements. If the complaint is defective, the Corporation Counsel shall notify the complainant of the defect within 10 days of receipt of the complaint. The complainant must correct the defect within 30 days of the Corporation Counsel's notification or the complaint will be administratively closed.

**(2)**

The Corporation Counsel shall send notice, including a copy of the complaint to the respondent(s) and complainant within seven business days of the receipt of the complaint by the **County Board Chair**. The notice shall be sent via certified mail or by personal service.

**(3)**

The notice shall inform the respondent that they may file a written statement of their position with the appropriate committee of oversight within 10 business days of the date the notice was sent.

**(4)**

The respondent may request that any hearing be held in open session.

**(5)**

The Corporation Counsel shall contact the members of the Ethics Board (**upon its assembly**) to schedule a probable cause hearing.

**C.**

Investigations and powers. Pursuant to any investigation or hearing conducted under this ethics article, the Ethics Board has the authority to:

**(1)**

Require any person to submit in writing such reports and answers to questions relevant to the proceedings conducted under this article as it may prescribe, such submission to be made within such period and under oath or otherwise as the Ethics Board may determine.

**(2)**

Administer oaths and require by subpoena issued by it pursuant to § 885.01, Wis. Stats., the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of

any documentary evidence relating to the investigation or hearing being conducted.

**(3)**

Order testimony to be taken by deposition before any individual who is designated by it and has the power to administer oaths, and, in such instances, to compel testimony and the production of evidence in the manner as authorized by Subsection **C(2)**, above.

**(4)**

Pay witnesses the same fees and mileage as are paid in like circumstance by the courts in Wisconsin.

**(5)**

Request and obtain from the Department of Revenue copies of state income tax returns and access to other appropriate information under § 71.78(4), Wis. Stats., regarding all persons who are the subject of such investigation.

**(6)**

Retain outside counsel and other experts as needed in connection with any of the Ethics Board's responsibilities hereunder after solicitation of recommendations from the office of the District Attorney and upon such contract for services approved for content and form by the Corporation Counsel.

**D.**

Hearings.

**(1)**

Procedure; burden of proof. All hearings conducted by the Ethics Board under this article are subject to the following:

**(a)**

The burden of proof at all hearings shall rest with the complainant to prove the allegations by evidence that is clear, satisfactory and convincing.

**(b)**

The Ethics Board shall conduct all hearings in accordance with the rules of civil procedure and shall keep a record of the hearing and all admitted evidence at the hearing. However, the common law or statutory rules of evidence do not apply. The Ethics Board shall admit all testimony having reasonable probative value, but shall exclude immaterial, irrelevant or unduly repetitious testimony. The Ethics Board shall give effect to the rules of privilege recognized by law. Basic principles of relevancy, materiality and probative force shall govern the proof of all questions of fact.

**(c)**

All hearings shall be in closed session, pursuant to § 19.85, Wis. Stats., unless the respondent requests an open hearing.

**(d)**

The Ethics Board shall convene in closed session following any hearing for the purpose of deliberation on the evidence.

**(e)**

All hearings shall be conducted under oath or affirmation.

**(f)**

~~Corporation Counsel will direct the proceedings of the hearing.~~ The proceedings of the hearing will be conducted in accordance with the Robert's Rules of Order, managed by the Ethics Committee Chair with Corporation Counsel acting as parliamentarian.

**(g)**

The parties may make a brief opening statement to acquaint the Ethics Board with the nature of the complaint.

**(h)**

The parties shall be allowed to question each other and present witnesses on their behalf, consistent with the subject matter before the Ethics Board.

**(i)**

The Ethics Board may direct questions to any party or witness.

**(j)**

The Ethics Board may, in its sole discretion, extend the deadlines for taking action on a verified complaint or request. Failure of the Ethics Board to take action within the time frames in this article shall not preclude the Ethics Board from pursuing a complaint.

**(2)**

Initial/probable cause hearing.

**(a)**

The Ethics Board shall set a time for a probable cause hearing on the complaint that is within 15 business days following the 10 business-day-time for response by the respondent. The probable cause hearing date shall be set prior to the notice being sent out so that the notice will include the date, time and place of the probable cause hearing of the Ethics Board regarding the complaint.

**(b)**

At the probable cause hearing the Ethics Board shall determine if it has jurisdiction over the subject matter of the complaint and to determine if there is a basis for the complaint. The complainant must be present. If the complainant does not personally appear, the Ethics Board may dismiss the complaint without prejudice. If the Ethics Board determines that there is no basis for the complaint, it may immediately dismiss the complaint with prejudice and without further hearing. In determining if there is a basis for the complaint, the Ethics Board must review the complaint, assuming that every allegation is true.

**(c)**

An agenda shall be filed and posted by the County Clerk prior to the probable cause hearing and the respondent's name will not be included in the meeting notice and public access to records pertaining to the complaint shall be restricted in accordance with § 19.35, Wis. Stats., unless the respondent has requested an open hearing.

**(d)**

The corporation counsel shall send a copy of the response(s) received from the respondent(s) to the Ethics Board and the complainant(s) at least five business days prior to the probable cause hearing.

**(3)**

Fact-finding hearing.

**(a)**

If after the probable cause hearing the Ethics Board finds that probable cause exists for believing the allegation(s) in the complaint, the Ethics Board shall schedule a fact-finding hearing not less than 30 business days after making the finding of probable cause.

**(b)**

If the Ethics Board sets the matter for a fact-finding hearing, it may direct the parties to appear before it for a conference to consider:

**[1]**

The clarification of issues;

**[2]**

The necessity or desirability of amendments to the pleadings;

**[3]**

The possibility of obtaining admissions of fact and of documents which will avoid unnecessary proof;

**[4]**

The limitation of the number of witnesses;

**[5]**

Such other matters as may aid in the disposition of the action.

**(c)**

Upon the conclusion of the fact-finding hearing, the Ethics Board shall adjourn into closed session for deliberations. Any person not a member of the Ethics Board, including County Board supervisors, shall be excluded from the Ethics Board's deliberations; however, the County Clerk or County Administrator and the Corporation Counsel, who are charged with providing administrative and legal assistance to the Board, shall remain.

**E.**

Disposition.

**(1)**

Upon completion of deliberations, the Ethics Board shall issue a written decision within 10 business days from the conclusion of deliberation and may direct the Corporation Counsel to draft the decision for signature by the Ethics Board Chair. The decision shall be filed with the County Clerk's office and a copy sent to the complainant and the respondent.

**(2)**

If the Ethics Board determines by clear, satisfactory and convincing evidence that a violation of this article has occurred, the Ethics Board shall refer the matter to the proper County authority:

**(a)**

For matters involving allegations against a County employee or department head: the County Administrator and governing committee;

**(b)**

For matters involving allegations against the County Administrator: the Administrative Committee;

**(c)**

For matters involving constitutional officers, e.g., County Clerk, Register of Deeds, Sheriff, Treasurer or Clerk of Circuit Court: to the official or body with the authority to remove the officer from office under County ordinance or Wisconsin Statutes.

**(d)**

For matters involving a County Board Supervisor, the County Board of Supervisors.

**(3)**

If the Ethics Board does not find a violation by clear, satisfactory and convincing evidence that a violation of this article has occurred, it shall dismiss the complaint.

**(4)**

Recommendations. The Ethics Board may make recommendations to the proper authority which may include, but are not limited to:

**(a)**

In the case of an official who is an elected County Board Supervisor, the County Clerk, Treasurer or Surveyor, that the County Board consider sanctioning, censuring, or removing the person under § 17.09(1), Wis. Stats.

**(b)**

In the case of the Clerk of Circuit Court, referring the matter to the Circuit Court judge to consider sanctioning, censuring, or removing the Clerk of Circuit Court under § 17.09(2), Wis. Stats.

**(c)**

In the case of the Sheriff, ~~coroner~~ or Register of Deeds, referring the matter to the Governor for sanctioning, censuring, or removal under § 17.09(3), Wis. Stats.

**(d)**

In the case of an employee, referring the matter to the appropriate County officer or committee to consider discipline, up to and including discharge of the employee.

**(e)**

The return of County property or funds or gifts and/or restitution for the value of the gifts, property and funds procured, obtained or retained as a violation of this ethics article. An order for return/restitution shall include a deadline for return or making restitution.

**(f)**

An order requiring the accused to conform his or her conduct to this article.

**(g)**

An order requiring an individual who has been determined to have violated this ethics article to forfeit an amount not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000 for each offense along with a payment deadline.

**(h)**

Referral to the District Attorney to commence enforcement and penalties as permitted by Wisconsin Statutes.

**(5)**

No recommendation of the Ethics Board becomes effective until 20 days after it is issued or while an application for rehearing or rehearing before the Board is pending, or the Board has announced its final determination on rehearing.

**F.**

Review.

**(1)**

Any party appearing before the Ethics Board who is dissatisfied with the decision may request a review.

**(2)**

The review is initiated by filing a written request with the County Clerk within 15 days of the Ethics Board's written decision or as required under the grievance procedure in a collective bargaining agreement. The filing of an appeal shall stay any recommendations issued by the Ethics Board. The appeal shall be to the County Board and shall be heard at the next regularly scheduled County Board meeting.

**G.**

Violations. It is unlawful for:

**(1)**

A person to violate any provision of this article or state statutes incorporated herein.

**(2)**

Any person to file a complaint for the purpose of harassment, knowingly provide false information, make a false statement, or fail to provide or misrepresent any material fact to a County agent, board, commission, committee, department, employee, officer, or official acting in an official capacity under this article.



**(3)**

A person to disobey, fail, neglect, or refuse to comply with or otherwise resist an order issued pursuant to this article.

**H.**

Penalties.

**(1)**

Any official or employee violating the provisions of this article shall be subject to a nonreimbursable forfeiture of not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000.

**(2)**

The minimum forfeiture specified in this subsection is doubled for a person who is convicted of violating the same provision of this article within a twenty-four-month period.

**(3)**

A separate offense is deemed committed on each day that a violation occurs or continues.

**(4)**

The enumerated penalties and sanctions in this section shall not be construed to limit the authority of the Ethics Board or the County from imposing any additional penalties or sanctions. Any person found by the Ethics Board to have violated any portions of this article shall be subject to private reprimand, public reprimand, denial of salary or merit increase, suspension without pay, removal from employment or office in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes or other disciplinary actions pursuant to the recommendations of the Ethics Board or judgment of the official or body to whom the decision of the Ethics Board is referred under this section. Any action taken by an official or employee that is deemed in violation of this section may be deemed void by Green Lake County.

**(5)**

Any other recommendations or others as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the intent and purpose of this article.

**§ 9-77 Advisory opinion.**

**A.**

Anyone who is subject to this article may request an advisory opinion from the Ethics Board on any matter relating to their official duties by submitting a written request to the office of the Corporation Counsel, but a request should be made only after the person has given the question careful consideration.

**B.**

The request should:

**(1)**

Clearly and fully state the question presented for an opinion.

**(2)**

Fully state the facts giving rise to the question presented.

**(3)**

Identify any information that the requestor is aware of that is relevant to the question presented. This includes identifying any specific administrative codes, guidelines, ordinances, regulations, or statutes that are relevant and any authorities or other sources that have been consulted and the responses received.

**C.**

The Corporation Counsel shall forward a copy of the request to the Ethics Board within five business days of its receipt.

**D.**

The Ethics Board shall convene to consider the request within 30 days of the date it is forwarded by the Corporation Counsel. The Ethics Board will convene in open session, but its consideration of the request will take place in a closed session. The Ethics Board shall provide a written opinion within 20 business days and may direct the Corporation Counsel to prepare the advisory opinion for signature by the Ethics Board's Chair.

**E.**

The request for an advisory opinion, the record of the Ethics Board's proceedings, and the advisory opinion are deemed confidential and shall not be made available for public inspection, but may be made public with the consent of the person who made the request.

**F.**

The Ethics Board may provide a public summary of any advisory opinion provided that the summary does not disclose the identity of the person who requested the opinion.

**G.**

A person who receives an advisory opinion shall be guided by the opinion rendered



**GREEN LAKE COUNTY**  
**OFFICE OF CORPORATION COUNSEL**

*Jeffrey A. Mann*  
*Corporation Counsel*

*Office: 920-294-4068*  
*FAX: 920-294-4069*

---

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Administrative Committee  
FROM: Jeffrey A. Mann  
DATE: December 20, 2023  
RE: 2023 Department Year-End-Review

---

Members of the Administrative Committee:

Please accept the following as a year-end-review of activities within the Office of Corporation Counsel. While this is not an exhaustive list, it summarizes some of the highlights from 2023 and is broken down into five categories: Court Activities; Training; Interdepartmental; Contract Review and Ordinances & Resolutions.

**Court Activities**

A significant portion of the Office of Corporation Counsel's duties involve preparing for and arguing legal matters before the Circuit Court. Those matters include: Children in Need of Protection & Services/Termination of Parental Rights; Involuntary Civil Commitment; Guardianship; Protective Placement and Child Support cases. Cumulatively, those five areas comprise approximately 90% of Corporation Counsel's time in court.

In the instance of Child Support, that department receives reimbursement for the time Corporation Counsel spends each month working with it on support establishment, contempt, and support enforcement. The table below illustrates the hours logged from April through November, 2023.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Hours billed</b>
April	45.40
May	45.00
June	53.60
July	40.05

August	29.40
September	39.15
October	30.07
November	41.05

Similarly, the Department of Child Protection & Services (CPS) receives reimbursement from a state grant at a rate of 26% of the amount billed by the Office of Corporation Counsel. For the first quarter, this office billed \$3,802.00, with CPS receiving \$988.52 in reimbursement. For the second and third quarters, this office billed \$13,379.85 and \$21,728.71, with CPS receiving \$3,478.76 and \$5,649.46, respectively.

The remainder of time Corporation Counsel spends in court typically focuses on prosecuting cases for Green Lake County's Land Use Planning & Zoning Department (LUPZ). LUPZ cases touch upon a variety of issues, with septic tank and zoning infractions being two of the more common.

### **Training**

Corporation Counsel offered training to multiple County entities in 2023. In April, it provided the Board of Supervisors with information pertaining to the Robert's Rules of Order. Later, in October, Corporation Counsel presented and offered recommendations to the Department of Human Service's Behavioral Health Unit on testifying in court and handling medical records requests. Corporation Counsel expects 2024 to afford additional opportunities for training, with it already being scheduled for multiple sessions with the Sheriff's Department focusing on the nuances of civil commitment and guardianship law.

### **Interdepartmental**

The Office of Corporation Counsel maintained regular contact with nearly every department making up Green Lake County in 2023. An example of this were the cooperative efforts between Corporation Counsel and Treasurer's Office to identify and file actions against properties on foreclosure of tax liens in rem.

Likewise, Corporation Counsel and the Sheriff's Department worked in conjunction to have the owner of a large, privately-owned commercial barge move out of the riparian zones attached to county-owned property along Big Green Lake which had been unlawfully moored.

Corporation Counsel was also able to acquaint itself with some of the community organizations which the County works with. One of those, Fox River Industries (FRI),

has long partnered with Green Lake County to provide work and vocational training to developmentally disabled persons residing within the County. This office sat down with the County Administrator and FRI leadership to identify ways to clarify the business relationship existing between the two entities and, in the process, acquired outside counsel to update documents which will spell out the functions and responsibilities of both parties moving forward.

Lastly, coordinated efforts were made to maximize court preparedness by meeting with the appropriate agency workers whenever possible. This proved to be of great benefit as it ensured that court proceedings moved as smoothly as possible.

### **Contract Review**

Corporation Counsel spends a great deal of its time reviewing the many contracts that flow from the various departments within the County. In 2023, this department reviewed numerous contracts pertaining to several vendors and acts who offer entertainment at the Green Lake County Fair. Additionally, this department reviewed a multitude of agreements existing between the County's Department of Human Services and the many providers it partners with to carry out its mission.

The Office of Corporation Counsel, in conjunction with the County Administrator, also focused its attention on drafting an agreement with Marquette County to ensure that both counties were afforded medical examiner services. Green Lake County named its new medical examiner in April, and the agreement was ultimately solidified with Marquette County in May.

Furthermore, the Office of Corporation Counsel reviewed the existing agreement between the County and Communications Engineering Company (CEC) that provides audio and visual equipment to the Circuit Courtrooms. After some negotiation, both parties were able to reach a mutually beneficial agreement.

### **Ordinances & Resolutions**

The Office of Corporation Counsel spent much of 2023 attending a variety of committee meetings. An assortment of ordinances and resolutions were drafted by this office, passed by these committees and were subsequently approved by the County Board. For instance, with significant assistance from the County Administrator, Chief Deputy Sheriff and Highway Department Director, a revised ordinance permitting the operation of ATV/UTV operation on many County roads was approved in April. Later that same month, this office drafted a resolution that was passed creating a new ad hoc committee commissioned with examining the construction of a new Highway Department facility.

In June, the County Board approved a resolution from the Land Conservation Committee encouraging State lawmakers to review and revise policies so that foreign ownership of Wisconsin farmlands was more closely monitored and regulated. The Office of Corporation Counsel invested significant time speaking with the Land Conservation Department director, other county's corporation counsel and researching this issue before drafting the resolution.

### **Conclusion**

2024 already appears to be a busy year, with several projects already underway including an update of procedures related to the organization of the Green Lake County Ethics Commission. I've truly enjoyed my first year in the Office of Corporation Counsel and look forward to continuing in this capacity for years to come.



**GREEN LAKE COUNTY**  
**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**  
*Cate Wylie, MBA*  
Desk 920-294-4147 • Cell 920-299-0866 • FAX: 920-294-4135  
*cwylie@greenlakecountywi.gov*

---

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR ANNUAL REPORT:**  
**YEAR END 2023**

2023 has been a year of change. The financial health and well-being of Green Lake County has defined much of my first year, but I am most proud of my impact on the employees and our culture. The decisions and project choices I have led were not always easy, but beneficial and worthwhile for the overall good of the organization. I have brought much needed transparency to County operations, sharing our struggles and opportunities, while seeking input and the appropriate permissions from Committees and the Board. I have been, and continue to be, fair-minded with the recommended changes, and accountable for the results.

Some of the highlights of 2023 include:

- Re-negotiation of the Medical Examiner Contract; the Medical Examiner was added to Green Lake County and shared with Marquette County (a reverse of previous contract).
- Hired the Corporation Counsel.
- Addressed the state of our financial issues:
  - hired a consultant to assist with getting us back on track;
  - solved the 2021 Audit issues and completed the audit;
  - hired a Finance Director;
  - reset the finance department, which is now fully actualized and working productively for the County.
- Implemented weekly leadership huddles with the exceptionally talented departmental directors; implemented monthly employee appreciation initiatives to recognize the dedication of our outstanding employees.
- Revised salient policies and practice to support a balanced and fair working environment for all employees; changed some operational dynamics that were strongly rooted in favoritism.
- Completed NACo High Performance leadership training.
- Experienced my first Green Lake County Fair.
- Implemented our first HRIS system.



- Work with WCA on initiatives that helps not only Green Lake County, but all Wisconsin counties.
- Nominated by my peers and was voted president-elect for WCEA, a subgroup of WCA.
- Brought my first balanced budget for the County, while positioning ourselves strategically for our near future needs. Highlights of the budget include:
  - Budgeting for our contractual and realistic operational obligations.
  - Set up long term financing for highways to eliminate past debt financing mistakes that ravaged the Highway Fund.
  - Centralized contingency funds to better serve all operations and not specific departments.
  - Implemented some needed operational reorganization without added employees: (Finance manager to Finance Director; HR coordinator to Finance Account Specialist; County Coroner to ME with revenue from Marquette Co. to offset additional expenses; HHS secretarial support to Highway Laborer).

We, operations and the County Board, have worked through some difficult situations including negative public perception of certain departments; clarity on operations versus committee oversight; bringing stronger alignment with policy and best practices; creating and enforcing an environment of fairness; and more. But most importantly, we have clarity on our finances; we reward collaboration; we have recognized and acted on opportunities for improvement; and changed the tone of our culture for the better!

I wish to thank every member of the County Board for their oversight and support. I also want to express my gratitude to the dedicated employees that show up, day in and day out, giving the best of themselves for the betterment of the Green Lake County.

I look forward to what 2024 has in store for us!

Respectfully,



Cate Wylie, MBA  
Green Lake County Administrator

*REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE JANUARY 16, 2024,  
AND FORWARDED TO THE GREEN LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS*



# GREEN LAKE COUNTY

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

*Elizabeth Otto*  
*County Clerk*

*Office: 920-294-4005*  
*FAX: 920-294-4009*

---

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

### COUNTY CLERK ANNUAL REPORT

**January 16, 2024**

Activities in the County Clerk's office for 2023 included:

- ❖ 2023 was our “easy” year for elections with only a February Primary and the April Spring Election. As the Chief Election Official for the county, it is my statutory duty to oversee each election by providing ballots, programming, notices, and various other services to all 16 municipalities. I truly appreciate all of the work that goes into each election for the municipal clerks and I enjoy working with all of them. 2024 is a huge election year with a February Primary, April Spring Election, August Primary, and of course the November General Election. This year the April election includes all of the County Board Supervisors so work began on that in mid-November with nomination and filing paperwork.
- ❖ I combined with Marquette and Waushara County to provide election training for all of our municipal clerks and election workers on December 8, 2023 in Wautoma. We offered two sessions (morning and afternoon) and it was well attended with approximately 125 people in each session. This worked out well and I hope to combine again in the future.
- ❖ Marriage licenses were on the increase in 2023 over the previous year with 114 total applications taken.
- ❖ Passport application processing increased once again in 2023 with 275! We have seen a dramatic increase every year since 2020. Annual training is required to keep our certificates up to date and to provide accurate information for each situation and questions that arise. Both Nan and Karissa do an excellent job of providing this service to area residents. We also offer the photo processing option which many agents don't provide so this gives applicants the convenience of a “one stop shop” for their passports.
- ❖ Health insurance proved to be a challenge again in 2023 due to a program change with our provider, Employee Trust Funds. This involved new applications from all employees during open enrollment along with removing the HSA option and reinstating the FSA option for employees.
- ❖ Late in the year I worked with the County Administrator to help input the new BambooHR system for all employees. This system replaces the previous Halogen system to manage hiring, performance, and personnel information for all employees.
- ❖ In October of this year my longtime Deputy, Samantha Stobbe, moved into the Finance Department and was replaced by Karissa Block. Karissa has done a fantastic job in her new role and offers great customer service to both fellow employees and residents. Although we miss Samantha, the transition has been smooth and Nan and I are happy to have Karissa here.

- ❖ Other services my office currently provides in addition to those mentioned above include:
  - Agendas, minutes, meeting notice requirements, and publication of county board proceedings
  - Annual county directory
  - Benefits and COBRA administration for all employees including WRS, all insurance, flex spending, FMLA, and Nationwide retirement options
  - County payroll
  - Door and badge security programming for the Government Center
  - DNR license sales
  - Insurance requirements such as property, liability, vehicle, and worker's comp
  - Mail distribution and management of postage costs
  - New employee orientation/onboarding
  - Purchasing and distribution of office supplies
  - Snowmobile maintenance grant funding and the SNARS system
  - Timecard management through the Time Management system
  
- ❖ I am currently working on 2023 year end items such as W2's, 1095C's, and retirement reconciliation with the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS). This always makes for a busy January!
  
- ❖ Each year I like to take the opportunity to thank my staff for their contribution to this office. Both Karissa and Nan provide much appreciated assistance to me and the general public, including our fellow Green Lake County employees. Both of them have a great work ethic and are willing to "go the extra mile" in any situation.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or comments you may have.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Elizabeth Otto*  
Elizabeth Otto  
County Clerk

## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT (Revenues Only)

TO: THE HONORABLE CHAIRMAN AND BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF GREEN LAKE COUNTY

COUNTY CLERK		2022	2023
<b>FISH &amp; GAME LICENSES</b>	Gross license fees remitted to state	\$1,386.75	\$1,425.30
	License fees retained by County	\$51.20	\$82.25
	Interest	\$0.09	\$0.80
<b>DOG LICENSES</b>	License fees collected	\$9,220.50	\$8,883.50
	License fees remitted to state	\$485.90	\$468.45
<b>MARRIAGE LICENSES</b>	114 marriage licenses at \$75.00/each	\$8,175.00	\$8,550.00
	Waivers: at \$25.00/each	\$275.00	\$225.00
	Fees remitted to state (114 @ \$25.00)	\$2,750.00	\$2,850.00
<b>MAILINGS</b>	Postage - county offices	\$46,511.26	\$48,513.51
	Municipal mailings - fees to the county (Real Estate tax bills)	\$7,894.38	\$7,207.46
<b>PASSPORTS</b>	275 Acceptance Fees collected at \$35.00/each	\$8,435.00	\$9,625.00
	Passport Photo Fees (\$10.00 each)	\$2,315.00	\$2,630.00
<b>ELECTION CHARGES</b>	WisVote entry charges/supplies/S&H	\$6,565.00	\$5,103.33
<b>ELECTION NOTICES</b>	newspapers notices submitted by the county	\$7,783.60	\$2,240.00

### PAYROLL STATISTICS

<b>PAYROLL</b>	Total county payroll W2's for 2023 - 262	\$12,030,552.96	\$12,154,799.99
	New Hires	37	42
	Exits	42	42
	Retirements	12	9
	Terminations (1 death in 2023)	6	6
	Voluntary	24	28

Respectfully submitted,  
*Elizabeth A. Otto*  
 Elizabeth A. Otto, County Clerk

**Green Lake County  
County Board Annual Report  
2023  
Information Technology Department**

Submitted to the Honorable Chairman and Board of Supervisors for Green Lake County

---

Highlights of the IT Departments activities during 2023:

1. The IT Department continued our service and support of all County employees with immediate attention to their computing needs - whether assisting by phone, email, in person, or remotely when called upon.
2. The IT department was responsible for all computers, servers, MFPs, network devices, iPhones, iPads, desk phones, and an extensive number of computing applications and software packages. All are located across different facilities and interconnected across all County departments, units, and agencies.
3. Continued the management and running of the building security system and its on-going support workload.
4. Performed continuous software upgrades and patches to improve the efficiency of County employees, security, and their response to other departments and to the public.
5. Remote access provided to employees and their applications along with online services added for public access.
6. Continued protecting all PCs with on-site security patching services and modern endpoint protection.
7. Continued to run and manage the monthly employee security trainings and ongoing assessments of said trainings for all employees.
8. Performed all the IT financial and IT purchasing needs for the County.
9. Maintained the data backup system's infrastructure and its daily operation.
10. Rolled out secure Password Management for all employees.

11. Sheriff Office and Police Department's main RMS system expanded and upgraded.
12. IT Department was given responsibilities of the County phones, phone system, and voicemail.
13. All IT Department employees are members of the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs and Wisconsin Emergency Management's state-wide Cyber Response Team. Attended trainings and monthly updates and participated in incident responses.
14. Added resilience to the time synchronization system required by all County infrastructure.
15. Improved the multi-levels of backup and cloud backup.
16. Corrections canteen and door check systems upgraded and improved.
17. Increased the use of multi-factor authentication across many critical systems and provided several means for employees to validate.
18. Handled multiple large-scale issues that arose with the Government Center's building door security and camera system without losing service or video.
19. Continually manage and handle all departments' data resource needs and requirements.
20. 440 formal helpdesk tickets created in 2023.
21. Updated the Print Management critical system that is used county-wide.
22. Hoisted Child Support's document management system to the cloud to keep them on an updated and supported system.
23. Undertook the change to setup and manage syncing all employee local data with the cloud.
24. Managed all computing accounts setup and tear down for all employee transitions (starting, exiting, transferring)
25. Moved all remote devices over to newer and faster VPN communications.
26. Attended all Monday morning department meetings run by County Administrator.
27. Veteran Services office moved over to new RMS system of their choosing.
28. Updated and upgraded the Government Center's HVAC system.

29. Increased the speed to all the WAN sites serviced from the Government Center.
30. Many laptops rolled out, or upgraded, or repaired during the year.
31. Upgraded key component and station used in Fox River Industries manufacturing pipeline.
32. Increased wi-fi connectivity at Fox River Industries.
33. Many device upgrades to improve reliability and employee's effectiveness.
34. Completed work and planning to meet the IT needs of all departments for next year's budget. Gathered all the info, researched best options, and accumulated quotes and figures for a detailed budget with final approval for all by the Finance Department, County Administrator, and County Board.
35. Maintained and extended the life of all computing hardware and software used throughout the County. We purchase high-quality equipment upfront and run it for as long as possible. We continually maintain and are proactive with future needs. We perform most all repairs ourselves saving the County from expensive outsourcing costs.
36. Upgraded the County Clerk's DNR station.
37. Worked with and completed upgrades and changes to meet the needs of HHS's PCI compliance for new customer payment options.
38. Setup the County's new offices like Finance and Medical Examiner.
39. Institution-wide implemented full device encryption for all laptop systems.
40. Moved the Dispatch Center up to the WI Department of Justice's new portal system.
41. Provided assistance and specified a more capable forensics system for Sherriff Office detectives.
42. Completed the cutover for all departments from @co.green-lake.wi.us mail domain to new and secure @greenlakecountywi.gov domain.
43. Upgraded County's voicemail to a newer and more cost-effective system.
44. Built out the video board for HHS usage for trainings and meetings.
45. Helped to facilitate increased usage by all departments of both the external and internal websites. All departments have direct, secure, access to their

- key areas so they can quickly and easily communicate to the public and internally to employees.
46. Upgraded all of the Sheriff Office's smartphones.
  47. Continued maintaining key power protection UPSs for all sites.
  48. Continued inventory and tagging of all IT equipment.
  49. On-going use of open-source alternatives to save future dollars. We use numerous open-source operating systems and software packages to save on both upfront licensing costs and future licensing and support costs.
  50. Completed multiple major upgrades and changes to all departments' specific systems. All departments at the County have both separate and shared systems that they rely on for day-to-day operations.
  51. Provided and managed shared equipment for checkout by any County personnel to keep costs down by promoting the continued sharing of resources like projectors and laptops.

Respectfully submitted,  
William R. Hutchison  
Green Lake County - Information Technology Director





# GREEN LAKE COUNTY

## OFFICE OF THE REGISTER OF DEEDS

**Renee Thiem-Korth**  
Register of Deeds

Office: 920-294-4021  
FAX: 920-299-5075

---

January 16, 2024

To: The Green Lake County Board of Supervisors

From: Renee A. Thiem-Korth, Green Lake County Register of Deeds

The Office of the Register of Deeds was established in Wisconsin in 1836. In 1848, Wisconsin Constitution established the Register of Deeds as a permanent element of the county-level governmental structure. Each of the 72 counties in Wisconsin has a Register of Deeds. The office must abide by Wisconsin Statutes 59.43 and 69. We must also be familiar with many other Wisconsin Statutes to perform our duties. While being familiar with the Statutes, we cannot provide legal advice.

The Register of Deeds is a revenue bearing office for the State of Wisconsin and the County of which it is located in. By State Statute, all recordings, and copies, whether certified or uncertified, have a fee associated with them. While the fee remains the same, at this time, the revenue does fluctuate based on economy and sales of real estate and vital records.

The Register of Deeds office is a starting point for the work of many other offices within the county. The documents recorded in the ROD office are then used by many other offices for information. The Treasurer and Real Property Lister utilize all land transfers recorded by the ROD office to update the tax roll. The Land Use Planning and Zoning office utilize land transfers to issue permits from their office. The GIS department uses land transfers to update the online GIS mapping. Land Conservation utilizes land records for maintenance agreements with landowners. The Register of Deeds office also works with the Health and Human Services department and the Veterans Service Office for issuance of vital records.

The Register of Deeds office follows individuals the full span of their lives. From birth to death, and all along their life, individuals will continue interaction with the Register of Deeds office. From the issuance of your birth certificate to filing your death certificate, our office will assist you. The deed for your real estate purchases, along with your mortgages and satisfactions and other real estate documents, are recorded in the Register of Deeds office. The Green Lake County Register of Deeds office currently has over 100 different types of documents which can be recorded. Each document is review for statutory requirements before they can be recorded. Your marriage and divorce certificates can be obtained only in the Register of Deeds office as well. If you are in the Military, once discharged, you can have your DD-214 placed on file for safe keeping in the Register of Deeds office. These are just to name a few of the services provided by the office. From birth to death, you will have continuous involvement with the Register of Deeds office.

The Register of Deeds office also helps people with genealogy. This can be a very time-consuming process, and there are days we have genealogist in our office for hours and hours and sometimes days, looking for where their ancestors lived, or vital records of ancestors. We must be very well versed in genealogy to help others.

Moving into 2024 I am hoping to complete the last of the scanning projects. These projects were started years ago with former Registers. I have a quote to move forward with this project. The office has restricted funds from social security redaction which will cover over half of the cost. This final scanning project would provide a backup for documents which currently have no backup. This will also allow title companies, attorneys, genealogists, and all citizens to do a complete search of real estate, deeds, mortgages, and satisfactions etc., online. These digitized documents could also provide some income to the county through our online searching. While the documents will not be completely indexed, they will be searchable by document, volume, and page numbers. Our office back indexes documents as time allows.

The office made staffing changes in 2023. A Chief Deputy position was added, a full-time position was removed, and a part-time position was added. Erica VanRossum was hired as the part-time deputy. Erica started in January 2024.

As Register of Deeds, my office staff, Chief Deputy Pam Weber, and Deputy Erica VanRossum and I will continue to do our best to serve the citizens of the county and all who utilize our office, in the best way possible. One way being continued is the Property Fraud Alert system. This is now being utilized by many real estate owners in the county.

Statewide, there is pending legislation regarding the transfer fee return split, this did pass the Senate. A bill to increase the recording fees for recording documents is also being looked at. Both are currently being monitored by the Register of Deeds Association. Also, the WRDA is working on simplifying, clarifying, reorganizing and bring s. 59.43 up to date with technology.

To watch a brief video of who the Register of Deeds office is and what we do, please go to:

<https://www.wrdaonline.org/video>

Please find following this cover letter, the 2023 annual report for the Green Lake County Register of Deeds Office. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at your convenience.

Thank you,

Renee A. Thiem-Korth

# REGISTER OF DEEDS OFFICE

## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted by Renee A. Thiem-Korth

January 16, 2024

				GROSS REVENUE	COUNTY REVENUE
<b>WISCONSIN REAL ESTATE TRANSFER FEES</b>				<b>\$501,891.00</b>	
County Share	20%	\$100,378.20			\$100,378.20
WDOR Share	80%	\$401,512.80			
<b>RECORDINGS</b>					
Real Estate	3312 recordings & 4 plats *			<b>\$99,535.00</b>	<b>\$49,855.00</b>
County Land Records Fees	\$8 fee	\$26,496.00			
State Land Records Fees	\$7 fee	\$23,184.00			
County ROD Recording Fees	\$15 fee	\$49,855.00	* 3 X \$50 & 1 X \$25		
<b>VITAL STATISTICS</b>					
<b>Births Certified - 1st Copy \$5</b>	248				
Add'l Certified copies \$3	339			<b>\$7,524.00</b>	<b>\$2,439.00</b>
Fees Rmtd to State-Trust Fund \$7	\$2,373.00				
Fees Remitted to State \$8	\$2,712.00				
<b>Deaths Certified - 1st Copy \$7</b>	437				
Add'l Certified copies \$3	4,535				
Fees Remitted to State \$13	\$5,681.00			<b>\$21,034.00</b>	<b>\$15,353.00</b>
<b>Marriages Cert. - 1st Copy \$7</b>	177				
Add'l Certified copies \$3	359				
Fees Remitted to State \$13	\$2,301.00			<b>\$4,617.00</b>	<b>\$2,316.00</b>
<b>Divorce Certificate - 1st Copy \$7</b>	2				
Add'l Certified copies \$3	0				
Fees Remitted to State \$13	\$26.00			<b>\$40.00</b>	<b>\$14.00</b>
<b>Official Records Online \$2.50</b>	40				
				<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>TAPESTRY/MONARCH REVENUE</b>				<b>\$8,691.36</b>	<b>\$8,691.36</b>
<b>LAREDO COPY FEE</b>				<b>\$10,343.50</b>	<b>\$10,343.50</b>
<b>LAREDO REVENUE</b>				<b>\$32,044.05</b>	<b>\$32,044.05</b>
<b>COPIES</b>				<b>\$2,316.75</b>	<b>\$2,316.75</b>
<b>MISC. INCOME</b>				<b>\$1.00</b>	<b>\$1.00</b>
<b>TOTAL GROSS REVENUE</b>				<b>\$688,137.66</b>	
<b>TOTAL COUNTY REVENUE</b>					<b>\$223,851.86</b>



# GREEN LAKE COUNTY

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY TREASURER

Jessica McLean  
Treasurer

Office: 920-294-4018  
FAX: 920-299-5064

---

January 12, 2024

It is my pleasure to present the 2023 annual report for the office of the Green Lake County Treasurer.

- Two bond payments issued, one on March 1<sup>st</sup>, the second on September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Negotiated with local financial institutions for higher interest rates on county invested funds.
- Elected Vice Chair for County Treasurer's District 2.
- Worked closely with accounting consultant, which included building an additional monthly reconciliation process.
- Collected over \$280k in delinquent property taxes.
- Continued to assist with the Wisconsin Help for Homeowners in Green Lake County, which provided relief of over \$300k for local taxpayers.
- Assisted with Highway borrowing process.
- Attended the WCTA Conference in Door County.
- Continue to manage the credit card portfolio.
- Manage Highway loan payments.
- Worked closely with DHHS to create a process and open a bank account for a new billing software.
- Hosted our annual municipal Treasurer/Clerk meeting in November with great attendance.
- Officially ended the 2022 property tax collection leaving a total of \$476,257.66 in delinquent 2022 property taxes.
- Working closely with the Corporation Counsel's office regarding the In Rem process.
- Ordered and reviewed all title reports for each In Rem property.
- Ran statutory publications in local newspaper.
- Assisted municipalities with the 1<sup>st</sup> installment property tax collection process. Many of which were one on one sessions in my office.
- Interest rates have leveled off in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023, however, have been significantly higher than previous years.

At the end of November, our office started to receive certified levy amounts for all the many municipalities and districts within our county. The municipal clerks enter the levy amounts along with any special assessments, special charges, or delinquent charges in our tax software. Our office then verifies all the information, calculates the taxes, and waits for final approval from the municipality to print the bills. During this time, there is a lot of communication via phone and email. Fortunately, our office holds good relationships with all the municipalities and this process is done in a prompt and professional manner. Our office then prints and folds every tax bill for Green Lake County. The total amount of bills printed and folded for 2023 was 18,829. This is a timely process,

thankfully the Treasurer's office operates like a well-oiled machine and likes a good challenge. The last of the tax bills were mailed on December 18, 2023.

In February, the tax settlement process will be complete. At this time, the municipal Treasurers turn their collection records over to the county. The percentage of all taxes collected by January 31<sup>st</sup> need to be distributed to all districts within the 16 municipalities by February 20<sup>th</sup>. These calculations are done in this office.

In addition to collecting taxes, the Treasurer's office continues to be a central location for many important functions within the Government Center. Some of these functions include, receipting and depositing all monies, keeping daily balances of all bank accounts, distributing all checks for the county, investing excess funds, maintaining records of all unpaid and delinquent taxes, assisting local municipal clerks and treasurers with their tax collection and settlement as well as their tax and assessment roll preparation, and furnish complete and balanced tax settlements to the Department of Revenue, In Rem processing for delinquent property taxes, to name a few.

The Treasurer's office houses the Real Property Lister position which is held by Stefanie Meeker. In 2023, the Real Property Lister processed approximately 1,200 various documents, some of which include, Warranty Deeds, Quit Claim Deeds, and Certified Survey Maps. This number is in line with previous years. Approximately 120 tax parcels had geographical changes in 2023, this number is in line with previous years as well. The assessment process for 2023 went well. The Town of St Marie had a revaluation in 2023. Their final assessment rolls were completed much later than others, however that is to be expected in a revaluation year. Looking forward to 2024; some municipalities have contracted with different assessors, two of which are new to Green Lake County. Stefanie has begun the "rollover" process into 2024. This process consists of creating new assessment rolls for all municipalities, making sure the assessment beginning balances match for each municipality along with several other items.

I'd like to take this time to recognize the staff in my office. Stefanie Meeker, Real Property Lister/Deputy Treasurer has been with the Treasurer's office for a total of just over 10 years. Her knowledge of the Treasurer's office along with the Real Property Lister duties are extensive. She has the gift to problem solve and always lend a helping hand to not only our office but to other departments as well. Brenda Sondalle, Deputy Treasurer has been in the Treasurer's office for 2 years. Brenda's attention to detail and organizational skills are beyond measure. She is always willing to assist where needed and greet you with a smile.

As always, our goal for 2024 is to continue to provide accurate and friendly customer service. Our office strives to be helpful, respectful, and transparent to everyone that enters our doors.

Respectfully submitted,



County Treasurer

**TO THE HONORABLE CHAIRMAN AND BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF GREEN LAKE COUNTY**

I herewith submit the annual report of the Green Lake County Treasurer's office for the period of  
**January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023**

Report on General Activity in County Treasurer's office for 2023:

	<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>	<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>
	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
General Receipts	15,455,982.55	33,769,512.42
General Property Tax Receipts	8,428,904.15	8,915,279.00
Withdrawals related to payroll/general maintenance checks	9,000,000.00	10,733,000.00
Total Interest Received on Investments	135,179.08	187,784.97
Sales Tax Received	2,043,043.25	2,108,613.02
Withdrawal of Sales Tax funds for loan payment on bldg	924,581.77	1,102,593.15
Total Interest and Penalty Received on Delinquent Taxes	150,260.41	204,601.97
ARPA Funds	1,836,814.50	0.00
Boat Launch	49,497.00	57,835.00
Highway Loan	0.00	3,600,000.00
Total General Maintenance Checks	13,714,696.30	17,257,064.45
Real Estate Transfer Fees	407,786.13	412,855.38
Total Sales Tax Wires	2,034,160.78	2,145,636.65
Repayment of Bond Loan +Interest on Loan	924,581.77	1,102,593.15
Outstanding Check Resolutions and Banks Fees	3,203.32	8,348.53
Repayment of Highway Loan +Interest on Loan	0.00	2,458,525.00
ARPA Funds Transfer	1,836,814.50	1,128,439.27

**Report of Cash Balance on Hand**

**STATEMENT OF CONDITION OF GREEN LAKE COUNTY**

From January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023

Cash Balance 1-1-23	1,240,036.03	
Receipts - 2023	60,679,219.53	
	61,919,255.56	
Disbursements - 2023		61,088,887.95
Required Cash Balance 12-31-23		830,367.61

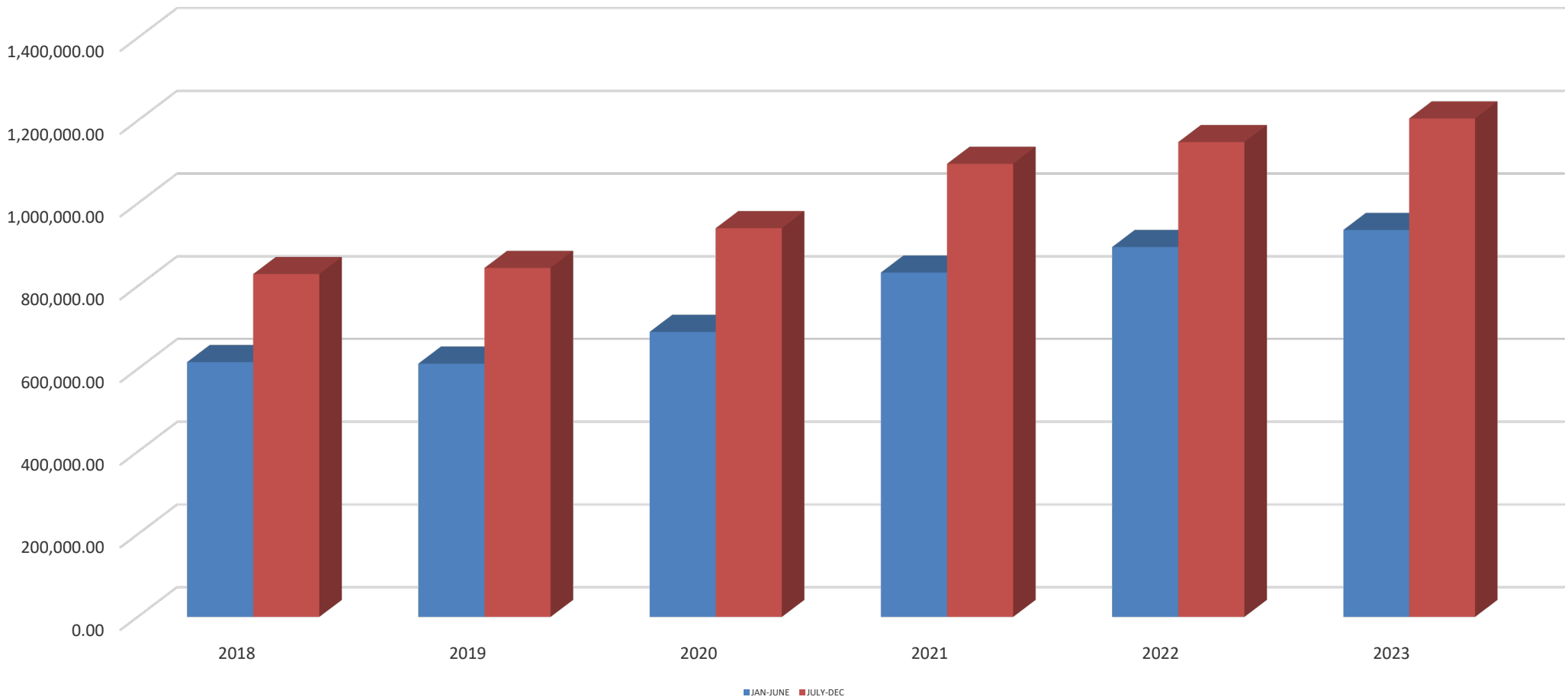
Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica McLean, County Treasurer

## SALES TAX COMPARISON BY MONTH

	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Highest</b>	<b>Lowest</b>
JANUARY	89,933.78	109,509.43	128,731.85	129,049.30	129,910.32	132,549.17	97,891.12	132,549.17	62,321.73
FEBRUARY	126,251.39	119,075.76	116,846.62	133,920.39	165,044.95	196,656.86	97,952.41	196,656.86	60,255.84
MARCH	75,898.03	85,550.74	90,381.98	100,966.39	109,740.25	119,323.49	84,615.91	119,323.49	46,994.44
APRIL	72,655.36	76,224.82	113,659.11	127,433.63	136,138.08	127,794.28	78,505.10	136,138.08	36,804.46
MAY	125,227.50	118,471.32	119,338.16	151,450.22	159,631.49	170,254.53	88,619.68	170,254.53	41,257.94
JUNE	126,711.01	104,210.27	120,755.71	190,264.84	194,310.06	189,432.17	102,393.52	194,310.06	59,400.00
JULY	116,127.56	143,859.66	168,092.46	191,059.31	177,408.66	196,260.51	108,157.51	196,260.51	15,457.04
AUGUST	184,463.92	182,104.04	171,355.64	199,478.15	199,766.82	212,840.16	126,520.03	212,840.16	83,741.27
SEPTEMBER	126,122.19	106,728.23	161,646.56	186,737.85	207,875.18	222,261.39	125,287.27	222,261.39	1,077.35
OCTOBER	144,616.82	154,381.89	163,549.99	185,341.04	185,549.27	188,231.58	122,735.31	188,231.58	64,005.77
NOVEMBER	154,928.51	158,042.83	135,345.97	163,382.51	198,999.02	211,363.18	126,018.58	211,363.18	64,072.75
DECEMBER	103,170.65	99,052.48	140,318.27	169,786.68	178,669.33	174,339.55	111,769.17	178,669.33	64,039.26
<b>30,976,984.79</b>	<b>1,446,106.72</b>	<b>1,457,211.47</b>	<b>1,630,022.32</b>	<b>1,928,870.31</b>	<b>2,043,043.43</b>	<b>2,141,306.87</b>	<b>1,245,325.34</b>	<b>2,043,043.43</b>	<b>931,953.00</b>
	3.96%	0.77%	11.86%	18.33%	5.92%	4.81%			
<b>By Quarter</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>			
Qtr 1	292,083.20	314,135.93	335,960.45	363,936.08	404,695.52	448,529.52			
Qtr 2	324,593.87	298,906.41	353,752.98	469,148.69	490,079.63	487,480.98			
Qtr 3	426,713.67	432,691.93	501,094.66	577,275.31	585,050.66	631,362.06			
Qtr 4	402,715.98	411,477.20	439,214.23	518,510.23	563,217.62	573,934.31			
Total	1,446,106.72	1,457,211.47	1,630,022.32	1,928,870.31	2,043,043.43	2,141,306.87			
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-			

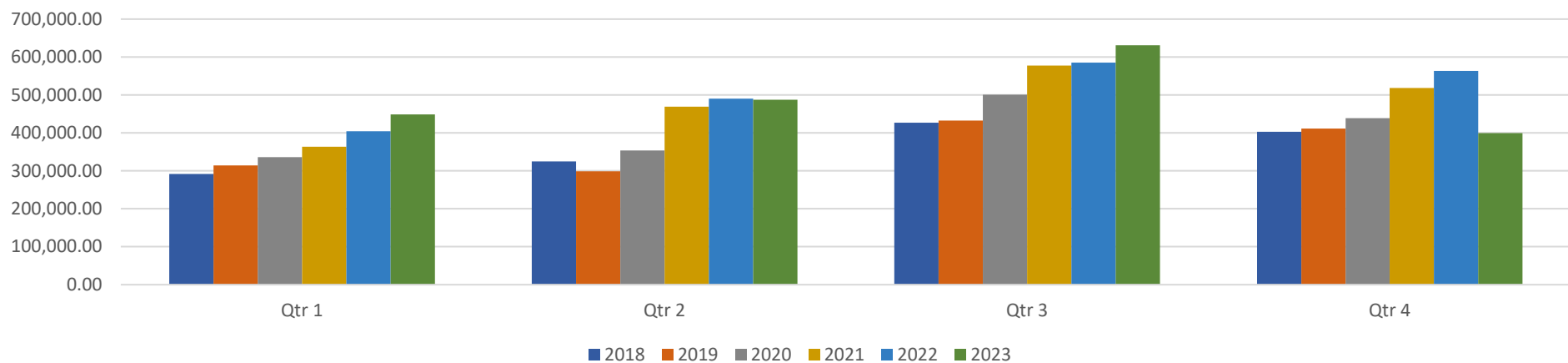
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
JAN-JUNE	616,677.07	613,042.34	689,713.43	833,084.77	894,775.15	936,010.50
JULY-DEC	829,429.65	844,169.13	940,308.89	1,095,785.54	1,148,268.28	1,205,296.37

SALES TAX Q1/2 VS Q3/4





### Sales Tax Revenue by Quarter



### Sales Tax Revenue by Month

