



Office of the County Executive

Jonathan Delagrave

730 Wisconsin Avenue

Racine, WI 53403

262-636-3273

fax: 262-636-3549

Jonathan.Delagrave@racinecounty.com

October 10, 2017

COUNTY EXECUTIVE JONATHAN DELAGRAVE PRESENTS 2018 BUDGET
(As prepared for delivery)

Mister Chairman, Madam Vice-Chairman, members of the County Board, Youth in Governance Representatives, distinguished guests, and residents of Racine County.

In my first budget address in the fall of 2015, I spoke about vision.

Last year, I described the “big picture.”

In this, my third budget address, I’m going to speak about time.

I’m not talking about calendar time – linear time - or what the Ancient Greeks referred to as Kronos. Kronos time is the ordinary time of our days that marches ever forward. Kronos, ironically, is also the name of the county’s timecard software.

I’m referring to Kairos. Kairos is a moment in time, a time that knows no boundaries, extraordinary time. Kairos means “the right, critical, or opportune moment for action.” It is the perfect time that an arrow must be released from the bow to hit a target.

I believe that in the last few months, Racine County has been in Kairos. We are in a moment – a season – that will change the projection of our County and our region for our generation and those to come.

These past few months have been filled with unprecedented events. “Unprecedented” has been used to describe the July floods. It was used to

describe SC Johnson's \$6.5 million donation for the new aquatic center at Pritchard Park.

That word also applies to three unrelated but equally visionary programs: the Resilient Communities Initiative Series held by the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, Visioning Greater Racine's community engagement; and the first Future Region Grant, awarded to Racine County this fall.

And of course, unprecedented is the perfect word – in this Kairos moment - to describe the immense economic opportunity that was just announced last week: Foxconn.

This speech, however, is about the 2018 Racine County budget. My pledge and obligation to you, the taxpayers and people of Racine County, is to keep our County budget in the time of Kronos.

I've consistently emphasized three goals as County Executive: establishing a Racine County ready workforce, improving mental health services, and attracting I-94 economic development.

The team at RCEDC, led by the illustrious Executive Director Jenny Trick, has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that our yearly investment of county funds has yielded an impressive return. Recent projects supported through the County's high-impact Revolving Loan Fund or RLF have included InSinkerator's office development in Mount Pleasant, the expansion of Yorkville's pharmaceutical company, Merz, and Caledonia's Norco Manufacturing and DeBack Farms Business Park.

RCEDC also took the lead to apply for and win one of the first Local Government Institute's "Future Regions" grants. Facilitated by futurist Rebecca Ryan, this year long grant includes a comprehensive strategic plan that will focus on the development potential of the I-94 corridor in Racine County.

Foxconn would not be calling Racine County home without the leadership, drive, and dedication of RCEDC. Their mission doesn't end there, though. We want our existing Racine County companies to succeed as well.

Therefore, I am capitalizing a new RLF fund with a \$750,000 investment and increasing our contract with RCEDC by \$100,000.

This interplay between time and seizing upon opportune moments has been dramatic this year, and our Human Services Department (HSD), under the deft leadership of Hope Otto, has reflected both the steady drumbeat of Kronos and the lightning changes of Kairos.

Our future prosperity rests on our ability to cultivate the health and well-being of the next generation. Yet, more Racine County families and children are entering our Child Welfare and foster care system than ever before.

Simply increasing services is insufficient to move the needle on this issue. We need to be strategic, innovative, and pre-emptive. Therefore, we are investing in prevention programming and the development of a trauma-informed community.

I spoke earlier this year about adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, and how these negative childhood experiences impact adult actions and choices. No community is immune to this problem; however, local data demonstrates that Racine has significantly higher levels of early childhood adversity than what was found in the original ACE research.

When it comes to childhood development, our society drastically underfunds prevention services. Although the rate of return on dollars spent is highest in childhood, most of our dollars are spent for costly adult interventions. Early investment lays a foundation for success while reducing social spending and achieving better outcomes. In other words, if we focus more of our efforts and resources on our vulnerable youth today, we will save tax dollars and maximize return on investment in the future.

As you know, the Human Services Department is the umbrella of several different divisions, including Youth and Family, Behavioral Health, Juvenile Detention, and Workforce Solutions. In the budget, these are addressed as separate, siloed departments. As Hope and her team know; however, many of our families are engaged with two or more divisions within HSD. Our efforts will be more impactful if we work in concert with one another.

For example, Youth and Family Division Manager Kerry Milkie and her team are training all Human Services personnel and critical community partners in trauma-informed care. Meanwhile, Behavior Health Division Manager Michelle Goggins has dedicated two therapists to provide counseling to children and families to identify and address the social barriers that are caused by ACEs and other

traumatic events. The goal is to align efforts to optimize and target mental health services within HSD.

Barriers to employment are often rooted in the same trauma experienced in child welfare. Therefore, Workforce Solutions' youth employment counselors are working to develop pathways to further education and sustainable employment for those young adults who may otherwise fall through the cracks.

Information Technology is a high-wage, high-demand field with huge growth opportunities. Workforce Solutions Manager Mark Mundl and his team have collaborated with area partners to launch two youth-targeted IT training programs: Start IT and TechHire. Both ventures offer technical and soft skills training to overcome common barriers to work readiness. We are building the talent pipeline that our community will soon demand.

We also recognize that success in new ventures often requires good peer support and networking. The Vibe is a new facilitated networking group for young adults to improve career awareness and obtain meaningful employment. The classroom-based GED 5.09 program allows students to earn their High School Equivalency Diploma in 20 weeks. Both have added peer-supported accountability to our efforts. To date, Racine County residents have earned more GEDs than our neighboring counties combined.

What gets measured gets improved. Simply, our community deserves to know the effectiveness of their tax dollar investment. Our newly-hired data manager, Travis Richardson, will ensure HSD services are driven by data and meet the challenges of our communities. For example, tracking our Foster Care programs will ensure we are both effectively reducing the number of Racine County children entering foster care and recruiting more foster-care families.

The Human Services Department has operating expenses of \$47.8 million with only \$5.5 million on the tax levy.

Racine County has been active in finding solutions for Racine County's homeless population, and supportive of the Homeless Assistance Leadership Organization (HALO) new inclusive model, which better tackles our community needs. HALO faces a critical funding shortage and capacity issues. My budget plan allocates \$100,000 to HALO and their mission to ensure everyone has a safe place to stay and, just as importantly, has access to vital supportive services.

This season of Kairos has not been confined to Racine County. Unprecedented hurricanes and devastating floods have wiped out entire cities and island countries. The horrific mass shooting in Las Vegas defies description. In these Kairos moments, we take for granted the uniformed men and women who are first on the scene, the first to slog through the floods, the first to search hotel rooms for a madman.

In Racine County, we are fortunate to have a Sheriff who is committed to our public safety now and into the future. Sheriff Chris Schmaling and his team unveiled a proactive and thoughtful five-year plan this fall that addresses the changing Racine County landscape with the arrival of Foxconn and increased economic development. Updated infrastructure, increased staffing needs, state of the art equipment and technology, and the latest training are all important to properly prepare Sheriff's Office personnel to protect our community.

Sheriff Schmaling didn't stop there. He recently entered into a contract with the State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections to house up to 130 state prisoners in our Racine County Jail. Not only does this arrangement ease the overcrowding in the prison system, it is financially advantageous to our taxpayers. Daily housing of up to 130 state prisoners will generate over \$2.5 million annually.

This foresight and drive is just one of the reasons why the Sheriff's Office continues to be on the forefront of the battle against the opioid epidemic and internet crimes against our most vulnerable, our children.

Both District Attorney Tricia Hanson and Clerk of Courts Sam Christensen are used to running a tight ship on a tight budget. As caseloads and court cases have increased and technology has changed the way both offices do business, the 2018 budget adds needed resources to both offices: 2.5 staff positions to the DA's office, and long-overdue remodel of the jury assembly room for the Courts.

Another accomplishment is the planned replacement of our aging voting system. Over the past two years, our illustrious County Clerk Wendy Christensen has facilitated the purchase of new voting machines for all the county municipalities. By coordinating this purchase at the county level, we obtained a volume discount and streamlined delivery and training sessions. The new machines will be used starting with the 2018 elections.

We all have first-hand experience of the importance of a secure IT network. John Barrett and the Information Technology Department is focused on strengthening

IT security, including protecting and monitoring of our network and data throughout the county. You'll also soon see – finally, and much to your delight – an audio and video upgrade upstairs in the Ives Grove auditorium and in these County Board Chambers.

If IT is the lifeline for any efficient business today, then leadership is our lifeblood, and teamwork is our backbone. Human Resources Director Karen Galbraith has spearheaded our year-long leadership training, Living as a Leader, for over 70 County Employees. Once a month, these department heads, supervisors, and managers meet in a large workshop or small coaching group to improve communication, mentoring, and supervisory skills. Developing leaders is key for the future health of County Government. It is also vital for those times when leadership is unexpectedly called upon.

As I stated earlier, I believe that in the last few months, Racine County has been in an extraordinary time – Kairos. Let me explain.

In May, over 70 representatives from Racine County participated in a 4-day mock emergency management course.

In July, the emergency became real. We experienced an unprecedented flood on the western side of the county and the City of Burlington was especially hit hard. Leaders stepped forward from throughout the county, the state, and the country to help our communities and residents in need.

I'm especially proud of the Racine County Communications Center, led by coolheaded Director Jackie Bratz, who seamlessly assumed all City of Burlington police, fire, and rescue dispatching duties within hours of the flood. Let me point out – Jackie and her team added these calls during a crisis and from our back-up dispatching center, as the Communications Center lost their phone lines for 12 hours during the severe storm.

Also within hours of the flood, Register of Deeds Tyson Fettes and his crack GIS mapping team developed a specialized Racine County damage assessment app for smartphones. Please note: Tyson and his team were attending an ESRI conference in California at the time! This app helped the assessment teams tremendously by compiling, verifying, and mapping the flood damage for FEMA reporting, all in real time.

Both the FEMA training and the flood taught us valuable lessons regarding the state of Racine County's emergency preparedness. As David Maack, Racine County's Emergency Management Coordinator said, it takes a good emergency for us to value good emergency management! The 2018 budget includes back-up generators and a mobile Emergency Operations Command post – and several robust tabletop trainings, I'm sure!

As county executive, I have the privilege of meeting community leaders and extraordinary citizens who spend their time trying to make our county a better place. Sometimes these leaders emerge in everyday Kronos time, and sometimes these leaders seem to appear suddenly, in the flash of Kairos time. Some of their names are well recognized in the community, and some prefer to do their good work very quietly.

In a world that sometimes feels as though it's moving just too fast, I want to pause a moment – and shine a spotlight on a couple of these truly thoughtful and dedicated people and their good work. So tonight, I'd like to introduce the Racine County Executive's Community Impact Awards, which recognize one individual or group of people, and one nonprofit organization that are making a difference in Racine County.

This year's inaugural Community Impact award goes to a group of six Burlington officials: City Administrator Carina Walters, Fire Chief Alan Babe, Police Chief Mark Anderson, Mayor Jeannie Hefty, Director of Administrative Services Megan Watkins, and Finance Director Steve DeQuaker.

The torrential rains and unprecedented flooding in July caused people to lose their homes, their income, and their belongings. What they did not lose during that time was their heart and their faith. These six leaders symbolize the can-do attitude and strength of all the first responders, volunteers, and countless others who rose to the challenge and put others before themselves, helping the community truly be Burlington Strong.

I'm also honored to present the other Community Impact award to the Caledonia Conservancy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving natural areas in Caledonia.

Over the last 23 years, the Conservancy has permanently protected more than 170 acres in the village. Their efforts have expanded recreational trails and allowed residents to enjoy the area's natural beauty. Working cooperatively with

schools, businesses and government, the dedicated volunteers behind the Caledonia Conservancy are a shining example for groups across the country on how to build community, protect natural corridors and preserve rural character.

Both of these groups will receive a \$2,000 grant to enhance their ability to help the community. I'd like to congratulate them on this award and thank them for their contributions to Racine County.

Speaking of making Racine County a better place, the new SCJ Community Aquatic Center at Pritchard Park will be constructed over the next several months and is slated to open next summer. At the same time, we're excited that a new community pool is under construction in Burlington. With that said, I'm pleased to announce I'm proposing a \$100,000 Cultural and Community Service grant to the Burlington Community Pool Corporation to help with the construction of a fantastic new facility on the west end. Having two new pools on each side of the county open in the same year is a big win for Racine County families.

Our Public Works and Development Services, under the steady leadership of Director Julie Anderson, manages many of our important County projects, including the new aquatic center and road construction. Next year we will reconstruct County Highway MM, a project many years in the making, and South Loomis Road in the Town of Norway. After we finish that 3-mile stretch in Norway, the road will be permanently turned over to the town. That's a nice win for the county and Norway, who will take over maintenance costs while gaining local control.

Other 2018 county projects include planting trees at the courthouse and several parks to replace those lost to emerald ash borer. I bet that makes the Caledonia Conservancy folks happy! The Courthouse has two long-awaited, much anticipated projects on the 2018 slate - a memorial garden and window replacements. Cleanup and rehabilitation of Quarry Lake Park will also continue in the new year.

Our industrious Finance Department, headed by Director Alex Tillmann, is responsible for this \$151 million county budget in times of steady Kronos and, like this year, in the challenging flashes of Kairos. This diligence extends to the proceeds of the sale of Ridgewood Care Center. We are using \$1.275 million of the sale proceeds to fund capital projects in the 2018 budget, and the balance will be placed in reserves.

In everything we do, Racine County taxpayers – our employers – are always at the front of our minds. Racine County is on the brink of very exciting times – and we've told you some of our big plans for 2018.

At the same time, I am a prudent man and a practical County Executive. Racine County has a long history of fiscal conservatism, - "The Racine County Way"- and this year is no different. Where we can do more with less, we will. This budget contains smart and responsible principles of financial management. I'm gratified to report that this budget keeps the countywide property tax levy virtually flat while lowering the mill rate.

I have included a proposed \$103,000 increase in the library budget, which is divided by the five Racine County municipal libraries in the Lakeshores Library System.

In 2018, we are bonding just over \$6.7 million in capital. Our unrestricted reserves are at \$9.9 million and we have a total reserve balance of \$48 million. We continue to earn a strong AA1 bond rating.

I'd like to give a special thanks to my cabinet: Julie Anderson, Hope Otto, Karen Galbraith, Michael Lanzdorf, Alex Tillmann, Jackie Bratz, John Barrett, and M.T. Boyle. This past year has not been easy at the county. The sheer number of large and complicated projects and heavy lifts has been – yes, I'm using the word one last time – unprecedented. And then came Foxconn. They all rose to the Kairos moment, and I could not do my job for one minute without this fantastic team. This budget is the result of the commitment, creative thinking, and perseverance they bring to the job every single day. Thank you.

I'm grateful for the support of county elected leaders: Sheriff Chris Schmaling, County Clerk Wendy Christensen, Register of Deeds Tyson Fettes, Treasurer Jane Nikolai, Clerk of Courts Sam Christensen, and District Attorney Tricia Hanson. I also appreciate working with the 17 heads of municipal government from throughout the county. In this transformational time, it's more important than ever to continue our strong partnerships and intergovernmental cooperation.

Finally, I want to thank you, the County Board. You have risen to the occasion again and again. I believe you are the board that was supposed to be in those seats during this historic time in Racine County. I am honored to work by your side as we continue to move our county toward greater prosperity and a brighter future.

Because this is our moment. This is our Kairos. This is why we all agreed to enter public service -- to make the world – our world – a better place.

I hope you're as proud as I am about what we've accomplished, and about the possibilities that are just around the corner.

I think we're only getting started, and I'm glad to be on this journey with all of you.

Thank you. Good night, and God Bless Racine County.

###