******

**Advocacy Digest | June 28, 2022**

**Brad Boycks, Executive Director**

**2023-2024 Draft Advocacy Budget Available for Review**

Recently, the WBA Advocacy Group began the process of reviewing our draft agenda for the upcoming 2023-2024 legislative session. For the past decade, the Advocacy Group first reviews a draft agenda that is put together by the advocacy chair and vice-chair, WBA staff, and contains several items that were suggested by members and advocacy groups from local HBAs across the state.

The items from that draft agenda are also listed below. We ask that you review the enclosed items and make any suggested additions to Brad Boycks by September 15. If your local has an advocacy/government affairs committee, we would also ask that they review the items below and make any suggestions.

The final 2023-2024 WBA Advocacy Agenda will be reviewed and approved by the Advocacy Group and the Board of Directors during their next meetings on Thursday, October 6.

**Building and Code Issues:**

* Work with the Joint Committee for the Review of Administrative Rules to change the commercial building code that requires “two exits or exit access doorways from any space” which is a cross reference to IBC 10006.2.1.
* Additional funding for a state ResCheck software to be provided by the Department of Safety and Professional Services for energy calculations
* Support efforts to restrict local regulation of utility service based on energy source (natural gas)
* Move construction of 4- and 8-unit apartment complexes from the commercial building code to the uniform dwelling code with enhanced fire wall and egress requirements but no sprinkler requirement

**Development Issues:**

* Changes to TRANS 233 to allow flexibilities for minor projects in highway right of ways, utility easements, and buffer areas (landscaping, signs, parking lots) that the current rule does not allow
* “Workforce Housing Tax Incremental District”, other changes to TIF laws, or alternatives like “community development districts” as additional tools to spur housing development
* Prohibit municipalities from requiring supermajorities for the adoption of zoning amendments
* Eliminate zoning protest petitions for county zoning
* Amend state statute 66.10015 to prohibit a municipality from prohibiting a property owner from merging two or more abutting parcels of land that the property owner owns
* If after further review state statutes conflict on utility fees being required to do a needs assessment for passage, make changes to eliminate ambiguity in current state statutes
* Work with the League of Municipalities to pass a statute that requires all municipalities to connect roads between them
* Limit the provisions dealing with solar energy systems in 236.292 to only include flush mounted roof top solar panels for one- and two- family structures
* Incorporate into the annexation statute a definition for contiguity that reflects the Wisconsin Supreme Court’s opinion in the Kohler annexation case

**Tort Reform Issues:**

* As a member of the Wisconsin Civil Justice Council, continue to support legislative and state budget initiatives “promoting fairness and equity in Wisconsin’s Civil Justice System”

**Tax/Business Issues:**

* Maintain current law regarding Use Value Assessment of agricultural land
* Complete elimination of the personal property tax
* Support the current Worker’s Compensation Council and explore health care cost controls
* Reduce the holding cost of lots with a provision similar AA1 to ASA 1 to AB 582 (undeveloped lots would be taxed at 50% of value)

**Remodeling Issues:**

* Pursue changes to DATCP 110 either via administrative rule change or legislative change to make it easier to follow to assure compliance

**Workforce Issues:**

* Explore a “Go Build Wisconsin” “Be Pro Be Proud” program in South Carolina (www.beprobeproudsc.org)
* Training for middle and high school career counselors to educate students on the benefits of careers in the trades (low or no student debt, high wages)
* A tax deduction for apprenticeship expenses tax deduction and changes to encourage more apprenticeship programs (2021 Assembly Bill 973)