

Sauk County, Wisconsin
Corporation Counsel Annual Report

2015 Mission: Provide professional legal services to Sauk County government, including the Board of Supervisors, committees, departments, and connected boards and commissions, as well as providing legal representation of the public interest in statutorily and contractually defined areas.

Vision: Provide legal advice and guidance to County officials to assist them in making policy decisions, and provide the legal support to the organization to facilitate and carry out those decisions.

Departmental Program Summary: The work of the office is broken down into four separate program areas described below:

General Government Legal Services: The duties of the corporation counsel involve civil legal matters and include giving legal opinions to the board, its committees, and county departments, interpreting the powers and duties of the county board and officers, drafting and reviewing contracts, leases and other legal documents, representing the county in all manner of civil legal proceedings in state and federal court, defending or coordinating the defense of claims and suits, reviewing and drafting resolutions and ordinances, maintaining the county code of ordinances and prosecuting violations of the code, and serving as ethics advisor to county employees and elected officials. This program area also includes providing legal counsel to the University of Wisconsin Baraboo/Sauk County Campus Commission.

Department of Human Services (DHS): Legal support to the DHS includes representing the public interest in involuntarily mental commitments and the DHS as petitioner in guardianship and protective placement actions, children in need of protection and services cases (CHIPS) and termination of parental rights (TPR) cases.

Labor-management Relations: The office represents the county in all labor/management relations matters to include negotiations, arbitrations and other proceedings before the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, equal employment matters, and litigation resulting from labor relations issues.

Child Support Enforcement: The office provides legal services to the Child Support Agency including enforcement of child support obligations through judicial action, establishment of paternity, and related collection matters.

2015 Goals Review:

2015 GOALS REVIEW

OBJECTIVE	WAS THIS OBJECTIVE REACHED IN 2015?
	Yes or No (If no, please provide comment)
Implement new paperless file technology that will interface with research software and enable all attorneys access to files and information for complete synergy.	Yes
Support economic development activity through proactive legal support to the County.	Yes
Respond to the revenue and regulatory threats and challenges posed by the trust land applications of the Ho-Chunk Nation.	Yes
Support the County's efforts to protect the health and safety of Sauk County.	Yes
Provide legal support to the University of Wisconsin Baraboo-Sauk County Campus Commission as legal counsel in support of ongoing campus improvement projects.	Yes

Changes / Accomplishments: The legal services provided to the County in 2015, as always, reflected the myriad diversity of county operations. In addition to the routine but critical work of the office in the areas of protecting the mentally ill, developmentally disabled, abused and neglected children, and enforcing child support, the office touched every major project involving the county.

As part of the office’s commitment to lean practices and efficiency, the office implemented new technology by moving toward a paperless, technology driven solution that works hand in glove with our legal research program. This makes research and retrieving files easier and facilitates the sharing of information between attorneys and support staff. The office is now on the cutting edge of technology for corporation counsel offices statewide.

As legal counsel to the University of Wisconsin Baraboo-Sauk County under the cooperative agreement Sauk County has with the City of Baraboo, 2015 saw the completion of the public-private venture involving the residence hall and the completion of the new science facility. The office successfully navigated the legal aspects of these projects to a successful conclusion largely because the corporation counsel shaped this project from the beginning.

The multi-year project driven by the Conservation, Planning & Zoning Department to implement a revised, comprehensive zoning ordinance was completed. The result is a zoning code that is a model for other units of government in the state. Other zoning matters included addressing a long lingering issue involving the Christmas Mountain Campground.

The corporation counsel supported much of the activity involving the creation of the Great Sauk State Trail including providing the legal work to create the Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail, a non-profit friends group.

New challenges and opportunities were explored with the Ho-Chunk Nation in order to address the increasing capacity of the Nation as a sovereign government while encouraging a mutually beneficial relationship regarding the existing and proposed trust lands in the county.

The vacancy in the administrative coordinator position gave the county the opportunity to explore structural changes while recruiting for a new individual to fill that position. The corporation counsel provided advice and support to the board during this transition period achieving its mission of providing support to the board.

The County began the process of exploring unique financing arrangements for the implementation of solar electric power generation.

The corporation counsel completed negotiations with the law enforcement bargaining group resulting in a tentative agreement.

New procedures were implemented in the office that resulted in cost savings in the transport of subjects of mental commitment proceedings.

Statistical Summary:

OUTPUT MEASURES

DESCRIPTION	2013 ACTUAL	2014 ACTUAL	2015 ACTUAL
Guardianship/Protective Placement Hearings & WATTs Reviews	150	180	178
Mental Commitment Hearings	114	108	119

OUTCOME AND EFFICIENCY MEASURES

DESCRIPTION	2013 ACTUAL	2014 ACTUAL	2015 ACTUAL
Legal Opinions Rendered (90% of actions completed or status report given within two weeks)	389 - 99% of goals met	418 – 98% of goals met	387 – 97% of goals met
TPR/CHIPS Hearings & Filings (100% of actions followed through to completion)	186 - 100% of goals met	217 – 100% of goals met	226 – 100% of goals met
Mental Commitments (100% of actions followed through to completion)	114- 100% of goals met	108 – 100% of goals met	119 – 100% of goals met
Violations - P&Z, PH, Parks (90% of cases to gain compliance with Ordinance Code w/i 2 weeks or status/follow-through until compliance reached)	22 actions – 100% of goals met	52 – 100% of goals met	71 – 100% of goals met