

# Executive Update

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker's Weekly Newsletter

January 29, 2010

## Message from County Executive Walker

*The Public Policy Forum released a report this week that affirmed many of the concerns I raised about the future of county finances. A number of their possible solutions are also items that I have pushed in the past, but I hope that the renewed attention to these concepts might promote progress.*

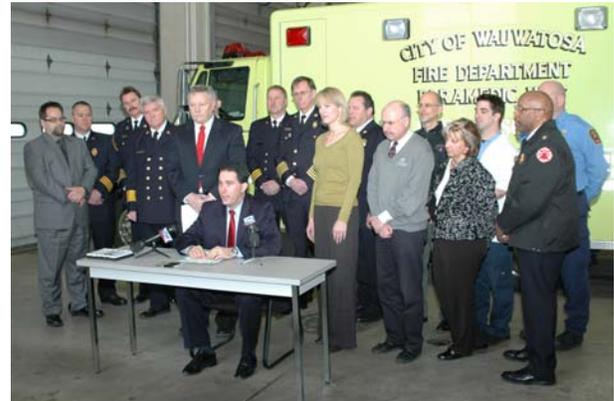
*For example, I think that it makes sense for the county to cap employees going into the pension system and replace it with a defined contribution system like the 401(k) system that most employees have in the private sector. I also think that it makes sense for the county to better use its assets like the land on the county grounds or the operations of the airport. These, too, were ideas mentioned in the report.*

*Over the next few weeks, I will work with members of the County Board to see if we can jump-start these ideas and get progress on things that will not only balance the 2010 budget, but help us better be able to balance budgets for years to come.*

Scott



## EMS resolution signing



County Executive Walker held a news conference at the Wauwatosa Fire Department to sign an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) contract resolution for Advanced Life Support (Paramedic) Service and Transport and Paramedic First Response Services with seven municipalities and the North Shore Fire Department. Participating municipalities are Franklin, Greenfield, Milwaukee, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Wauwatosa and West Allis.

(L-R photo above) Ken Sternig – EMS Program Director, Wauwatosa Deputy Chief Jim Case, West Allis Fire Chief Steve Hook, Wauwatosa Fire Chief Dean Redman, Deputy Chief Brent Lee (partially hidden), Franklin Mayor Tom Taylor – Chair of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Council (ICC), Deputy Chief Scott Erke, Franklin Chief Jim Martins, Wauwatosa Mayor Jill Didier, Oak Creek Fire Chief Brian Fatula, Supervisor Mark Borkowski, Dr. Ron Pirrallo – EMS Council, Lisa Marks – Acting Director Dept. of Health and Human Services, paramedic Michael Wirth, Acting Milwaukee Fire Chief Michael Jones, and (partially hidden) paramedic Kirk Trevisan. (Also in attendance but not pictured: Greenfield Mayor Mike Neitzke).

## Good news at GMIA



County Executive Walker earlier this week announced a record December and fourth quarter for General Mitchell International Airport (GMIA). The December passenger count of 728,067 was the busiest on record for the month of December and the first time more than 700,000 passengers used the airport in the month of December.

For the year, GMIA was just a fraction below the 2008 record, serving close to 8 million passengers.

Nationwide, passenger traffic declined 6 percent in 2009, but GMIA saw only a .13 percent decline.

Walker said, "AirTran, Midwest, Frontier and Delta all added flights to Mitchell in 2009, and with the startup of Southwest Airlines in November, the airport served 600,683 more passengers in the final four months of the year than in the same period in 2008. It was a phenomenal closeout to the year."

Airport Director Barry Bateman noted that GMIA has become one of the most price-competitive airports in the nation. The average airfare out of Milwaukee was lower than the average at 75 other US airports.

Mitchell's average fare was about \$44 less than O'Hare's, and \$28 less than the nation's average fare.

For more information on GMIA, visit:

[www.mitchellairport.com](http://www.mitchellairport.com)

## Community Events

County Executive Walker was the keynote speaker at the Cudahy Lions Club Quad dinner meeting this week which included clubs from St. Francis, Oak Creek, and South Milwaukee.

The **Milwaukee County Zoo** welcomes a new groundhog, Wynter, to take center stage in the annual weather prediction festivities on **Groundhog Day**, Tuesday, February 2 at 10:30am at the zoo's Northwestern Mutual Family Farm. A rehabilitated animal, Wynter was found orphaned on a roadside at about five weeks of age and served as an educational animal for the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery in Ohio before coming to our zoo in October. The zoo's director, Chuck Wikenhauser, will host the Groundhog Day ceremony. According to tradition, if it's sunny and Wynter sees her shadow, she'll return to her burrow for six more weeks of winter. If she does not see her shadow, we can expect an early spring.

The **Mitchell Park Domes** have set up the annual **Train Show** with a theme, "Westward Ho" that includes G-scale trains running on over 500 feet of track through a landscape of western scenes such as the Mesa Verde, the Golden Gate Bridge, and a cattle drive. The Wisconsin Garden Railway Society and the Glacier Train Club provide volunteer support along with local hobbyists to answer train questions. The Domes are open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am to 5pm, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 9pm and weekends 9am to 4pm. Adult admission is \$6.50, children 6-17 are \$5, and children under age 6 are free.

On Tuesday and Thursday evenings through March 18, the Domes continue the "**Music Under Glass**" concerts from 6:30pm – 8:30pm. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/atf3tu> for a complete schedule of performers and special event nights that include a Mardi Gras party and a Beach Party.