

*Richland County Board - Education Committee
Richland County, Wisconsin*

August 31, 2022

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Education Committee will be meeting virtually on Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 6:00pm only via WebEx to discuss and/or take action on the following agenda items:

Via WebEx with information available at: <https://administrator.co.richland.wi.us/minutes/education/>

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Roll Call
3. Proof of Notification
4. Agenda Approval
5. Discussion and Action on Letter from the Richland County Education Standing Committee to the Richland County Campus Foundation
6. Discussion and Action on Letter from Richland County Education Standing Committee to the Michael Compton, Assistant Provost, UWP-Richland
7. Adjourn

Thank you,
Linda Gentes,
Chair, Richland County Education Standing Committee

Copies to: Education Committee Members

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| - Linda Gentes | - Ingrid Glasbrenner |
| - Chad Cosgrove | - Daniel McGuire |
| - Bob Frank | - Marc Couey |
| - Barbara Voyce | - Shaun Murphy-Lopez |

Marty Brewer, County Board Chair
Clinton Langreck, County Administrator
Richland Observer
WRCO
Derek Kalish, County Clerk

Richland County Education Standing Committee

Dear Richland Campus Foundation Board members,
September 6, 2022

We are writing to you as members of the Richland County Education Standing Committee. This committee has delegated oversight from the County for the UWP-Richland Campus (its buildings, grounds and promotion of the campus as a cultural and educational center), the Richland County Extension Service, and the Richland County Food Service.

As you probably have heard the county's financial situation has been challenging due to factors such as declining state shared revenue, property tax levy limits imposed by the State, and the deferred need to give annual wage increases to County employees. The attached document from the County's Referendum Ad Hoc Committee gives more context for the County's financial situation.

The county has passed a resolution associated with all the entities the Education Committee oversees. A copy of that resolution is also attached. We are asking for your partnership work together, along with UW system staff, to determine how we can enable the campus to again thrive and continue to be a higher educational entity for Richland County.

We understand Richland County Campus Foundation board President, Terry Sebranek, changed his busy schedule and sat through our Education Committee meeting on August 8. We appreciated his attendance and look forward to hearing the perspective of the UW-Richland Foundation at future meetings.

Currently, through perspectives of area high school staff, students, and parents we have been learning how confusing the admission process is for our campus.

- Some are confused about whether they are applying to the Richland or Platteville campus.
- More than one student received two acceptance letters, one to Platteville and one to Richland.
- Follow-up e-mails only mention Platteville (see attached e-mail)
- International students have experienced challenges with applying and have not been told about the scholarships the Foundation offers.

The result is that many students have given up on the UW-Richland application process and applied to other campuses.

We understand in the past the Foundation has offered multiple times to fund a recruiter for our campus but the offer was declined.

We believe that if our campus does not have improved recruiting and admissions, the campus will no longer live up to its potential. We would like UW Platteville to rethink how they recruit and admit students to Richland.

We hope you will consider the County Board's resolution, and perhaps your own ideas for how our campus can be improved. The idea that the Foundation would consider offering up to \$100,000 a year for capital projects is merely a starting point in the discussion. We understand the Foundation already

makes many capital and student investments in the campus, and we look forward to learning about what those investments have been.

We also believe the County needs to increase its investment in the campus, which has been declining in recent years. We are pleased to share that the County plans to allocate \$100,000 in 2023 to replace the leaking flat roof on the Coppertop Theater. Yet we know that investment is far outpaced by the maintenance needs of the campus.

The Education Committee welcomes any ideas or other options you may wish to bring forward. Our next committee meeting is Monday, September 12 at 1;15pm in the Pippin Conference Center.

We would enjoy your response and welcome anyone to attend our meeting and would be pleased to attend a Foundation meeting upon invitation.

Respectfully,
Linda Gentes
Chair, Richland County Education Standing Committee
Linda.gentes@co.richland.wi.us
620 Cedar Street #101, Richland Center, WI 53581
Cell: 608-574-4296
gentesl@uwplatt.edu

County Board Supervisor, Marc Couey
Vice Chair, Richland County Education Standing Committee

County Board Supervisor, Chad Cosgrove

County Board Supervisor, Bob Frank

County Board Supervisor, Ingrid Glasbrenner

County Board Supervisor, Dan McGuire

County Board Supervisor, Shaun Murphy-Lopez

County Board Supervisor, Barbara Voyce

Cc: Assistant Provost Michael Compton
County Administrator Clinton Langreck
County Board Chair Marty Brewer

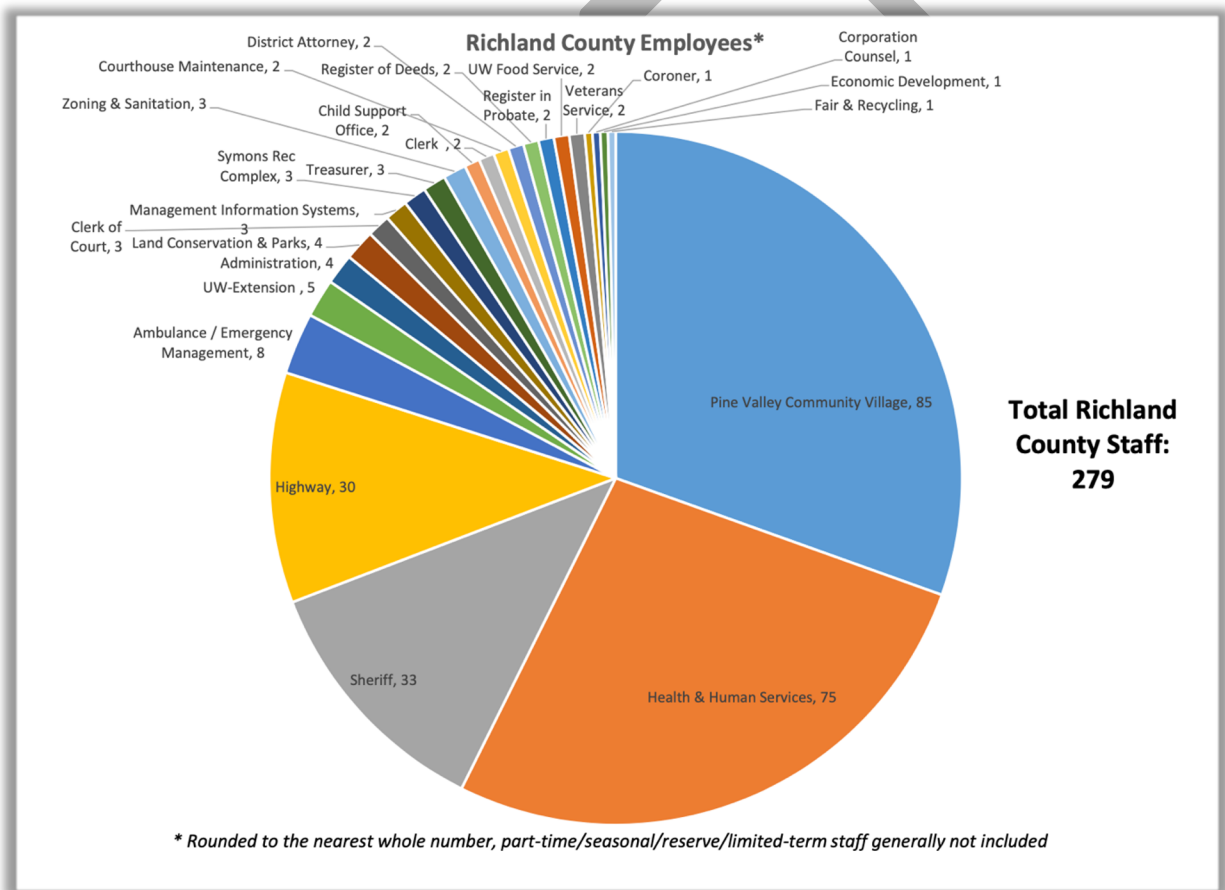
DRAFT: Educational Information for Use by the Referendum Ad Hoc Committee

The following information provides educational context for the work of the Richland County Referendum Ad Hoc Committee, and has the following primary purposes:

1. To serve as the basis for educational materials to be developed by the Committee so the public can better understand our mission
2. To be used as a tool for communication with County departments/committees

Introduction

The Richland County Referendum Ad Hoc Committee is *considering the idea of a referendum* so the voters can decide if the County's operating levy should be increased to maintain current staffing levels and services. **Staffing levels currently look like this:**



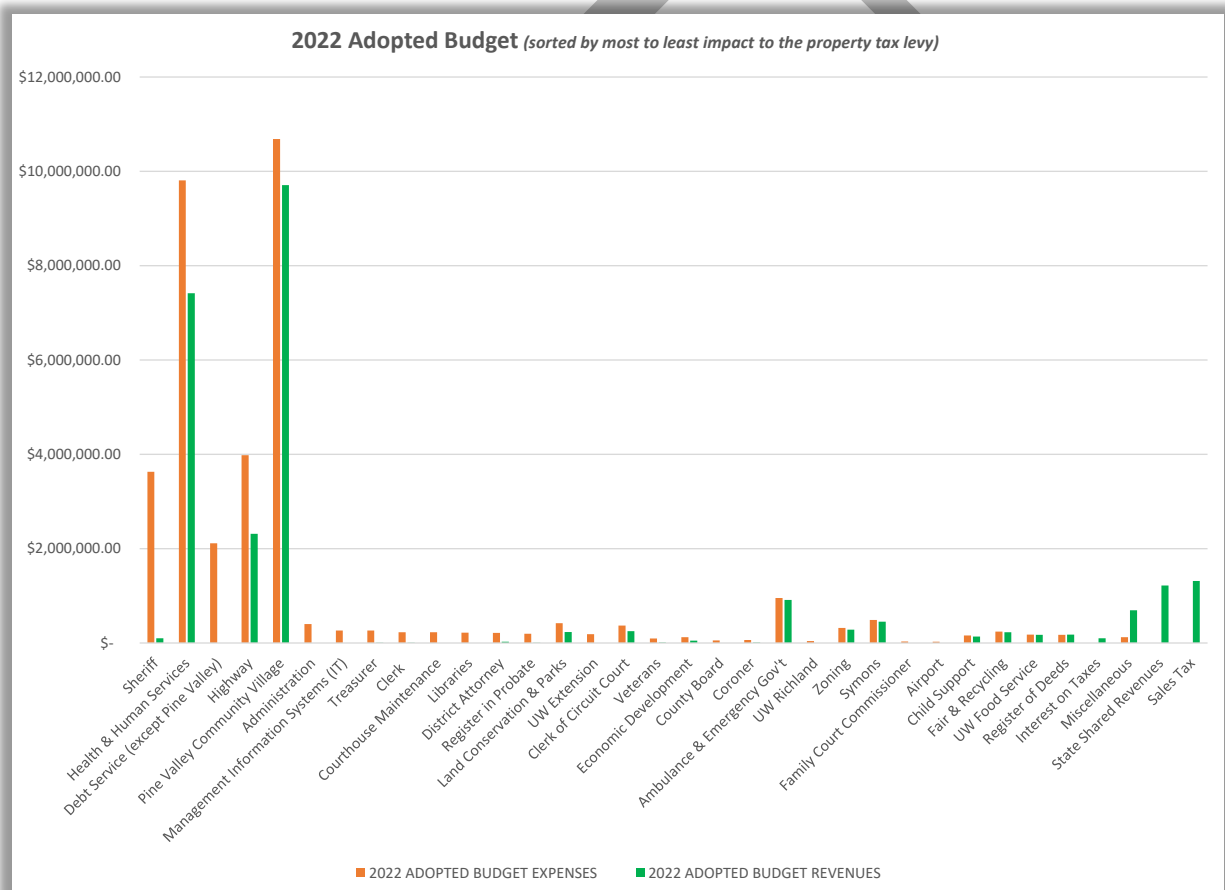
The County has a total budget of \$36 million in the current 2022 calendar year. **The budget is balanced, meaning \$36 million in expenses matches \$36 million in revenues.**

Revenues vs. Expenses

Most County budget revenues come from other governments, typically at the federal and state levels. Some departments bring in significant amounts of revenue to offset County expenses. For example,

- The **federal government** pays for patient care at **Pine Valley Community Village**
- The **federal and state governments** pay for programming in the **Health & Human Services Department** (i.e., mental health, economic support, aging and disability resources, child protection, public health)
- The **state government** pays the **Highway Department** to maintain state-owned highways (e.g., US Highway 14, Wisconsin Highway 60)

Other departments don't have the ability to bring in very much revenue. **The expenses and revenues of all departments currently look like this:**



The Property Tax

How does the County make up the difference in revenues and expenses for each department? **We levy a property tax**, as shown here:

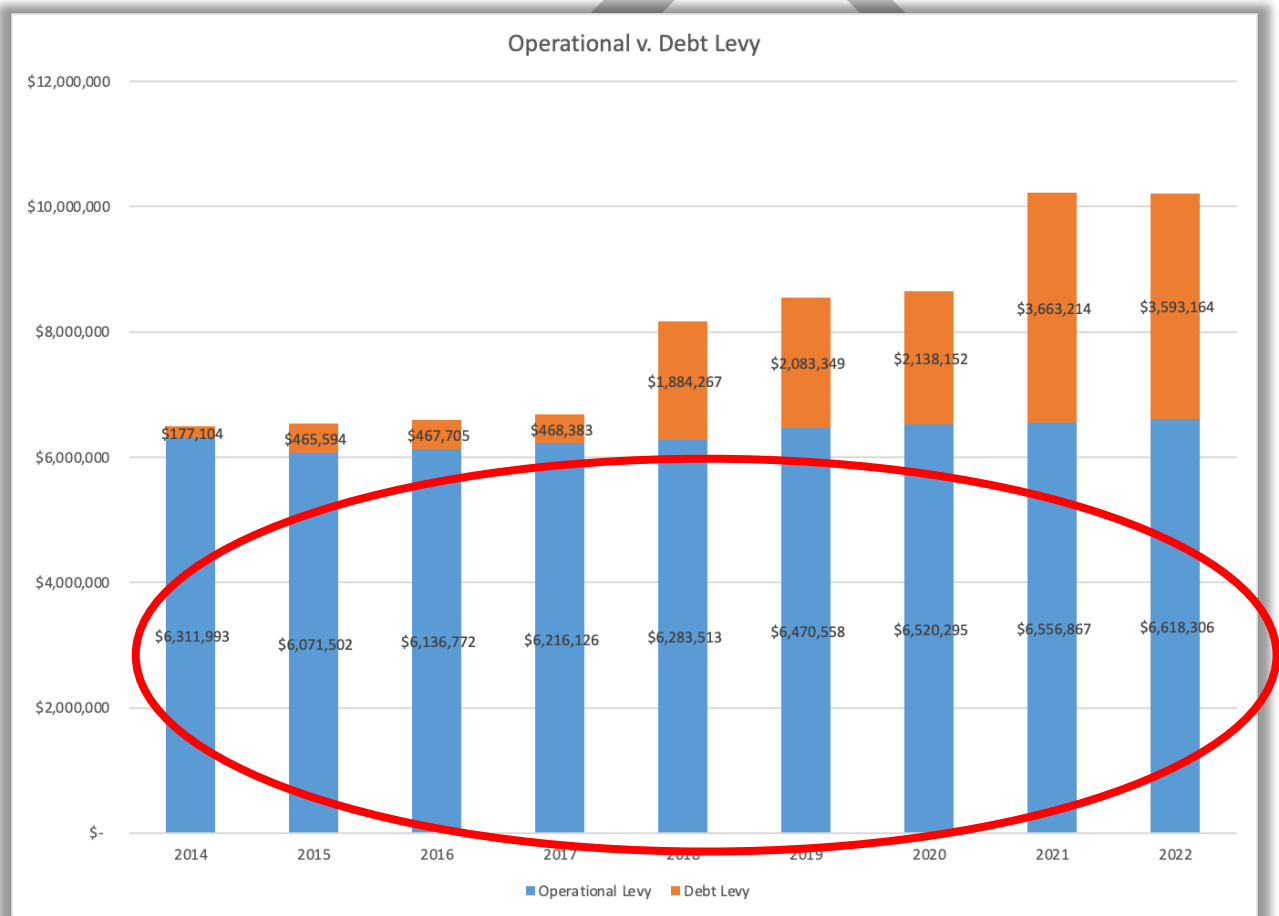


The property tax levy is divided into 2 parts: **operating and debt**. We do this because the State of Wisconsin has different laws about how the County can levy property taxes for each part:

1. The first law says the County **cannot raise the operating levy at a rate faster than net new construction**.¹
2. The second law says the County **can raise the debt levy at the rate it chooses**, as long as the total outstanding debt stays below 5% of the value of all property in the County.

Over the past 8 years, **the operating levy has stayed relatively flat, while the debt levy has risen at a faster pace** to pay for the new building at Pine Valley Community Village (between 2017 and 2018) and highway/building maintenance needs (between 2020 and 2021).

The County's Referendum Ad Hoc Committee is looking at the possibility of asking the voters to approve a more substantial increase to the operating levy (circled in red below):

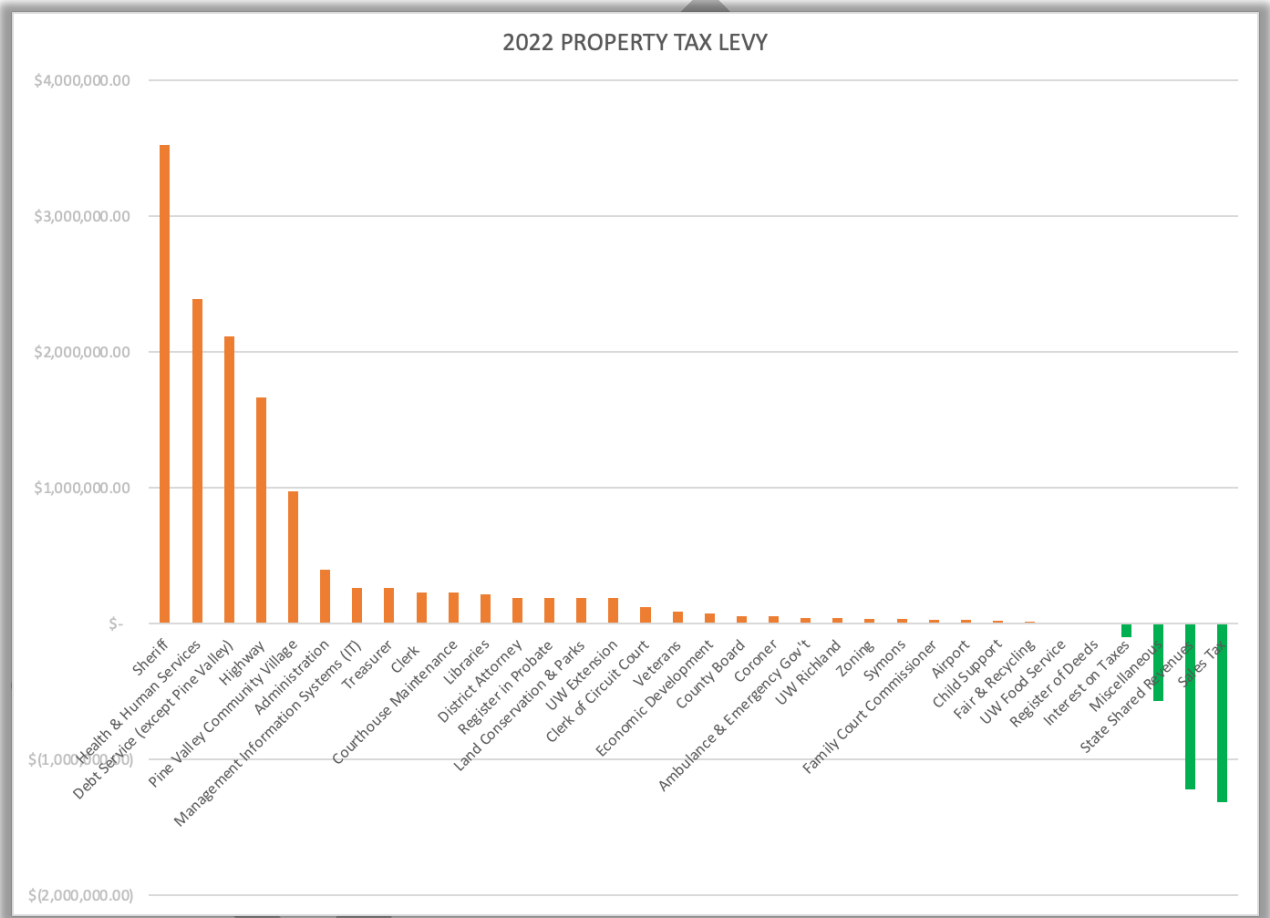


¹ <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/66/vi/0602>

Departments Relying on the Property Tax

Which departments benefit most from property taxes? If federal and state revenues, as well as fees for services (such as those collected by the Ambulance, Clerk of Court, Register of Deeds, Symons, UW Food Service, and Zoning Department) are set aside, the **following 4 departments use the most property tax**:

1. Sheriff
2. Health & Human Services
3. Highway
4. Pine Valley Community Village

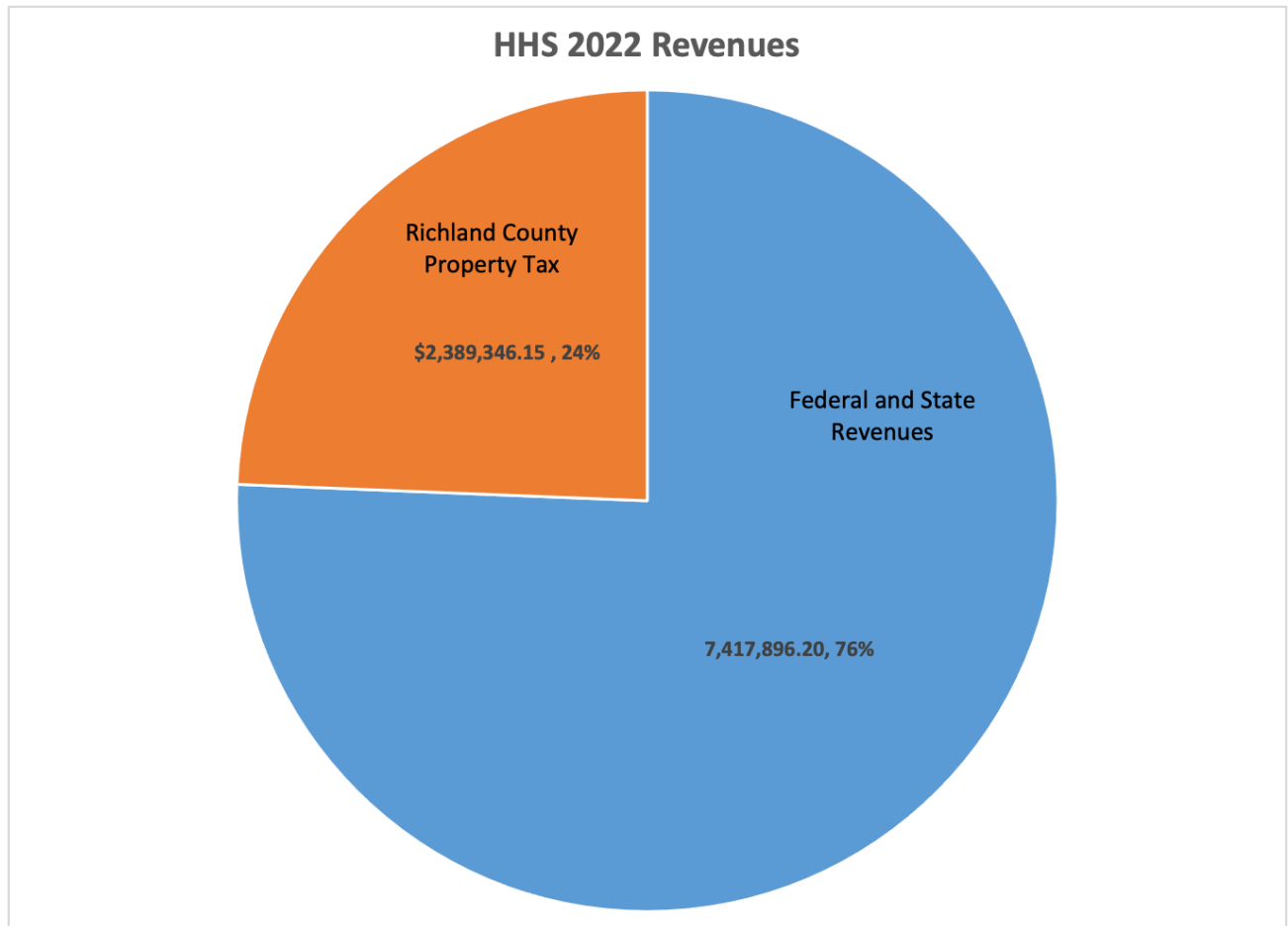


Next, we'll look at three categories that often have associated misconceptions: 1) Health & Human Services, 2) Pine Valley Community Village, and 3) State Shared Revenue.

Category #1: Health & Human Services

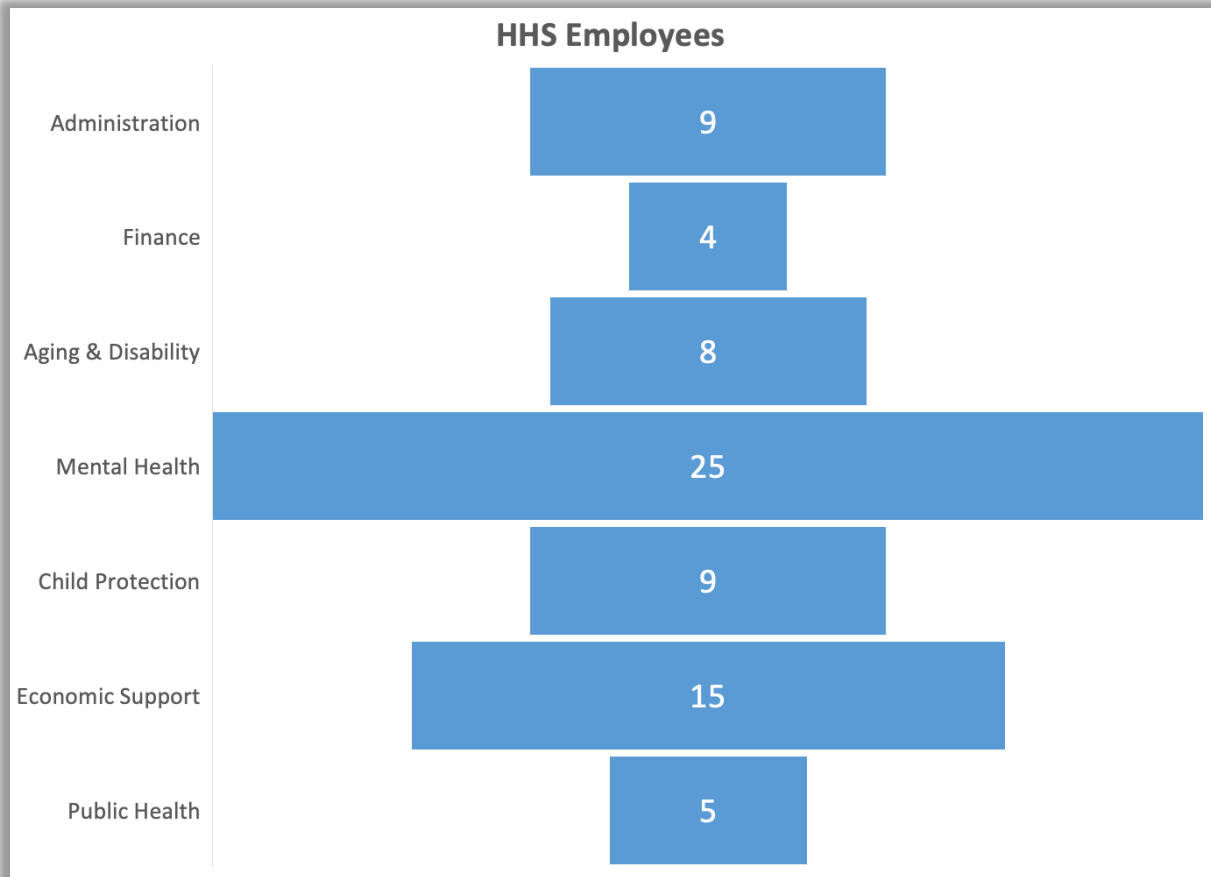
As shown in previous charts, the Health & Human Services (HHS) Department has the 2nd highest number of employees out of any department at the County. At the same time, this department uses less property tax revenue than the Sheriff's Department (\$2.4 million for HHS vs. \$3.5 million for Sheriff). Why is this?

It's because **HHS brings in a lot of revenue from the federal and state governments.**



If the County reduced its property tax revenue contribution to HHS, some of these federal and state revenues would be lost.

People also often think HHS is primarily a welfare agency. **While economic support is important, it's one of only 5 main areas of service to residents.** More employees are dedicated to mental health services than economic support, as shown in this chart:



Note: Over the coming months, the Referendum Ad Hoc Committee will be working with the Health & Human Services and Veterans Standing Committee to better understand how federal and state funding is tied to employee positions.

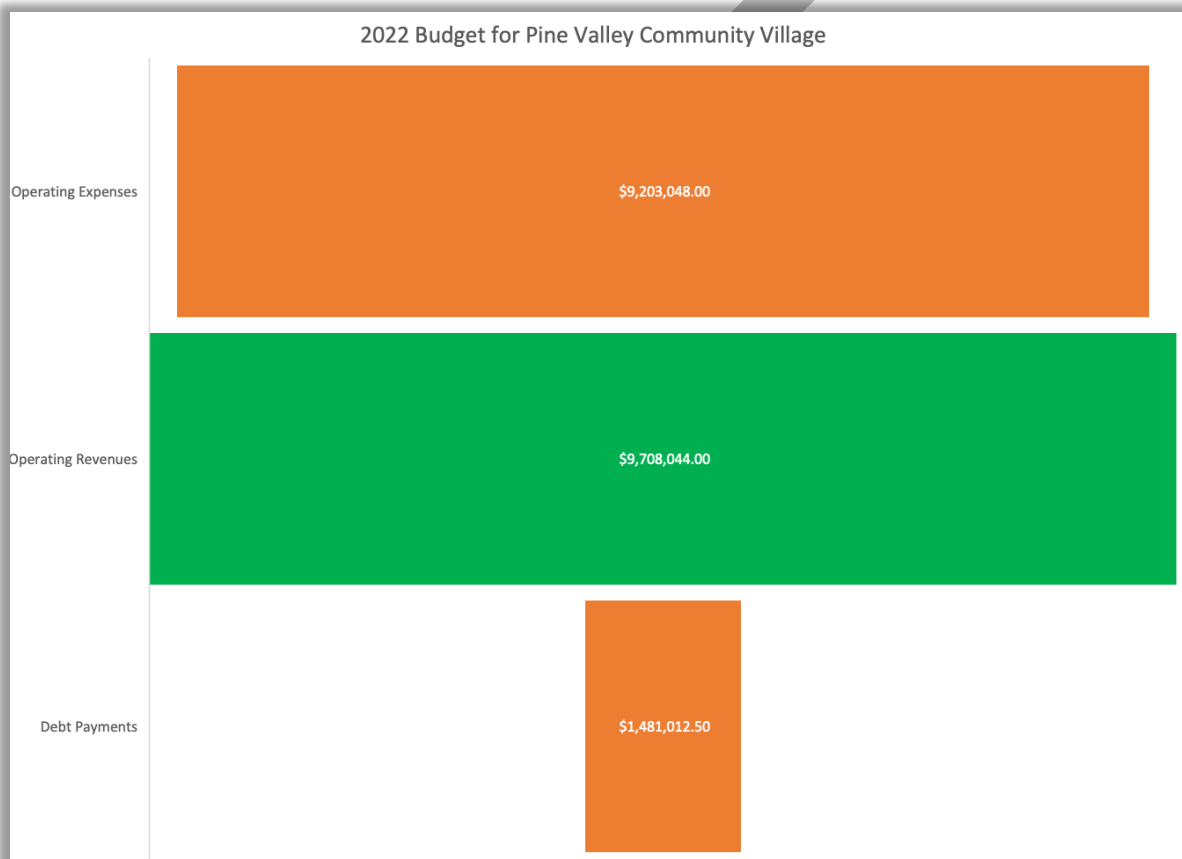
Category #2: Pine Valley Community Village

It is often said that Pine Valley Community Village:

1. Makes a profit for the County
2. Doesn't pay its debt

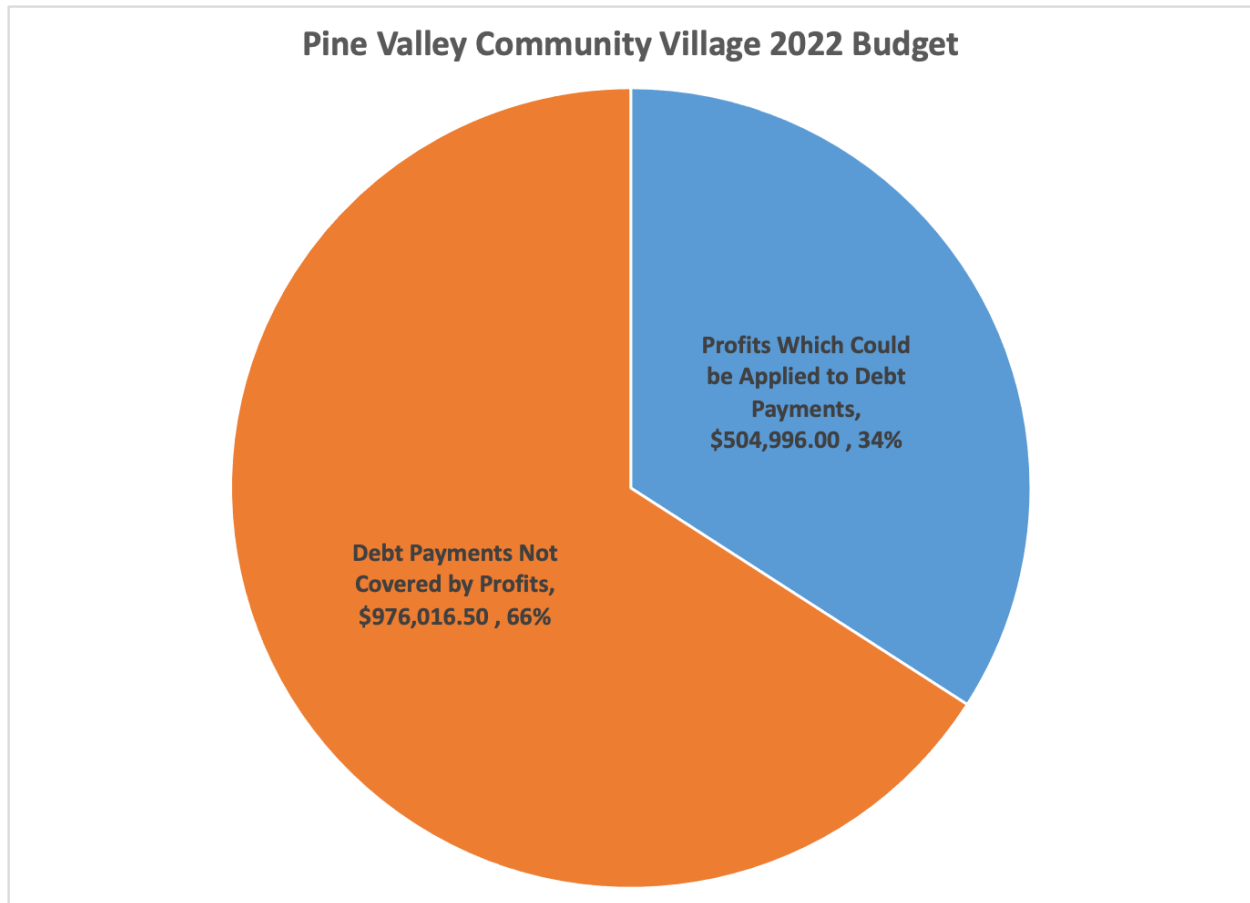
Which is true?

There is some truth to both statements, but neither is totally accurate. Because of the state laws referred to earlier, the County keeps track of Pine Valley's budget in two categories – operating and debt:



Statement #1 would be more accurate if it said, **“Pine Valley makes an operating profit for the County.”**

In recent years, the operating profit from Pine Valley has been applied to offset the operating expenses of other departments at the County. **If that operating profit was instead applied to debt payments, it would cover one-third of annual debt payments**, as shown in the following chart:



So, statement #2 would be more accurate if it said, **“Pine Valley’s operating profits could cover one-third of its debt payments, if those profits were not used to offset the operating expenses of other County departments.”**

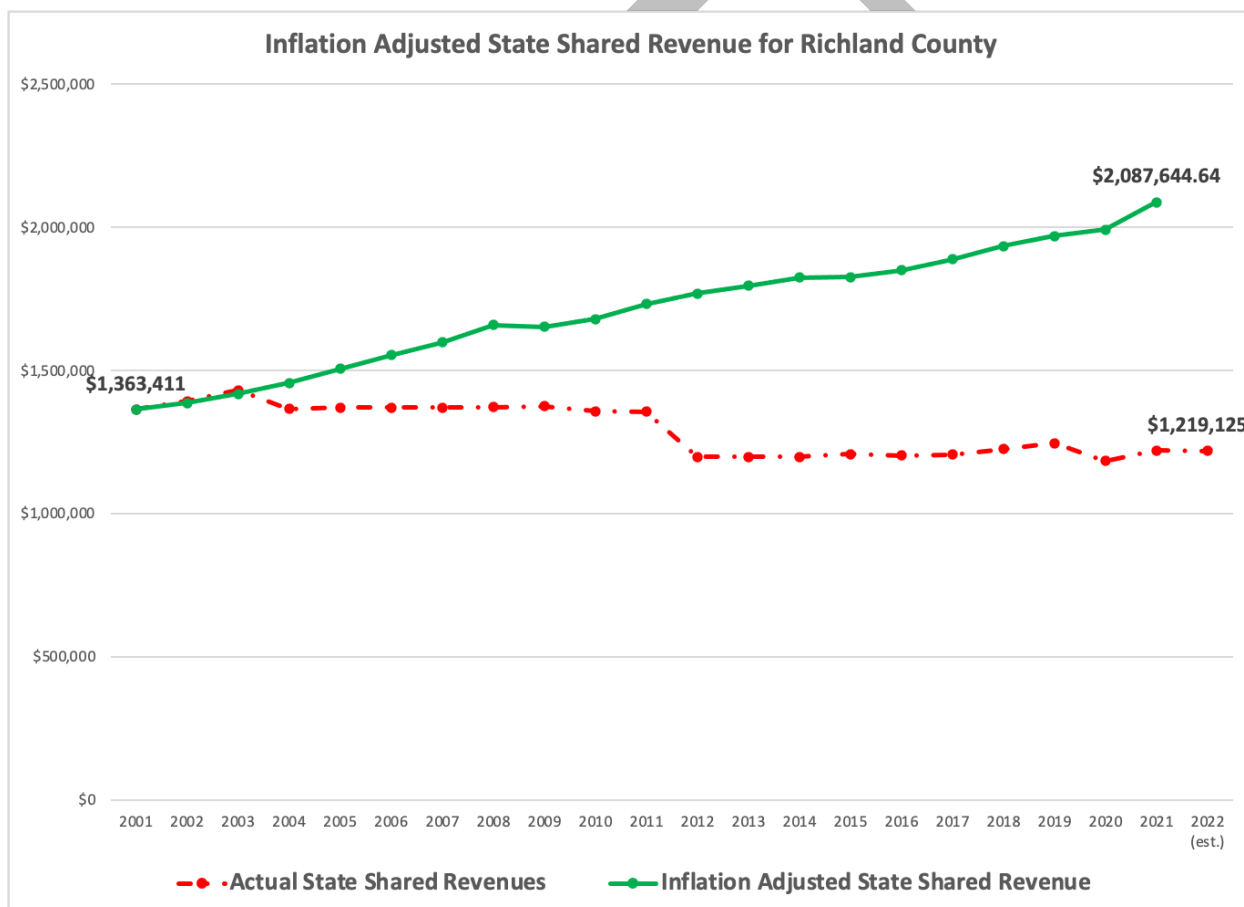
Note: Over the coming months, the Referendum Ad Hoc Committee will be working with the Pine Valley & Child Support Standing Committee to better understand if operating profits can be increased to cover 50% of its debt payments.

Category #3: State Shared Revenue

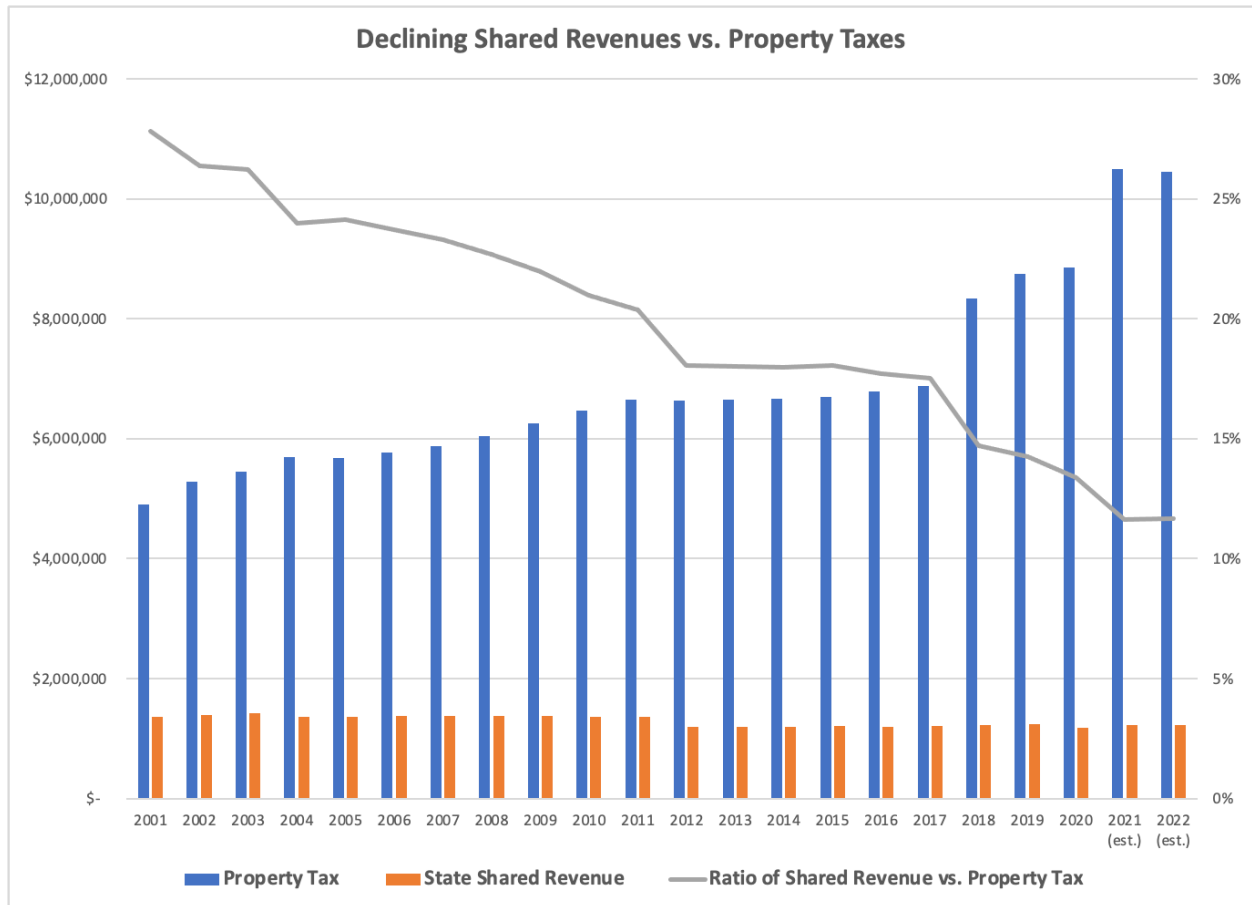
State shared revenue comes from the State of Wisconsin. **Every local government agency in Wisconsin receives this revenue.**

Shared revenue was originally put in place in the early 1900's to share state income tax revenue with local governments in exchange for a reduction in property that could be taxed². In the 1970's, shared revenues were begun to be used to level the playing field between communities with lower income tax revenues and wealthier parts of the state.³

In 2001, Richland County received \$1.36 million that could be spent on general government activities such as public safety, human services, and highways. **In 2021, the State shared \$1.22 million, a drop of 12%.** If the amount received in 2001 was adjusted for inflation⁴, the amount would be \$2.09 million.



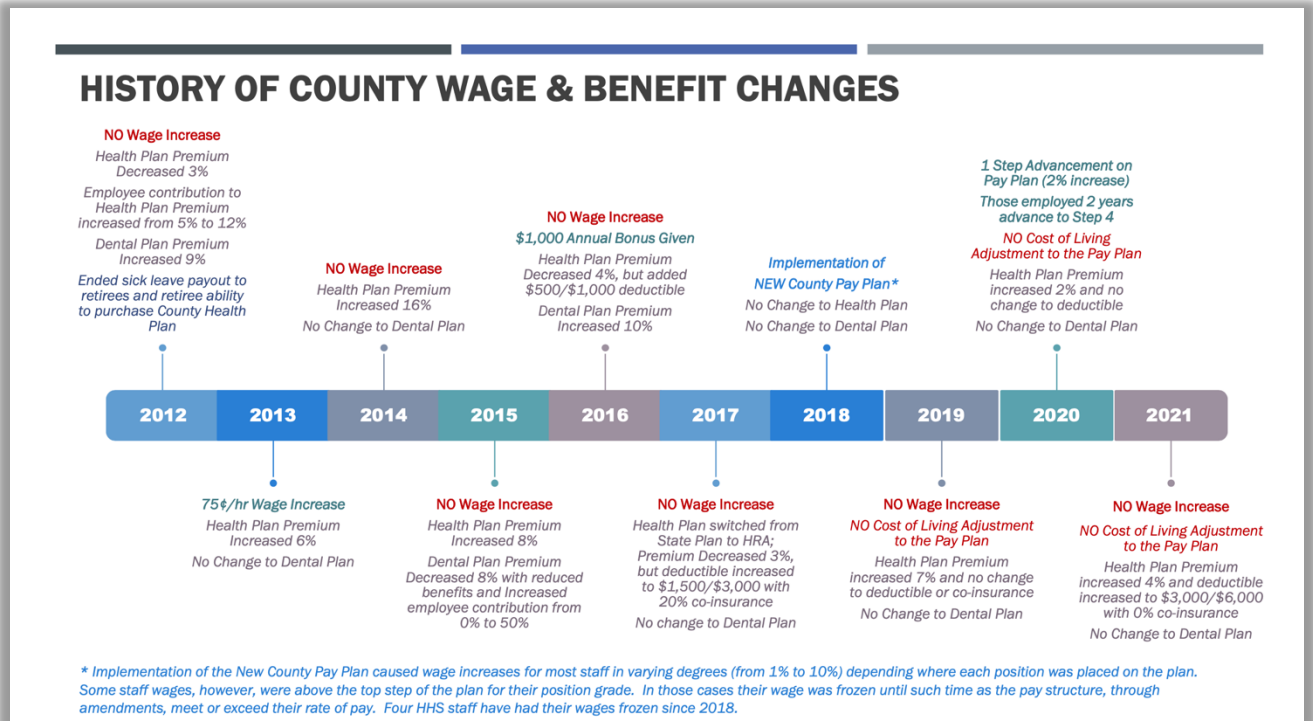
Since shared revenues from the State of Wisconsin are declining, this means **Richland County has had to rely more on property taxes to finance departments that need additional revenues**, as shown in the following chart:



Note: Over the coming months, the Referendum Ad Hoc Committee will be working with the Finance & Personnel Standing Committee to better understand the development of the State of Wisconsin budget, as it relates to state shared revenues.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Over the past decade, Richland County has been responding to the State of Wisconsin's policies by **skipping annual pay increases and reducing health insurance benefits**, as shown in the following graphic.

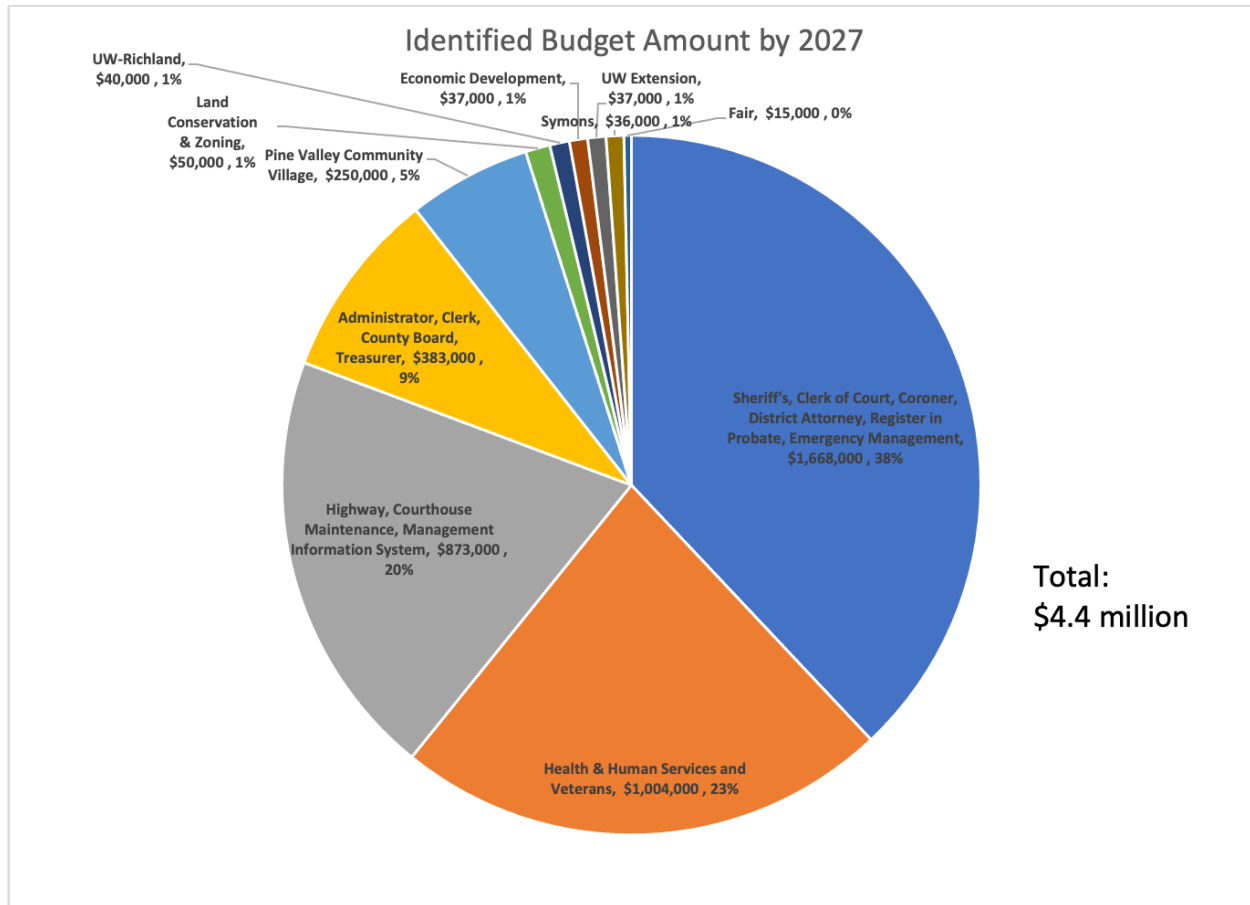


Earlier this year, Richland County adopted a Strategic Plan⁵ that determined that path is no longer sustainable, with a **commitment to annual pay increases for employees**.

The County Administrator has also created a 5-year (2023 – 2027) financial plan that **estimates the additional revenues that will be needed** to deliver those pay increases and fund other County priorities, such as finance, human resources, and maintenance positions.

⁵ <https://administrator.co.richland.wi.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Richland-County-Strategic-Plan-Chapter-2-Operations.pdf>

The County Board also recently adopted a set of resolutions guiding committees and departments as to how to decrease their impact on the property tax levy. **Some of these decreases may be permanent, but some may be identified for a potential property tax operating levy referendum in 2023, to take effect in 2024** as shown in the following chart:



Next Steps

The Referendum Ad Hoc Committee has identified the following next steps:

1. Communicate directly with committees and departments heads affected by a potential referendum, so that expectations are clear
2. Research other operating levy referendums
3. Educate the public about the work of the committee
 - Radio
 - Newspaper
 - Video
4. Recommend action on the referendum, including:
 - Whether or not to develop a referendum question
 - The date, amount, and purpose of a potential operating levy referendum
 - Public education content and format for a potential operating levy referendum
 - The consequences/outcome of a failed operating levy referendum
5. Draft a report for submittal to the committee we report to (Finance & Personnel Standing Committee)

Amended On Board Floor August 16, 2022

Resolution No. 22 – 94 notifying The UW Platteville-Richland leadership, UW Extension Office and Food Services of future funding reductions and directing the Richland County Education Standing Committee to consider services, develop options and propose a recommendation on future operations was reviewed by County Administrator Langreck. Motion by Glasbrenner, second by Manning that Resolution No. 22 - 94 be adopted. Discussion continued. Motion by Murphy-Lopez, second by Williamson, to amend the resolution as follows:

Under the “Regarding UW Campus section”: add an “s” to the word “project” in item 2b and move #3 and #4 under #2 as sub-sections of #2.

Strike the following language under the “Regarding the Food Services” section:

5. Service Consideration Matrix — Evaluate services under the guidance of the Service Consideration Matrix (of the Richland County Strategic Plan), finalize responses by a majority vote of the committee and submit the responses to the County Administrator to present to the Rules and Strategic Planning Standing Committee, Finance and Personnel Standing Committee and the Richland County Board

7. Develop a course of action, for the discontinuation of the existing services including: elimination of county funding, reassignment or separation of existing staff, necessary changes in policy, and appropriation or liquidation of all assets, grounds, equipment and facilities in the best interest of the county.”

Strike date of “June 6th, 2023” and replace with “October 31, 2022”.

Discussion continued. Motion by McKee, second by Rudersdorf, to accept all proposed amendments. Discussion continued. Voice vote taken and motion to accept all proposed amendments carried. Voice vote taken and motion accept amended resolution carried with one opposed and resolution declared adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 22 – 94 (Amended)

A Resolution Notifying The UW Platteville-Richland Leadership, UW Extension Office And Food Services Of Future Funding Reductions And Directing The Richland County Education Standing Committee To Consider Services, Develop Options And Propose A Recommendation On Future Operations.

WHEREAS, the Richland County Board Accepted the County Administrator’s Financial Conditions Report that illustrated the financial challenges in maintaining all current county provided services; and

WHEREAS, the Richland County Board Adopted the County Administrator’s Financial and Capital Plan that iterates the Richland County’s Strategic Plan calling for prioritization of services and reductions in levy expenditures on both mandated and non-mandated services; and

WHEREAS, the Richland County has received numerous petitions and concerns regarding the elimination, reduction or displacement of such highly valued services, and recognizes the importance that these services have to the community, and is taking actions to investigate a possible transition of these services.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Richland County Board of Supervisors that the University of Wisconsin Extension Office, Food Services and partners in the UW Platteville-Richland have been identified for future funding reductions, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Richland County Education Standing Committee is tasked to work in conjunction with county administration, supporting staff, UW Platteville-Richland and community partner to consider services, develop and evaluate options and make a recommendation, to the County Board, on future operations of the UW Extension Office, Food Services and UW Platteville-Richland; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Education Standing Committee is specifically tasked with the following:

Regarding the UW Campus

1. Existing Agreement with No Levy — Develop a course of action, if possible, where ownership of all grounds and property is retained by Richland County and services are provided through UW Platteville-Richland, but in which no foreseeable county levy dollars are needed for any future operations or capital expenditures entering into 2025 and beyond.
2. Explore more cost effective and efficient use of land and buildings.
 - a. Explore the return of recruiting and admissions from the UW Platteville Campus to the UW Richland Campus and
 - b. Explore a dollar for dollar match by UW Richland Foundation for capital projects, not to exceed \$100,000 year in exchange for the County committing to continue to allocate a minimum of \$20,000 a year for insurance and \$100,000 for capital maintenance projects.

Regarding the Food Services

3. Existing Model with No Levy — Develop a course of action, if possible, where services are provided to UW Platteville-Richland, Nutrition Program and community, but in which no foreseeable county levy dollars are needed for any future operations or capital expenditures entering into 2024 and beyond. Consideration must also be given to future maintenance and ownership of the Coppertop Building.

Regarding the UW Extension Office

4. Service Reduction — Develop a course of action, for prioritizing services to operate at a 20% reduction by 2024 (from a 2022-year budget of approximately \$37,000).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Education Standing Committee Chair, through the powers established of setting agendas, is responsible for completing these specified tasks by no later than the October 31st, 2022 Finance and Personnel Standing Committee Meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage and publication.

VOTE ON FOREGOING RESOLUTION
AYES _____ NOES _____

RESOLUTION OFFERED BY THE FINANCE
AND PERSONNEL STANDING COMMITTEE
(10 AUGUST 2022)

RESOLUTION _____

DEREK S. KALISH
COUNTY CLERK

DATED:

	FOR	AGAINST
MARTY BREWER	X	
SHAUN MURPHY-LOPEZ	X	
MARC COUEY	X	
GARY MANNING	X	
TIMOTHY GOTTSCHALL	X	
DAVID TURK	X	
STEVE WILLIAMSON	X	
MELISSA LUCK	X	
STEVE CARROW	X	

On Wednesday, August 3, 2022, 1:30 PM, Division of Enrollment and Student Success
<studentsuccess@uwplatt.edu> wrote:



Greetings from Enrollment and Student Success

Hello again, Parents and Families!

In just five short weeks, your student will be starting their fall semester at UW-Platteville. Two years ago, my own son was getting ready to start college. I remember him feeling excited and nervous at the same time. He was excited to connect with his peers, delve into his major, and (if I'm honest) gain some distance from me! He was also nervous because the world we live in isn't as safe as it once was. And our way of processing all those feelings was to talk.

I hope you can have some **intentional talks** with your student this month. Have you decided how often you will talk to your student once they have started their semester? While it's important to stay connected, you also want to respect your student's need for independence. And it's not realistic to expect them to answer a call when they are in class!

It is also important to talk with your student about how they will resolve issues that might come up, such as a lost ID card or oversleeping and missing a class. While you can continue to provide support from home, it's equally important for your student to know who on their campus can replace that ID or how to talk to their professor about the work they missed. And if there are more serious issues, remember that the **Dean of Students Office** is ready to provide guidance. They have developed a [resource](#) specifically for parents and families to help you talk about making safe decisions in a college environment. To reach the Dean of Students Office for more information, just email deanofstudents@uwplatt.edu.

While preparation is important, the most impactful conversations are those that start and end with, "I'm proud of you." You will always be your student's most important

cheerleader and they will look to you if they are feeling unsure of themselves. What **words of encouragement** will you provide your student? How will you let them know that “they got this” and that you have their back? Email studentsuccess@uwplatt.edu (if you like) and share some examples of positive messaging that you plan to use. We will then compile these words of encouragement—anonynously—to share with all our incoming students at the start of the semester.

Continue checking the New Student Experience Parent & Family [website](#) and look for “Reconnecting with Campus.” These are virtual sessions coming up on August 18 and August 22 to answer last minute questions you or your student may have. We will be emailing invitations to these sessions soon.

Thank you for choosing a UW-Platteville campus!



nse@uwplatt.edu | 608.342.1081 | uwplatt.edu/new-student-experience
facebook.com/uwplattnse2022

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Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.
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1 University Plaza
Platteville, WI | 53818-3099 US

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Visit us on the web at <http://co.richland.wi.us>

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Dear Michael Compton,
September 6, 2022

We are writing to you as members of the Richland County Education Standing Committee.

As you know, the county has passed a resolution associated with the all the entities the Education Committee oversees. A copy of that resolution is also attached. We are asking for your partnership to work together, along with UW system staff, to determine how we can enable the campus to again thrive and continue to be a higher educational entity for Richland County.

Currently, through perspectives of area high school staff, students, and parents we have been learning how confusing the admission process is for our campus.

- * Some are confused about whether they are applying to the Richland or Platteville campus.
- * More than one student received two acceptance letters, one to Platteville and one to Richland.(see attached e-mail memo)
- * Follow-up e-mails only mention Platteville (see attached e-mail)
- * International students have experienced challenges with applying and have not been told about the scholarships the Foundation offers.(see attached e-mail)

The result is that many students have given up on the UW-Richland application process and applied to other campuses.

We understand in the past the Foundation has offered multiple times to fund a recruiter for our campus but the offer was declined.

We believe that if our campus does not have improved recruiting and admissions, the campus will no longer live up to its potential. We would like UW Platteville to rethink how they recruit and admit students to Richland.

We hope you will consider the County Board's resolution, and perhaps your own ideas for how our campus can be improved. Every campus, whether a part of a larger unit, which Richland is with UW-Platteville, still has its own culture and its own identity. The Richland Campus has been closely aligned with the area community. They are invested in its education and cultural progress. Several years ago, it developed that Richland could offer a complete university experience for area students by having a diverse student population from Madison, Milwaukee and from international countries.

In addition to recruitment and admission efforts, we also believe the County needs to increase its investment in the campus, which has been declining in recent years. We are pleased to share that the County plans to allocate \$100,000 in 2023 to replace the leaking flat roof on the Coppertop Theater. Yet, we know that investment is far outpaced by the maintenance needs of the campus.

The Education Committee welcomes any ideas or other options you may wish to bring forward at our next committee meeting, Monday, September 12 at 1:15pm in the Pippin Conference Center.

We wish to work together as a unit but also encourage you to work with us to strive to have the campus develop its unique culture through attracting a diverse student population, and reaching out more to the community. We would enjoy your response and welcome any positive steps we can take together.

Respectfully,

Linda Gentes

Chair, Richland County Education Standing Committee

Linda.gentes@co.richland.wi.us<mailto:Linda.gentes@co.richland.wi.us>

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Cc: Assistant Provost Michael Compton

County Administrator Clinton Langreck

County Board Chair Marty Brewer

Notes from phone conversation on Friday, August 5, 2022 with Monica Kershner

Monica is the mother of Ty Kershner who will be attending UWP-Richland in the fall of 2022.

She also has been working part time in the Ithaca schools in the counselor's office and assisting high school students in course work, college credits, etc. She is also the Youth Apprenticeship Career coach. I help junior and seniors discover their career passions and strengths. ;)

I asked her how the admission process was for Ty when applying to Richland.

She said:

- Apply online at UW Platteville, then click Richland and you go right to UW Platteville admissions.
- It was very confusing, not sure to which school you are applying
- He is her third child to enter college and this was the most confusing admission
- They received two acceptance letters, one for UWP-Richland and one for UW Platteville, which confused them more because not sure where he was enrolled.
- They needed clarification. He is interested in engineering and it was difficult to find out that he could begin at Richland and then transfer to Platteville to go into their engineering program
- Not sure of the campus spirit, he can be a walk on for track at Platteville so is he a Roadrunner or a Pioneer?
- Since last Friday, over the weekend of the 6th and 7th, Ty received an e-mail from UW-Platteville about getting ready for college. It never mentions Richland. Other e-mails have been this way also and that makes for concerns that they are really a part of the Richland Campus.

She further went on to talk about working with the Ithaca students:

- There has been no recruitment at Ithaca for Richland
- There does not seem to be any PR for the campus.
- It is a privilege to have an area 2-year school with several associate degree programs
- Many of her students are not ready for a larger school and want an environment to get to know faculty and also still live at home and save money
- She really hopes we can keep UWP-Richland alive and thriving
- She is helping 5 seniors at Ithaca take college-up programs and wishes there were more opportunities like this at Richland

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In just five short weeks, your student will be starting their fall semester at UW-Platteville. Two years ago, my own son was getting ready to start college. I remember him feeling excited and nervous at the same time. He was excited to connect with his peers, delve into his major, and (if I'm honest) gain some distance from me! He was also nervous because the world we live in isn't as safe as it once was. And our way of processing all those feelings was to talk.

I hope you can have some **intentional talks** with your student this month. Have you decided how often you will talk to your student once they have started their semester? While it's important to stay connected, you also want to respect your student's need for independence. And it's not realistic to expect them to answer a call when they are in class!

It is also important to talk with your student about how they will resolve issues that might come up, such as a lost ID card or oversleeping and missing a class. While you can continue to provide support from home, it's equally important for your student to know who on their campus can replace that ID or how to talk to their professor about the work they missed. And if there are more serious issues, remember that the **Dean of Students Office** is ready to provide guidance. They have developed a [resource](#) specifically for parents and families to help you talk about making safe decisions in a college environment. To reach the Dean of Students Office for more information, just email deanofstudents@uwplatt.edu.

While preparation is important, the most impactful conversations are those that start and end with, "I'm proud of you." You will always be your student's most important cheerleader and they will look to you if they are feeling unsure of themselves. What **words of encouragement** will you provide your student? How will you let them know that "they got this" and that you have their back? Email studentsuccess@uwplatt.edu

(if you like) and share some examples of positive messaging that you plan to use. We will then compile these words of encouragement—anonynously—to share with all our incoming students at the start of the semester.

Continue checking the New Student Experience Parent & Family [website](#) and look for “Reconnecting with Campus.” These are virtual sessions coming up on August 18 and August 22 to answer last minute questions you or your student may have. We will be emailing invitations to these sessions soon.

Thank you for choosing a UW-Platteville campus!



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Hi Linda,

Thanks for your contact regarding UW-Richland.

UW-Richland and Eagle School have had a history of working well together. Many of the domestic and international graduates from Eagle have chosen to enroll at UW-R. This is often because they like the community and the host family. Often these students have been high achievers at UW-R in student government and academics. There was a standing agreement with UW-R that Eagle international grads could be admitted without taking an English proficiency test or an ACT. This relationship continued when regionalization took place. Many of the Eagle grads continued to choose UW-R as their next step in education. I know there were occasions when the student senate president and the international club president were both Eagle grads.

The special relationship between Eagle and UW-R changed when Platteville took over. Immediately we were told admission decisions would be made from Platteville rather than in Richland Center. Even when there was a local dean, he seemed to have little authority about admission decisions.

I will explain some of the struggles Eagle has had with Platteville but first a disclaimer. All of my interactions with Michael Compton have been cordial. Michael approved the use of the UW-R soccer field for my spring team to play on in 2022. I believe he wants to make UW-R work.

The troubles began the first year Platteville became the overseer of UW-R. Platteville wanted to have a different agreement for admission of Eagle students. But, they didn't let us know what the terms of that agreement were. I called the admission office to try to nail them down. After some extensive discussion, the man on the phone said, "why don't you just send all the students to Platteville instead of Richland?" I explained the students wanted to live in RC since they went to school here and had social connections. However, I was surprised at the brazen recruitment away from enrollment at Richland. Eagle never heard back about a new agreement for admission.

In late 2019 and early 2020, I personally worked with the athletic director for UW-R, Robert Laue. We traveled together to Brazil to recruit soccer players/students to come to Eagle and UW-R. The trip was very successful in that we created a cooperative agreement between Eagle and UW-R to share a soccer coach and facilities. The soccer players at Eagle would transfer to Richland upon graduation. This agreement was confirmed with the dean and with the powers at Platteville. Then COVID hit and everything was stopped. But, Platteville did not communicate anything with Eagle, not even the stopping of the program for the 2020-2021 school year. Suddenly, there was no coach, no university soccer players and no plans to revive the program. I couldn't get anyone to even talk to me about it (this was before Michael Compton's role). Eagle continued to work the effort and had several online Brazilian students for the 2020-2021 school year. In 2021-2022 there were 12 Brazilian students that attended Eagle and played soccer. Nine of them graduated in May of 2022 and went on to universities elsewhere. They would likely have all attended UW-R if there had been a soccer program. This sequence of events was very disappointing as Platteville dropped the ball with Eagle and failed in communication. The loss of these nine students and many more in the future was significant for UW-R.

During the enrollment period of 2021-2022 Eagle had international student grads (not soccer players) that wanted to apply for enrollment at UW-R. Two of those students were told by admission people in Platteville that they would receive a scholarship if they attended UW-P but not if they enrolled in UW-

R. Much later it was explained to Eagle that the Platteville scholarship would have equalized the tuition between UW-P and UW-R but that was never communicated with the students or Eagle. It appeared to be a play to get students to enroll at Platteville instead of UW-R. The students who were told they would receive a scholarship if they attended UW-P but not UW-R passed the word to other students. None of them attended UW-P or UW-R. Most Eagle students like Richland Center but if they are going elsewhere it will be UW-Madison or some other large university, not UW-P.

In the admission season of 2022-2023 some Eagle students attempted to enroll in UW-R but could not navigate the enrollment process. One student contacted UW-P and asked how to enroll in UW-R. The student reported he was told he must enroll in UW-P and then apply for enrollment in UW-R. The process seemed so confusing, he dropped the application and enrolled in a different university. He told the other Eagle students it was very difficult to enroll in UW-R so they elected to enroll elsewhere.

On a personal note, my son, Jayce Breininger, just completed his freshman year at UW-Whitewater. I asked him why he didn't choose UW-R. He said, first they don't have an ROTC program, but mostly because there is nothing going on there. Few students, few local administration and faculty, and it seemed like it was dying. I have had eight children attend UW-R over the years. This was the first of my children to choose not to attend UW-R even though the cost to attend UW-Whitewater was much higher since he had to rent a room and pay for his own food.

I have stated publicly and privately that I believe the UW-Platteville admissions have been one of the largest problems for enrollment at UW-R. I believe that is still the case. That is compounded with little authority on the local level to make decisions. In my opinion, unless there is dramatic change, UW-P will sink UW-R.

Thanks,

Mike Breininger

Hi Linda,

Thanks for the details.

The Richland School District Board of Education approved a proposal that I worked on to begin working on implementing an F1 visa program at the high school. I had contacted Lisa Behling at the UW-Platteville Richland campus and she gave me the name of the international coordinator at Platteville. I emailed that person and she was very slow in responding.

However, eventually she did respond, and Emily Dolan and I met virtually with her once to discuss the possibility of implementing a program. What I am hoping for with this is to have international students attend RCHS on J1 visas as juniors, switch over to an F1 visa as seniors, graduate from RCHS, and spend at least one year at UW-Platteville Richland. What we were told on our call was that the idea is definitely feasible, but there would be no guarantee that the students would attend Richland and not some other UW campus. This was disappointing to me, but understandable. After our meeting, she followed up with an email that gave information on some of the partners Platteville works with to recruit international students.

You may have heard that I will be leaving the school district. I have been offered a position at the WI Department of Public Instruction as a School Administration Consultant. I begin there on August 1st. I will continue to be the Foreign Exchange Director at RCHS, at least for one more year, and I still intend to work on the getting the F1 program in place.

It will be difficult for me to make the meeting on August 12, unfortunately. I won't say impossible because I don't know what my schedule is going to look like yet. But it might be better to have something written for that meeting. Maybe this email will suffice, but if you want more info, please let me know. My intention with this whole idea is to start a seamless regular flow of international students from RCHS to the campus. I am devastated at what has happened to the international program at UW-Platteville Richland. I'll do anything I can to help re-establish a viable program.

Stay well!

Kathy