

THE GAD REPORT

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REALTOR® & GOVERNMENT DAY FEBRUARY 5

One of the largest contingents of RANWW members in recent memory will be travelling to Madison on February 5th for the annual REALTOR® & Government Day.

Over 40 from your Association and more than 300 statewide will spend the afternoon being briefed on issues that are important to real estate, bills that are currently seeing legislative action or are expected to be taken up over the next month or two, an address by Governor Tony Evers, and the reason we are going to Madison; a 90 minute meeting with our legislators and their staffs. As has been our practice, we have all of our legislators meet in one

room to discuss the issues, which this year has produced some logistical challenges.

For years, we have been in Room 201SE in the capitol. We were recently moved to 330SW, which is almost an exact copy of our usual room. It seats 50. With 40 of us and legislators coming and going through our meeting, we'll have close to standing room only.

We will be discussing four issues with them. First on the priority list is legislation that will clarify that all waterfront property owners have the right to place a pier subject to Chapter 30 of Wisconsin Statutes. Second

is legislation that helps to clarify language and adding a disclosure in disclosure reports. Third is unfair property tax assessments that makes new homeowners pay more in property taxes, and finally, workforce housing legislation that has already passed the Assembly by a vote of 97 to 1 and has been advanced to the Senate for action in an upcoming floor session.

After the business of the day, we'll return to the Concourse Hotel for a reception then return to Eau Claire. A big thank you to everyone who is taking time out of their schedules to join us this year in Madison for REALTOR® & Government Day.

CANDIDATE FORUM IN MENOMONIE

There will be a candidate forum for the Menomonie School Board on Tuesday, February 4th starting at 6:30pm at the Mable Tainter Center for the Arts in Menomonie.

There are seven candidates for three 3-year terms

on the board of education. The top six emerging from the February 18 primary election will go on to the spring election where the top three vote getters will be elected.

The forum will have candidates make an opening

statement, a question and answer period where the audience will be able to submit questions and a closing statement by all participants.

In the event of bad weather, the forum will be held on February 11th.

HAVE YOU GOTTEN OUR TEXT MESSAGES?



Text REALTORS to 30644 to get alerts on CALLS FOR ACTION

SIGN UP TODAY

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SCHOOL REFERENDUMS ON SPRING BALLOTS

There will be a number of school referendums on ballots this spring including a \$48.8 million referendum for CVTC in 11 counties. Other communities in our jurisdiction will have school referendums of their own:

Birchwood: \$5,800,000 for operating revenue and building and facility maintenance, programming and curriculum.

Eleva-Strum: \$1,725,000 to be

used for ongoing maintenance and educational programming.

Elk Mound: \$15,730,000 for general obligation bonds not to exceed the amount specified for school needs.

Osseo-Fairchild: \$3,900,000 to pay the costs of improvements to district buildings and grounds and equipment acquisition, building and

site maintenance projects, expansion of technical education spaces and acquisition of related equipment and district-wide technology upgrades and replacements.

Osseo-Fairchild: \$3,150,000 to go toward district operating costs.

Siren: \$900,000 for operating dollars for the district.

Spooner: \$16,000,000 for district wide infrastructure security and ADA (continued)



OVER \$1 BILLION IN REFERENDUM DOLLARS SOUGHT STATEWIDE

improvements. Academic and cafeteria addition at the elementary school, demo of the small middle school gym and acquisition of related furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

Webster: \$6,500,000 for construction of an addition to expand the career and technical education area of the middle/high school, parking

lot, athletic facilities and site improvements at the middle/high school. Renovations, improvements and technology updates at the elementary, middle and high schools, and acquisition of furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

Winter: \$4,000,000 for facility upgrades to their schools.

These are the referendums in our jurisdiction. There are

55 statewide with Racine being the largest. They are tearing down nine old schools, building five new ones and will be asking for funding in sections for the next 30 years that will add up to just over one billion dollars.

Eau Claire and other districts are already looking to future referendums after 2020.

CITY COUNCIL INVESTS IN SONNENTAG CENTER

The Eau Claire City Council approved a deal to provide from six to seven million dollars as a contribution from the city to the Sonnentag Event Center, a partnership between UWEC, Mayo Clinic and Visit Eau Claire. The council voted 9 to 0 to approve the deal, with the final dollar amount to be decided later this spring. It will allow

the proposed event center, which will replace the more than 50 year old Zorn arena on the UWEC campus to add over 1100 more seats bringing the capacity up to 5100 which is a threshold that large events and conventions look to in order to book facilities. In addition to the replacement of Zorn, the facility will have a fitness and recreation

center, classrooms and lab rooms for the university's kinesiology program and Mayo's sports and imaging clinic.

Ground is expected to be broken for the project this summer with a completion date sometime in the summer of 2022 if all approvals are secured.



REALTORS® POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Here's a program that helps support local and state candidates

**Invest \$50 per month, charged monthly to your Visa,
Mastercard or American Express card**

**Candidates and incumbents for local offices and the
state Legislature need your support**

**Support those who support real estate and land use
as well as private property rights**

**Go to: <https://www.wra.org/dgcontribution/> to set
up your Direct Giver investment**





NATIONAL NEW HOME SALES UP 10 PERCENT IN 2019

Sales of new built, single-family homes decreased by 0.4 percent to an adjusted rate of 694,000 units in December according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The monthly number is 23 percent higher than numbers from December of 2018 with 681,000 new homes sold in 2019 which is a 10.3 percent year-to-year increase.

Existing home sales in

Wisconsin finished strong in December, with home sales and median prices up by double digits. Home sales increased 14.8 percent from December 2018 to December 2019 and the median price rose 10.1 percent to \$197,000.

Annual sales in Wisconsin were nearly the same as in 2018 with 2019 seeing over 82,000 statewide sales of homes

for the fourth consecutive year.

While mortgage rates have trended downward for the last two months, the supply of homes on the market continues to be a concern. Wisconsin has a 3.2 month supply of homes for sale, well below the six-month mark that shows a balanced housing market.

Prices are up, inventory is down starting 2020.



EAU CLAIRE COUNCIL APPROVES AFFORDABLE HOUSING PANEL

The Eau Claire City Council unanimously approved the formation of an 11 member panel tasked with addressing the issue of affordable housing that is a major issue in Eau Claire and many communities throughout Wisconsin and the nation.

The Housing Opportunities Commission will be comprised of one council mem-

ber, along with representatives of development, real estate, public health, social services, property management and city residents who have been directly impacted by the lack of affordable housing.

The duties of the advisory board include recommending and reviewing city policies, facilitating affordable housing programs, developing more

public-private partnerships to increase the depth and breadth of the city's housing stock, and developing strategies to increase homeownership.

The new commission will report out to the council once each year on the progress they have made and receive feedback from the council on future needs.

APRIL PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT SET

There will be 12 Democrats on the spring ballot for President and only one Republican, President Donald Trump.

The names of the Democratic candidates that will appear on Wisconsin's ballot are:

Michael Bennett, Joe Biden, Michael Bloomberg,

Pete Buttigieg, John Delaney, Tulsi Gabbard, Amy Klobuchar, Devel Patrick, Tom Steyer, Bernie Sanders, Andrew Yang and Elizabeth Warren.

President Trumps Republican challengers, Joe Walsh and William Weld each did not reach the 8000 signature

threshold required to get on the ballot.

One race you won't see on the April ballot is the contest for the open 7th Congressional District.

That special election will be held on Tuesday, May 12th.



LARGE DONOR COUNCIL

RANWW Needs YOU to join the Large Donor Council in 2020

Invest \$85 per month, charged monthly to your Visa, Mastercard or American Express card

Candidates and incumbents for local offices and the state Legislature need your support

Support those who support real estate and land use as well as private property rights

Go to: <https://www.wra.org/dgcontribution/> to set up your Large Donor Council investment



12 Reasons to Renew or Begin Your Large Donor/Major investor Council Membership

1. In 2010, some appraisers and the City of Milwaukee wanted legislation passed that would prevent real estate licensees from giving **opinions of value** unless they had an appraiser's license. It didn't pass thanks to your help and the WRA's efforts to kill this legislation.
 2. In some states, local governments can **regulate brokerage services** that are currently regulated by state and federal laws. Not in Wisconsin! The WRA helped pass a law that prohibits local governments from interfering with Wisconsin license law.
 3. In some states, attorneys are required at every closing. Not in Wisconsin! Your right to use **state approved forms** was reaffirmed by the state Supreme Court, thanks to an amicus brief filed by the WRA.
 4. In some states and municipalities, state or local governments have **rent control** laws or ordinances. Not in Wisconsin! The WRA took the lead years ago and helped pass a law that prohibits local rent control.
 5. Some members of Congress wanted to eliminate the **mortgage interest deduction** for second homes. The NAR and WRA were successful in maintaining this deduction because of the importance of second homes to the real estate market in Wisconsin.
 6. Prior to 2016, Wisconsin REALTORS® could be sued up to six years after a closing. Today, we have significantly improved liability protection for real estate firms and agents by creating a **two-year statute of limitations** from closing.
 7. For years, some Wisconsin municipalities imposed expensive and unnecessary **time of sale requirements** on property owners. Not anymore! Wisconsin law now prohibits local time of sale requirements that would limit or impede a property owner's right to transfer property.
 8. For 30 years, the State of Wisconsin imposed **weatherization requirements** on rental properties. Not now! The legislature eliminated the rental weatherization program, which required weatherization of rental units and certification before the property was sold or transferred.
 9. Some Wisconsin municipalities prohibited homeowners from **renting their property** on a short-term basis. Today, we have a new law that protects the ability of homeowners to rent out their home by allowing local communities to regulate but not prohibit such rentals for seven days or more.
 10. Historic rehabilitation is a priority for communities across the State of Wisconsin. Through the efforts of the WRA and other allies, Wisconsin maintains the **state historic rehabilitation tax credit** up to \$3.5 million per project.
 11. Some Wisconsin cities imposed rigid and expensive **rental property inspection programs**. A new law limits the authority of municipalities to conduct inspections of rental property unless there is evidence of blight, high rates of building code complaints or violations, deteriorating property values, or increase in single family home conversions to rental units.
 12. Over the years, some state lawmakers have made several attempts to increase the **real estate transfer tax**. The WRA has stopped all these proposals, including the last proposal to double the transfer fee that would cost your seller hundreds of dollars on the sale of their home.
- This is only a small sample of our legislative successes at the State and Federal level, made possible by your contributions so we can support candidates who support our industry.



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“RANWW/NWWMLS UNITE TO
ADVOCATE FOR REAL PROPERTY RIGHTS,
ADVANCE PROFESSIONALISM AND CONNECT
MEMBERS WITH OUR COMMUNITIES.”

The REALTORS® Association of Northwestern Wisconsin is the largest association in terms of area, stretching from Millston, Whitehall and Fountain City to the south all the way to central Bayfield and southern Ashland county to the north. We are the fourth largest of the 19 Associations in terms of membership. Your Association covers 385 units of local government, monitoring a wide variety of issues that can and do affect you. In addition to local government, your GAD also monitors issues at the state and national level that will have a direct or indirect impact on housing and the industry, as well as legislation that can affect the consumer. Your Government Affairs Director works with members and affiliates to raise investment dollars for RPAC that help to support elected officials that support your business. RANWW is one of only three REALTOR® Association's in Wisconsin that have their own PAC, which was started 41 years ago to support candidates at the local and state level. We maintain a Facebook page, called “The GADabouts”, that aims to keep you up to date on political issues that will affect your business. Your GAD also produces a periodic government affairs program posted on our YouTube channel, RANWWTV!!

MY THOUGHTS—BY BRUCE KING

REALTOR® & Government Day truly makes a difference when we show up in numbers that legislators and their staffs are impressed by.

If you have ever thought about attending, you should have that on your annual “to do” list. For you, it is a day invested out of the office, half of which you will spend in transit to and from the event. That gives you an opportunity to make calls, send emails and texts and at least conduct some business if you need to.

The briefing you receive prior to our hill visit is conducted by veterans of the

political process. Tom Larson, Joe Murray and Cori Lamont have decades of combined experience in Madison working with lawmakers from both sides of the aisle in times of one party rule and like today, split governance in the capitol.

Housing is one issue that both sides pretty much agree on. Our team works very hard to get bills written, introduced and guided thru the legislative process that is not only beneficial to homebuyers, but sellers of homes and property, protecting the rights of landowners and protecting our waterways

and land uses. For one moment in time, or in this case, about 90 minutes in time, you as a member of the Association, have the opportunity to verbally support the efforts of the lobby team by being in the room and lending your voice and support for legislation that is being promoted.

Don't think of yourself as a lobbyist, instead think of yourself as an advocate for housing, homeownership and land use.

It's one day out of the year, 90 minutes in a room that can make all the difference when decisions are made at the capitol.

