Capitol Update
By Senator Howard Marklein
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Monitoring State Government: the Open Book and Agency Dashboard

Several months ago, Governor Scott Walker announced a number of initiatives aimed at promoting open and transparent Executive-branch government in Wisconsin. In addition to OpenBook Wisconsin, the administration has now created a website to share Agency Performance Dashboards. Both resources are free, online and open-to-the public.

OpenBook Wisconsin (www.openbook.wi.gov) is a direct view into the checkbook of Wisconsin. It includes more than 25 million entries for payments made by state agencies, the legislature, the courts and the University of Wisconsin System for purchasing goods or services, travel and vendor payments. It also contains the salary information for all state government employees, links to state budget documents and data for economic development programs.

Follow this direct link to the salary information for every state employee in 2014. http://openbook.wi.gov/Uploads/State_of_WI_2014_Payroll_Data.pdf The data is sorted alphabetically by department and name. The data for 2015 is pending.

Follow this direct link to the Vendor Contracts for all agencies: http://vendornet.state.wi.us/vendornet/procman/prob2b.asp

Follow this direct link to the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR): http://www.doa.state.wi.us/Divisions/Budget-and-Finance/Financial-Reporting/Comprehensive-Annual-Financial-Reports This report presents the State's financial position in a business-like manner.

The creation of OpenBook Wisconsin required state agencies and the legislature to roll-out new accounting, procurement and record-keeping software over the last several years to make the data easier to collect and share. This system, the State Transforming Agency Resources system known as STAR, is a huge asset to our state government in this effort.

More recently, Governor Walker issued Executive Order #189 which, in part, created Agency Performance Dashboards as a portal for all of us to track agency performance in key program areas. Review a snapshot of key metrics and access all of the dashboards at the following link: www.performance.wi.gov.

Like most private businesses that measure performance, the Agency Performance Dashboards measure the agencies against specific metrics related to their purposes and goals. This is a great tool for citizens of Wisconsin to review how agencies are serving us, the taxpayers of Wisconsin.

Each agency has a unique function within our state government structure. As such, each agency has different goals related to their purpose and mission. For example, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is measured on the following metrics:

- Increase/maintain number of targeted meetings with business and industry.
- Increase export sales as a result of the Wisconsin International Trade Team services.
- Increase percentage of food inspections performed on schedule.
- Maintain turnaround time on issuance of certificates required for export of plants and plant products.
- Increase percentage of animal health inspections performed on time.
- Increase percentage of feed quality surveillance samples that meet label guarantees.
- Improved response time to consumers.
- Decrease number of Consumer Protection hotline calls that go to voicemail.
- More efficient weights and measures/fuel quality inspections.
- Clean Sweep collections.

For each goal, the department determines if the goal is met or unmet based on measureable data or hard numbers. This is an objective, clean way to measure performance. According to the most recent Performance Dashboard report for DATCP from the second quarter of 2016, the agency has met 50% of their goals. The 50% that are not met are trending toward meeting the goals, however, there is definitely more work to do.

Opportunities for improvement show us where we should dedicate more time, talent and resources. They give us the opportunity to truly understand where we are successful and where we need to refocus our energies. Assessing performance in this way helps all of state government to operate in a more efficient, effective way.

I encourage everyone who is interested in the function of our state government to review the OpenBook Wisconsin and Agency Performance Dashboard websites to learn more about the function of our state government.

For more information and to connect with me, visit my website http://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/17/marklein and subscribe to my weekly E-Update by sending an email to Sen.Marklein@legis.wisconsin.gov. Do not hesitate to call 800-978-8008 if you have input, ideas or need assistance with any state-related matters.

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