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## **Public Policy Forum announces 20<sup>th</sup> annual “Salute to Local Government” award winners**

**MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin** – *Friday, June 1, 2012* – Milwaukee-based Public Policy Forum, a nonpartisan public policy research organization, has announced its 2012 *Salute to Local Government* award winners.

“There are many examples of strong government performance throughout our region, and of innovative government leaders who excel at their work,” says Rob Henken, Forum president. “The Salute reflects the Forum’s strong belief that good government is *worth* celebrating, and that the public needs to hear about the many examples of ingenuity and outstanding performance that are occurring every day in our local governments and school districts.”

This year’s *Salute* includes awards categories that recognize government entities for innovation, partnership and cooperation, as well as individuals in government and school districts for excellence and lifetime achievement.

The awards will be presented at the Public Policy Forum’s 20<sup>th</sup> annual *Salute to Local Government* breakfast on **Tuesday, June 19, 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at the Italian Conference Center, 631 East Chicago Street, in Milwaukee’s Historic Third Ward.**

The *Salute* breakfast is sponsored this year by Baker Tilly; BMO Harris Bank; Ehlers & Associates, Inc.; Helen Bader Foundation; Milwaukee Public Television; Northwestern Mutual Foundation; Potawatomi Bingo Casino; Quarles & Brady, LLP; SC Johnson: A Family Company; and We Energies.

The 2012 recipients are:

### **“Innovative Response to Tough Budget Times”**

*Milwaukee County Treasurer’s Office*

The Milwaukee County Treasurer’s Office initiated a series of quality improvements that have enhanced productivity, reduced expenditures and increased revenues. The improvements include large-scale implementation of the State of Wisconsin’s Tax Refund Intercept Program as a tool for collecting delinquent property taxes; eliminating all paper paychecks; creating on-line access to delinquent property tax records and an on-line payment module (which reduced incoming phone calls by 75%); streamlining the county’s bank deposit processes (which reduced cash receipts by 33%); and introducing a pilot Electronic Fund Transfer process. Because of these improvements, the Treasurer’s Office will be able to reduce its staffing from nine to seven employees, and it has doubled its delinquent property tax collections.

### **“Effective Use of Technology”**

*City of Wauwatosa*

The City of Wauwatosa recently culminated a four-year project by unveiling a new network infrastructure that includes wireless point-to-point access points, server virtualization, and high-speed data replication between data centers. The initiative was spurred by the city’s receipt of an \$80,000 Homeland Security grant to install a new video surveillance system, which prompted city staff to use the opportunity to upgrade the rest of its information technology infrastructure. The result is high-speed connectivity and vastly enhanced capacity for communications between city hall and the police department, \$25,000 of new annual revenue from a new communications tower, and opportunities to expand the city’s wireless infrastructure to other areas of city operations.

### **“Intergovernmental Cooperation”**

*North Shore Consolidated Dispatch Services*

Despite a history of cooperation including a consolidated fire department, the seven municipalities in Milwaukee County’s North Shore maintained three separate facilities for public safety dispatch operations (one for Bayside, Fox Point and River Hills; one for Whitefish Bay, Shorewood, Glendale and the North Shore Fire Department; and one for Brown Deer). That changed late last year, when the seven agreed to combine their dispatch operations at an

expanded facility at Bayside Village Hall, which officially opened for business in mid-May. The coordinated dispatch effort – which involved painstaking negotiations over a cost-sharing formula, location and governance – is projected to save the communities more than \$4 million during the next 10 years while enhancing service levels and technology.

### **“Private-Public Cooperation”**

*Villard Square Grandfamily and Villard Avenue Library*

Faced with a stagnant business district in need of investment, a growing number of grandparents seeking quality housing and services for their grandchildren, and an aging public library needing major improvements or replacement, a group of partners from the public and private sectors came together to forge one grand solution: a “grandfamily” apartment complex with a new public library on the first floor. The partnership included the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Library, Gorman & Company, and the Northwest Side Community Development Corporation, who together created 47 fully leased apartments on Villard Avenue in Milwaukee and a new public library.

### **“Leader of the Future Award”**

Jason Dzwinel

Assistant County Administrator/Human Resources Director, Ozaukee County

As Ozaukee County’s second-highest administrative official, 36-year-old Jason Dzwinel plays a key role in the government’s policy development and analysis, strategic planning, budgeting, human resources, collective bargaining and financial management. Jason has received several promotions since coming to Ozaukee County in 2002, assuming Human Resources Director duties in 2008 and taking the lead in revamping the county’s personnel policies, guiding collective bargaining, and instituting important changes in health insurance administration and employee wellness. Ozaukee County Administrator Tom Meaux calls Jason “a trusted advisor and strategic implementer throughout our organization.”

### **“James R. Ryan Lifetime Achievement Award”**

James T. Dwyer

Former Board Chair, Waukesha County Board of Supervisors

Jim Dwyer was elected to the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors in 1992 and served as chairman from 1994 until this past April, when he was defeated in his re-election bid for county supervisor. Jim not only was known for his promotion of intergovernmental cooperation and strong leadership as county board chair, but also for his active leadership in organizations whose reach extends well beyond the Waukesha County Courthouse. For example, he is a past president of the Wisconsin Counties Association; he represented all Wisconsin counties as a member of the Supreme Court Policy and Planning Advisory Committee; and he served on the Executive Committees of the Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation, Waukesha County Criminal Justice Collaboration Council, and Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Jim also served for two years as a Village of Menomonee Falls Trustee before being elected to the Waukesha County Board.

## **“Norman N. Gill Award”**

Sue Black

Director, Milwaukee County Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture

Sue Black has been a leader in the park and recreation industry for more than 30 years, serving in senior parks management positions in Green Lake, Portage, Dane County and as the director of the Wisconsin State Parks. Since 2004, she has been director of the Milwaukee County Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, where she has excelled in generating corporate support for the parks, encouraging the development of new friends groups and parks programming, and vastly increasing marketing and media attention for the parks. Among her many accomplishments, Sue received national recognition in 2009 as the recipient of the R.O.S.E. Award (Recognition of Significant Efforts) from the National Recreation and Park Association. In addition, under Sue’s leadership, the Milwaukee County Parks was named the Class I winner of the National Gold Medal for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management.

The substantial number of outstanding nominations also prompted the Forum to recognize the following entities with Honorable Mention awards:

- The City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board and private sector employers for the “Earn & Learn” program in the “Private-Public Cooperation” category.
- The Regner Rejuvenation Committee & West Bend Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry for their efforts to renovate Regner Park in the “Private-Public Cooperation” category.

Milwaukee-based Public Policy Forum ([www.publicpolicyforum.org](http://www.publicpolicyforum.org)) – which was established in 1913 as a local government watchdog – is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness of government and the development of southeastern Wisconsin through objective research of regional public policy issues.