

I have unique experience and qualifications that I believe could benefit County residents, and I'm willing to make the sacrifice to serve on the County Board.

Thus far I have:

- Knocked on 500 doors and will continue this week.
- Attended County Board meetings.
- Met with community leaders in the business, non-profit, and city/county government to learn more about how things work.
- I've studied the Marathon County Life Report, which gives us a data-driven depiction about the quality of life in Marathon County.

Below is a link to the report itself, and a summary of the Life Report Issues, Calls to Action, and my responses that show my contributions in the area as well as some thoughts on how to address them.

Marathon County 2023 Life Report:

<https://www.marathoncountypulse.org/tiles/index/display?alias=2023LIFEReport>

Life Report Issue	Life Report Call to Action	Ken's Contributions & Observations
Basic Needs- Unmet Basic Needs	. . . provide resources or referrals directly to programs to help with basic needs.	SVdP annual assistance of \$175,000 to 1,700 people. Member of initial Community Partners Campus Impementation Team. We are more flexible than agencies because we don't get HUD \$ or qualification barriers for our friends in need.
Basic Needs- Housing	The number of households receiving Emergency Housing Assistance Funds (EHAF) is decreasing. Due to an increase in rent costs, and less EHAF dollars	There are more organizations providing various types of housing assistance in Marathon County, including St Vincent de Paul, which is primarily self-funded
Basic Needs- Homelessness	Efficient use of coordinated entry process amongh HUD funded Housing Assistance agencies.	SVdP works closely with WPD community outreach specialist to help get the unhoused into housing. Top priorities: Create more supervised shelter space. Expand and better-coordinate the various case management silos. Dedicated mental health & substance abuse treatment & recovery on site. The video link to the right gives a perspective on homelessness that I share. https://link.theepochtimes.com/mkt_app/finding-hope-for-american-homelessness_4602819.html

Life Report Issue	Life Report Call to Action	Ken's Contributions & Observations
Mental Health Top 4 Call to Action	Reducing barriers for individuals seeking mental health care and for mental health care providers to expand services is vital.	SVdP does a lot of home visits, and many of our friends in need complain about mental health services. This is also one of the top 4 Calls to Action.
Substance Misuse Top 4 Call to Action	Efforts to expand prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery must continue to occur in Marathon County.	Many of our friends in need have drug & alcohol addictions. NCHC's new Lakeside Recovery's 8-day medically monitored residential program, with 16 beds, will make a difference, but much more capacity, especially for those requiring long-term recovery, is needed.
Economic Environment- Labor Market	Marathon County continues to experience a tight labor market as labor force participation decreases and unemployment rates remain low, resulting in many open jobs in the community with not enough people to fill them. Marathon County needs to attract, support, and retain a labor force by reversing net migration and attracting more people to live in our communities.	My experience with SVdP, Marathon County Jail/prison re-entry work, and systemic change program (see more below), tells me that we have a potential workforce that currently isn't working because of barriers, some self-imposed, and some community limitations. Through public/private partnerships, I believe we can help put more of this population to work.
Economic Environment- Community Attractiveness	Marathon County needs to become a desirable destination not only for traditional manufacturing employment, but also for creative workers, entrepreneurs, and professionals. The disruption of traditional industries and employers (such as manufacturing and agriculture) leads to fewer local jobs, which results in people and/or businesses leaving our community.	As a member of the Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce, I would promote their Strategic Plan which outlines 31 tactical initiatives that support their goals of 1) Attracting & retaining skilled workers and talented individuals. 2) Nurturing, growing & attracting technology-enabled companies. and 3) Developing quality places & amenities to retain & attract talent. See the full document below: https://www.wausauchamber.com/assets/pdf/StrategicPlan2023_bookletsmall/

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Economic Environment- Living in Poverty	Percentage of People Living Below Poverty Level in Marathon County is 8.3%. Percentage of children living in poverty is 9.8%. United Way Bold Goal: "Lift 10,000 Community Members to Financial Stability by 2033"	<p>A key facet of the SVdP's work is to end poverty through long-lasting systemic change. Systemic change goes beyond addressing the immediate needs of poverty; instead, it is about partnering with the poor to identify the root causes of their poverty and remove the barriers that keep people impoverished. We are doing this in Wausau by conducting Getting Ahead Workshops. See our website:</p> <p>www.svdpwausau.org</p>
Child Care Top 4 Call to Action	Child care needs additional long-term public and private investment so children can have high-quality care and education, parents remain in the workforce, and those who work in child care can earn enough to support their own families.	I would like to see the Department of Children & Families conduct an assessment of our state regulations & 45 page YoungStar evaluation procedure to see where costs can be reduced, especially for home childcare. I would support public/private business networks like the industrial parks to share costs for Employer-provided Childcare. Lastly I would expand Wisconsin Shares (Federal/State) subsidies to assist more families.