

# The Game

With a basic understanding of [The Rules](#), it's now time to see how the game is played. There are concrete options for public participation and specific steps you can take when faced with this globally financed industry barreling into your community. These include:

- Opportunities to Stop Bond Deals
- Steps to Take if You Catch Wind of a Deal
- How to Win a Referendum
- Steps to Take if a Developer Tries to Use PFA

Information gleaned from a review of more than 1,200 pages of public documents makes it clear that some of the players involved want this complex game to be run as opaquely and quietly as possible.

Three case studies document how global, national, and local companies leverage public financing and subsidies to further consolidate Wisconsin's livestock industry. ***More importantly, you'll see how people like you can have an impact.***



## THREE CASE STUDIES

[Ridge Breeze Dairy](#) – Town of Salem, Pierce County

[Coleman Ponderosa](#) – Town of Pound, Marinette County

[WI RNG Hub](#) – Town of Gillett, Oconto County

# Opportunities to Stop Bond Deals

Federal and state laws require public participation if your county or town wants to issue bonds through WEDC or approve of PFA being the conduit for a bond deal. Developers have three options when wrangling for a bond. **YOU ALSO HAVE OPTIONS!**

It is imperative that you start contacting your town and county chairs and developing [a petition](#) as soon as you hear any word of a livestock factory potentially targeting your community for development.



## IS YOUR TOWN LOOKING TO ISSUE BONDS THROUGH WEDC?

1

You only need 5% of the registered electors in your town to sign a petition to trigger a referendum. Some Wisconsin towns approached by developers have as few as 400 people and would only need 20 signatures! Oftentimes, a developer will pull out rather than go through a referendum.

## IS YOUR COUNTY LOOKING TO ISSUE BONDS THROUGH WEDC?

2

Have 5% of your county sign a petition to trigger a referendum on the developer's plans. While this involves more than it does in a town, the petition process also serves as an excellent way to educate and involve people.

## IS THE DEVELOPER LOOKING TO HAVE PFA BE THE FINANCIAL CONDUIT?

3

Work with your town and county chair early and often. A developer only needs to convince one person in your county and town to approve PFA as the conduit. That person is the chair or administrator. A hearing is required, but cannot derail a deal even if there is a very large crowd objecting. However, the chair can require the full board to vote or turn down approval.

# Steps to Take if You Catch Wind of a Deal

1

Alert elected officials in both the county and town of the possible attempt to use their authority to act as conduits for public financing.

2

Locate the sites or news sources where your county and town publish public notices and monitor them religiously. Expect a notice to be published only once.

3

Request public information under [Wisconsin Public Records Law](#) from your county, town, WEDC or PFA.

4

Request the *full county and town boards* approve of any decisions with an open and transparent hearing and comment process. Request public committee hearings.

5

Review Corporate Governance Policies for any participating players and contact the companies about infractions.

6

Alert local, state, and national media of the proposed deal and local resistance. Find help through [Sustain Rural Wisconsin Network](#).

# How to Win a Referendum if Your County or Town Tries to Issue a Bond

1

Attend board meetings and track public notice of a county or town's Initial Resolution Regarding Solid Waste Disposal Revenue Bond Financing. This publication starts a countdown to the 30-day deadline for filing a petition for referendum.

2

Request committee hearings in planning, environment, or land conservation committees that cover all the details of the livestock factory such as public subsidies, foreign investors, and past permit violations.

3

Obtain [a petition form](#) from your town or village clerk and the number of signatures needed to meet the 5% of the elector population requirement. To protect the privacy of petitioners while collecting signatures, use multiple copies of the form and allow petitioners to sign separate forms. Signed forms become public record. Some residents may be wary of taking a public stance against the developer. However, they may see signing the petition as a way to get more information.

4

While you circulate the petition, confirm that each signer is a qualified elector in your town or village. Closely monitor that all boxes are completed. The clerk will discard signature counts for non-qualified persons and incomplete data. Obtain extra signatures assuming some will be discarded.

# How to Win a Referendum if Your County or Town Tries to Issue a Bond

5

Campaign in your community asking people to Vote No on public financing for privately owned livestock operations.

6

Expect the developer may pull their bond request from the town or village and move on to using PFA as a conduit instead.

**WHILE YOU CIRCULATE THE PETITION, CONFIRM THAT EACH SIGNER IS A QUALIFIED ELECTOR IN YOUR TOWN OR VILLAGE.**



# Steps to Take if Developer Tries to Use Public Finance Authority (PFA)



1

Request that the *full county and town boards* approve of any decisions with an open and transparent hearing and comment process.

2

Request committee hearings in planning, environment, or land conservation committees.

3

If your county or town chairs secretly sign off, propose a full board resolution calling for them to withdraw approval.

4

Attend local hearings to put public opposition on the record.

5

If your county and town approve of PFA being the conduit, you have 30 days to challenge the validity of the bond in circuit court under [Wisconsin Statute 66.0304 11\(c\)](#).

6

If your county and town sign off, circulate a petition asking the PFA and underwriter to reject the deal. Alert local, state, and national media of the petition. Here are two examples:

[RIDGE BREEZE PETITION](#)

[PFA EXITS CONTROVERSIAL ALABAMA PRISON](#)