

# Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing

May 10 to May 16, 2026

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## Budgets and Finance

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### Marinette County weighs borrowing to keep road projects on track

The Marinette County Infrastructure Committee, meeting Wednesday, May 7, 2026, took no formal vote but directed Highway Commissioner Eric Burmeister and County Administrator Kevin Solway to return in June with a refined capital plan after reviewing a proposed borrowing of \$9 to \$10 million over three years to cover an estimated \$9.5 million local share of highway construction costs in 2027 through 2029. Burmeister warned that canceling federally aided projects, including a roundabout at County Trunk B and U.S. 141, reconstruction of County Trunk JJ, and a bridge on County Trunk P, would require repayment of 100 percent of design costs and could trigger a federal audit of all county-received aid. Solway estimated gross interest on a \$9.5 million borrowing at approximately \$785,000, with a net cost near \$9.74 million after reinvestment. The committee directed that capital requests from all departments be compiled by early June before any borrowing resolution is presented to the full county board.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | [https://www.ehextra.com/news/marinette-county-weighs-borrowing-to-keep-road-projects-on-track/article\\_0348df27-495f-4bc6-938c-82c85baee2ef.html](https://www.ehextra.com/news/marinette-county-weighs-borrowing-to-keep-road-projects-on-track/article_0348df27-495f-4bc6-938c-82c85baee2ef.html)

### Janesville City Council approves interim city manager and search firm for permanent city manager

The Janesville City Council voted 6-1 on May 11, 2026, to approve Jay Shambeau of West Bend-based Innovative Public Advisors as interim city manager and to enter into a city manager recruitment agreement with the same firm, with council member Josh Erdman casting the sole dissenting vote. The recruitment contract carries a flat fee of \$18,000 for a search expected to span two to four months, plus interim city manager services billed at \$150 per hour for up to 30 hours per week, equating to a maximum of \$4,500 weekly. The action follows City Manager Kevin Lahner's impending departure later in May 2026 and a previously council-approved \$110,000 severance authorized in closed session on April 27, 2026. The council retains final hiring authority over the permanent city manager selection. Innovative Public Advisors will conduct outreach including potential public surveys and community meetings to gather resident input on desired qualifications for Janesville's next city manager.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | [https://www.gazettextra.com/news/janesville-city-council-approves-interim-city-manager-and-search-firm-for-permanent-city-manager/article\\_72bdc5a4-566d-4a7d-bedd-c928844e47bc.html](https://www.gazettextra.com/news/janesville-city-council-approves-interim-city-manager-and-search-firm-for-permanent-city-manager/article_72bdc5a4-566d-4a7d-bedd-c928844e47bc.html)

### La Crosse Fire and Police have gone over budget for the third year in a row

La Crosse city records disclosed at a city council meeting show that the Fire and Police Departments have exceeded their combined overtime budget for three consecutive years, with \$260,000 budgeted for overtime while actual spending has surpassed \$500,000 annually, a recurring shortfall of at least \$240,000 per year. District 2 Council Member Erin Goggin, citing historical spending data, stated the city has consistently underbudgeted for known overtime costs. Finance Director Chadwick Hawkins acknowledged in a written statement that personnel and staffing needs are not always anticipated in the budgeting process. Police Chief Shawn Kudron, speaking at a city meeting, stated he has repeatedly requested more accurate overtime figures be reflected in departmental budgets since taking the position. Council Member Goggin indicated the council could face the same budget overrun in the 2026 fiscal year without corrective action, signaling potential budget amendment discussions ahead.

Source: WKBT CBS8 La Crosse (Western) | [https://www.news8000.com/news/originals/la-crosse-fire-and-police-have-gone-over-budget-for-the-third-year-in-a/article\\_908085ff-9369-40b0-8844-dd87e0a60621.html](https://www.news8000.com/news/originals/la-crosse-fire-and-police-have-gone-over-budget-for-the-third-year-in-a/article_908085ff-9369-40b0-8844-dd87e0a60621.html)

### **RAFD board approves tech security upgrade, audit findings**

The Ripon Area Fire District Board approved a \$34,395 procurement for a cloud-based security upgrade during its most recent meeting. Auditors issued a clean audit opinion for the district, reporting no major findings and noting improved accounting practices. The board, serving as the governing authority for the Ripon Area Fire District, reviewed the audit results alongside the security contract award. The audit finding and contract approval represent formal governance actions by the RAFD Board. The next procedural step was not specified in the available text, though the board also reviewed the district's improving financial condition as part of the same meeting agenda.

Source: Ripon Commonwealth Press (Central/Northern) | <https://riponpress.com/news/government/>

### **Sun Prairie adopts nonprofit funding policy**

The Sun Prairie City Council unanimously adopted a formal nonprofit funding policy at its May 5, 2026, meeting, establishing a standardized annual application process through which community nonprofit organizations may request allocations from the city's property tax levy. City Attorney Kathleen McDaniel developed the policy at the council's direction following months of deliberation and multiple draft iterations dating to at least February 2026. The policy creates a seven-member evaluation work group, five city employees appointed by the city administrator and three mayor-appointed residents with relevant experience subject to council approval, to rank applications and issue funding recommendations before the full council makes final award decisions. All funded organizations must enter written agreements with performance and reporting requirements. An emergency funding provision allows nonprofits to submit requests to the city clerk at any time for expedited mayor and council president review. The policy takes effect in 2027; existing funding agreements remain in place for the current year, with termination of prior individual agreements to be phased in going forward.

Source: Sun Prairie Star (South Central) | [https://hngnews.com/the\\_star/local\\_news/sun-prairie-adopts-nonprofit-funding-policy/article\\_ce600521-3a98-4ef4-9b98-fcd751d3a15d.html](https://hngnews.com/the_star/local_news/sun-prairie-adopts-nonprofit-funding-policy/article_ce600521-3a98-4ef4-9b98-fcd751d3a15d.html)

### **Lake Mills to charge parking fee, not entrance fee at Sandy Beach Park**

The Lake Mills City Council voted on May 5, 2026, to replace Sandy Beach Park's entrance fee structure with a parking fee system. The prior fee schedule charged residents \$3 and non-residents \$4 at the gate; under the new structure, no entrance fee will be collected, but parking will cost \$12 per day. City residents may register two household vehicles for a parking fee exemption; all non-residents must pay. The city is partnering with ParqEx to deploy QR-code-based payment kiosks, with Lake Mills Police Department officers conducting seasonal compliance checks against the ParqEx database and issuing citations for violations. City Manager Drake Daily's memo to the council noted that 2025 gate fees generated \$30,000 gross and \$22,000 net after \$8,000 in staffing costs, while projecting the new parking fee structure could yield up to \$58,000, excluding citation revenue. The city will review ParqEx-collected data on vehicle counts and payment compliance at the end of the season.

Source: Cambridge Enterprise Sentinel (South Central) | [https://hngnews.com/leader\\_independent/news/local/lake-mills-to-charge-parking-fee-not-entrance-fee-at-sandy-beach-park/article\\_7804822c-d2a0-406d-a3a9-b08c047d30de.html](https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/lake-mills-to-charge-parking-fee-not-entrance-fee-at-sandy-beach-park/article_7804822c-d2a0-406d-a3a9-b08c047d30de.html)

## **Parks & Forest Committee looks to expand park usage**

The Eau Claire County Parks & Forest Committee voted unanimously to set rental rates for the new Coon Fork cabin facilities during its May 12, 2026 meeting. Under the approved fee structure, cabins will be priced at \$110 per night on weekdays and \$130 per night on weekends during summer, with reduced rates during off-season months. Parks Director Josh Pedersen presented the rates to the committee, noting the cabins are a new addition to Coon Fork County Park in 2026, with one unit featuring a ramped accessible entrance. The committee also considered a proposed equestrian policy that would expand horse use beyond the existing Tower Ridge County Park trails to include Guettinger Woods and the LL Phillips and Red Flint recreation areas; however, that policy was tabled pending revisions following committee member suggestions, with a revised document to be presented at the June meeting. The cabin fee structure now advances to the Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors for approval at its next scheduled meeting.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/12/parks-forest-committee-looks-expand-park-usage/>

## **Chippewa County Board passes amended agreement with Chippewa Valley Music Festivals**

The Chippewa County Board voted 18-2 on May 12, 2026, to approve an amended security services agreement with Chippewa Valley Music Festivals, extending law enforcement and IT services to the Hoofbeat, Rock Fest, and Force Fields events through 2028. The revised agreement requires the festivals to reimburse the county at the actual cost of law enforcement, calculated at double time plus 30 percent benefits, reflecting overtime provisions and updated collective bargaining terms. The amendment was structured in part to allow the county to secure favorable union contract terms for officers working non-governmental events without increasing costs under the standard union contract. General Manager Wade Asher addressed the board, noting the double-time-plus-benefits provision represents a minimum of \$50,000 in additional annual costs to the festivals and was added without prior consultation. No additional procedural steps were reported following the board's approval of the amended agreement.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/13/chippewa-county-board-passes-amended-agreement-with-chippewa-valley-music-festivals/>

## **Workforce and Labor**

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### **Port police chief to leave next month for new job**

Port Washington Police Chief Kevin Hingiss formally announced his retirement to the Port Washington Police and Fire Commission on Monday, with an effective separation date of June 15 after 42 years with the department, including service as chief since January 1, 2012. Hingiss notified Commission Chairman Jim Biever of his decision the prior week before addressing the full commission. The departure creates an executive vacancy subject to the commission's appointment authority. Commission Chairman Biever stated the commission will likely convene within one to two weeks to determine a replacement process, coordinating with the city's human resources department and soliciting input from officers and community members. Biever indicated the commission will likely appoint an interim chief pending a permanent hire, identifying Police Captain Craig Czarnecki, promoted to captain by Hingiss in 2020 and second in command, as a probable interim candidate. No vote on succession had been taken as of the commission meeting.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeeexpress.com/content/port-police-chief-leave-next-month-new-job>

## **Dave Solberg appointed to interim city manager role pending official candidate search**

The Eau Claire City Council unanimously appointed Deputy City Manager and City Engineer Dave Solberg as interim city manager at its May 12, 2026 meeting, with the appointment taking effect at 6:00 p.m. that evening. The action follows the April 28 resignation of City Manager Stephanie Hirsch, who held the role for four years. Solberg has served the City of Eau Claire for 12 years in various capacities and previously held the interim city manager role from 2020 to 2022 following Dale Peters' retirement. Immediately following the appointment, the City Council entered a closed work session to deliberate on whether the formal city manager search will proceed as an internal process or expand to a nationwide candidate search; no decision on that question had been announced as of the meeting. Solberg has identified addressing the city's \$2.2 million budget deficit as the top priority, with the capital budget scheduled for council vote in July 2026 and the operating budget to follow.

Source: Volume One (Western) | <https://volumeone.org/articles/2026/05/12/389806-dave-solberg-appointed-to-interim-city-manager>

## **Next steps shared in search for new Chippewa Falls city administrator**

The Chippewa Falls Common Council voted unanimously on December 4, 2025, to fund a new city administrator position, allocating \$200,000 for the role; six of seven council members were present, with Rob Kiefer absent. The position had been vacant since 2009. On May 5, 2026, the Council selected five semi-finalists from the applicant pool, one of whom subsequently withdrew, leaving four remaining candidates: Heath Eddy, former City Administrator of Kewaunee; Jerry Gabrielatos, former City Manager of Beloit; David Solberg, Deputy City Manager of Eau Claire; and Laura Stelzner, City Administrator and Treasurer of Chetek. City Clerk Bridget Givens reported that the Council is scheduled to reconvene May 19, 2026, to review video interviews and narrow the candidate pool for in-person interviews. Following in-person interviews, the Council will vote to extend a conditional offer of employment to a final candidate.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/15/next-steps-shared-search-new-chippewa-falls-city-administrator/>

## **Former Outagamie County HR director sentenced to 10 years in prison in child porn case**

A federal judge sentenced Adam Westbrook, 36, former Outagamie County human resources director, to 10 years in federal prison on Friday, May 15, 2026, following his September 2024 conviction for producing child pornography at a Sauk County hotel. The court additionally imposed 20 years of supervised release. Westbrook had entered a guilty plea and subsequently attempted to withdraw it; a federal judge rejected that withdrawal motion last month and also rejected Westbrook's constitutional challenge arguing the relevant statute was unconstitutionally vague. Westbrook resigned from his Outagamie County position following his arrest. Co-defendant Preston Kite of Racine, to whom Westbrook allegedly transmitted the videos, previously received a 65-year federal prison sentence on related child pornography counts. The sentencing concludes the federal judicial proceedings against Westbrook; supervised release conditions will govern his status following completion of the custodial term.

Source: WLUK FOX11 Green Bay (Northeastern) | <https://fox11online.com/news/local/former-outagamie-county-hr-director-sentenced-to-10-years-in-prison-in-child-porn-case-adam-westbrook-preston-kite-federal-prison-supervised-release>

### **Tim Berg sworn in as Onalaska Police Chief**

The City of Onalaska formally installed Tim Berg as Police Chief on May 12, 2026, completing an executive appointment to lead the Onalaska Police Department. Berg, who joined the Onalaska Police Department in January 1998, previously served in roles including Patrol Officer, Sergeant, Professional Standards Sergeant, Assistant Chief, and Interim Chief before assuming the permanent chief position. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and began his law enforcement career in October 1996 with the West Salem Police Department. Berg also led the department's Reserve Unit for approximately 16 years from 2005 through 2021. Berg's swearing-in on May 12 marks the operational effective date of his appointment as the department's chief executive officer.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/13/tim-berg-sworn-onalaska-police-chief/>

## **Infrastructure and Utilities**

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### **Highway building site eyed at Pleasant View**

The Green County Highway Committee reached consensus at its Thursday meeting that the preferred site for a new 160,000-square-foot county highway department garage is adjacent to the existing Pleasant View county complex, with projected construction costs ranging from approximately \$42 million to \$48 million. The committee reviewed multiple site options presented by planning contractor Kraemer Brothers Construction, whose Vice President Greg Gallin outlined advantages of the Pleasant View location including available utilities, favorable soil conditions, lower grading requirements, and superior traffic circulation compared to competing sites including Aebly Road, the Donny Property off County DR, and a parcel near Walmart. Gallin advised against phased construction, citing annual inflation rates of 6 percent or more. County Highway Commissioner Chris Narveson participated in the deliberations. The full Green County Board retains final decision-making authority on the project. A vote on the initial project budget is anticipated in January 2027. The estimated tax impact is approximately \$0.60 per mill, or roughly \$180 annually for a \$300,000 property.

Source: Monroe Times (South Central) | <https://themonroetimes.com/local-news/highway-building-site-eyed-at-pleasant-view/>

### **Billings Ave. work to include sidewalk/path to park**

The Medford City Council voted at its Monday, May 13, 2026 meeting to approve hiring Ayres Associates to perform engineering services associated with a resurfacing, curb and gutter, and sidewalk and path project on Billings Avenue, with construction scheduled for 2027. The approval constitutes a procurement award for professional engineering services. The project scope includes the addition of a sidewalk and path connecting to a nearby park as part of the street resurfacing work. The City Council, as the governing body of the City of Medford, exercised its procurement authority in selecting Ayres Associates for the design phase. The next procedural step is the completion of engineering and design work by Ayres Associates in advance of the planned 2027 construction timeline.

Source: Medford Star News (Central/Northern) | <https://www.centralwinews.com/news/2026/05/13/billings-ave-work-to-include-sidewalk-path-to-park/?destination=star-news>

## Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council awarded \$600K to support One Better Way capital campaign

Governor Tony Evers, acting under state executive authority, announced a \$600,000 State of Wisconsin award to Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council Inc. to support the One Better Way capital campaign in Eau Claire. The grant was announced May 14, 2026, as part of a statewide investment in community development and public service projects. The funding will support development of a new Day Resource Center located at 1 Better Way in downtown Eau Claire, a collaborative facility designed to consolidate services addressing homelessness and housing instability. Western Dairyland CEO Anna Cardarella acknowledged the award on behalf of the organization. The next operational step is the development and opening of the Day Resource Center at the downtown Eau Claire location.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/14/western-dairyland-economic-opportunity-council-awarded-600k-support-one-better-way-capital-campaign/>

## Public Safety

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### Jail phone contract before the Dane County Board, again

The Dane County Personnel and Finance Committee voted 6-1 on May 11, 2026, to recommend denial of a proposed three-year contract with ViaPath Technologies for telecommunications services at the Dane County Jail, with an option for two one-year extensions. Under the proposed contract, ViaPath would charge jail residents six cents per minute for tablet use and 25 cents per message or photo, while providing one free daily call of up to 10 minutes; ViaPath would pay the county nothing for exclusive access rights. The county's Public Protection and Judiciary Committee had narrowly recommended approval in March after modifying the contract term to three years and adding a clause requiring full county board sign-off for any extensions. ViaPath currently collects approximately \$1.5 million annually from Dane County Jail residents under an existing extension set to expire October 2026. The full Dane County Board was scheduled to vote on the contract on May 14, 2026; denial would prompt re-issuance of the request-for-proposals process, which Supervisor Keith Furman asserts could still meet the October deadline.

Source: Isthmus (South Central) | <https://isthmus.com/news/news/jail-phone-contract-before-the-dane-county-board-again/>

### McFarland Police nix plan to install Flock cameras

The McFarland Police Department announced it will not proceed with a planned procurement of the Flock Safety automated license plate reader system, citing a reduced regional camera network and resident privacy concerns. The McFarland Village Board had approved use of the ALPR technology on December 9, authorizing an annual expenditure of \$18,000 for six cameras. Police Chief Brian Redman, citing the Dane County Board's April 16 vote (32-1) to remove \$80,000 from the County Sheriff's Office Flock subscription and Monona Police Chief Brian Chaney's May 4 suspension of that department's Flock use, determined that the diminished Dane County network would not provide adequate return on investment. No contract with Flock Safety was executed, and the company has been notified of McFarland's intention not to pursue an agreement. The department is exploring alternative uses for the

unspent funds; the news release did not indicate whether an alternative ALPR provider would be considered.

Source: Waterloo/Marshall Courier (South Central) | [https://hngnews.com/leader\\_independent/news/local/mcfarland-police-nix-plan-to-install-flock-cameras/article\\_e9ecf3b4-b5e4-4a05-b826-1cee2e57c344.html](https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/mcfarland-police-nix-plan-to-install-flock-cameras/article_e9ecf3b4-b5e4-4a05-b826-1cee2e57c344.html)

## Land Use and Development

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### Town to try negotiating before taking mill property

The Town of Fredonia Board previously authorized Town Chairman Chris Janik to execute an intergovernmental agreement with Ozaukee County for the acquisition and demolition of the Waubeka Mill and Button Factory along the Milwaukee River, with the parcels to be transferred to the county for development as a boat launch and park. Janik is currently conducting direct purchase negotiations with owners Charles Sheridan and his son, with a June 15 deadline to reach agreement before eminent domain proceedings would be initiated. Ozaukee County received a \$142,800 Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation brownfield assessment grant for the properties, contingent on owner-granted site access for the county and the state Department of Natural Resources. County Planning and Parks Director Andrew Struck has described the flood-zone structures as non-conforming and unbuildable. If negotiations fail by June 15, the county grant funding would be deferred to the next funding cycle, and the town would proceed with eminent domain to compel transfer at fair market value.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeepress.com/content/town-try-negotiating-taking-mill-property>

### Couple files litigation against town, Town Board regarding large pond proposal

Michael and Stacy Gauthier filed a petition for writ of certiorari on April 29 in Ozaukee County Circuit Court against the Town of Cedarburg and the Cedarburg Town Board, challenging the board's denial of their application to construct a 13.2-acre pond and an accompanying Certified Survey Map petition on their property near Covered Bridge Road. The Town Board had previously denied both the pond permit application and the CSM petition at its February meeting. The Gauthiers, whose rezoning application was separately withdrawn prior to that meeting, allege multiple legal errors by the board, including failure to act on the CSM within the 90-day period required under Wisconsin state statute, reliance on an uncodified zoning policy, and exceeding its jurisdiction by imposing conditions not authorized by town ordinance. The complaint further contends the board incorrectly treated the proposed fish farming pond as categorically prohibited in the A-1 agricultural district. Outside counsel Andrew Jones, representing the Town of Cedarburg, declined to comment on the pending litigation.

Source: Waukesha Freeman (Southeastern) | [https://www.gmtoday.com/the\\_freeman/news/couple-files-litigation-against-town-town-board-regarding-large-pond-proposal/article\\_6512d61e-9185-5600-a806-542e477207d9.html](https://www.gmtoday.com/the_freeman/news/couple-files-litigation-against-town-town-board-regarding-large-pond-proposal/article_6512d61e-9185-5600-a806-542e477207d9.html)

### Data center ordinance gives Wisconsin Rapids more control

The Wisconsin Rapids Common Council passed an ordinance in April 2026 amending the city's zoning code to regulate data centers within city limits. The ordinance, described by Alderperson Madalyn Palmquist, adds data centers as a conditional use category subject to location restrictions, requires applicants to obtain approval from the electric utility company, and mandates compliance with water usage requirements at the local, state, and federal levels. The measure grants the Planning Commission authority to approve or deny data center

conditional use permits and attach conditions to each permit. Prior to the ordinance's passage, no such zoning framework existed, meaning a data center could have purchased industrial land and commenced operations without city oversight. A separate public hearing on a pending data center CUP application for the former Kraft Mill site, originally scheduled in early May, was postponed; the city will instead hold a community listening session, with the date to be published on the city's website.

Source: WFHR 1320 AM Wisconsin Rapids (Central/Northern) | <https://www.wfhr.com/news/2026/05/14/data-center-in-wisconsin-rapids>

## **City Council approves \$1.8M TIF deal for 44-unit housing at former Town & Country site**

The Janesville City Council voted unanimously on May 11, 2026, to approve a \$1.8 million tax increment financing agreement between the City of Janesville and River Street Renaissance LLC, developer Jim Cope, for a 44-unit multifamily apartment complex on the 0.34-acre former Town & Country Building site in downtown Janesville. The \$11.5 million project will be financed through developer equity, construction loans, land value contributions, and a pay-as-you-go TIF incentive under which the developer receives 90 percent of the property tax increment generated over 15 years, with payments projected from 2029 through 2043. The five-story, 55,280-square-foot building will include 32 one-bedroom and 12 two-bedroom units. The agreement includes a provision allowing the city to reduce the incentive if project returns exceed 15 percent after five years of operation. Construction is scheduled to begin on or before October 1, 2026, with a targeted completion date of December 2027.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | [https://www.gazettextra.com/news/city-council-approves-1-8-tif-deal-for-the-44-unit-housing-at-the-former/article\\_cf375050-ad53-4d79-8ed4-2b900b369844.html](https://www.gazettextra.com/news/city-council-approves-1-8-tif-deal-for-the-44-unit-housing-at-the-former/article_cf375050-ad53-4d79-8ed4-2b900b369844.html)

## **Dane County Board approves \$6.4 million purchase of land to be donated to Ho-Chunk**

The Dane County Board voted 32-1 on May 14, 2026, to authorize the purchase of approximately 165 acres of undeveloped land in the Town of Dunn, just south of the Village of McFarland, from Stuart Herro and the Mary Stuart Herro Family Trust for \$6,410,000 plus miscellaneous costs. The resolution, sponsored by County Board Chair and District Supervisor Patrick Miles, directs that a conservation easement permanently prohibiting development be placed on the property before it is donated to the Ho-Chunk Nation. Financing will be drawn from the Dane County Conservation Fund budget with a 20-year debt term. Groundswell Conservancy will co-hold the conservation easement alongside the county. The sole no vote was cast by Supervisor Goodwill Obieze of Sun Prairie. County Executive Melissa Agard issued formal approval of the action. The next operational step is execution of the purchase agreement, placement of the conservation easement, and transfer of title to the Ho-Chunk Nation. The acquisition includes six recorded archaeological sites and rare mound groupings within the parcel.

Source: Waterloo/Marshall Courier (South Central) | [https://hngnews.com/leader\\_independent/news/local/dane-county-board-approves-6-4-million-purchase-of-land-to-be-donated-to-ho/article\\_9c2e0b0a-13fb-4422-be94-6cfaccb61926.html](https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/dane-county-board-approves-6-4-million-purchase-of-land-to-be-donated-to-ho/article_9c2e0b0a-13fb-4422-be94-6cfaccb61926.html)

## **McFarland upset over County's proposed \$6.4 million land purchase**

Village of McFarland Board President Stephanie Brassington submitted a formal letter to the Dane County Board requesting that action on the \$6.4 million Town of Dunn land acquisition

be delayed, citing the village's extraterritorial jurisdiction over the land and lack of prior consultation. The County Board was scheduled to vote on May 14, 2026, on the resolution authorizing the purchase of approximately 165 acres from Stuart Herro and the Mary Stuart Herro Family Trust for \$6,410,000 plus miscellaneous costs, with the parcel to be donated to the Ho-Chunk Nation following placement of a conservation easement co-held by Groundswell Conservancy, Inc. If the donation does not occur, Dane County would own and manage the property as part of the Lower Mud Lake Natural Resource Area. County Board Chair and area Supervisor Patrick Miles sponsored the resolution after referral in April 2026 by Land and Water Resources Department Director Laura Hicklin. The County Board voted 32-1 to approve the purchase the same day.

Source: Waterloo/Marshall Courier (South Central) | [https://hngnews.com/leader\\_independent/news/local/mcfarland-upset-over-county-s-proposed-6-4-million-land-purchase/article\\_957acdfd-eb5c-4d01-af49-d7dbb69a9ec0.html](https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/mcfarland-upset-over-county-s-proposed-6-4-million-land-purchase/article_957acdfd-eb5c-4d01-af49-d7dbb69a9ec0.html)

### **Apartment building site plans approved by Plan Commission**

The Plymouth Plan Commission voted to approve a site plan for three 12-unit apartment buildings at 1111 Reed Street, the former Willowglen Academy property, at its May 7 meeting. The approval authorizes construction of 36 total residential units on the Reed Street parcel. Developer Trevor Stroebel, who had presented a concept plan to the Commission the previous month, received formal site plan approval from the body at this session. The next procedural step was not disclosed in the accessible portion of the article.

Source: Plymouth Review (Northeastern) | <https://www.plymouth-review.com/articles/apartment-building-site-plans-approved-by-plan-commission/>

## **Governance and Elections**

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### **Absentee ballots that arrived late to Madison polling places counted after judge's order**

Dane County Circuit Court Judge Everett Mitchell issued an order on May 14, 2026, directing the Wisconsin Elections Commission to accept Dane County's original April 15 canvassed results for the 2026 Spring Election, which included 23 late-arriving absentee ballots, and to disregard the WEC's May 8 canvass that excluded those ballots. The WEC had previously determined that city and county canvassers overstepped their authority by counting the ballots, which arrived at Madison polling places after the 8 p.m. Election Day deadline. During a special meeting on Friday, May 15, WEC Chair Ann Jacobs certified Wisconsin's statewide canvass statements for the 2026 Spring Election, incorporating the Dane County original canvass. The certification followed a challenge filed by Dane County and by progressive law firm Law Forward. Election officials stated the change did not affect the outcome of any race on the April ballot. Dane County's separate legal challenge to the WEC's decision remains open, with a scheduling conference set for June 10, 2026.

Source: WISC CBS3 Madison (South Central) | [https://www.channel3000.com/news/absentee-ballots-that-arrived-late-to-madison-polling-places-counted-after-judges-order/article\\_5e09a4b6-8c5d-4d65-8ed9-83f58cb3e294.html](https://www.channel3000.com/news/absentee-ballots-that-arrived-late-to-madison-polling-places-counted-after-judges-order/article_5e09a4b6-8c5d-4d65-8ed9-83f58cb3e294.html)

### **Shorewood Hills Board removes Village President from office**

The Shorewood Hills Board of Trustees voted 4-3 on May 12, 2026, to remove Village President John Imes from elected office under a Wisconsin statute permitting village boards to

remove elected officials for gross neglect of duty or continued physical inability to perform duties. The removal action was initiated by a complaint filed April 28 by newly elected trustee Brian Utschig and former village trustee and president Peter Hans, alleging Imes misrepresented information regarding the proposed purchase of the Lodgic Building at 2801 Marshall Court for a new village hall, failed to disclose conflicts of interest tied to his leadership of the Wisconsin Environmental Initiative, and conducted village business through personal email. Imes and his attorney Erin Deeley denied all charges at the five-and-a-half-hour quasi-judicial hearing. The village currently has no president; under state law, the remaining board may appoint one or call a special election. Imes told Isthmus he is weighing an appeal.

Source: Isthmus (South Central) | <https://isthmus.com/news/news/a-little-bit-of-a-circus/>

## **Amery repeals Ethics Board ordinance, adopts revised Gifts and Memorials policy**

The Amery Common Council voted at its May 6, 2026 meeting to repeal the city's Ethics Board ordinance under Ordinance 05-2026, which removes Municipal Code Section 47-13. City Administrator Alex Mansfield stated the board's functions are replaced by a Fraud Prevention and Whistleblower Policy adopted in April, centralizing ethics oversight under the city administrator, city attorney, and city council. In a separate action, the council unanimously approved Resolution 08-2026, adopting a revised Gifts and Memorials Policy that condenses the document from approximately nine pages to one and a half pages while retaining all substantive thresholds and procedural requirements, including the unchanged \$1,500 threshold distinguishing minor from major donations and City Council approval requirements for major gifts and donations of real property. Mayor Rick Van Blaricom presided. No further procedural steps were reported for either action.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | [https://theameryfreepress.com/news/city-council-briefs-may-12-2026/article\\_29353698-a6d5-497e-925e-ed855a83663.html](https://theameryfreepress.com/news/city-council-briefs-may-12-2026/article_29353698-a6d5-497e-925e-ed855a83663.html)

## **Two former Housing Service employees charged for altering records to obtain housing benefits**

Rock County Circuit Court criminal complaints filed the week of May 5, 2026 charge two former City of Janesville Housing Services employees with felony misconduct connected to the city's federal rent assistance program. Rachel Jacquest faces two felony counts and one misdemeanor charge of receiving stolen property valued under \$2,500, stemming from allegations that she omitted her daughter's income from housing calculations, redirected an \$850 ECHO security deposit refund to her personal bank account in August 2025, and submitted falsified YMCA employment verification letters for a family friend to obtain Section 8 benefits. Alicia Alvarado faces one felony charge for allegedly falsifying her son's full-time student status to inflate rental assistance eligibility. Judge Jack Hoag set a \$1,000 signature bond for each defendant following initial appearances on May 11, 2026. The city launched its internal investigation on November 24, 2025, after a Housing Services employee reported concerns to the Housing Services Director and Neighborhood and Community Services Director.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | [https://www.gazettextra.com/news/2-former-housing-service-employees-charged-in-court-for-altering-records-for-family-to-receive/article\\_b9fb417f-0871-43d7-a48d-6349fcc961bb.html](https://www.gazettextra.com/news/2-former-housing-service-employees-charged-in-court-for-altering-records-for-family-to-receive/article_b9fb417f-0871-43d7-a48d-6349fcc961bb.html)

## **Residents sound off on data center development to Rock County Board**

The Rock County Board held a formal public hearing on May 14, 2026, at which residents testified regarding proposed data center developments in the Towns of Beloit, Turtle, and Janesville, as well as the City of Janesville. No decision was reached at the meeting. County Supervisor Philip Gorman, whose earlier resolution to ban county employees from entering non-disclosure agreements died in committee in March 2026, announced he will reintroduce the measure under new committee assignments with the newly seated board. The hearing addressed a proposed 430-acre data center in the Town of Beloit, which had been under discussion for more than a year under NDAs signed by county staff. Residents raised concerns about lithium-ion battery fire hazards, groundwater contamination, and employment impacts. The next procedural step is Gorman's reintroduction of the NDA prohibition resolution before the reconstituted Rock County Board committees.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | [https://www.gazettextra.com/news/residents-sound-off-on-data-center-development-to-rock-county-board/article\\_cc632bca-a573-4163-a9bb-4089cead00ba.html](https://www.gazettextra.com/news/residents-sound-off-on-data-center-development-to-rock-county-board/article_cc632bca-a573-4163-a9bb-4089cead00ba.html)

## School Districts

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### Lodi School Board hires new principal, associate principal

At its Monday meeting, the Lodi School Board of Education approved two administrative hires for the Lodi School District. The board approved Sarah Brings as the next Lodi Primary School principal, effective July 1, replacing Amy Fassbender, who is departing for an administrative role in the Waunakee School District. Brings was selected from a pool of 20 applicants following two rounds of interviews involving Primary School staff, district administrators, and board members. Brings holds 24 years of education experience, most recently serving as 4K-5 principal in the Baraboo School District. The board also approved Matthew Davis as Associate Principal of Lodi High School, effective August 1, replacing Jason Marshall. Davis was selected from 37 applicants and eight finalists through a two-round interview process involving a broad committee. Davis brings 19 years of education experience, including prior service as associate principal at Mauston High School and principal of Rio Middle and High School.

Source: Lodi Enterprise (South Central) | [https://hngnews.com/tribune\\_enterprise/news/local/lodi-school-board-hires-new-principal-associate-principal/article\\_09ba92b1-996f-40b0-84a6-b388d8437109.html](https://hngnews.com/tribune_enterprise/news/local/lodi-school-board-hires-new-principal-associate-principal/article_09ba92b1-996f-40b0-84a6-b388d8437109.html)

### Watertown School Board cuts 'A Mother of a Revolution' from spring concert

The Watertown Unified School District Board of Education voted 7-1 at a special meeting on May 13, 2026, to remove 'A Mother of a Revolution,' composed by Omar Thomas, from the Watertown High School Wind Symphony's spring concert scheduled for May 18, 2026. Board President Laurie Hoffmann cast the sole dissenting vote in favor of retaining the piece. Vice President Sam Ouweneel and board member Christina DeGrave spoke in support of removal. Hoffmann proposed a compromise allowing the performance with a disclaimer, which failed on a 4-4 tie vote. Band director Reid LaDew had introduced the piece earlier in the school year, sending a notification letter to families in October consistent with school board policy; of more than 30 Wind Symphony students, only three opted out. The board exercised its oversight authority over curricular and performance content in reaching the decision. The action prompted approximately 350 Watertown High School students to walk out of school on Wednesday, May 13, gathering in the WHS Peace Garden to protest the board's action. The spring concert was scheduled to proceed Monday without the piece.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | [https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/school-board-cuts-song-from-spring-concert/article\\_a29a47f8-45a6-4d59-823f-4bc0822caef0.html](https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/school-board-cuts-song-from-spring-concert/article_a29a47f8-45a6-4d59-823f-4bc0822caef0.html)

## Cuts made at Butternut School District helps narrow passing of \$500K referendum

Butternut School District voters approved a \$500,000 operational referendum on April 7, 2026, by a margin of 281-280, a single-vote difference. The referendum authorizes funds for operational expenses including utilities, teacher salaries, instructional materials, and textbooks. District Administrator Carolyn Pollitt reduced the ask from a prior failed \$1.1 million referendum by eliminating eight full-time positions, adjusting employee health insurance contributions, and accepting voluntary salary returns from coaches. Two prior referendums in recent election cycles had failed. The approved \$500,000 figure reflects the restructured budget following those workforce and benefit reductions. Pollitt stated the district is now planning for the 2026-27 school year and developing longer-term operational plans in coordination with community members and staff.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | [https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/cuts-made-at-butternut-school-district-helps-narrow-passing-of-500k-referendum/article\\_f6666f33-ca4f-445f-bf26-ac9aace64f29.html](https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/cuts-made-at-butternut-school-district-helps-narrow-passing-of-500k-referendum/article_f6666f33-ca4f-445f-bf26-ac9aace64f29.html)

## Delavan-Darien School Board votes to keep dual-language program, sets outline for 18-person advisory board

The Delavan-Darien School Board voted Monday, May 12, 2026, to retain its Two-Way Dual Language Immersion program fully intact for students in 4K through 12th grade, rejecting an alternative that would have reduced the program to 5K through sixth grade. The board also approved a framework for an 18-member Dual Language Immersion Advisory Committee, created in response to findings from a community needs assessment that identified gaps in program vision, implementation consistency, and data use. The committee will include two dual-language teachers, two monolingual teachers, three building administrators, three district leadership members, one DLI coordinator, one ESL coordinator, two school board members, two parents or guardians, and two community members. Applications opened May 12 and close May 21, with member selection scheduled for the week of May 22. The committee's first meeting is set for June 1, 2026, with regular subsequent meetings to review program progress and address documented funding and staffing challenges.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | [https://www.gazettextra.com/news/delavan-darien-school-board-votes-to-keep-dual-language-program-sets-outline-for-18-person/article\\_6eda9fbc-7c96-47f2-909a-ca5fb722d84e.html](https://www.gazettextra.com/news/delavan-darien-school-board-votes-to-keep-dual-language-program-sets-outline-for-18-person/article_6eda9fbc-7c96-47f2-909a-ca5fb722d84e.html)

## Amery district details \$2.5 million in cuts

The School District of Amery presented a budget reduction package exceeding \$2.5 million to the school board at a special meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 2026. Superintendent Shawn Doerfler detailed two primary reduction categories: elimination of 25.5 positions, comprising 9 support staff and 16.5 certified staff, projected to save \$1.26 million net of proposed salary increases, and \$737,809 in operational savings. Operational cuts include elimination of a planned \$175,000 bus purchase, an \$85,000 reduction in utility costs, a \$218,321 decrease in non-capital supplies representing approximately 25 percent cuts to department and building budgets, a \$69,657 reduction in purchased services, and elimination of summer custodial positions saving \$24,226. Certified staff facing non-renewal received preliminary notices the week of March 8, 2026, under state statute notification requirements. Doerfler stated net savings of approximately \$2 million are intended to rebuild a fund balance that closed fiscal year 2024-25 in negative territory. No board vote on formal budget adoption was reported at this meeting.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | [https://theameryfreepress.com/news/amery-district-details-2-5-million-in-cuts/article\\_03a5fde2-3b2c-4060-9ab1-b78f878f0cca.html](https://theameryfreepress.com/news/amery-district-details-2-5-million-in-cuts/article_03a5fde2-3b2c-4060-9ab1-b78f878f0cca.html)

### **Oconomowoc school district meals to increase in price**

The Oconomowoc Area School District Board of Education voted at its May 6, 2026 meeting to approve the food service program budget for the 2026-2027 school year and renew the food service management contract with Aramark. Under the approved plan, breakfast prices will rise from \$1.75 to \$2.25, lunch for kindergarten through fourth grade will increase from \$2.80 to \$3.55, and lunch for fifth through eighth grade will increase from \$3.50 to \$4.25. Beth Sheridan, assistant superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that meal prices had not changed in approximately five to six years. The district had previously used a Fund 50 balance accumulated during the pandemic, when federal reimbursements were elevated, to subsidize lower prices, but that balance has declined. The price adjustments are intended to maintain a breakeven budget while retaining a reserve in Fund 50 for equipment replacement. Additional incremental increases may follow due to food cost inflation, Sheridan indicated.

Source: Oconomowoc Enterprise (Southeastern) | [https://oconomowocenterprise.com/oconomowoc\\_enterprise/news/oconomowoc-student-lunch-costs-2027/article\\_7bc4f16d-c7ff-5775-8a76-970b90f2d1ee.html](https://oconomowocenterprise.com/oconomowoc_enterprise/news/oconomowoc-student-lunch-costs-2027/article_7bc4f16d-c7ff-5775-8a76-970b90f2d1ee.html)

### **GBAPS and 4 other districts weigh in on rejected special education funding**

Following the Wisconsin State Senate's May 14, 2026 rejection of a special education funding bill on a 18-15 vote, the Green Bay Area Public School District, Milwaukee Public Schools, Racine Unified School District, Madison Metropolitan School District, and Kenosha Unified School District issued a joint letter addressed to the Governor and the Legislature calling for renewed negotiations. The failed measure would have directed \$617 million in additional special education funding to school districts statewide. State Sen. Jamie Wall (D-Green Bay) voted against the bill, citing projected fiscal concerns of a \$3 billion deficit in the next state budget. The five districts acknowledged the bill as an imperfect compromise but asserted it would address immediate underfunding of special education services. No subsequent legislative session or renegotiation timeline has been announced; the measure's future remains unresolved pending further legislative action.

Source: WTAQ 1360 AM / 97.5 FM Green Bay (Northeastern) | <https://wtaq.com/2026/05/15/gbaps-and-4-other-districts-weigh-in-on-rejected-special-education-funding/>

## **State-Local Interface**

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### **Legislative budget committee approves bipartisan deal to fund schools, provide tax relief**

The Wisconsin Joint Committee on Finance voted 12-4 on May 12, 2026, to approve a bipartisan fiscal package exceeding \$600 million, with all twelve Republican members voting yes and all four Democratic members voting no. The package, negotiated among Gov. Tony Evers, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, and Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu, allocates \$300 million in general school aid and more than \$300 million in special education funding, raising the special education reimbursement rate to 50 percent beginning in fiscal year 2026-27. The agreement also provides \$350 million in property tax relief, direct payments of \$300 per individual or \$600 per married couple filing jointly to over three million Wisconsin residents, elimination of state income tax on cash tips saving approximately \$102 million over two years,

and elimination of state income tax on overtime income saving \$328 million over two years. The Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau projects the state will end the biennium with approximately \$2.37 billion in reserves. The full Assembly and Senate were scheduled to vote on May 13.

Source: WKOW ABC27 Madison (Statewide) | [https://www.wkow.com/news/state/legislative-budget-committee-green-lights-bipartisan-deal-to-fund-schools-provide-tax-relief/article\\_948b7753-0184-41c2-b7a9-5e68cc7d8467.html](https://www.wkow.com/news/state/legislative-budget-committee-green-lights-bipartisan-deal-to-fund-schools-provide-tax-relief/article_948b7753-0184-41c2-b7a9-5e68cc7d8467.html)

## **Wisconsin Senate rejects \$1.8 billion tax relief, school funding plan**

The Wisconsin State Senate on May 13, 2026, rejected a \$1.8 billion tax relief and school funding package by a vote of 15-18, with all Democrats opposed, halting the legislation after the State Assembly had passed it earlier the same day. The bill would have provided more than \$600 million for K-12 schools including increased special education reimbursement, hundreds of millions in general school aids, \$300 rebate checks for state taxpayers, property tax relief through technical college funding, and exemptions from state income tax on tips and overtime pay. The measure relied on one-time state funds and would have reduced the state's budget surplus. Senate President Mary Felzkowski (R-Tomahawk) and Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) criticized the outcome following the vote. Governor Tony Evers also condemned the failure, stating the proposal resulted from months of bipartisan negotiations. Ten Assembly Democrats had joined Republicans in support during the earlier Assembly vote. The failed vote leaves the surplus funds unallocated, deferring the spending decision to the next governor and Legislature during the 2027-29 biennial budget process.

Source: WKOW ABC27 Madison (Statewide) | [https://www.wkow.com/news/wisconsin-senate-rejects-1-8-billion-tax-relief-school-funding-plan/article\\_63c61ded-e034-4c9e-b485-f8e89ff15f88.html](https://www.wkow.com/news/wisconsin-senate-rejects-1-8-billion-tax-relief-school-funding-plan/article_63c61ded-e034-4c9e-b485-f8e89ff15f88.html)

## **Evers signs executive order prohibiting use of insider information by state employees for personal benefit**

Governor Tony Evers signed Executive Order #294 on May 14, 2026, prohibiting Wisconsin state government employees from disclosing or using nonpublic information obtained through their state employment to personally profit or benefit, including through prediction market contracts and wagering. The order, issued under the governor's executive authority, responds to a nationwide increase in the use of insider information via prediction markets to wager on governmental actions and elections. Evers' office stated that no identified incidents of inappropriate insider information use by Wisconsin state employees have occurred. The order supplements existing Wisconsin state ethics laws and regulations governing public employees. Similar executive actions have been taken by Illinois, New York, Maryland, and California. No legislative ratification or further procedural step was identified in the release; the order takes effect as signed.

Source: WKBT CBS8 La Crosse (Statewide) | [https://www.news8000.com/lifestyle/technology/evers-signs-executive-order-prohibiting-use-of-insider-information-by-state-employees-for-personal-benefit/article\\_2e64514b-ce52-411c-90bd-1a7f0b1f1f81.html](https://www.news8000.com/lifestyle/technology/evers-signs-executive-order-prohibiting-use-of-insider-information-by-state-employees-for-personal-benefit/article_2e64514b-ce52-411c-90bd-1a7f0b1f1f81.html)

## **Gov. Tony Evers appoints Sara Gehrig-Woodman to Rock County Circuit Court**

Gov. Tony Evers exercised his appointment authority on May 14, 2026, naming Janesville attorney Sara Gehrig-Woodman to fill the vacancy in Branch VII of the Rock County Circuit Court created by the retirement of Judge Barbara McCrory, whose last day on the bench is May 15, 2026. The appointment was announced by the Governor's office and is effective upon

McCrory's departure. Gehrig-Woodman, a partner at Nowlan Law LLP in Janesville with a practice encompassing civil litigation, employment, construction, and family law, is also an independent hearing officer for the Janesville School District. She will serve the remainder of McCrory's term, which expires July 31, 2027. Gehrig-Woodman previously prosecuted crimes of violence in Alaska and Idaho. Following this appointment, she would need to stand for election to retain the seat beyond the current term's expiration.

Source: Janesville Gazette (Statewide) | [https://www.gazettextra.com/news/gov-tony-evers-appoints-sara-gehrig-woodman-to-rock-county-circuit-court/article\\_8025b6eb-5af3-4fee-8c5f-9f3ad49c4a13.html](https://www.gazettextra.com/news/gov-tony-evers-appoints-sara-gehrig-woodman-to-rock-county-circuit-court/article_8025b6eb-5af3-4fee-8c5f-9f3ad49c4a13.html)

## **Foes of AI surveillance get wins in Wisconsin, but they fear they're playing Whack-A-Mole**

The Dane County Board of Supervisors voted 32-1 in April to strip \$80,000 from the county budget allocated to a contract with Flock Safety, defunding the Dane County Sheriff's Office's use of AI-enabled automated license plate reader cameras. Supervisor Chad Kemp proposed the budget amendment following earlier action by the city of Verona, whose officials terminated their own Flock contract in November after officers in other jurisdictions accessed Verona's cameras on behalf of immigration agents. Sheriff Calvin Barrett confirmed via email on April 30 that his office will cease using Flock in compliance with the board's decision. Barrett's office had originally installed the system using a \$68,750 grant from Axon Enterprise without prior board approval. The sheriff's office spokesperson confirmed the office is exploring alternative vendors to replace Flock but ruled out using outside grant funding again to circumvent board oversight.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Statewide) | <https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/05/wisconsin-flock-camera-ai-surveillance-backlash-police-privacy-dane-county-milwaukee/>

## **Wisconsin announces \$248M for essential projects statewide**

The State Building Commission approved approximately \$248 million in funding for infrastructure and community development projects across Wisconsin, with Gov. Tony Evers announcing the action on May 13, 2026. The total includes \$50 million in state funding allocated to 71 non-state projects through the Non-State Grant Program, which was established in the 2023-25 state budget to support nonprofit and local government projects serving the broader public interest. Qualifying project categories include hospitals, fire departments, emergency medical services, museums, libraries, galleries, veterans housing, and other local infrastructure. Individual awards reach up to \$2 million each for the largest disbursements. The commission's approval authorizes disbursement of funds to grantees; no additional procedural step was reported as remaining before funds are released to recipient communities.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Statewide) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/05/15/wisconsin-announces-248m-for-essential-projects-statewide/>

## **Lawmakers approve \$4M in spending authority, say Brule hatchery must stay open**

Wisconsin's Joint Committee on Finance unanimously approved \$4 million in additional spending authority for the state's fish and wildlife account on Tuesday, directing the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to maintain operations at the Brule State Fish Hatchery in Douglas County. The committee allocated nearly \$2.9 million for fisheries management and \$1.14 million for wildlife management, with \$1.4 million earmarked exclusively for fish stocking

supplies and services, excluding staffing. An additional \$792,000 was directed toward fisheries habitat management and \$695,000 for fish monitoring and population assessments. Wildlife management funds were divided among recreation (\$575,400), habitat management (\$438,400), population monitoring (\$237,400), administrative costs (\$151,300), and wildlife education (\$28,000). The committee's action, co-chaired by Rep. Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam), requires DNR to keep wildlife staffing positions vacant and prohibits expenditure on winter wolf tracking surveys. The Osceola hatchery was not addressed in the committee's action.

Source: Superior Telegram (Statewide) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/wisconsin/lawmakers-approve-4m-in-spending-authority-say-brule-hatchery-must-stay-open>

## **UW-Madison budget cuts accelerate closure of 2 libraries**

UW-Madison is closing two campus libraries, the Geology and Geophysics Library and the Social Work Library, as a direct result of campuswide budget cuts mandating departmental reductions of 5 percent to 7 percent for the 2025-26 school year. Former Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin announced the cuts in June, with the UW Board of Regents informed at a February meeting that cost-cutting measures had already yielded \$43 million in savings for UW-Madison. The Geology and Geophysics Library closed May 14 as its final public access day; the Social Work Library will shutter August 14. Library collections are being transferred to Steenbock Library or the university's shelving facility in Verona and will remain available for catalog request. The Department of Geoscience chair Michael Cardiff confirmed the former library space will reopen August 24 as study and collaborative work space, and that the department's in-house librarian position was also eliminated due to the 7 percent departmental budget cut.

Source: La Crosse Tribune (Statewide) | [https://lacrosetribune.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article\\_c8300759-300d-5011-b276-2a02c3c84326.html](https://lacrosetribune.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_c8300759-300d-5011-b276-2a02c3c84326.html)

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*Each edition reflects ongoing refinement of the underlying workflow, and I expect the product to keep improving. Source articles are not independently verified beyond the curation process, and errors in source reporting may occur. Some Wisconsin news outlets restrict automated access to their content, which can limit coverage in any given edition. If you notice an inaccuracy, a story of statewide governance significance that was missed, or have feedback on how this briefing can better serve your work, I welcome hearing from you. Forward this edition to a colleague who works in Wisconsin local government if you find it useful. Reach me at [patrick@boldpathconsulting.com](mailto:patrick@boldpathconsulting.com) or (920) 522-2413.*

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