Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing

October 31 to November 7, 2026

The Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing is a weekly governance intelligence product curated by BoldPath Consulting from Wisconsin local journalism, public-sector think tanks, and credible regional media. Source collection is automated; editorial selection, summarization, and topic assignment are overseen by Patrick Glynn, and a source link accompanies every item so readers can verify the underlying reporting. Items are selected for governance relevance, not political leaning. If a story meets the newsworthiness standards built into this workflow, it is included regardless of which direction it cuts, and contested or uncomfortable decisions are reported rather than avoided. The intent is to put the week's governance record in front of the practitioners who have to work with it, not to add to the argument surrounding it. The briefing is offered as an informational service and does not constitute legal, financial, or policy advice.

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'Disturbing' county budget proposal could leave Lake Onalaska without funding

A wording change in La Crosse County's proposed budget reclassifies Division 2130 from "Lake District Protection and Rehab" to "Lake Neshonoc Lake District," which would exclude Lake Onalaska. The county has provided $80,000 in funding to Lake Onalaska since 2022 but says it has no direct maintenance responsibility for that lake. County board member Jeff Fimreite plans to offer an amendment at the Nov. 9 budget meeting at 5 p.m. at 212 Sixth St., La Crosse, which is open to the public. Without county funding, Lake Onalaska would lose seed money needed to match state grants and federal grants, potentially forfeiting a combined $200,000 in matched funds for rehabilitation projects. Fishing tournaments at the lake generated over $4.6 million in 2023, $2.1 million in 2024, and over $3.9 million in 2025, according to a UW-La Crosse report.

Source: La Crosse Tribune (Western) | https://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/article_ac5d5010-7093-4739-b43a-3066a8493b92.html

Board Adopts $1.5 Billion Budget, After Dealing With Accounting Error

The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors adopted a $1.5 billion 2027 budget with a $316 million property tax levy, a 2.32% levy increase over 2026 but a 4.6% reduction in the tax rate, dropping the rate from $2.92 to $2.79 per $1,000 of equalized value. Supervisor LeeVan Roundtree Jr. cast the sole dissenting vote, citing a $4.6 million accounting error from an automated budget formula. A comprehensive amendment by Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell, adopted unanimously, restored funding for community programs and added approximately $497,000 for a Washington Park aquatic facility. The Milwaukee County Transit System avoided a 25% service cut through a $12 million draw from the debt service reserve. The Behavioral Health System absorbed a $4.3 million levy reduction. Supervisors rejected a parks department plan to charge parking fees at lakefront and American Family Field locations, instead backfilling an $886,000 gap with $486,862 from a dam maintenance trust fund.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/11/06/mke-county-board-adopts-1-5-billion-budget-after-dealing-with-accounting-error/

Chippewa County levy set to increase 3.2%

The proposed Chippewa County 2027 budget totals $129.06 million, up from $126.83 million in 2026. The tax levy would rise 3.23%, from $22.33 million to $23.05 million, an increase of $720,878, while the tax rate would drop 5.49% from $2.12 to $2.00 per $1,000 of valuation. The $9.11 million in half-percent sales tax revenue funds uses including $3.93 million in property tax credits, $2.27 million in debt service, $2.7 million for bridge and highway projects, $165,600 for deputy body-worn cameras, and $68,000 for 50 new Glock handguns. The budget adds two part-time positions requiring no additional levy funding. A public hearing and board vote were scheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday at the Chippewa County Courthouse.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/chippewa-county-levy-set-to-increase-3-2/article_9998586b-3567-4d94-ba69-486eb77bac27.html

County Board gets first look at 2027 budget

Pierce County Administrator Jason Matthys presented the proposed 2027 budget to the County Board on Oct. 26, showing department requests of $21,115,978 against a state-capped operating levy of $17,781,443, leaving a gap of more than $3.3 million to close. The total proposed levy of $22,635,404 (including debt service of $3,839,713, library costs of $814,248, and bridge aid of $200,000) is an increase of $327,411 (1.47%) over the prior year, while the mill rate would decrease 6.25% on the county portion of tax bills. Matthys cited health insurance increases, new judicial facility operating costs, rising human services placement costs, and new position requests as drivers, noting cumulative inflation of 49.9% since 2010 against 22% net new construction growth. A public budget hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 10.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/county-board-gets-first-look-at-2027-budget,212013

County Software Error Creates $4.6 Million Budget Hole

Milwaukee County's Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance discovered a $4.55 million error in the 2027 budget two weeks before adoption, caused by a newly automated formula that miscalculated airport revenues. Supervisors were not notified until the day before their November budget adoption meeting, one day after the midterm election in which County Executive David Crowley appeared on the ballot for governor. Budget Director Nick Sinram said he notified the county executive's office when the error was discovered but chose not to inform the board until he had solutions. The board adopted an amendment by Supervisor Jack Eckblad requiring a full accounting and a plan to achieve a $5 million surplus by January, with a full audit threatened if the January report is incomplete. The article reports it is the third major financial error to reach the board without advance notice in under two years.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/11/05/mke-county-county-software-error-creates-4-6-million-budget-hole/

Dane County Board approves 2027 budget with significant housing investments

The Dane County Board of Supervisors approved a $950 million budget for 2027, designating housing and homeless services as the single largest capital investment. The plan directs more than $29 million in capital funds toward housing initiatives and shelter facilities, including $2.1 million for an expanded Salvation Army of Dane County facility. Board leaders stated that amendments added during deliberations were offset by reductions elsewhere, holding the property tax levy flat relative to the county executive's proposal.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/11/06/dane-county-board-approves-2027-budget-with-significant-housing-investments/

Dunn County proposes reduced services, lower taxes

The Dunn County Board of Supervisors is set to vote on a proposed 2027 operating budget of approximately $117.4 million, down from $129.8 million in 2026. The budget includes a 1% county tax levy increase to $25.36 million, but the tax rate would fall from $4.30 to $4.04 per $1,000 of

equalized value due to property value growth. Approximately 6.5 positions were eliminated through attrition to close a $1.4 million budget gap, with no layoffs. County Manager Dan Dunbar said service levels will be reduced in certain areas, driven in part by rising human services placement costs. A public hearing is scheduled for 7 p.m. Nov. 10 at the Dunn County Government Center, followed by a board vote.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/dunn-county-proposes-reduced-services-lower-taxes/article_dd2ef602-81ed-4a71-bb36-3d901473bef0.html

Eau Claire County to vote on budget next Tuesday

The Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors will vote at a 7 p.m. Tuesday hearing on a proposed $157.3 million 2027 operating budget, down from this year's $165.98 million. The property tax levy would be $41,728,104, a 1.2% increase of $483,769. To balance the budget, the county is reducing contracted services and positions: the District Attorney's office, ADRC, Sheriff's Department, and Facilities Department are cutting a combined 6.4 FTEs, while Human Services is adding 4.5 FTEs. The tax rate would fall to $2.62 per $1,000 of assessed value from the current $2.76. Net new construction increased 1.751%, adding approximately $484,000 in revenue. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for Nov. 12 if needed.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/eau-claire-county-to-vote-on-budget-next-tuesday/article_a97e8000-d682-42a9-b685-e66a4b24e082.html

Kenosha County Board unanimously adopts 2027 budget

The Kenosha County Board's 23 members voted unanimously Thursday to adopt a $310,792,698 spending budget for 2027, a less than 1% increase from the 2026 figure of $308,533,400. The tax levy rises 2.94%, which County Executive Samantha Kerkman noted is below the current 3.7% inflation rate. A median-value home assessed at $335,000 will pay approximately $13.48 more in property taxes. Personnel costs increase by roughly $4,271,740 and debt service by approximately $919,234, a nearly 4% rise. The budget funds two new Sheriff's Office positions focused on internet crimes against children, Bristol County Center renovations to provide a Sheriff's Office west-end outpost and Emergency Operations Center backup space, Highway K expansion from 94th Court to 128th Avenue, Fox River erosion and flooding improvements along Highway W, and a Lake Michigan shoreline restoration estimated at approximately $15 million between 2027 and 2028. Capital project reserves increase by roughly 37% from 2026, with $1 million more drawn from reserves. Board Chairman Mark Nordigian credited collaboration between administration and board members throughout the planning process.

Source: Journal Times (Southeastern) | https://journaltimes.com/news/local/government-politics/article_7b199f26-bfd8-53d7-a157-bb0aa2277f5f.html

Per Diem for Jury Duty to Increase

The Sheboygan County Board approved doubling the per diem paid to jurors, raising it from $12.50 to $25 for a half day and from $25 to $50 for a full day. The new rates are included in the county's budget for 2027. County Administrator Alayne Krause said the board doubled both rates and

called the change a step toward compensating residents who serve as jurors. The report does not give a vote tally or the cost of the increase.

Source: WHBL 1330 AM Sheboygan (Southeastern) | https://whbl.com/2026/11/05/per-diem-for-jury-duty-is-upped/

Proposed county budget closes gap on deficit

Waupaca County Finance Director Heidi Dombrowski presented a proposed 2027 budget at the Oct. 27 board of supervisors meeting that eliminates a projected $3.2 million operating deficit through indirect cost recalculations, spending cuts, and internal fund transfers. Grant recalculations recovered $209,000 in administrative reimbursements, including $121,700 from CLTS, $43,000 from Child Support, and $45,116 from ARDC. Operational cuts include $292,000 from mental health contracted services, $36,000 from child protective services, and elimination of one $114,000 human-services position tied to an expired grant. A switch from purchasing to leasing Sheriff's Office squads freed $1.1 million for HVAC upgrades and $100,000 for software. A $906,075 drawdown from general fund reserves covers highway construction, a $125,000 contingency fund, and a $250,000 strategic plan RFP. County equalized property values rose 9.73%, dropping the tax rate from $4.21 to $3.87 per $1,000, saving the median homeowner $67.12 annually. A public hearing and final board vote are scheduled for Nov. 10.

Source: Waupaca County Post (Northeastern) | https://www.waupacanow.com/stories/proposed-county-budget-closes-gap-on-deficit,362171

Racine County approves 2027 budget as supervisors clash over taxes, debt and spending

The Racine County Board voted 15 to 4 on November 3 to adopt the 2027 budget, which County Executive Ralph Malicki said raises the property-tax levy 3.8 percent, from $62.7 million to $65.1 million. Supervisors Taylor Wishau, Valena Lena Coleman, Ernie Rossi, and Troy McReynolds voted no. The budget projects $24 million in sales-tax revenue, allocated $16.4 million to operations, $6.7 million to debt service, $650,000 to highway capital, and $250,000 to reserves. Reserve financing is projected at $3.2 million for 2027, up from $680,000 in 2025. Opponents questioned the sustainability of new positions and rising debt; supporters argued the 0.5 percent sales tax (in effect since April 2025) prevented cuts to sheriff's deputies and roads.

Source: WRJN 1400 AM Racine/Kenosha (Southeastern) | https://wrjn.com/news/2026/11/05/racine-county-approves-2027-budget-as-supervisors-clash-over-taxes-debt-and-spending

Tax rate down, bills up: Marathon County's 2027 budget goes to public hearing Monday

Marathon County's proposed 2027 budget totals $238.6 million, up 21.5 percent from $196.4 million in 2026, with a property tax levy of $66.25 million, up $5.02 million or 8.2 percent. The tax rate would fall one cent to $3.48 per $1,000 of equalized value, while the county share of the average home's bill would rise from $884.33 to $936.92. The debt service levy rises from $4.51 million to $7.71 million, nearly two-thirds of the levy increase, as a $3.5 million North Central Health Care lease payment shifts to a Highway Department facility of nearly $55 million. The

Sheriff's Office holds the largest levy share at $27.05 million, and out-of-home placement spending falls $534,754 to $5.32 million. The budget adds a net 8.5 positions, raises the pay scale 1 percent, and increases nearly 500 fees. The public hearing was set for Nov. 2, and the County Board votes on the budget Nov. 10.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/10/31/tax-rate-down-bills-up-marathon-countys-2027-budget-goes-to-public-hearing-monday/

Taxpayers will see a slight increase in levy

Polk County's proposed 2027 levy rises $282,771 to $23,907,400, up from $23,624,629 in 2026, while the mill rate falls from $2.49 to $2.36 per $100,000 of equalized value. The total budget increases $2,605,048 to $76,715,491, with total projected revenue of $77,040,018. Personnel costs account for 52% of expenditures at $40,295,657. County Administrator Emil Norby said the approximately 336 full-time equivalent employee count could decrease slightly in 2027. Non-GAM, non-WPPA employees will receive a budgeted wage increase of 3.95%, comprising a 2.95% market adjustment on January 1 and a 2% merit increase on July 1. The County Board is scheduled to hold a public hearing and vote on the budget Nov. 10.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | https://theameryfreepress.com/news/taxpayers-will-see-a-slight-increase-in-levy/article_a95c1bbf-9daf-47d6-a0a1-bc426d54d59d.html

Council approves $18 million capital budget

Stevens Point Common Council voted 10-0 on October 19 to approve an $18 million capital budget for 2027. The council tabled a decision on whether $200,000 earmarked for seepage repairs at McDill Dam should instead be reallocated to road maintenance, pending the return of Alderperson Guthrie, who proposed the reallocation but was absent. Residents spoke in support of retaining dam funding, citing a prior $845,000 dredging project undertaken without municipal support and a DNR warning before 2022 repairs that the area risked wetland reclassification. Alderperson Christianson raised the possibility of sharing dam repair costs with neighboring municipalities. The city treasurer was scheduled to present a fuller budget overview at a Special Finance Committee meeting on October 26.

Source: Stevens Point Gazette (Central/Northern) | https://stevenspointgazette.com/stories/council-approves-18-million-capital-budget,360763

Council Rewrites Mayor's Budget, Setting Up Potential Veto Fight

The Milwaukee Common Council rewrote Mayor Cavalier Johnson's proposed 2027 budget, making changes including employee raises, a public utility study, library hours, and street repairs, with property taxes rising slightly. The revised budget sets up a potential mayoral veto.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/11/06/council-rewrites-mayors-budget-setting-up-potential-veto-fight/

Lake Mills City Council approves 2027 budget

The Lake Mills City Council approved the 2027 budget and tax levy on Nov. 3 with a 6.4 percent levy increase, about $35 more per $100,000 of property value. The general fund budget totals $6.7 million and decreases from the prior year, while capital spending rises. City Treasurer Sam Bell said the main change was in capital expenses for Sandy Beach updates and the library expansion. The city budgeted $3 million in 2027 for Sandy Beach, including a pavilion with food service, a new playground, new volleyball courts, and relocated restrooms, and the council authorized up to $400,000 for playground equipment there. The city has committed $2.5 million to the library expansion, contingent on the library matching that amount through fundraising. The library had raised $2.41 million as of early November.

Source: Daily Jefferson County Union (South Central) | https://www.dailyunion.com/news/local/lake-mills-city-council-approves-2027-budget/article_f399b373-5d39-5b54-a32f-92e5e93c5187.html

Wausau City Council to weigh 2027 budget that adds about $72 to a $200,000 home's city taxes

The Wausau City Council will hold a public hearing Nov. 10 on a 2027 budget that raises general fund spending 3.44 percent to $49.67 million and the total city levy, including tax increment, 6.76 percent to $40.63 million. The city tax rate would rise from $8.74 to $9.10 per $1,000 of assessed value, about $72 more on a $200,000 home, roughly $65 of which traces to the $1.45 million fire levy voters approved in April. The proposal drops a $50,000 Flock camera payment, and committee cuts removed $45,000 for alley paving, $150,000 for Forest Street two-way conversion engineering, and $20,000 for River Edge Trail planning. A $650,000 tax increment grant to the 56-unit Westside Commons affordable housing project needs a two-thirds vote because it amends the adopted 2026 budget. A consent resolution would add $5.57 million in lead pipe, road, and traffic signal projects to Tax Increment District 8. The council can adopt the budget Nov. 10 or wait until Nov. 24.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/11/05/wausau-city-council-to-weigh-2027-budget-that-adds-about-72-to-a-200000-homes-city-taxes/

Kronenwetter budget would raise village tax levy 6.8%

The Kronenwetter Village Board will hold a public hearing and vote Nov. 9 on a 2027 budget that raises the total levy $184,776, or 6.8 percent, to $2.91 million. The general operations levy rises 7.5 percent to $2.14 million, a new $35,750 levy funds the capital equipment replacement fund, and the debt service levy holds at $735,003. The general fund grows 11 percent to $6.55 million, with public safety up 14.9 percent to $2.59 million, more than half the growth, and public works up 9 percent to $2.33 million. Finance Director and Treasurer John Jacobs projected about $56,417 in added state aid, mostly transportation aid. The board will vote on three resolutions covering the operating budget, the other funds, and a $4.32 million capital improvements plan that includes $2.42 million in new borrowing. The village is negotiating a police union contract covering 2027 through 2029.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/11/06/kronenwetter-budget-would-raise-village-tax-levy-6-8/

McFarland Village Board makes cuts as it moves toward approving 2027 budget

The McFarland Village Board cut approximately $93,000 in operating expenses and reduced borrowing at an Oct. 29 special budget review meeting, lowering the proposed 2027 levy to $9,967,500, about 2.84% above the 2026 levy of $9,692,000. The proposed tax rate drops eight cents to $5.70 per $1,000 of value, though the owner of a median home (valued at $452,700) will pay roughly $14 more due to a 2% increase in assessed value. A second public hearing and budget adoption vote are scheduled for Nov. 24.

Source: Cambridge Enterprise Sentinel (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/mcfarland-village-board-makes-cuts-as-it-moves-toward-approving-2027-budget/article_73b284fd-e0cd-4ce8-928c-005cf8894a66.html

Can Wisconsin Democrats end cycle of city referendums, budget cuts?

Dane County mayors are pressing Wisconsin's incoming Democratic trifecta to ease fiscal constraints imposed under the 2011 budget reforms, which cap municipal property tax levy increases to the net value of new construction. Mayors of Madison, Fitchburg, Middleton, Monona, Stoughton, Sun Prairie, and Verona are seeking more equitable state aid distribution and authority to raise levies for inflation, which has increased overall costs roughly 30 percent since January 2020. Madison, Monona, Fitchburg, and Sun Prairie have held referendums since 2024; Sun Prairie and Fitchburg's measures failed. Middleton Mayor Lisa Janairo, as president of the Dane County Cities and Villages Association, plans to present policy recommendations to Gov.-elect David Crowley and Democratic legislative leaders in coming weeks.

Source: Chippewa Herald (South Central) | https://chippewa.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_d60a02c5-dd15-51a5-8247-7589dd4cff33.html

$121 million surprise complicates Beaver Dam budget talks

A $121 million valuation discrepancy in TIF District 10, which covers Meta Platforms' data center site, has disrupted Beaver Dam's budget process. The city valued the parcels at $85 million, but the Wisconsin Department of Revenue certified the valuation at $206 million based on a figure in a preliminary assessment report, City Administrator Larry Bierke told the Common Council. The discrepancy affects how much the city must set aside for the TIF fund versus general operations. Bierke notified DOR of the error and is working toward a correction. A special Common Council meeting is scheduled for Monday at 6:30 p.m. at Beaver Dam Municipal Building, 205 S. Lincoln St., to discuss the budget; the adoption deadline is November 16.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/news/community/bdc/article_9e0f09f4-d01a-47bd-8b65-0f7ba4111e9e.html

City of Janesville receives $445,000 from FEMA for debris, flood cleanup

FEMA announced October 27 that more than $445,000 in Public Assistance funding would go to the City of Janesville following President Trump's June 30 major disaster declaration for April severe storms and flooding. The funding, under which FEMA covers 75% of eligible costs with the remainder split between state and local government, will reimburse costs including storm debris

cleanup, skylight damage at City Services, and Greenbelt flood mitigation. Housing and Emergency Management Director Kelly Bedessem said specific project allocations are still being determined through weekly FEMA review sessions, and the full recovery process could take two to three years.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/local/city-of-janesville-receives-445-000-from-fema-for-debris-flood-cleanup/article_796d27d0-ae64-4ad7-b0e8-5bc6ef4e61c3.html

Downtown Mainstreet shutdown brings change in La Crosse Center concessions

The disbanding of Downtown Mainstreet, Inc. (DMI), which voted to disband and will cease operations December 1, ends DMI's concession service at La Crosse Center events. City Attorney Stephen Matty told the Finance and Personnel Committee that without a replacement concessionaire the city could not serve alcohol at Center events, creating a negative revenue impact. The city has established its own concession service company in response.

Source: WIZM 1410 AM La Crosse (Western) | https://www.wizmnews.com/2026/11/05/shutdown-of-dmi-to-bring-a-change-in-la-crosse-center-concessions/

Eau Claire council members propose changes to downtown paid parking hours, rates

Less than four months after paid parking launched on August 1, 2026, in downtown Eau Claire, council members Aaron Brewster and Andrew Werthmann have proposed four changes for consideration at the November 10 city council meeting. The proposals include eliminating the 50-cents-per-hour outer zone, shifting paid hours from 1-11 p.m. to 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday through Saturday, providing one free hour in city ramps on Saturdays, and waiving on-street fees on Saturdays from the first Saturday after Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. Finance Director Kitzie Winters estimated the combined changes would yield a net annual revenue increase of $7,265 but carry one-time implementation costs of $18,570 to $50,430. Winters did not recommend the changes at this time. A vote could come at the November 24 council meeting.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | https://www.weau.com/2026/11/06/eau-claire-council-members-propose-changes-downtown-paid-parking-hours-rates/

MKE Community Impact Committee to ask for more time to develop participatory budgeting process

Milwaukee's MKE Community Impact Committee, created by Common Council resolution in July 2025 at Ald. Milele Coggs's sponsorship, will ask the Council's Community and Economic Development Committee on Nov. 11 to extend its mandate through March 31, 2027. The committee was originally due to present a participatory budgeting framework for $600,000 in non-police safety funds by November. Since forming in March, the 11-member body has established three work groups, launched a city website, and reviewed models from other cities. A key unresolved question is whether project proposals must exclude named vendors to comply with city purchasing rules, or whether the process can bypass standard procurement restrictions.

Source: Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service (Southeastern) | https://milwaukeenns.org/2026/11/04/mke-community-impact-committee-to-ask-for-more-time-to-develop-participatory-budgeting-process/

Collective Bargaining Workshop: December 8-9, 2026

Wisconsin voters elected the state's first Democratic trifecta in 16 years on November 3, and public-sector employers should expect changes to collective bargaining law early in the 2027 session. If the past 15 years' rhetoric is any guide, repealing Act 10 is likely the first step. Broader bargaining subjects, fixed timelines for elections and negotiations, and changes to interest arbitration could follow. Employers have a short window to set their own status quo before a petition arrives. That means reviewing policies and handbooks, knowing exactly what you pay and provide, and documenting performance problems now. Kyle Gulya and I will cover what comes next on December 7 and 8 at WCTC in Pewaukee. Register at https://wctc.edu/cjtraining under Specialized Training.



Workforce and Labor

Weight loss drugs cost Milwaukee County $11 million, leaders look for ways to cut costs

The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors voted down an amendment by Supervisor Shawn Rolland that would have raised employee copays for GLP-1 medications from $40 to $150 and limited coverage to diabetes patients. The county spent $11 million on GLP-1 drugs for employees this year, and Supervisor Sheldon Wasserman, also a physician, projected costs could reach $15 million next year. Rolland said the amendment was intended to help close a separate $4.5 million budget gap.

Source: WISN 12 ABC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.wisn.com/article/weight-loss-drugs-cost-milwaukee-county-11-million-leaders-look-for-ways-to-cut-costs/74362630

$2 An Hour Or 2%? Council Rewrites City Worker Pay Plan

The Milwaukee Common Council rewrote the mayor's proposed city worker pay plan, substituting a $2-per-hour increase targeting the lowest-paid employees in place of a uniform 2% raise, raising concerns about wage compression and higher long-term costs.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/11/06/2-an-hour-or-2-council-rewrites-city-worker-pay-plan/

Amery school board approves Clubhouse restructuring, adding slots and ending insurance for some staff

The Amery School Board approved by voice vote at a special meeting a staffing overhaul at The Clubhouse Childcare, effective January 1, that will add capacity for 34 children but end health insurance for at least six current employees. The Clubhouse lost $369,276 in 2024-25 and $526,619 in 2025-26. The restructuring projects cash-flow improvements of $349,345 through June 30, 2027, and $680,090 for 2027-28. The plan creates three job categories: seven lead teachers at 40 hours with insurance eligibility, four associate teachers at 40 hours without insurance eligibility, and ten assistant teachers at 29.75 hours without insurance eligibility. Three assistants will have hours reduced from 40 to 29.75; five will move to three-day schedules. No hourly wages will decrease. District Administrator Shawn Doerfler said a second round of changes, including handbook revisions and a new attendance policy, is planned for January through March.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | https://theameryfreepress.com/news/amery-school-board-approves-clubhouse-restructuring-adding-slots-and-ending-insurance-for-some-staff/article_22ac9a08-7c81-4cd3-8e92-f360ac07bc64.html

DPI: Sun Prairie superintendent's Wisconsin license application denied

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction denied Sun Prairie Superintendent Dr. Antoine Reed's application for a Wisconsin superintendent license on October 7, 2026, after he applied July 27. Reed, who began the role July 1 under a contract covering July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028, at a $230,000 base salary, holds no current Wisconsin license and has no pending application. DPI told the district in an August 18 meeting that Reed was ineligible under state law due to insufficient Wisconsin-equivalent experience under his Illinois superintendent endorsement, which was first issued December 19, 2025. The signed contract requires Reed to hold a valid Wisconsin administrator license at all times and states it "shall be invalid" if he fails to maintain one. At an October 26 school board meeting, Reed said his Wisconsin license was still being processed and did not disclose the denial. The district said it has appropriately licensed administrators in place to handle duties requiring a Wisconsin license and that it is working with DPI and legal counsel on a licensure pathway.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/11/06/dpi-sun-prairie-superintendents-wisconsin-license-application-denied/

Houseman gets City Hall swear-in for first day as Janesville's new city manager

Rebecca Houseman was sworn in Monday as Janesville's 12th city manager and its first female manager, approximately five months after former city manager Kevin Lahner departed. Houseman begins with immediate responsibility for meeting 18 department and division heads and managing ongoing shifts in staff roles. Near-term priorities include finalizing a zoning code revision to allow more flexible housing types and advancing a development plan for a 55-acre city-owned parcel at 2400 Beloit Avenue, where developer Next Generation proposes a blended single-family and apartment project.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/houseman-gets-city-hall-swear-in-for-first-day-as-janesvilles-new-city-manager/article_16cb49a2-3956-479f-9cb2-7a5ce83d864a.html

MPS replaces finance chief after losing $450K in bank fraud scheme

Milwaukee Public Schools removed Chief Financial Officer Aycha Sawa from her role following a bank impersonation fraud scheme in which the district lost approximately $450,000. U.S. Bank recovered $255,000 as of November 4. Sawa, a certified public accountant who had served as Milwaukee's city comptroller for four years before joining MPS in fall 2024, remains employed by the district. Deputy CFO Jennifer Buros will serve as interim CFO during the investigation. The loss compounds existing financial difficulties: MPS overspent its budget by $46 million in 2024 and reported a $58 million deficit last spring, against a total budget of approximately $1.6 billion.

Source: WUWM 89.7 Milwaukee Public Radio (Southeastern) | https://www.wuwm.com/mps-replaces-finance-chief-after-losing-450k-in-bank-fraud-scheme

Ryan McCue named as interim city manager; Fort Atkinson seeking public input on permanent manager through survey

Fort Atkinson has named Ryan McCue interim city manager while it recruits a permanent manager. McCue was Janesville's deputy city manager from 2016 to 2025 and deputy administrator and economic development director in Wautoma from 2010 to 2015, and he is interim library operating officer at North Shore Library in Bayside. The city council selected Innovative Public Advisors to conduct the recruitment. The firm is running a community survey on leadership qualities and priorities through Nov. 10 and will hold a public input open house from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Nov. 10 at the Hoard Historical Museum, 401 Whitewater Ave. IPA Partner Jay Shambeau said survey results will go into a report for the council and hiring team and may shape the position description and recruitment materials. The council will then finalize the position description, review applicants, and interview finalists, a process expected to take three to four months.

Source: Daily Jefferson County Union (South Central) | https://www.dailyunion.com/news/local/ryan-mccue-named-as-interim-city-manager-fort-atkinson-seeking-public-input-on-permanent-manager/article_5151e296-17e3-4bb7-ad15-8c8c355bad53.html

Two Rivers City Council approves city manager's resignation

The Two Rivers City Council voted unanimously Monday to accept the resignation of City Manager Kyle Kordell after a closed session of one hour and 15 minutes. Kordell had held the position since August 2025 and had been on paid leave since Oct. 7. Police Chief Ben Meinnert, a certified public manager through UW-Madison and the Wisconsin Training and Standards Board, will serve as acting city manager until the council names a replacement. The council said it had worked with external legal counsel because of confidentiality concerns, and Council President Scott Stechmesser said the council has confidence in Meinnert. The council plans to name an interim city manager as soon as possible and expects to fill the position permanently over the next five months.

Source: WBAY ABC2 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.wbay.com/2026/11/02/two-rivers-city-council-approves-city-managers-resignation/

UGHS superintendent placed on unpaid leave following child porn charges

The Union Grove High School Board voted Thursday to place Superintendent Tom Johnson on unpaid leave of absence pending resolution of criminal charges and an internal misconduct investigation. Johnson faces two Class D felony counts of child pornography possession in Kenosha County, each carrying a maximum sentence of 25 years and a $100,000 fine. His cash bond was set at $250,000 at his initial court appearance Thursday. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Nov. 12. Principal Tom Blair has been named acting superintendent by Board President Diane Skewes. A third-party investigator will conduct the internal misconduct review. UGHS said it is cooperating with law enforcement and that additional mental health support is available for students and staff.

Source: Journal Times (Southeastern) | https://journaltimes.com/news/local/education/article_a21b3182-97e7-45d7-be90-c330e86a48f0.html

Blanchardville Police Department chief announces resignation

Blanchardville Police Chief Ryan Kumor announced his resignation effective Nov. 27, 2026, citing changes to daily workflow, operational expectations, and differences of opinion on the department's direction. Kumor noted that Blanchardville operates as a single-person police department, requiring professional autonomy across all law enforcement functions. He will return to the Lafayette County Sheriff's Office as a deputy.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/11/07/blanchardville-police-department-chief-announces-resignation/

Kronenwetter board set to confirm new village clerk

Kronenwetter Village President Dan Joling has recommended Connie Nowak as village clerk, with the Village Board set to vote Nov. 9 at the Kronenwetter Municipal Center. Confirmation requires a two-thirds vote of the seven-member board, at least five members, for a two-year term. Nowak would succeed Jennifer Poyer, whose resignation trustees accepted at an Aug. 27 special meeting; Poyer's resignation letter alleged harassment and retaliation by Village Administrator James Davel and Joling. Her predecessor, Bobbi Birk-LaBarge, resigned in November 2024, citing conduct by a village trustee. On Sept. 14 the board approved an extra $500 per two-week pay period for utility clerk Kim Coyle to serve as interim clerk, and trustees interviewed three candidates in closed session Sept. 17. Nowak's name already appears as clerk on the signature lines of the budget resolutions on the same agenda.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/11/05/kronenwetter-board-set-to-confirm-new-village-clerk/

Infrastructure and Utilities

City of Beloit receives over $6 million for removal of lead service lines from water system

The City of Beloit will receive $6.36 million in forgivable loans from the Wisconsin DNR and Governor Evers to replace public and private lead service lines. Work will focus on Census Tracts 16 to 18, identified as having the highest concentration of lead service lines in the city. The EPA requires all public water systems to replace public and private lead service lines by 2037.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/11/05/city-beloit-receives-over-6-million-removal-lead-service-lines-water-system/

State cited Amery water utility over lead pipe inventory; no lead found

The Wisconsin DNR cited Amery's water utility for submitting an incomplete lead service line inventory, a violation the city says is now resolved with no lead lines found and no penalties issued. The DNR sent a warning letter March 18, 2025, after Amery's October 2024 submission lacked required information; the corrected inventory was approved September 22, 2026. City Administrator Alex Mansfield said the City Council was not formally notified of the missed deadline, as notification was not required. Amery's inventory of 1,417 service connections lists zero lead lines, two galvanized requiring replacement, 1,169 unknown, and 246 non-lead. The 90th percentile lead result in the September 2023 sampling round was 0 parts per billion, against a federal action level of 15. Of 425 small municipal Wisconsin water systems, 105 received warning letters over their 2024 inventories. Annual notices will continue until every line is classified.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | https://theameryfreepress.com/news/state-cited-amery-water-utility-over-lead-pipe-inventory-no-lead-found/article_2e7a1fd0-c572-458d-89ae-147fba801c7f.html

Wausau alders were told in 2024 a lead pipe ordinance would earn state points. Without one, the city lost forgiveness, public works director says.

Wausau's citywide lead service line project scored 102 points for 2027 Safe Drinking Water Loan Program funding, short of the 105 a Cudahy project scored to receive the remaining principal forgiveness, Public Works and Utilities Director Eric Lindman wrote in a Nov. 4 memo to the Water Works Commission. Lindman wrote that the city would have scored within the forgiveness range with a mandatory replacement ordinance, which the Department of Natural Resources requires be uploaded with the application to earn points. The city requested $18.63 million across two projects and received $4.89 million in principal forgiveness, all for private-side work in eligible census tracts. The rest of the award is $5.73 million in loans at 0.25 percent and $8.01 million at 2.585 percent for utility-side work. The council postponed the ordinance in July 2024, rejected it 5-6 in September 2026 after the June 30 application deadline, and revived it in October. The Finance Committee takes up a budget amendment for the award Nov. 10.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/11/06/wausau-alders-were-told-in-2024-a-lead-pipe-ordinance-would-earn-state-points-without-one-the-city-lost-forgiveness-public-works-director-says/

Gov. Evers, PSC expand high-speed internet access

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin awarded nearly $58 million in State Broadband Expansion Grants to 46 projects serving more than 18,000 locations statewide. The round used underspent and returned funds from prior grant rounds plus Universal Service Fund allocations, as the Legislature approved $0 in new broadband funding in the two most recent state budgets. The PSC received 93 applications requesting more than $160 million, exceeding available funds by over $100 million. PSC Chairperson Summer Strand said this is likely the final round unless the Legislature authorizes additional funding, with at least 30,000 locations remaining unserved after accounting for BEAD program coverage.

Source: Chippewa Herald (Statewide) | https://chippewa.com/news/community/article_df0c8ac9-b494-548b-8222-7cce9800c9d4.html

Two Douglas County projects receive broadband grants

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin awarded nearly $58 million in State Broadband Expansion Grants to 46 projects statewide. In Douglas County, East Central Energy received about $1 million for fiber to 207 locations in Douglas, Washburn, and Burnett counties; Brightspeed received about $918,000 for fiber in Solon Springs and Gordon. The city of Superior's application for nearly $1.3 million to expand ConnectSuperior to roughly 250 locations was denied after a successful challenge by Spectrum.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/two-douglas-county-projects-receive-broadband-grants

County considers purchasing Firemen's Park

Ozaukee County's Executive Committee, chaired by Lee Schlenvogt and comprising the five standing committee chairs, was scheduled to meet in closed session following the County Board's 8 a.m. meeting to discuss negotiating strategy for acquiring the 16.18-acre Cedarburg Firemen's Park parcel from Cedarburg Fireman's Inc. A 1990 agreement gives the county right of first refusal before the property can be offered to the City of Cedarburg, with sale price set by a jointly agreed appraiser. A 2002 market study estimated acquisition at approximately $1.23 million plus $3 million in recommended improvements. County Administrator Jason Dzwinel confirmed the county's interest is preserving fair activities including the demolition derby and tractor pulls but declined to speculate on price or timeline pending closed-session discussion. The agenda noted the committee may take action when it reconvenes in open session.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | https://ozaukeepress.com/content/county-considers-purchasing-firemen%E2%80%99s-park

Council Approves $1.35 Million to Study We Energies Takeover

The Milwaukee Common Council voted 15-0 on November 6 to authorize up to $1.35 million in borrowing, via Amendment 92B, to fund a feasibility study of replacing We Energies with a city-owned electric utility. The measure, subject to a potential veto by Mayor Cavalier Johnson, directs the city to solicit outside consultants by February 1, 2027, with spending restricted until responses to a request for information are received. A task force including council, community,

and labor representatives would guide the study. The borrowing would be repaid over five to six years. The vote reversed a 2-2 Finance and Personnel Committee failure on an earlier version.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/11/06/council-approves-1-35-million-to-study-we-energies-takeover/

Typical Amery household to pay about $10 more per quarter for sewer in 2027

The Amery City Council unanimously approved Resolution 15-2026, raising the sewer volume charge from $13.20 to $14.42 per 1,000 gallons effective January 1, 2027. A typical household using 8,300 gallons per quarter will pay $10.13 more per quarter, a 4.9% increase. City Administrator Alex Mansfield cited a $94,921 shortfall in the $1.64 million 2027 sewer budget, driven by a $775,027 debt service obligation on a $15.35 million Clean Water Fund loan and sludge hauling charges rising at least 14% after River Falls left the West Central Wisconsin Biosolids Facility. Noncompliance with DNR discharge standards could bring daily fines of $10,000 to $25,000.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | https://theameryfreepress.com/news/typical-amery-household-to-pay-about-10-more-per-quarter-for-sewer-in-2027/article_4afeb614-b7f7-4af8-8980-251d558ee0d2.html

Grafton dam: Burrowing amphibians delay repairs until spring

Repairs to Grafton's Bridge Street dam on the Milwaukee River will not resume until spring after the Wisconsin DNR determined that amphibians burrowing into the impoundment area for winter prevent refilling the site. The Grafton Village Board approved the repair motion in August following a hydraulic cylinder failure in May. Repair costs are estimated at up to $180,000, compared to a dam removal cost estimated at up to $2 million. The repair plan involves closing the dam gate until the failed hydraulic cylinder is replaced.

Source: WITI FOX6 Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.fox6now.com/news/grafton-dam-amphibians-delay-repairs

Village Of Whitelaw Finds Snow Plowing Company For This Winter

The Village of Whitelaw contracted with Ryan Collins of Tower Excavating and Demolition for snowplowing and winter road maintenance after Manitowoc County's Highway Department announced in August it would no longer provide those services to Whitelaw due to a worker shortage. Tower Excavating will station a loader with a snow wing within the village and will use rock salt rather than salt brine. The company also currently serves the Villages of Kellnersville and Maribel.

Source: Seehafer News (Northeastern) | https://www.seehafernews.com/2026/11/06/village-of-whitelaw-finds-snow-plowing-company-for-this-winter/

Town grants for water, sewer connections may be offered

Town of Port Washington Chairman Mike Didier proposed $5,000 grants, which he called an idea for the board to consider, to help Knellsville property owners connect to city sewer and water as the Town Board reviewed an amendment to its border agreement with the City of Port

Washington. The grants would come from the $150,000 annual payments the town receives from the city for five years tied to annexation of the Vantage Data Centers Lighthouse Campus lands; only existing buildings would qualify. The draft requires the city to extend gravity sewer and water mains to all Knellsville areas west of I-43 by Dec. 31, 2027, and defers lift stations for the northern Vantage land to Jan. 1, 2041, when the data center's tax incremental district ends. The Port Washington Common Council approved a $7.3 million Dorner Inc. bid for Knellsville utilities and a $4.5 million Advance Construction Inc. water extension to the campus. Work awaits Public Service Commission approval, expected in January, and the amendment still needs city review.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | https://ozaukeepress.com/content/town-grants-water-sewer-connections-may-be-offered

Towns of Watertown, Herman receive Agricultural Road Improvement Program grants

The Town of Watertown received $1,303,850 in state Agricultural Roads Improvement Program funding, covering 89 percent of a $1,465,000 project to fully reconstruct Beryl Drive from CTH X to CTH E. The Town of Herman received $1,807,640.73 toward a $2,031,057 project on Illinois Road. The Town of Watertown Board was scheduled to formally accept the grant at its November 9 meeting; engineering work through Madison-based Jewell Associates is planned for 2027 before construction begins.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/towns-of-watertown-herman-receive-agricultural-road-improvement-program-grants/article_a2b42081-1565-4701-a504-c6a6da2603d8.html

Technology and AI Governance

Wisconsin Rapids app alerts drivers to blocked train crossings

Wisconsin Rapids has deployed TrainLinq, a technology system using 12 sensors at rail crossings to alert drivers and first responders when trains are blocking intersections and to estimate clearance times. City Engineer Joe Eichsteadt and Fire Chief Ben Goodreau described the system as a tool to reduce response time delays caused by blocked crossings. Goodreau said training with the technology will begin soon.

Source: WSAW CBS7 Wausau (Central/Northern) | https://www.wsaw.com/2026/11/06/wisconsin-rapids-app-alerts-drivers-blocked-train-crossings/

Public Safety

Flock debate reaches Marathon County Board as sheriff defends cameras shared with agencies in 40 states

Marathon County Sheriff Chad Billeb told the County Board at its 2027 budget hearing that the county's Flock Safety license plate reader data stays in Marathon County and that he is open to outside participation in reviewing audits if the audit logs remain confidential. The proposed 2027 budget includes $6,300 to continue five Sheriff's Office cameras. County Administrator Lance

Leonhard said two grants funded the cameras, one covering five and a later one covering three; both grants are spent, the second grant's contract runs through March 2029, and the 2027 budget carries no direct funding for those three. Leonhard counted eight cameras directly attributable to the county, while the sheriff's transparency portal lists 10 and shows 1,410 agencies able to search the county's camera data, 1,223 of them outside Wisconsin. A domestic violence agency director and a Wausau resident urged the board to stop funding the cameras. Budget amendments go to the Human Resources, Finance and Property Committee Nov. 9, and the full County Board votes on the 2027 budget Nov. 10.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/11/03/flock-debate-reaches-marathon-county-board-as-sheriff-defends-cameras-shared-with-agencies-in-40-states/

10 new cameras: Police chief outlines nearly $96K, 3-year Flock contract

Watertown Police Chief Dave Brower presented the Common Council with a three-year Flock Safety contract for 10 additional license plate reader cameras at a cost of nearly $96,000. Council member Dana Davis raised three procedural objections: Assistant Chief Ben Olsen signed the contract without authority (contracts above $20,000 require the mayor's signature), the contract was not reviewed by the finance committee as required for expenditures above $50,000, and the city attorney had not reviewed it. Brower confirmed data is wiped after 30 days unless flagged for evidence. No council action was taken at the meeting.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/10-new-cameras-police-chief-outlines-nearly-96k-3-year-flock-contract/article_c0927316-34b7-484b-a82f-8021ddf2ba5d.html

Council hears budget proposal, votes to terminate Flock contract

The River Falls City Council received the first reading of the 2027 budget on Oct. 27, showing a proposed total of $70,517,996 with a tax levy of $8,950,151, a 5.56 percent increase from $8.48 million. The mill rate rises from $4.35 to $4.44 per $1,000 of property value, roughly a 1.96 percent increase, translating to an estimated $20 to $25 increase for a property valued at $350,000. The council separately voted unanimously to terminate its contract with Flock Safety, citing the police department's loss of confidence in the company's data management practices, contractual transparency, and responsiveness following an internal investigation. The council also approved an estimated $49,400 three-year contract with optional two-year extension for yard waste site grinding services with Sylvesters Custom Grinding.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/council-hears-budget-proposal-votes-to-terminate-flock-contract,212055

Two Rivers terminates Flock Safety contract

The Two Rivers City Council voted unanimously Monday to terminate the city's contract with Flock Safety, which supplies automated license plate reader cameras, and ordered the cameras covered until they are removed. The city deactivated the cameras and removed their data-sharing capabilities in September but had remained under contract. Police Chief Ben Meinnert, who is also acting city manager, told the council that paying for the cameras was wasted money while

they were not used as intended. Appleton, Oshkosh, Grand Chute, and Kaukauna have ended or declined to renew Flock contracts in recent months, and Appleton last month became the first Wisconsin city to restrict broad use of the cameras. Meinnert said strategically placed cameras can still help law enforcement but that he would wait for federal guidance before considering another contract.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/tworivers/two-rivers-terminates-flock-safety-contract

Fond du Lac County considers new jail as current facility faces capacity, infrastructure concerns

Fond du Lac County is exploring construction of a new jail after its current facility, rated for approximately 300 inmates, is regularly exceeding capacity and experiencing sewage and water line failures. Samuels Group Vice President Kurt Berner presented two site options to the county board: adjacent to the courthouse south of Western Avenue, and on county-owned land on Scott Road. The estimated tax impact ranges from $0.65 to $1.55 per thousand dollars of property value depending on location and financing. County Executive Sam Kaufman expects the board to decide on a specific plan by May 2027, with five public listening sessions planned for January.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/fonddulac/fond-du-lac-county-considers-new-jail-as-current-facility-faces-capacity-infrastructure-concerns

Rusk County voters fail $32M advisory jail referendum

Rusk County voters rejected a $32 million advisory jail construction referendum on November 3, with 81.4% voting no. The non-binding result will guide county board deliberations on next steps. The proposed project would have added a two-story housing pod connected by skywalk to the existing law enforcement center, addressing safety concerns in the 1985-era jail. The board had voted 10 to 7 in February to place the referendum on the November ballot.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | https://www.weau.com/2026/11/04/rusk-county-voters-fail-32m-advisory-jail-referendum/

Public Safety Referendums Mostly Fail At Wisconsin Ballot Box

Voters in Muskego, New Berlin, Plymouth, Grand Rapids, Hayward, and Waldwick rejected property tax levy referendums for public safety staffing on November 4. The Muskego measure, which would have raised the levy by $5.9 million for fire, EMS, and police positions, received only 35.6% support. New Berlin's $3.12 million referendum for firefighter, paramedic, and police positions failed with 56.2% opposed. Plymouth's $600,000 referendum to add three officers and two squad cars was rejected by just over 51%. Voters in the town and city of Hudson approved referendums to fund additional firefighters. The League of Wisconsin Municipalities cited growing public safety costs and state levy limits as systemic drivers.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Statewide) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/11/05/public-safety-referendums-mostly-fail-at-wisconsin-ballot-box/

Dane County supervisors OK funding for sheriff's deputy body cams

Dane County supervisors approved a 2027 capital budget that includes $3 million for sheriff's deputy body cameras, part of a $94 million capital and $861 million operating package now awaiting County Executive Melissa Agard's signature. Deployment could begin as early as summer 2027 following a bidding process and training. The budget amendment, sponsored by Supervisor Keith Furman, requires Sheriff Kalvin Barrett to hold 30 days of public comment on a draft use policy and community engagement sessions countywide. Currently only about 30 west precinct deputies use cameras under a pilot program; the funding would extend cameras to all public-facing officers.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) (South Central) | https://www.wpr.org/news/dane-county-supervisors-ok-funding-sheriffs-deputy-body-cams

Dodge County advances plan for countywide EMS collaboration

The Dodge County Executive Committee unanimously recommended creating a countywide Emergency Medical Services Committee to evaluate and strengthen EMS services across the county. Sheriff Dale Schmidt restarted stakeholder discussions in July, building on a 2020 study that identified declining volunteer participation as a key challenge. The committee's structure, membership, and responsibilities will be developed after the county's budget process concludes later this month. Dodge County also plans to hire an EMS coordinator in 2027 as part of its broader planning initiative.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (South Central) | https://dailydodge.com/dodge-county-advances-plan-for-countywide-ems-collaboration/

Grant will help improve emergency communications equipment in Forest County

The Forest County Sheriff's Office was awarded a Public Safety Answering Point grant covering just over $373,000 of approved Next Generation 9-1-1 equipment upgrade projects, with Forest County responsible for the remaining 10%, approximately $41,000. The grant will fund three new Motorola dispatch consoles, translation and transcription software for 911 calls, and three emergency operations laptops, saving the county approximately $355,500 compared to fully self-funding the upgrades.

Source: WXPR 91.7 FM Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wxpr.org/local-news/2026-11-05/grant-will-help-improve-emergency-communications-equipment-in-forest-county

Beaver Dam police explain new e-bike ordinance and rider requirements

Beaver Dam's new e-bike ordinance sets a municipal court bond of $575, including fees, for violations. The ordinance requires registration of e-bikes, helmets for riders under 16, and bars those under 16 from operating Class 3 e-bikes capable of reaching 28 mph. Parents must appear in juvenile court if their child is cited and may also be cited if they knowingly allow violations. Lt. Jeremiah Johnson said the department is emphasizing education through social media and school resource officers while also issuing citations.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (South Central) | https://dailydodge.com/beaver-dam-police-explain-new-e-bike-ordinance-and-rider-requirements/

Appleton council boosts noise ordinance fines to curb excessive car noise downtown

The Appleton Common Council voted 11-1 to approve steeper fines for violations of the city's noise ordinance, a change aimed at reducing excessive car noise in the downtown area. The new schedule sets fines at $250 for a first offense, $400 for a second offense, and $800 for a third. Police cited 19 drivers in August for noise-related violations. The citations included excessive revving and tire squealing, an illegal muffler, and a modified or defective exhaust. In a separate action, the council approved renaming Veterans Park to Memorial Bridge Park, its original name, to avoid confusion after Memorial Park on the city's north side was renamed Veterans Memorial Park.

Source: WLUK FOX11 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://fox11online.com/news/local/appleton-council-boosts-noise-ordinance-fines-to-curb-excessive-car-noise-downtown

Milwaukee Common Council approves new measures targeting copper wire thefts

The Milwaukee Common Council approved three measures in the first week of November aimed at preventing copper wire thefts, encouraging tips from the public, and increasing penalties. The first measure directs city departments and agencies to coordinate on strategies to prevent the thefts. The second establishes a reward program for people who provide information related to the thefts. The third increases fines for the theft or destruction of copper wiring. City officials said the thefts have cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars, and Mayor Cavalier Johnson said the week before that they have cost more than $830,000 over the past two years. The report does not give the reward amounts or the new fine levels.

Source: WDJT CBS58 Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.cbs58.com/news/milwaukee-common-council-approves-new-measures-targeting-copper-wire-thefts

Germantown board approves $26.5M police station plan and $30.5M fire station path in split votes

The Germantown Village Board voted 8 to 1 to approve Path 2 for a new fire station estimated at $30.5 million, and voted 5 to 4 to advance a new police facility into the design development phase at an estimated construction cost of $26.5 million. Both votes occurred at Thursday's Village Board meeting. No financing details or timelines were included in the article.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/county-reporting/washington-county/germantown-board-approves-26-5m-police-station-plan-and-30-5m-fire-station-path-in-split-votes

Pleasant Prairie police use 'Grappler' to stop vehicle pursuits

Pleasant Prairie Police Department began deploying the Grappler vehicle-pursuit intervention device last month, becoming only the second Wisconsin department after Monona to use the technology. The device, a heavy nylon net mounted on a squad car's front bumper, wraps around a fleeing vehicle's rear wheel. Each net replacement costs approximately $400; the full

mechanism costs $8,000 to $10,000 and is rated for 100 uses. The department recorded three successful and three unsuccessful deployments in its first month. Police Chief David Selvidge said other Wisconsin agencies are monitoring results before committing to purchase.

Source: WITI FOX6 Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.fox6now.com/news/pleasant-prairie-police-use-grappler-stop-vehicle-pursuits

Siting and Moratoria

Alliant Energy in talks with 7 new potential AI data center sites in Wisconsin, Iowa

Alliant Energy CEO Lisa Barton disclosed during the company's Nov. 5 earnings call that the Madison-based utility is in discussions with developers behind seven new potential AI data center sites in Wisconsin and Iowa, in addition to exploring expansions at three existing data center projects. Alliant has already signed contracts to supply 3.4 gigawatts of electricity to data center projects involving Google and TTS in Iowa and Meta's facility in Beaver Dam. The company projects data centers will drive more than 60% growth in peak electricity demand by 2031. Alliant has submitted proposed large-load customer rules for data centers to the PSC for regulatory review.

Source: WiscNews (Statewide) | https://wiscnews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_85e432eb-5193-56cb-b783-2e9b5a874547.html

Vernon County Board unanimously calls for moratorium on 765-kV transmission lines in Wisconsin

The Vernon County Board unanimously passed a resolution calling for an immediate moratorium on 765-kilovolt transmission lines in Wisconsin and reform of the Public Service Commission's approval process for major energy projects. County Board Chair Lorn Goede said the issue is whether the approval process is sufficiently rigorous and accountable. The resolution requests Gov. Tony Evers and the Wisconsin Legislature to convene a special committee to make recommendations on electricity planning, PSC reform, and transmission line policy before any 765-kV projects proceed.

Source: WXOW ABC19 La Crosse (Western) | https://www.wxow.com/news/coulee/vernon-county-board-unanimously-calls-for-moratorium-on-765-kv-transmission-lines-in-wisconsin/article_ca6d966f-c8b0-44ce-9398-dadb04b43e34.html

Manufactured consent: Paid social media posters are being recruited to promote Wisconsin data center

A Wisconsin Watch investigation found that Scott A. Becher, a Neenah-based former Republican legislative aide turned public relations consultant, solicited at least one person to write paid social media posts promoting the $15 billion OpenAI/Oracle/Vantage Project Lighthouse data center in Port Washington. Applicants were required to sign a nondisclosure agreement before receiving details, and Becher offered $100 to attend an initial meeting if an application was accepted; he would not disclose posting volume or compensation. Vantage, the developer,

declined an interview and said any partnerships comply with advertising disclosure guidelines. A state bill introduced in February to ban NDAs between data center developers and local governments did not pass; the author, Rep. Clint Moses, R-Menomonie, said he will reintroduce and expand it when the new session opens in January, adding the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. to its scope.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Southeastern) | https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/11/wisconsin-data-center-paid-social-media-posters-recruited-to-promote-port-washington/

Housing and Development

County announces funding for local communities' plans for housing

Dane County awarded $279,750 to four municipalities for zoning and planning updates in the first phase of its Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing initiative, funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant PRO Housing program. Sun Prairie receives $150,000 to update the housing and land use sections of its comprehensive plan, and Deerfield receives $60,000 for zoning code updates. Monona receives $51,000 for zoning and land division code changes, and Waunakee receives $18,750 for zoning-related work on housing barriers. The first phase focuses on modernizing zoning and building codes, improving permitting and approval processes, and allowing a wider range of housing types and densities. A second round of about $720,000 is open to Dane County municipalities for implementation-ready planning and policy work, with requests of $15,000 to $150,000. Applications are due Nov. 13 at 11:59 p.m. through the county's procurement portal.

Source: Cambridge Enterprise Sentinel (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/county-announces-funding-for-local-communities-plans-for-housing/article_d539ebf6-ba6c-4786-bb30-d004dc02fdbf.html

Land Use and Zoning

GM/JATCO site referendum passes

Janesville voters approved a direct-legislation referendum granting voters authority to approve or deny any development project exceeding $450 million across 100 or more acres of the former 250-acre General Motors/JATCO site, with unofficial results showing 16,779 yes votes to 9,932 no votes. The referendum originated as a public petition in response to an 800-megawatt data center proposal by developer Viridian Partners, whose Letter of Interest the city allowed to lapse earlier this year. Business and labor coalition Grow Janesville Responsibly opposed the measure, arguing the $450 million threshold would deter large-scale redevelopment and environmental cleanup. Approval or denial of qualifying projects will occur through special or regular elections; results become official at the county canvass meeting.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/gm-jatco-site-referendum-passes/article_39bd578b-9327-4174-b6bd-0e44755d1d32.html

Town files lawsuit to shut down sober house

The Town of Grafton filed suit in Ozaukee County Circuit Court against Forest Recovery WI and the Leon E. and Marina L. Linton Revocable Trust, alleging the operation of a for-profit sober house at 598 Lake Shore Rd. violates the R-1 zoning district's single-family residential restrictions. The town is seeking temporary and permanent injunctions plus fines of $50 to $500 per day per violation. Forest Recovery's attorney Brian Randall contends the facility, housing up to eight adults, qualifies as a single-family dwelling under town code and that federal disability law bars discriminatory zoning enforcement against people in recovery. More than 125 neighbors attended the May 13 Town Board meeting in opposition. No court date has been set.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | https://ozaukeepress.com/content/town-files-lawsuit-shut-down-sober-house

Governance and Ethics

5 takeaways from La Crosse committee's clash over city admin

La Crosse's Judiciary and Administration Committee voted 5-2 on Nov. 5 to recommend a charter ordinance that would transfer budget preparation and department-head supervision from the mayor to a city administrator accountable solely to the council, while also recommending denial of Mayor Shaundel Washington-Spivey's alternative regular ordinance that would preserve mayoral authority. The charter ordinance requires a council supermajority and has failed twice before, most recently in August by one vote. City Attorney Stephen Matty said the charter proposal could lead to reducing the mayor to a part-time position. An informal survey by council member Lisa Weston found 12 of 13 responding employees supported creating the administrator position. Both proposals go before the full council Nov. 12.

Source: Chippewa Herald (Western) | https://chippewa.com/news/local/government-politics/article_ffcfcc4f-9052-5927-a2b8-c915831e3149.html

City of Wausau looking for input on city administrator model of government

The City of Wausau is soliciting public input through Nov. 17 on whether to transition from its current strong-mayor form of government to a city administrator model. Under the proposed model, the 11-member Common Council would hire a professional administrator to manage daily operations, oversee department heads, and prepare the annual budget and capital improvement plan, while the elected mayor would remain chief executive and final budget authority would stay with the council. The survey is available online and in paper form at City Hall, 407 Grant St.

Source: WSAW CBS7 Wausau (Central/Northern) | https://www.wsaw.com/2026/11/02/city-wausau-looking-input-city-administrator-model-government/

Supervisors deny revisions to rules of order

The Polk County Board of Supervisors voted 8 to 7 at its October meeting to defeat a resolution that would have amended the county code to add language on supervisor conduct, electronic device use, and conduct toward county staff. The measure required a two-thirds majority to pass.

Supervisor Pam Garvey, who brought the resolution from committee, said it was intended to address cell phone and computer use during meetings and to add the words "harass" and "threaten" to existing conduct language. Supervisor Adam Jarchow led opposition, calling it "a solution in search of a problem." The rules of order remain unchanged.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | https://theameryfreepress.com/news/supervisors-deny-revisions-to-rules-of-order/article_c8242881-3fe2-4f69-83b6-4debf74ae778.html

Trempealeau County seeks new board members after wave of resignations

Trempealeau County is seeking applicants to fill six vacancies on its 17-member board of supervisors in Districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 17, representing roughly one-third of the board. Four of the six resignations occurred in October, shortly before an Oct. 26 special meeting called to elect a new board chair. A Oct. 12 vote to remove former chair Andy Todd failed 8-8 when Ron Johnson had already resigned; Renee Lyon was subsequently elected chair at the Oct. 26 meeting. Appointees will serve through April 2028. Applications are due by Wednesday, Nov. 18, and must be submitted to County Board Chair Renee Lyon.

Source: Chippewa Herald (Western) | https://chippewa.com/news/local/government-politics/article_cdb580fa-1753-5127-9527-21836535b75b.html

Milwaukee County outlines process for replacing Crowley as county executive

Milwaukee County Board Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell will become acting county executive when County Executive David Crowley leaves office, according to a Nov. 4 message to county employees. Crowley, elected governor Nov. 3, remains county executive until he resigns or is inaugurated Jan. 4, 2027, whichever comes first. First Vice-Chair Steven Shea would then become acting chair of the County Board. Within 30 days, Nicholson-Bovell will appoint an interim county executive, who must be confirmed by the board. The interim will serve until a special election, for which no date has been set. The winner of the special election will serve the rest of Crowley's term, which ends in April 2028.

Source: WDJT CBS58 Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.cbs58.com/news/milwaukee-county-outlines-process-for-replacing-crowley-as-county-executive

Eagle River voters pass term limit referendum

Eagle River voters approved a term limits referendum on Election Day, with approximately 500 of 708 voters answering yes. The Eagle River Common Council had voted against establishing term limits for alderpersons and the mayor in August, but the question reached the ballot through a citizen-led petition. The new ordinance bars Alderperson Kim Schaffer, who has served nearly 30 years, from running for alderperson or mayor in 2027 and requires a six-year wait before she may seek either office again.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/eagle-river-voters-pass-term-limit-referendum/article_c501413b-1826-4497-8b42-bc5ec644b167.html

New Berlin Common Council meets over petition to remove Mayor Dave Ament

The New Berlin Common Council held a special meeting November 5 with the sole agenda item being a petition to remove Mayor Dave Ament from office, arising from anti-Muslim posts on his personal Facebook page. Members spent most of the meeting in closed session with legal counsel. Alderman John Hopkins moved to provide formal charges to Ament with an accompanying letter, limit the scope of the hearing to those charges, and address a related litigation matter. Public hearings on the removal are scheduled for December 1 and December 2. No immediate decision on removal was announced.

Source: WITI FOX6 Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.fox6now.com/news/new-berlin-mayor-removal-petition-addressed-common-council

Racine Mayor Cory Mason won't seek reelection

Racine Mayor Cory Mason announced November 6 that he will not seek reelection in April 2027. Mason was first elected mayor in a 2017 special election and subsequently won two full terms. His current term ends in April 2027. Mason previously served in the Wisconsin Assembly for five terms before becoming mayor.

Source: WITI FOX6 Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.fox6now.com/news/racine-mayor-cory-mason-reelection

Viroqua special Common Council meeting canceled amid ongoing tension between mayor and city administrator

A special closed-session Viroqua Common Council meeting called by Mayor Krista Browne for Nov. 5 to address a personnel dispute with City Administrator Julie Emslie was canceled after multiple council members indicated they would not attend, preventing a quorum. The agenda also included discussion of the city's attorney retainer agreement and an employment lawyer engagement. Council member Tanja Birke cited insufficient 24-hour notice. Browne's office was recently relocated by the council to the former municipal judge's office. A rescheduled date had not been confirmed at time of publication.

Source: WXOW ABC19 La Crosse (Western) | https://www.wxow.com/news/coulee/viroqua-special-common-council-meeting-canceled-amid-ongoing-tension-between-mayor-and-city-administrator/article_7ef378ce-1781-4683-8aff-c5521031b7e0.html

After winning election, Bukiewicz says he'll stay Oak Creek mayor

Democrat Dan Bukiewicz won the 21st Assembly District seat on Nov. 4 with 62% of the vote over Republican Dylan Pfeffenbach and announced he will retain his position as mayor of Oak Creek and as chair of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Council through their current terms. He will be sworn into the Assembly on Jan. 4, 2027. Bukiewicz has served as Oak Creek mayor since at least his 2024 re-election and as president of the Milwaukee Building and Construction Trades Council since January 2014, an organization representing more than 15,000 skilled trades workers. He said his initial legislative priorities would include property tax relief, road funding, data center guardrails, prevailing wage, and worker misclassification.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Southeastern) | https://dailyreporter.com/2026/11/06/dan-bukiewicz-remain-mayor-oak-creek-assembly-win/

November: Use of Signal app risks eroding trust

Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council columnist Robert Chappell reports that up to 12 members of Madison's 20-member Common Council used a Signal group chat over an approximately 18-month period, with some members altering the disappearing-messages timer between one day and one week. The alder who created the group instructed members to disable disappearing messages and avoid discussing city business, and all members contacted denied discussing city matters. Chappell argues that because Signal messages cannot be preserved or verified by the press or courts once deleted, the practice undermines open-records accountability regardless of content, and urges elected officials to avoid the app entirely. The article's language is partly advocacy-oriented.

Source: Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council (South Central) | https://wisfoic.org/november-use-of-signal-app-risks-eroding-trust/

Oshkosh school board violated open meeting rules for budget/tax levy hearing [AUDIO]

The Oshkosh Area School Board held its annual budget and tax levy public hearing in late October on a published notice that did not meet open meetings requirements. The notice, which ran in the Oshkosh Northwestern, did not appear at least 15 days before the hearing and did not state that the Oshkosh School District was the body holding the meeting. Board member Tim Hess sought to delay the hearing until proper notice was given. Board attorney Ron Stadler advised proceeding with the hearing and the budget and levy approval to meet the state's Nov. 1 deadline, and Superintendent Bryan Davis said proceeding was the best course after consulting legal counsel. The board will hold a second public hearing on the budget and levy in November after giving proper notice.

Source: WHBY 1150 AM Appleton (Northeastern) | https://www.whby.com/2026/11/03/oshkosh-school-board-violated-open-meeting-rules-for-budget-tax-levy-hearing/

Elections and Election Administration

Local turnout high; but a few problems counting the vote in Laf.

Green County recorded 74% voter turnout in the Nov. 3 midterm, with 17,299 total ballots cast including 3,647 absentees, and Green County Clerk Arianna Voegeli reported a smooth election night concluded by 10:30 p.m. Lafayette County reached 71% turnout, with 6,616 ballots cast out of approximately 9,305 registered voters including 807 absentees. Long lines and complex referendum questions slowed voting in Lafayette County, prompting distribution of paper ballots that required hand counting; County Clerk Carla Jacobson said officials worked into early Wednesday morning to finish.

Source: Monroe Times (South Central) | https://themonroetimes.com/local-election-coverage/local-turnout-high-but-a-few-problems-counting-the-vote-in-laf/

Stevens Point cut polling places from 11 to six. Now it wants more equipment

Stevens Point Mayor Mike Wiza and City Clerk Susan Pagel submitted a request to the Finance Committee on November 4 to amend the 2027 capital budget by $35,000 to purchase six additional Badger Book electronic poll book machines and carts. The request follows 11,381 ballots cast in the November 3 general election, with some voters waiting up to three hours at the city's six polling locations, reduced from 11 after Badger Books were adopted. The city's 2027 capital budget, approved in October at approximately $18.7 million, and a proposed operating budget calling for an 8.7% property tax levy increase already reflect significant financial pressure. The Finance Committee was scheduled to consider the request on November 9.

Source: Stevens Point Metro Wire (Central/Northern) | https://spmetrowire.com/stevens-point-cut-polling-places-from-11-to-six-now-it-wants-more-equipment/

Winneconne School Board clerk submits responses to recall complaint

Winneconne School Board Clerk Kari Flagg filed responses with the Wisconsin Elections Commission defending her invalidation of recall petitions against Board President Kati Calewarts and Vice President Dean Ackmann, arguing the petition forms were incomplete and that recall organizers also missed the 10-day deadline to file their complaint. The Elections Commission has not yet scheduled a date to consider the matter.

Source: WHBY 1150 AM Appleton (Northeastern) | https://www.whby.com/2026/11/05/winneconne-school-board-clerk-submits-responses-to-recall-complaint/

Wisconsin Rapids City Clerk Passes Away Following Election

Wisconsin Rapids City Clerk Jennifer Gossik died on Nov. 4, hours after administering the city's midterm election. Gossik had served as clerk since December 2018, when the City Council appointed her following the resignation of Paul Przybelski; she subsequently won a special election in April 2019 and continued winning re-election. Her death creates a vacancy in the elected clerk's office.

Source: WSAU 550 AM / 99.9 FM Wausau (Central/Northern) | https://wsau.com/2026/11/07/wisconsin-rapids-city-clerk-passes-away-following-election/

Election Day errors add to Milwaukee's history of messy elections

On Nov. 4, 2026, Milwaukee's central count operation experienced multiple procedural failures: one tabulator lacked a required security seal, two workers failed to write unique identifying numbers on 242 ballots, two tabulators rejected large batches of ballots, and a fourth tabulator produced error messages during results download. Election chief Paulina Gutiérrez confirmed the 242 unnumbered ballots were counted, calling the omission a clerical error. Wisconsin Elections Commission member Ann Jacobs said WEC has not investigated Milwaukee because the city has addressed past errors, while former Virginia elections director Chris Piper said repeated errors warrant investigation to determine root causes. Former Pennsylvania Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar attributed such patterns to chronic underfunding and understaffing of election offices. WEC holds authority to investigate municipal election operations but has not exercised it against Milwaukee.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Southeastern) | https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/11/milwaukee-wisconsin-election-day-errors-history-republican-critics-absentee-ballots-voting/

Human Services

DHS Health Alert: Early MMR vaccination for infants in measles outbreak-affected communities

Wisconsin DHS issued a health alert recommending one early MMR dose for infants aged 6 to 11 months who are significantly likely to be exposed to measles during the ongoing outbreak, which has produced 429 confirmed cases across 11 counties as of November 6, including one infant death. The recommendation applies to infants living with a confirmed or probable case, those with regular contact with affected families or communities, and those whose families belong to close-knit networks where measles is spreading, as identified by local health departments. Early MMR is estimated to be about 58% effective before 9 months and about 83% effective at 9 months or older. DHS stated it will broaden the recommendation and notify clinicians if generalized community spread is confirmed in any area.

Source: Monroe Times (Statewide) | https://themonroetimes.com/local-news/dhs-health-alert-early-mmr-vaccination-for-infants-in-measles-outbreak-affected-communities/

Wisconsin measles death comes as school immunization rates remain near record lows

A Wisconsin Policy Forum report released Thursday found only 16 school districts had at least 95 percent of students meeting minimum immunization requirements in 2025-26, down from 101 districts in 2019. Statewide, 87.4 percent of K-12 students met all minimum requirements, near record lows. Personal conviction waivers rose to 6.5 percent in 2026 from under 2 percent in the 1990s. DHS reported 431 measles cases across 13 counties this year with nine hospitalizations, and announced the state's first measles death in 36 years. Approximately 85 percent of Wisconsin kindergarteners have received both MMR doses, below the roughly 95 percent threshold needed to prevent spread. DHS also updated guidance to recommend an early MMR dose for certain infants ages 6 to 11 months facing elevated exposure risk.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (Statewide) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/11/06/wisconsin-measles-death-comes-school-immunization-rates-remain-near-record-lows/

GCPH shares update on wastewater monitoring for measles

Green County Public Health reported that measles virus was detected for a third time in untreated wastewater collected from the city of Monroe on October 28, 2026, following earlier detections on September 16 and October 14. Health officials confirmed no measles cases have been identified in Green County and the detections have not been linked to known cases or travel. GCPH is coordinating with DHS to investigate possible sources and urged residents to verify their MMR vaccination status. Free MMR vaccines are available to uninsured residents by calling GCPH at 608-328-9390.

Source: Monroe Times (South Central) | https://themonroetimes.com/local-news/gcph-shares-update-on-wastewater-monitoring-for-measles/

Measles-related death recorded in Grant Co.

Grant County Public Health and Wisconsin DHS confirmed on Nov. 5 that the state's first measles-related death involved an unvaccinated infant who was a Grant County resident, connected to the southwestern Wisconsin outbreak. Grant County has recorded 142 of the state's 431 confirmed 2026 measles cases, more than one-quarter of the statewide total. Of 431 cases, 428 involved unvaccinated persons, and there have been nine hospitalizations. Sixty cases involved children under age 5. Grant County Public Health Director Kessa Klaas said the child was too young to be vaccinated and urged community members to verify their vaccination status.

Source: Monroe Times (Western) | https://themonroetimes.com/local-news/measles-related-death-recorded-in-grant-co/

13 measles cases identified in Sauk and Columbia counties

Sauk County health officials confirmed 10 measles cases and Columbia County confirmed 3, totaling 13 in the two counties as of November 6. All confirmed cases involved unvaccinated individuals exposed at private gatherings; no public exposure sites were identified. Statewide, 444 confirmed measles cases have been recorded across 15 counties. Wisconsin DHS updated vaccination guidelines to allow infants as young as six months to receive an early dose. Columbia County Health Department and Public Health Sauk County are offering vaccines to uninsured adults and children on Badgercare, with Sauk County expanding access to Alaska Native and Native American children and adults.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/news/local/article_49ed215d-1079-4333-be61-7d4f67a42f61.html

Measles Confirmed in Green Lake County

Green Lake County Health confirmed 5 measles cases linked to a laboratory-confirmed case in another Wisconsin county. All cases involve unvaccinated individuals and exposures have been limited to private gatherings. The county health department is investigating, notifying exposed individuals, and providing MMR vaccines to underinsured adults, uninsured adults and children, and children enrolled in BadgerCare.

Source: WFHR 1320 AM Wisconsin Rapids (Northeastern) | https://www.wfhr.com/news/2026/11/05/measles-confirmed-in-green-lake-county

Measles exposure reported at Weston emergency department; free vaccine clinic set for Sunday

Wisconsin DHS and the Marathon County Health Department identified the Marshfield Medical Center-Weston emergency department, 3400 Ministry Parkway, as a measles exposure site for anyone present between 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. on Nov. 5. The county will hold a free MMR vaccination clinic from 10 a.m. to noon Sunday, Nov. 8, at the Marathon County Health Department, 1000 Lake View Drive, Wausau, with vaccines at no cost and interpreters available.

The 72-hour post-exposure vaccination window closes Sunday afternoon. Marathon County has six confirmed cases as of Nov. 3; the county's first case, confirmed Sept. 15, was linked to out-of-state travel. Statewide, 431 cases across 13 counties and one infant death have been recorded in 2026, with nine hospitalizations. DHS has distributed 2,000 MMR doses to local health departments since Aug. 1, and providers statewide have administered more than 42,000 doses over the same period.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/11/06/measles-exposure-reported-at-weston-emergency-department-free-vaccine-clinic-set-for-sunday/

New recovery effort aims to help Fox Valley families still rebuilding after disasters

Leaders from Winnebago, Outagamie, and Calumet counties announced a coordinated Long-Term Recovery Committee on Thursday, joining local nonprofits and faith-based organizations to address unresolved needs from April flooding and a July 27 EF3 tornado that struck Menasha, Fox Crossing, Neenah, Grand Chute, and Appleton. The committee introduced a new Unmet Needs Form allowing residents to report remaining damage not covered by insurance, FEMA, or other resources, with case managers available to connect individuals to assistance. The deadline to apply for FEMA disaster assistance from the July storms is December 7, 2026, with an application center at 1655 University Drive in Menasha. Submitting the form does not guarantee assistance but helps identify gaps in recovery resources.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/news/local-news/in-your-neighborhood/menasha/new-recovery-effort-aims-to-help-fox-valley-families-still-rebuilding-after-disasters

ECDHS to provide bus passes through new Eau Claire Transit agreement

The Eau Claire City Council approved an agreement on Oct. 27 between Eau Claire Transit and the Eau Claire County Department of Human Services (ECDHS) covering up to 100,000 rides at a discounted rate of $0.36 per ride, for a total ECDHS payment of $36,000. ECDHS clients and current ARPA pass holders will receive three-month laminated passes for free fixed-route bus service, with no limit on annual renewals. Transit Manager Katrina Running said the program builds on an overlap of clientele served by both agencies. ARPA pass usage is currently projected at approximately 49,500 rides in 2026. The agreement is set for one year.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/ecdhs-to-provide-bus-passes-through-new-eau-claire-transit-agreement/article_a14389d5-b416-4283-a6f4-0614070c5ff1.html

Manitowoc County To Help City Of Manitowoc With Paratransit Services

Manitowoc County will lease its transport vehicles to the City of Manitowoc to support in-house paratransit services after private provider Assist to Transport announced it will cease operations at year's end. County Executive Tyler Martell confirmed a transition period is planned to maintain service continuity for elderly and disabled residents.

Source: Seehafer News (Northeastern) | https://www.seehafernews.com/2026/11/06/manitowoc-county-to-help-city-of-manitowoc-with-paratransit-services/

Wisconsin Deflection Initiative aims to keep people out of the criminal justice system

Eau Claire County operates one of roughly 11 county deflection programs under the Wisconsin Deflection Initiative, launched in 2024 through an opioid abatement law enforcement grant partnering the sheriff's office, public health department, human services, and criminal justice services. The voluntary program serves adults 18 and older with substance use or mental health challenges who have no warrants or pending felony charges. Approximately 30 people are currently enrolled and 50 to 60 have been served since launch. Referrals come from law enforcement, self-referral, or community members; participants receive a call within 72 hours of application and are connected to peer support specialists and case management at no cost.

Source: WFHR 1320 AM Wisconsin Rapids (Western) | https://www.wfhr.com/news/2026/11/06/wisconsin-deflection-initiative-aims-to-keep-people-out-of-the-criminal-justice-system

City of EC to create Healthcare Action Committee, shares concerns with work entailed

Eau Claire voters approved a referendum on Nov. 4 to establish a Citizens' Advisory Healthcare Action Committee, 16,631 (55%) to 13,572 (45%). The Advisory Committee on Appointments will appoint seven unpaid community members, with appointment work beginning in January. City Manager Dave Solberg noted the city has virtually no regulatory authority over healthcare but will serve an educational role. An action plan covering affordability, accessibility, and recommendations for local, state, and federal officials must be completed by September of the following even-numbered year after each appointment cycle.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/city-of-ec-to-create-healthcare-action-committee-shares-concerns-with-work-entailed/article_9188a60c-de98-426d-8cf6-43e5b1a10940.html

Hope Haven Peer Respite in danger of closing

Hope Haven Peer Respite in Superior faces closure by the end of February due to a funding shortfall. Since opening in July 2025, the organization has recorded 143 overnight stays, 562 drop-in visits from 117 people, and more than 3,800 helpline calls. A state grant of $441,000 annually for five years was denied; a $190,000 Douglas County grant from opioid lawsuit settlement funds is covering current reduced operations, including a Tuesday closure. Two comparable NAMI-affiliated programs, La Crosse Lighthouse and Iris Place, have already closed or are closing. Executive Director Chrissy Barnard said the organization is seeking additional public and private funding, including from the city and county.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/hope-haven-peer-respite-in-danger-of-closing

School Districts

Area school district referendums: Fort Atkinson question fails, Lake Mills' passes

Fort Atkinson voters rejected a $7.1 million recurring operational referendum 57.5 percent to 42.5 percent (4,596 to 3,397), requiring the board to address expiration of existing referendum

authority in 2027. Lake Mills voters approved a $2.9 million operational referendum 50.3 percent to 49.7 percent (2,655 to 2,623), estimated to raise taxes about $40 per $100,000 of property value for four years. Among other area districts, Oconomowoc's $12.2 million referendum and Palmyra Eagle's $3.1 million referendum failed; Whitewater's $5.5 million question failed overall despite passing in Jefferson County; Mayville's $6.6 million referendum passed 59 to 41 percent in Dodge County.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/area-school-district-referendums-fort-atkinson-question-fails-lake-mills-passes/article_04f84e99-7e7c-4bc6-874a-2fab38a4a222.html

Local school districts weigh in on funding after referendum results

Four western Wisconsin school districts reported varying referendum outcomes from the November 3 election. The Winter School District's $1.5 million annual operational referendum passed for four years, averting dissolution. Black River Falls' operational referendum failed, requiring program reduction discussions. Thorp's $8.5 million capital referendum passed for facility maintenance and safety. Bloomer's $77 million capital referendum for a new high school failed. All four superintendents cited inadequate state funding formulas as the underlying driver of repeated local referendum reliance.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | https://www.weau.com/2026/11/05/local-school-districts-weigh-funding-after-referendum-results/

Majority of school referendums pass in 2026 General Election

Wisconsin voters approved 45 of 79 school district ballot measures in the 2026 General Election, authorizing just over $1.3 billion in referendum funding. Capital referendums passed at the highest rate, 14 of 17, including 9 of the 10 largest asks. The closest passing measure was Washburn School District by 8 votes; the closest failure was Geneva J4 by a single vote, 298 to 297. Green Bay's $158 million operational referendum passed with 54 percent. Of four districts seeking to avoid dissolution, Winter's $6 million referendum passed with over 68 percent while Siren and Gillett failed by wide margins and Dodgeville narrowly passed a $5.7 million measure by 125 votes. Only 3 of 8 permanent recurring levy referendums were approved. Advisory consolidation ballots in Clark County showed voters favoring one of four consolidation options over outright rejection, 1,486 to 992.

Source: WFHR 1320 AM Wisconsin Rapids (Statewide) | https://www.wfhr.com/news/2026/11/04/majority-of-school-referendums-pass-in-2026-general-election

Referendums: Iola-yes, Wega-no, Amherst-no

Voters in the Iola-Scandinavia School District approved exceeding revenue limits by $1.2 million for the next school year and $1.5 million annually for three years, passing 1,311 to 1,210. Voters in the Tomorrow River School District rejected exceeding revenue limits by $1.1 million annually for three years. Voters in the Weyauwega-Fremont School District rejected an $8.45 million facilities and infrastructure referendum, 1,727 to 1,566.

Source: Waupaca County Post (Northeastern) | https://www.waupacanow.com/stories/referendums-iola-yes-wega-no-amherst-no,362264

School referendum roundup: Athens, Edgar operational school referendums pass; others fail

Athens and Edgar school districts passed operational referendums Tuesday. Athens' measure, seeking $600,000 per year for four years, passed with 58.6 percent (1,115 yes, 787 no). Edgar's measure, seeking $1.4 million per year over five years, passed with 53.5 percent (899 yes, 781 no). The Minocqua-Hazelhurst-Lake Tomahawk referendum to exceed the revenue limit by $3.5 million failed 2,496 to 1,879. Adams-Friendship failed narrowly, 3,135 to 2,980. Tomorrow River (Amherst), which sought to exceed spending limits by $1.1 million over three years, also failed.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/school-referendum-roundup-athens-edgar-operational-school-referendums-pass-others-fail/article_e364c921-13b3-4343-8b21-a2864360a644.html

Voters approve $1.3 billion in school referendums statewide, but support waning

Wisconsin voters in the Nov. 3 election approved 45 of 79 school referendums on the ballot, totaling nearly $1.3 billion, with another 34 failing out of $1.6 billion total on the ballot. The 57% passage rate is down from roughly 70% in the November 2024 election and more than 60% in April 2026. Large approved measures include $100 million for Elmbrook, $90 million for Whitefish Bay, $86 million for Marinette, and $83 million for Reedsburg's new middle school, which passed 4,509 to 3,171. In Dane County, Middleton-Cross Plains passed a $118.5 million referendum with 60.1% support and Waunakee passed $97.5 million with 51.7%. Mayville's $950,000 operating referendum passed 1,882 to 1,261. Several districts including Hillsboro, Adams-Friendship, and Siren face budget decisions following failed measures.

Source: WiscNews (Statewide) | https://wiscnews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_c1626d50-df46-59d1-a2f4-4714f67a2efc.html

Western Wisconsin school districts face budget gaps after voters reject funding referendums

Voters in Black River Falls, Bloomer, Cashton, Hillsboro, Ladysmith, St. Charles, and Whitehall rejected operating referendum requests on November 3, leaving those districts to resolve budget shortfalls. State Sen. Brad Pfaff (D-32nd District) said the cycle of repeated local operating referendums reflects inadequate state funding and named school finance reform his top priority for the January legislative session, when Democrats take majority control.

Source: WKBT CBS8 La Crosse (Western) | https://www.news8000.com/news/education/western-wisconsin-school-districts-face-budget-gaps-after-voters-reject-funding-referendums/article_1bd458f0-43f7-4568-8562-87b0dabca752.html

Dane County voters pass three school funding referendums

Three Dane County school district referendums passed in the Nov. 3 election. Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District voters approved, with over 60% support, a $118.5 million, four-year

operating referendum raising property taxes by $120 per $100,000 of assessed value; the district still plans $5 million in spending cuts. Waunakee Community School District voters approved a $97.5 million capital referendum for high school and athletic facility renovations at nearly 52% support, and a $10.5 million permanent operations referendum at nearly 53% support. Waunakee's combined referendums will raise taxes on the average $500,000 home by approximately $210 per year.

Source: Capital Times (South Central) | https://captimes.com/news/elections/dane-county-voters-pass-three-school-funding-referendums/article_612b45b9-058a-4b7c-ae10-3712d49218ff.html

Walworth County voters reject operating referendums in three separate school districts

Three of four Walworth County school district operating referendum requests failed on Election Day. Whitewater Unified School District's request to raise its funding limit from $4.4 million to $5.5 million per year was rejected by 52% of voters. Delavan-Darien's $5.5 million annual limit increase was rejected by 51%, and the Woods School's $4.5 million referendum failed by one vote. East Troy's $4 million annual request had already failed in April. Only one of the four districts received voter approval.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/county-reporting/walworth-county/walworth-county-voters-reject-operating-referendums-in-three-separate-school-districts

Bloomer school referendum fails

Bloomer residents rejected a $77 million school construction referendum on Nov. 4 by a 65% to 35% margin, with 2,417 votes against and 1,301 in favor. The proposal would have funded a new high school estimated at $67 million, plus $8 million in fees and equipment, and $2 million in repairs to the elementary and middle schools. The district's existing facilities face an estimated $20 million in needed high school upgrades, $2.3 million in middle school repairs, and $2.6 million in elementary school upgrades over the next 10 years.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/bloomer-school-referendum-fails/article_1b5aae3d-7a7e-4b1d-83c4-87ded326209f.html

Brillion voters approve new school referendum after April failure

Brillion voters approved a five-year, $1 million per year operating referendum, beginning the current school year, reversing an April failure of a larger $2.275 million per year, three-year request. Following the April failure, the district cut approximately 13 staffing positions, imposed a salary freeze, and raised student fees. Despite the new referendum, the district still carries roughly a $500,000 deficit; Superintendent Corey Baumgartner said the remaining funds may support staffing restoration and maintenance. The school tax rate is projected to fall from $7.37 to $5.84 per $1,000 of property value, saving approximately $450 on a $300,000 home.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/lakeshore/brillion-voters-approve-new-school-referendum-after-april-failure

Evansville Community School District staves off budget, staff cuts with referendum approval

Evansville Community School District voters narrowly approved a four-year, $21.2 million operating referendum on Tuesday, 2,464 to 2,372 (roughly 51% to 49%), allowing the district to increase its annual tax levy by $5.3 million. Without the referendum, a $4 million annual shortfall would have required cutting approximately 30 positions, about 12% of the district's roughly 250 employees. A prior five-year, $22.3 million referendum failed in April 2024, and a three-year $8.7 million referendum passed the following November expires this school year. Superintendent Nate Perry, part of a 13-district coalition pressing legislators on state funding, cited a 1% annual increase in state special-education reimbursement as inadequate against 2.7% consumer price index growth. Perry expressed hope that a newly elected state legislature will address the underlying funding formula within two years.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/evansville-community-school-district-staves-off-budget-staff-cuts-with-referendum-approval/article_59837e61-b5b3-42b1-b853-47992322f86c.html

Geneva Joint No. 4 School District referendum question fails by a single vote

A four-year, non-recurring referendum in the Geneva Joint No. 4 School District failed on November 3 by one vote, 297 yes to 298 no, according to unofficial results. The measure would have allowed the district to exceed its state revenue limit by approximately $4.5 million over four years, beginning with $750,000 in 2027-28 and rising to $1.5 million in 2030-31. District Administrator Lynn Davies said the board will canvass votes and consider whether to pursue a recount. If needed, the earliest a new referendum could appear on the ballot is the spring 2027 election.

Source: Lake Geneva Regional News (Southeastern) | https://lakegenevanews.net/news/local/education/article_764e87d5-a5de-47a5-a3cd-9fcafc86627d.html

Janesville School District $98 million referendum prevails

Janesville School District voters approved a four-year, non-recurring $98 million operating referendum Tuesday, 13,352 to 11,731 (approximately 53% to 47%). The revenue limit will rise incrementally: $18.5 million in 2027-28, $22.5 million in 2028-29, $26.5 million in 2029-30, and $30.5 million in 2030-31. The new referendum replaces a current two-year, $14.5 million referendum expiring June 30, 2027. The approved figure was scaled back from $137.5 million, which received only 47% weighted support in an earlier survey.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/local/janesville-school-district-98-million-referendum-prevails/article_18eba64a-4661-4f3f-b54a-ba212f241b90.html

Voters in the Winter School District pass an operational referendum

Winter School District voters approved an operational referendum on November 3 authorizing $1.5 million per year for four years beginning with the 2027-28 school year, at an estimated cost of $162 annually per $100,000 of property value. The district identified the vote as the final

opportunity to avoid dissolution; funds will support school safety, curriculum, deferred facility maintenance, fund balance restoration, and staffing.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | https://www.weau.com/2026/11/04/voters-winter-school-district-pass-an-operational-referendum/

Westby Area School District voters renew 3-year referendum

Westby Area School District electors approved a three-year operational referendum renewal on November 3, 2026, by 1,996 yes votes to 1,433 no votes. The measure replaces the district's current $1.2 million annual operational referendum, now in its final year, authorizing the district to exceed state revenue limits by $1.6 million in 2027-28, $1.7 million in 2028-29, and $1.8 million in 2029-30. Property taxes on a $200,000 home are projected to decrease by $74 in year one, $42 in year two, and $52 in year three, partly because of debt retirement in 2027-28.

Source: Chippewa Herald (Western) | https://chippewa.com/news/community/vernonbroadcaster/article_f8309684-a998-5db2-8aba-0b49960e322a.html

Cambridge School Board approves 2026-27 budget revisions, finalizes tax levy

The Cambridge School Board voted unanimously Oct. 26 to approve a revised 2026-27 budget and a final tax levy of $10,045,320, up about 5.76 percent from $9,498,038 last year and above the estimate approved at the Aug. 31 annual meeting. The mill rate falls about 1.39 percent, from $7.93 to $7.82 per $1,000 of property value, because of higher non-TIF property values. The levy includes $9,192,015 for general operations, $110,805 for non-referendum debt, $175,000 for the capital expansion fund, and $567,500 for the community services fund. Business Manager Nicole Rothe said the revisions followed final fall property valuations, the September student count, and certified equalized aid released by the Department of Revenue in mid-October. Private school voucher deductions rise to $259,033 from $184,438. The district share of the December tax bill on a $400,000 home will be $3,128.

Source: Cambridge Enterprise Sentinel (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/cambridge-school-board-approves-2026-27-budget-revisions-finalizes-tax-levy/article_6bfaf523-3cc7-4ad7-ba49-b99ba705fffd.html

Cedarburg School Board approves 2026-27 budget

The Cedarburg School Board approved a 2026-27 budget with a $28,589,123 tax levy and a mill rate of $6.12 per $1,000 of equalized value, a 13-cent decrease from last year. The statewide average levy rate for 2025-26 was $7.09. The general fund budget is $42,181,793, with revenues and expenditures expected to rise 2.88 percent. Director of Business Services Kim Zabel reported a June 30, 2026 general fund balance of $13,239,101, or 31 percent of 2026-27 expenses, including a $1.9 million health insurance reserve. Total enrollment fell 52 students to 3,076. Compensation increases range from 2 percent to 7.25 percent after market adjustments, and the budget deposits $500,000 into Fund 46 against $461,000 in planned capital spending.

Source: News Graphic (Southeastern) | https://www.gmtoday.com/news_graphic/news/cedarburg-school-district-lowest-mill-rate/article_ff10b818-8992-547a-b3ea-e8df818311fd.html

DeForest School Board sets $47.724 million tax levy for 2026-27

The DeForest Area School District board approved a $47.724 million tax levy and a mill rate of $8.61 per $1,000 of equalized value at its October 26 meeting, both revised from July estimates. District Business Director Kathleen Davis-Phillips reported that total equalized property value reached $5.54 billion, state aid came in at $27.5 million (up from $24.29 million the prior year), and enrollment rose by 101 students to 4,374. The 2026-27 revenue limit is $65.38 million, split between $30.097 million in state allocations and $35.284 million in property taxes. A recurring 2024 operational referendum of $7.9 million is included, funding class-size management, a student resource officer, and 16 positions originally supported by COVID-era ESSER funds.

Source: Sun Prairie Star (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/the_star/local_news/deforest-school-board-sets-47-724-million-tax-levy-for-2026-27/article_e4a9143e-6d16-44fe-b661-65e781b898e9.html

Highlights of the Baraboo School District's $58.9 million budget

The Baraboo School District approved its 2026-27 budget at its annual meeting on October 26, totaling $58,865,748, including $51,288,841 for staff salaries, benefits, maintenance, food service, and special education. The district is drawing $1,349,297 from reserves to cover an operating deficit. Property tax revenue fell to $20,506,897 from $21,157,725 the prior year, the district's highest in five years; a $300,000 home carries a district tax bill of $1,967, down from $2,115. State aid is $20,218,644, down from $20,225,201 last year. School choice reductions total $1,472,543. The district has paid 63 percent of its capital referendum debt, with $27.5 million still outstanding from three referendums totaling $73 million approved since 2014.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/news/local/education/article_ce981ab2-23e4-4fe1-b530-a09ee1cc6ca3.html

SDRF crafting 2028-33 strategic plan

The School District of River Falls Board of Education was briefed at its Oct. 28 meeting on the process for developing a 2028-33 strategic plan, with final board approval tracking for spring 2026-27. The board also formally approved the 2026-27 budget and levy: a mill rate of 6.61 and total levy of $28,673,746, down slightly from the September estimate of 6.64 mills and $28.71 million, and from the prior year's 6.89 mill rate. District enrollment stands at 3,316, down 64 from the previous year, with net open enrollment now positive at 30 students.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/sdrf-crafting-2028-33-strategic-plan,212056

Lincoln Avenue School community holds on to hope as demolition plans take shape

Milwaukee Public Schools discussed demolition and restoration plans for the 109-year-old Lincoln Avenue School at a community meeting Thursday, with district leaders outlining a tentative timeline for demolition to be completed by March and restoration work by May or early next spring. MPS will reopen bidding next week following a challenge from The MRD Group, Inc., which disputes the district's award of a $4.8 million demolition contract to Illinois-based TW Chicago, alleging lack of transparency in the selection process and claiming the MRD Group

offered to do the work for millions less. Students and staff are currently attending classes at Pulaski High School.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/county-reporting/milwaukee-county/lincoln-avenue-school-community-holds-on-to-hope-as-demolition-plans-take-shape

Milwaukee Public Schools face bank fraud scheme alongside dire financial challenges

Milwaukee Public Schools lost $450,000 in a bank impersonation fraud scheme, recovering $255,000 with $195,000 still outstanding. The district notified the FBI, the Wisconsin Statewide Intelligence Center, and Milwaukee Police. During the investigation, Deputy CFO Jennifer Buros replaced CFO Aycha Sawa in an acting capacity. MPS's overall budget deficit has grown to approximately $58 million, up from a $46 million gap addressed by cuts in February, with the final 2026-27 budget revised to $1.77 billion in expenses. Enrollment stands at 58,088 against a projection of 60,277, reducing state funding. The district's reserve fund has fallen to $500,000 against a recommended $88.5 million. The Great Schools Advisory Committee will continue reviewing school closures and mergers over the next month.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) (Southeastern) | https://www.wpr.org/news/milwaukee-public-schools-bank-fraud-scheme-dire-financial-challenges

Superior Middle School roof replacement set for spring

The Superior Board of Education approved a $7.5 million contract with Jackson and Associates of White Bear Lake, Minnesota, on Nov. 2 for Superior Middle School roof replacement. The winning bid was about $250,000 lower than the next lowest bidder, with work set to begin as early as March, weather permitting, and expected to take 45 days. Funding comes from the district's capital projects fund. Hot asphalt work will occur on a second shift after school hours to minimize disruption.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/superior-middle-school-roof-replacement-set-for-spring

Wisconsin public school district to dissolve for first time in 3 decades

The School District Boundary Appeal Board voted unanimously to approve the dissolution of the Hustisford School District, the first Wisconsin school district dissolution in 36 years. The district, covering 58 square miles in Dodge County with approximately 275 students in kindergarten through grade 12, will transfer entirely to the Dodgeland School District. Voters had rejected five referendums over the past five years. Dodgeland has already enrolled about 150 Hustisford students this fall under a tuition agreement and hired 10 additional staff. State Superintendent Jill Underly attributed the dissolution to an "antiquated, broken school funding formula."

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) (South Central) | https://www.wpr.org/news/wisconsin-public-school-district-dissolve-first-time-3-decades

Amery school board approves e-bike policy requiring permits

The Amery School Board approved Policy 443.7, Alternative Forms of Student Transportation, on second reading Monday, requiring students to hold an annual district permit to bring an e-bike or electric scooter on school grounds. The policy caps speed at 15 mph on school premises, bans riding on sidewalks and grassy areas, and restricts riding to designated areas including Warrior Way. Students who violate state or local laws or ride recklessly lose school e-bike privileges. Board member Larry Wojchik moved approval with a change striking confiscation language; the motion passed on a voice vote. District Administrator Shawn Doerfler said the policy will return for periodic review.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | https://theameryfreepress.com/news/amery-school-board-approves-e-bike-policy-requiring-permits/article_510b7b93-6fd7-4c43-9c29-f4105c452c03.html

State-Local Interface

After-school programs could see new funds as a result of social media lawsuit

Wisconsin will receive at least $219 million over 10 years from a multi-state settlement with Meta. The Wisconsin Partnership for Kids coalition is seeking $10 million annually from the funds for after-school programs, plus 20% of annual funds placed into a long-term endowment. At least half the settlement must target youth mental health and social media harms, and after-school programs are an allowable use. Attorney General Josh Kaul, who retained his seat in Tuesday's election, said his office has not finalized allocation decisions; funds not allocated by January will be directed at his discretion. Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee saw its federal Community Learning Center funding cut 14% this year after roughly 15 years of flat funding.

Source: Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service (Statewide) | https://milwaukeenns.org/2026/11/05/after-school-programs-could-see-new-funds-as-a-result-of-social-media-lawsuit/

Judicial officials in northeastern Wisconsin press Legislature for fixes

Judges and prosecutors in northeastern Wisconsin told county and state bodies that chronic underfunding is degrading court operations. Brown County, which has the largest judicial deficit in the state at nearly six officials short per the April 2025 Wisconsin Judicial Needs Assessment Survey, had 3,755 pending criminal cases in 2025. Judge Tammy Jo Hock pressed the Brown County Public Safety Committee on Sept. 9 to endorse a resolution calling for two additional circuit court judges. Outagamie County District Attorney Mindy Tempelis, testifying Aug. 25 before the state's first study committee on district attorney funding, cited a 1,400-case backlog and called the outdated workload formula and inconsistent pay-progression funding unsustainable. State Public Defender Jennifer Bias concurred that "the entire system is broken." The judiciary received less than 2% of the 2025-27 state budget. Advocates are pressing the newly elected Legislature and governor to increase investment.

Source: The Press Times (Green Bay) (Statewide) | https://gopresstimes.com/stories/judicial-officials-in-northeastern-wisconsin-press-legislature-for-fixes,361258

Regulators approve scaled-back rate hikes for We Energies, Wisconsin Public Service

The Wisconsin Public Service Commission approved electric rate increases for We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service on Thursday, November 6, 2026, below the amounts both utilities requested. We Energies' approved base electric rate increases are 3.9 percent in 2027 and 3.5 percent in 2028, down from requested 4.6 and 4.5 percent. Wisconsin Public Service received 0.3 percent in 2027 and 2.9 percent in 2028. A typical We Energies residential customer will see monthly bills rise roughly $7 to $8 in 2027 and $6 to $7 in 2028. The PSC reduced both utilities' allowed profit rate from 9.8 percent to 9.5 percent, below the requested 9.9 percent, and eliminated WEC Energy Group board of director expenses from customer rates, a move the Energy and Policy Institute said will save We Energies customers more than $2 million. PSC Chair Summer Strand and Commissioner Kristy Nieto cited growing affordability concerns after a 33 percent cumulative increase in typical We Energies residential bills from 2022 to 2026.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) (Statewide) | https://www.wpr.org/energy/regulators-rate-hikes-we-energies-wisconsin-public-service

Two Republican constitutional amendments pass, one fails. Here's what that means.

Wisconsin voters approved two of three Republican-authored constitutional amendments Tuesday. The amendment banning race- or sex-based discrimination or preferential treatment in public institutions and government passed with 56.4% in favor; a second amendment limiting the governor's partial veto authority to raise taxes also passed. A third amendment that would have barred officials from closing places of worship during emergencies failed with roughly 52% opposing. The amendments required passage in two consecutive legislative sessions before going to voters. Legal challenges to the DEI-related amendment are expected, with the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty already actively litigating related cases before state courts.

Source: Civic Media (Statewide) | https://civicmedia.us/news/2026/11/04/two-republican-constitutional-amendments-pass-one-fails-heres-what-that-means

Wisconsin AG Kaul Says Court Ruling Protects More Than $6 Million in Public Safety Funding

U.S. District Judge John J. McConnell Jr. permanently blocked the Trump administration from imposing immigration-enforcement conditions on federal public safety grants, protecting more than $6 million in Wisconsin funding. The ruling shields $3.2 million in Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant funds for state and local criminal justice agencies, $2.1 million through the Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program, and more than $800,000 in juvenile justice funding. Attorney General Josh Kaul joined attorneys general from 21 other states and the District of Columbia in the suit. A prior related case resulted in removal of similar conditions from more than $1.3 billion in grants nationally, including more than $24 million for Wisconsin victim service programs.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (Statewide) | https://dailydodge.com/wisconsin-ag-kaul-says-court-ruling-protects-more-than-6-million-in-public-safety-funding/

Summaries are drawn from the linked source reporting and are not independently fact-checked, so errors in the original coverage can carry through. Some Wisconsin outlets restrict automated access to their content, which leaves known gaps in any given edition, and I keep refining the collection workflow to close them. If you spot an inaccuracy, or know of a governance story a colleague in another community would want to see, I want to know. Forward this edition to someone who works in Wisconsin local government. Reach me at patrick@boldpathconsulting.com or (920) 522-2413.