

Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing

May 17 to May 23, 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. Source links accompany every item so readers can verify the underlying reporting. The briefing is offered as an informational service and does not constitute legal, financial, or policy advice.

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Announcement

Public-sector collective bargaining training set for August 17-18 at WCTC

A note from the editor: I will be co-teaching Wisconsin Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining for the Public-Sector Supervisor with Attorney Kyle Gulya of von Briesen and Roper on August 17-18, 2026, at Waukesha County Technical College, 800 Main Street, Pewaukee. The 12-hour program runs 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Day 1 and 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Day 2, with registration at \$385 per participant. The curriculum covers Wisconsin collective bargaining law, negotiation preparation through interest arbitration, contract administration, grievance processing, past practices and prohibited practices, and leverage dynamics, delivered through instruction, scenarios, and hands-on grievance and bargaining exercises. The session is designed for administrators, human resources, finance, public safety supervisors, transit supervisors, and school district administrators. Registration is at www.wctc.edu/cjtraining under Specialized Training.

Budgets and Finance

Chippewa County Board to vote in June on \$10 million loan for new hospital

The Chippewa County Board held a special meeting on May 20, 2026, to receive a presentation from the Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative (CVHC) regarding a proposed \$10 million county-backed loan toward a \$158 million hospital project in the Village of Lake Hallie. No vote was taken at the special meeting. County Administrator Andy Albarado confirmed the 21-member board will reconvene in June to deliberate in closed session on loan terms before taking final action in open session. Under the proposed structure, the county would borrow from the Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands State Trust Fund loan program and re-lend the proceeds to CVHC, retaining ultimate repayment liability. CVHC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit formed February 29, 2024, has raised \$14 million in donations and pledges. The proposed 144,000-square-foot, 48-bed hospital would be built on a 20-acre parcel near the Melby Street exit off U.S. 53. The June board action is the next procedural step.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/chippewa-county-board-to-vote-in-june-on-10-million-loan-for-new-hospital/article_a7f68990-b779-4aee-ad01-8bc9993192b1.html

One Better Way campaign goes up to \$5.3M with awarding of state grant

The Wisconsin State Building Commission approved a \$600,000 grant to the Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council (WDEOC) through the Non-State Grant Program, bringing the organization's One Better Way capital campaign total to \$5.3 million toward its \$6.4 million goal. The grant was awarded as part of a broader state action in which 71 applicants received funding totaling \$248 million for community development and public service projects statewide. The funds support operation and maintenance of the Day Resource Center at 1 Better Way in Eau Claire, which houses the Community Haven House operated by Hope Gospel Mission and WDEOC offices providing temporary housing, prevention, and long-term housing programs. Anna Cardarella, CEO of WDEOC, identified the award as the campaign's largest single contribution to date. The campaign remains approximately \$1.1 million short of its goal, with ongoing fundraising continuing.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/one-better-way-campaign-goes-up-to-5-3m-with-awarding-of-state-grant/article_9fadd0a0-ba0b-4add-8007-79961233259c.html

Wisconsin Rapids businesses receive grants to boost tourism

The Wisconsin Rapids Area Convention and Visitors Bureau awarded more than \$19,000 in tourism development grants to twelve local businesses and organizations, with each recipient receiving \$2,500. The grants are directed toward tourism-generating activities including the Cranberry Blossom Festival, Civil War Days, Friends of Rapids Music, the Grand Rapids Lions Club Bluegrass at the Lake festival, and Wisconsin Rapids Aqua Skiers infrastructure improvements at Red Sand Beach on Lake Wazeecha. The Bureau's stated objectives include increasing overnight stays and supporting local businesses. Applications for the next grant round open in January 2027.

Source: WSAW CBS7 Wausau (Central/Northern) | <https://www.wsaw.com/2026/05/19/wisconsin-rapids-businesses-receive-grants-boost-tourism/>

Workforce and Labor

Shorewood Hills removes Imes as president amid turmoil in village

The Shorewood Hills Village Board voted 4-3 on May 12, 2026, to remove John Imes from his position as village president under the Wisconsin statutory provision allowing removal of local officials for gross neglect of duty. The action followed a formal complaint filed by resident Peter Hans and newly-elected Trustee Brian Utschig alleging that Imes made false statements regarding a rejected proposal to purchase the Lodgic Building at 2801 Marshall Court for use as a village hall, and that he failed to disclose conflicts of interest or recuse himself from related votes. The board conducted a five-and-a-half-hour quasi-judicial hearing reviewing hundreds of pages of evidence. Trustees Utschig and Rocky van Asten declined recusal requests made by Imes' attorney Erin Deeley. Trustee Carol Barford seconded the removal motion but voted against it. Deeley stated Imes' team is evaluating next steps, including a potential legal appeal citing the recusal refusals as possible grounds.

Source: Capital Times (South Central) | https://captimes.com/news/government/shorewood-hills-removes-imes-as-president-amid-turmoil-in-village/article_738efb4c-47bc-4fc3-ac84-09439b030162.html

CF Council adds a candidate for administrator position after one finalist drops out

The Chippewa Falls City Council, meeting in closed session on May 20, 2026, for approximately three and a half hours, reached consensus to add City Planner Brad Hentschel as a finalist for the vacant city administrator position after candidate Doug Pearson withdrew from consideration. The council reviewed video interviews of the remaining four candidates and agreed to include Hentschel, who has served as city planner since 2018, bringing the finalist pool to five. The position carries a salary range of \$130,000 to \$160,000, with the council having voted 6-0 in December to allocate \$200,000 in interest revenue to fund salary and benefits. The city hired Public Administrator Associates in February to conduct the search at a cost of \$18,500. Mayor Jason Hiess confirmed the council will hold a special meeting the following week to review a new video interview with Hentschel, after which the council is expected to select the winning candidate within coming weeks.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/cf-council-adds-a-candidate-for-administrator-position-after-one-finalist-drops-out/article_2b5daca4-d4e6-46e6-b6ea-10775dd0ac3f.html

Leaving a legacy: Duley retires, Husnick sworn in

At the Antigo City Council meeting on May 14, 2026, Joe Husnick was formally sworn in as Chief of the Antigo Police Department by City Clerk-Treasurer Kaye Matucheski, succeeding Dan Duley,

who retired after 28 years with the department, including four years as chief. The swearing-in followed a succession process overseen by the Antigo Police and Fire Commission, which Mayor Tom Bauknecht acknowledged for its role in selecting Husnick as Duley's replacement. Husnick assumed command of the department effective at the council meeting. No vote count or ordinance identifier was reported in connection with the appointment. Mayor Bauknecht stated the succession was designed to ensure little or no disruption to public safety and protection in the City of Antigo.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | https://www.antigojournal.com/news/leaving-a-legacy-duley-retires-husnick-sworn-in/article_84ba4727-3445-4c44-8965-8ecba2f19f65.html

Billy Bleskacek Named New Bloomer Fire Chief

The Bloomer Fire Board voted to approve Billy Bleskacek as the new Bloomer Fire Chief, confirming the selection recommended by retiring Chief Jared Zwiefelhofer and ratified by Bloomer Fire Department members. Bleskacek's appointment follows the retirement of Zwiefelhofer, who had led the department prior to this transition. The Fire Board, exercising its authority over departmental leadership appointments, cast the approving vote to make the designation official. No specific vote count, effective date, or compensation details were reported in the available article text. The article does not report further procedural steps for the appointment.

Source: Bloomer Advance (Western) | https://www.bloomeradvance.com/news/front_page/

Minnig named Dodge County Highway Commissioner

The Dodge County Board of Supervisors, meeting on May 21, 2026, in Juneau, formally appointed Nate Minnig as the new Dodge County Highway Commissioner. The Board of Supervisors holds appointment authority over the Highway Commissioner position under Wisconsin county governance structure, which places county department-head selections with the elected supervisory body. The article does not report a vote count, salary, contract terms, effective date, or the circumstances surrounding the vacancy in the position. No next procedural step is reported in the available article text, and no additional administrative actions tied to the appointment are described in the reporting.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (Southeastern) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/minnig-named-dodge-county-highway-commissioner/article_4a563ad2-553b-4aae-80c3-27215dbb7e34.html

Infrastructure and Utilities

Superior council awards contract for lead pipe replacements

The Superior City Council voted on May 19, 2026, to award a \$3.9 million contract to Hanco Utilities for the removal and replacement of lead service lines in Census Tract 206, bounded generally by Belknap and 34th Streets and Hammond and Elmira Avenues. Hanco submitted the lowest of six bids received. The contract covers both Superior Water, Light and Power (SWL&P) and private lead service line replacements across approximately 306 properties, with SWL&P funding approximately \$2.3 million and the remaining \$1.6 million covering private-side replacements at no cost to property owners. Mayor Jim Paine and Public Works Director Chris Carlson announced the project is expected to represent approximately 15 percent of all lead line replacements citywide at an estimated \$5,000 per line. Construction is expected to begin within two to three weeks. Property owners who have not yet signed access agreements were urged to contact the city.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/superior-council-awards-contract-for-lead-pipe-replacements>

Port may make replacement of lead pipes mandatory

The City of Port Washington Board of Public Works voted on May 12, 2026, to recommend a mandatory private-side lead and galvanized steel water service line replacement program, with the city subsidizing 50 percent of the estimated \$7,500-per-property cost, the maximum cost-sharing ratio permitted by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. The recommendation was adopted with one dissenting vote from Alderperson Mary Lou Mueller. The program targets 641 known or suspected lead and galvanized steel service lines among 4,087 total water services, representing a total program cost of approximately \$4.8 million. Property owners would finance their share through special assessments spanning three to five years, generating approximately \$960,000 to \$1.4 million in outstanding receivables at any given time. Water Superintendent Dan Fisher and Public Works Director Rob Vanden Noven presented the program options. The proposal is scheduled for review by the General Government and Finance Committee on June 2 before advancing to the Common Council for final consideration.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeeexpress.com/content/port-may-make-replacement-lead-pipes-mandatory>

Superior considers sewer facility upgrade for Enbridge

The Superior City Council voted on May 21, 2026, to refer a proposed infrastructure agreement between the City of Superior and Enbridge to the Public Works Committee for further review. Under the proposed agreement, the city would fund approximately \$5 million in upgrades to its wastewater treatment system, while Enbridge would contribute \$1.1 million toward an ultraviolet disinfection system at the South Superior sewer treatment facility, bringing total public infrastructure investment to approximately \$6.1 million. The upgrades, with construction scheduled for 2027 to 2029, are required to accommodate 100 to 200 additional gallons of wastewater per minute generated by Enbridge's estimated \$1.5 billion terminal cooling project. Mayor Jim Paine noted the agreement would generate between \$750,000 and \$1 million in annual revenue for the city. Councilor Nicholas Ledin requested the committee referral for closer review. The Public Works Committee is scheduled to consider the proposal on June 4.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/superior-considers-sewer-facility-upgrade-for-enbridge>

Horicon Secures Clean Water Loan Funding for Decades-Old Wastewater Plant

The City of Horicon secured Clean Water Loan funding for an approximately \$30 million upgrade to its municipal wastewater treatment facility, a project described as addressing the decades-old plant's infrastructure deficiencies. The loan, administered through Wisconsin's Clean Water Fund Program, will finance a phased upgrade to the wastewater treatment system. The full details of the vote count, specific loan terms, and repayment schedule are not available in the accessible portion of the article. The project will result in a phased increase in costs to the city, with the Clean Water Loan serving as the primary financing mechanism. The article does not specify further procedural steps.

Source: Mayville Dodge County Pioneer (South Central) | <https://www.dodgecountypioneer.com/stories/horicon-secures-clean-water-loan-funding-for-decades-old-wastewater-plant,335768>

Contract signed for work on Highway 45 between Monico and Three Lakes

The Wisconsin Governor's office announced the signing of a \$7 million contract for highway improvement work on US Highway 45 between Monico and Three Lakes in Oneida County. Pitlick and Wick has been awarded the prime contractor role. Scheduled work includes resurfacing the highway, replacing 22 culverts, performing guardrail work, and installing centerline rumble strips.

Construction is set to begin May 26, 2026, with a scheduled completion date of October 2026, contingent on favorable weather and construction progress. During construction hours, US 45 will operate as a single lane with flagging operations; both directions of travel will be restored at the end of each work day. Motorists seeking traffic impact updates are directed to Wisconsin's North Central Region 511 website.

Source: WXPB 91.7 FM Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | <https://www.wxpr.org/business-economics/2026-05-20/contract-signed-for-work-on-highway-45-between-monico-and-three-lakes>

Evers approves Wis. 69 improvements

Governor Tony Evers signed a \$7,781,725 contract awarding Rock Roads, Inc. the prime contractor role for resurfacing Wisconsin Highway 69 across 12.5 miles between Bushnell Creek in Monroe and Cow Path Lane in New Glarus, spanning Green County. The procurement covers pavement resurfacing, installation of centerline and shoulder rumble strips, new pavement markings, replacement of deteriorating culverts, and updated guardrail. Preliminary work is scheduled to begin May 26, with full project completion targeted for November 1, 2026, subject to weather and construction progress. The Wisconsin DOT Southwest Region is the administering authority. A public informational meeting is scheduled for May 21, 5 to 7 p.m., at Monticello Village Hall, where officials will present the construction schedule and traffic impact details. WIS 69 will be closed to through traffic during culvert replacement phases and will remain open under flagging operations during the remainder of construction.

Source: Monroe Times (South Central) | <https://themonroetimes.com/local-news/evers-approves-wis-69-improvements/>

Wis. 29 resurfacing project approved

Governor Tony Evers signed a \$9.35 million contract with prime contractor Rock Road Cos., Inc. of Janesville for a resurfacing project on WIS 29 spanning from 320th Street east of Boyd in Chippewa County to Koser Avenue west of Thorp in Clark County. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation project, which began May 11, 2026, includes concrete pavement patching, placement of 3.75 inches of asphalt over the existing roadway, removal and replacement of pavement on WIS 29 on- and off-ramps at the County H interchange in Stanley, culvert repairs, rehabilitation of the structure over Hay Creek east of Boyd, and closure and removal of the WIS 29 intersection at 320th Street per the Town of Delmar's request. WIS 29 will remain open during construction with single-lane closures and reduced speed limits in effect. Construction is scheduled for completion in mid-September 2026.

Source: Ladysmith News (Western) | https://ladysmithnews.com/news/area_news/article_98b9e8a1-89a0-4a6f-812e-3339d66948b1.html

Lake Geneva council approves replacement of some traffic signal poles

On May 11, 2026, the Lake Geneva City Council voted 5-3 to approve adding \$60,000 to the Highway 50 state municipal finance agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to replace existing aluminum trombone-arm traffic signal poles with black monotube poles at several intersections along Main Street. Alderpersons Joel Hoiland, Mary Jo Fesenmier, and Brian Smith voted no. City Administrator Dave De Angelis stated the city is contributing 20 percent of the overall project cost, and that installing the poles during the reconstruction project is significantly less expensive than a standalone installation estimated at \$650,000 to \$800,000. The \$60,000 addition is incorporated into the city's existing 20 percent project contribution share. De Angelis also noted monotube poles are easier to replace if damaged. The poles will be installed upon completion of the WisDOT Highway 50 and Main Street road reconstruction project.

Source: Kenosha News (Southeastern) | https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/local/government-politics/article_d18e41ff-3980-52ec-96fb-a14af286f812.html

Cost of bike trail project divides Port council

The Port Washington Common Council voted 5-2 on May 19, 2026, to authorize hiring TKDA, a Wauwatosa consulting firm, to prepare and submit an application for the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant, awarding TKDA a \$10,000 contract for the required engineering work. The grant would fund 80 percent, or approximately \$1.6 million, of an estimated \$1.5 million to \$2 million project to reroute the Ozaukee Interurban Trail through a new underpass on the north side of Oakland Avenue near Spring Street in Port Washington. The city's required 20 percent match would total approximately \$400,000. Aldermen Paul Neumyer, Mike Gasper, Jonathan Pleitner, Michael Beaster, and Mary Lou Mueller voted in favor; aldermen Deb Postl and Dan Benning voted against, consistent with a prior General Government and Finance Committee recommendation that the city not apply. The grant application deadline is June 9.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeepress.com/content/cost-bike-trail-project-divides-port-council>

Results of RF street safety analysis presented to council

The River Falls City Council voted 6-1, with Alderperson Abdouch opposed, to approve the rezoning of a portion of the Sterling Ponds Corporate Park property from Conservancy to Industrial at the May 12, 2026, council meeting. Separately, the council received a presentation from Toole Design consultant Mitch Coffman on the Safe Streets Action Plan, developed following the city's 2023 Vision Zero Resolution adoption and a \$200,000 U.S. Department of Transportation grant awarded in 2024 that authorized Toole Design to prepare the plan. The plan identifies 21 policies and programs, 54 to 55 safety countermeasures, and multiple priority safety projects targeting intersections, which account for 49 percent of crashes and 77 percent of fatal and serious injury crashes recorded from 2014 to 2023. Mayor Alison Page noted that formal adoption of the plan would position River Falls to pursue federal and state implementation funding toward a Vision Zero goal of zero traffic fatalities or serious injuries by 2040.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | <https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/results-of-rf-street-safety-analysis-presented-to-council,190969>

Paid parking in downtown Eau Claire expected to begin later than planned

The Eau Claire City Council is scheduled to vote on May 26, 2026, on an ordinance amendment that revises the effective date of the city's downtown paid parking program from June 1 to August 1, 2026. Interim City Manager David Solberg recommended the delay due to a postponed delivery of parking kiosks. Under the program, portions of Barstow and Dewey streets will be designated as \$1.00-per-hour zones, while other downtown areas will be priced at \$0.50 per hour. Payment will be accepted via mobile app, credit card, or cash at street kiosks. Revenue generated by the program will remain within the parking utility fund and is designated for pavement maintenance, parking ramp construction, enforcement operations, and personnel costs. The May 26 council vote on the ordinance amendment is the next formal procedural step before implementation.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/22/paid-parking-downtown-eau-claire-expected-begin-later-than-planned/>

Lake Superior Reserve to expand office space

The Superior City Council voted on May 19, 2026, to amend the city's lease with the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents governing land on Barker's Island occupied by the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve, raising the annual base rent from \$2,700 to \$3,700 to account for increased land area associated with a planned 1,793-square-foot building expansion. The council declined to adopt an inflation-based escalator clause that had been recommended by the Finance Committee, with Councilors Joe Radtke, Nicholas Ledin, and Garner Moffat among those opposing the clause. The nearly \$800,000 expansion project is a collaboration among the UW-Madison Division of Extension, Wisconsin Sea Grant, and Friends of the Lake Superior Reserve, with UW-Superior overseeing construction. The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents holds ownership of the buildings while the City of Superior retains ownership of the underlying land.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/lake-superior-reserve-to-expand-office-space>

Improvements to be made at Carson Park baseball stadium

The Eau Claire Landmarks Commission unanimously approved a Certificate of Appropriateness at its May 18, 2026, meeting, authorizing preservation-focused improvements to the historic grandstands at Carson Park baseball stadium to address chronic water intrusion. The approved scope includes repairing and replacing deteriorated steel structural elements, installing waterproof and vapor-permeable coatings beneath seating and at walkway surfaces, improving surface drainage, and completing deferred protective painting. The commission's vote also formally recommends all four phases of the project to the State of Wisconsin for approval, which is required because Carson Park holds national historic landmark designation. Patrick Newkirk, City of Eau Claire Recreation and Facilities Manager, stated construction is scheduled to begin in mid-August 2026. No dollar figures were disclosed. State approval of the full four-phase plan is the next procedural step.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/19/improvements-be-made-carson-park-baseball-stadium/>

Feds award \$8M grant to Milwaukee airport concourse redevelopment

The Federal Aviation Administration awarded an \$8 million grant to Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport under the FAA's Airport Terminals Program, bringing total federal support for the \$95 million Concourse E redevelopment to \$21.5 million, including a previously announced \$13 million federal grant. Remaining project costs are funded through airport revenue and bonding, according to Milwaukee County officials. Funding derives from the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, secured with assistance from U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Milwaukee County and airport director Brian Dranzik are the responsible authorities overseeing the project, which entered construction in September 2025 with general contractor Findorff. The new Concourse E will replace the International Arrivals Terminal, a separate structure that closed in 2016, and will accommodate additional domestic and international airline services. Project completion is expected in late 2027.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Southeastern) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/05/22/feds-award-8m-grant-to-milwaukee-airport-concourse-redevelopment/>

Flagpole height concerns pilots, city leader says

The Ladysmith Common Council voted 7-0 on May 19, 2026, to award a street chip-seal maintenance contract to Scott Construction of Wisconsin Dells for \$44,562, rejecting a higher bid

of \$74,856 from Fahrner Asphalt Sealers of Plover. Public Works Assistant Director Doug Parker and Public Works Director Kurt Gorseger recommended Scott Construction, citing more than ten years of satisfactory performance including warranty work on Doughty Road. Streets scheduled for chip-seal treatment this summer include E. 11th Street N, E. Fairway Drive, W. Fairway Drive, Oakwood Drive, and Sunrise Court. The council separately tabled a microsurfacing contract bid, with Gorseger citing unresolved logistical issues. The council also unanimously approved a resolution directing the city administrator to file applications for financial assistance with the Wisconsin Environmental Improvement Fund for the planned reconstruction of Miner Avenue from W. Sixth to W. Ninth Avenue, scheduled for the following year.

Source: Ladysmith News (Western) | https://ladysmithnews.com/news/article_25e3b288-3f6e-4ad9-a70c-8c8264c1ebbb.html

Council meetings to begin live streaming in June

The Antigo City Council, at its May 14, 2026, meeting, approved a procurement for a condition assessment of the city hall moisture problem, awarding a contract to Building Envelope Consultings, Ltd., in the amount of \$11,580. The council also formally approved naming the Hogan Street trail segment in honor of D. Wayne Lukas, an Antigo native and U.S. Horse Racing Hall of Fame inductee who died last summer at age 89. Clerk-Treasurer Kaye Matucheski and Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Shannon Smith announced that live streaming of council meetings, integrated with new agenda-management software, was tested at the May meeting and will go live at the June 13 council meeting; the streaming link will be accessible through council agendas posted on the City of Antigo website. Staff will coordinate with the Parks and Recreation Department to publicize the new streaming capability before the June 13 meeting.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | https://www.antigojournal.com/news/council-meetings-to-begin-live-streaming-in-june/article_4bb2435d-408a-40c4-b16e-9efd6e2c5b4c.html

Sally Port: High, wide, and under budget

The Barron County Board Jail Sally Port Oversight Committee confirmed at its May 13, 2026, meeting that construction of a jail sally port addition is complete and has received operational authorization from the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. The project, financed through a County Board borrowing of \$1,767,898, is expected to finish under budget, with only minor work remaining, including installation of four intercom stations for video conferencing. Committee members present included supervisors Patti Anderson, Pete Schneider, Pete Olson, and committee chair Craig Turcott, along with County Board Chair Louie Okey. County Administrator Jeff French advised subcontractors that final invoices must be submitted promptly, as the 36-month borrowing window is nearing expiration and late submissions risk nonpayment. The expanded facility accommodates up to two bus-sized vehicles in its entry bay and includes secure attorney-client conference rooms for both in-person and video consultations.

Source: Barron News-Shield (Western) | https://news-shield.com/news/top_stories/article_281b0e0a-8370-4547-8ee2-82df67cb8514.html

Public Safety

Dane County Board rejects ViaPath jail communications contract

The Dane County Board voted 30-4 on May 14, 2026, to reject a proposed contract renewal between the Dane County Sheriff's Office and ViaPath, the current telecommunications service provider for county jail residents. Board member Richelle Andrae authored the proposal and was

joined in supporting it by members David Peterson, Michael Engelberger, and Matt Veldran; the remaining 30 board members voted against renewal. The contract had previously been reviewed by the county's Public Protection and Judiciary Committee and Personnel and Finance Committee before reaching the full board. Sheriff Calvin Barrett, who holds formal authority over jail vendor selection, had backed the ViaPath agreement, which included a reallocation of approximately \$270,000 in administrative fees and reduced multimedia messaging costs. Following the rejection, county officials are directed to initiate a new competitive bidding process, with the existing ViaPath contract set to expire in fall 2026.

Source: Capital Times (South Central) | https://captimes.com/news/government/dane-county-board-rejects-viopath-jail-communications-contract/article_40080036-47c6-4edc-a216-d1b7d4bec661.html

Menominee council says no to Flock cameras

The Menominee City Council voted unanimously 8-0 on May 19, 2026, to reject an ordinance that would have regulated the use of automatic license plate reader systems within the city, and then voted again 8-0 to terminate the city's existing contract with Flock Safety. Council member Josh Jones was excused from both votes. The rejections followed a nearly two-hour public comment session in which 26 of 29 speakers opposed the camera system, with overflow attendance extending outside council chambers. Council member Steve Fifarek made the motion to reject the cameras. Police Chief Justin Hofer had previously supported the system as a crime-fighting tool. Concerns raised during public comment centered on data security, Fourth Amendment protections, and potential federal government access to collected data. Termination of the Flock Safety contract represents the final governance action on the matter.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | https://www.ehextra.com/news/menominee-council-says-no-to-flock-cameras/article_81fe9634-9a26-450b-b92c-daea82ef320a.html

Janesville police to step up enforcement of anti-cruising rules to quash street drag racing, stunt riding

The Janesville City Council approved an updated anti-cruising ordinance during the week of May 17, 2026, granting Janesville Police Department authority to tow and impound vehicles involved in drag racing, stunt riding, and coordinated parking-lot burnouts, including vehicles not owned by the cited driver. The ordinance aligns with a new state law targeting coordinated reckless driving events. Police Chief Chad Pearson, presenting to the council, stated that impoundment will be directed at serious infractions such as extreme speeding and repeat reckless driving offenders rather than minor stoplight infractions. Towing and impoundment operations will be carried out through qualified private towing contractors, with costs generally not borne by taxpayers. In 2025, under a prior abbreviated ordinance, the department recorded zero impoundments and focused on warnings. Enforcement of the strengthened ordinance is set to begin this summer, with Pearson indicating police are already investigating a planned June street-takeover event.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/janesville-police-to-step-up-enforcement-of-anti-cruising-rules-to-quash-street-drag-racing/article_f1cffd3-c2c7-4cdd-8014-a2567eb3d416.html

Marinette weighs higher water rescue fees

The Marinette Public Safety and Code Enforcement Committee voted to advance two procurement and regulatory actions at its May 19, 2026, meeting. On police vehicles, the committee backed a bid from The Motor Company for two replacement squad cars at \$54,245 plus applicable taxes, against a \$120,000 capital budget line; Police Chief Jon LaCombe noted that existing light bars, radios, and most equipment will be transferred, with only docking stations requiring replacement. That purchase recommendation proceeds to the full City Council for final approval. On fire rescue

billing, Fire Chief Jay Heckel presented an internal review finding that the fee schedule, unchanged since 2014, no longer recovers costs; the committee directed city staff and the city attorney to draft a new ordinance section 3 establishing a flat mobilization fee of approximately \$250 per rescue boat or airboat call plus actual personnel wages from station departure to return, with redlined language to be brought back for committee review.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | https://www.ehextra.com/news/marinette-weighs-higher-water-rescue-fees/article_a983b935-bbb8-4357-9587-01e023a620c7.html

CF officer cleared in fatal shooting on south side of the city

Chippewa County District Attorney Wade Newell announced on May 19, 2026, that no criminal charges will be filed against Chippewa Falls Police Department Sgt. James Luckey following the April 9, 2026, fatal shooting of Bradley J. Barnum, 44, of Eau Claire, at a hotel in the 1000 block of West Park Avenue. Newell's two-page prosecutorial determination, issued under his authority as county district attorney, concluded that Luckey's use of deadly force constituted a legally justified act of self-defense given the totality of circumstances, including Barnum's active arrest warrants, his flight on foot, his presentation of what was later identified as a Daisy Model 5501 CO2 BB pistol, and toxicology results positive for amphetamines and methamphetamine. Luckey, a 9.5-year veteran of the department, discharged his weapon twice after Barnum pointed the firearm toward him while fleeing over a fence and refused multiple commands to drop it. The DA's office stated no further action will be taken regarding the matter.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/cf-officer-cleared-in-fatal-shooting-on-south-side-of-the-city/article_d0774b8c-351d-4b0a-bd8a-494015a9d290.html

Land Use and Development

Monona City Council approves general development plan for part of WPS site

The Monona City Council voted unanimously on May 18, 2026, to approve a general development plan for The Greenline, a proposed mixed-use redevelopment of nearly 12.5 acres on the former WPS Health Insurance site along West Broadway. The Galway Companies project would comprise four six-story buildings containing 669 total apartment units and approximately 25,500 square feet of ground-floor commercial space, to be constructed in two phases. Phase one includes 357 units across two buildings, just over 16,000 square feet of commercial space, a developer-dedicated 1.44-acre public park fronting West Broadway, and reconfigured streets including realignment of WPS Drive and a new east-west connection between Engel Street and the soon-to-be-renamed Topgolf Way. The property sits within Tax Increment District No. 15, and Galway Companies has begun discussions with the Community Development Authority regarding TIF assistance. Director of Planning and Community Development Doug Plowman estimated phase one construction at approximately 20 months. The Plan Commission is scheduled to consider the precise implementation plan for phase one on May 26.

Source: Waterloo/Marshall Courier (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/monona-city-council-approves-general-development-plan-for-part-of-wps-site/article_adbf9a49-fbed-4569-be9c-aaebdd29b376.html

Tosa's new TIF district poises 92 apartments on Mayfair Road

The Wauwatosa Common Council approved the creation of Tax Incremental District 17 on May 19, 2026, authorizing up to approximately \$2.85 million in pay-as-you-go development incentives for Cream City Real Estate Investments LLC's proposed 92-unit market-rate apartment development at 2825 and 2835 North Mayfair Road on a 1.7-acre parcel. Total anticipated city project costs are

approximately \$5 million. The Council had previously approved the development and TIF district term sheet in March 2026. The project plan projects TID 17 will generate approximately \$19.6 million in new taxable value by end of 2027, with full project cost recovery from tax increment anticipated by 2043, within the district's maximum 27-year lifespan. As a condition of financing, Cream City Real Estate LLC agreed to pay \$100,000 to the city's Affordable Housing Fund. Construction is scheduled to commence June 2026, with completion anticipated July 2027.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Southeastern) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/05/22/tosa-tif-district-92-apartments-north-mayfair-road/>

Oshkosh takes step toward buying former downtown shopping mall property

The Oshkosh City Council voted 5-2 in May 2026 to approve a resolution authorizing city staff to prepare a purchase offer on two properties comprising the former City Center mall: 101 Commerce St. and 201 Pearl Ave. The resolution caps the total purchase price at \$12.5 million for the more than 16-acre site along the Fox River. Mayor Matt Mugerauer and Alder Paul Esslinger cast the two dissenting votes. The resolution specifies that any formal purchase is contingent on additional approvals from both the Oshkosh Plan Commission and the full City Council. The Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corp. presented redevelopment concepts including retail, housing, restaurants, and office space. Existing tenant leases would be honored pending ownership transfer. The Plan Commission is scheduled to review the purchase offer and issue a recommendation on May 20, 2026, with a Council vote on the offer anticipated May 26, 2026.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) | <https://www.wpr.org/news/oshkosh-buying-former-downtown-park-plaza-city-center-mall>

Beaver Dam taps \$350,000 county grant for South Side development

The Beaver Dam Common Council approved the use of \$350,000 from the Dodge County Community Development Fund grant program at its May 18, 2026, meeting to support public infrastructure improvements for a 16-unit single-family residential development off Wilderness Way on the city's south side. The city will also contribute \$170,000 from its housing fund, bringing total public investment to \$520,000. Next Generation Construction, represented by Zach Knutson, is under agreement with the city to build the homes, which will range from 1,400 to 1,800 square feet and include predominantly ranch-style designs plus a stormwater pond. The Dodge County program, which launched in 2024 as a first-in-Wisconsin initiative using sales tax revenue, distributed \$2 million in grants to municipalities for infrastructure supporting development. The subdivision is expected to be fully constructed and occupied within two years.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/news/local/government-politics/article_2d246592-43b0-48e5-b64e-aa0edd2bb6bd.html

Madison senior living facility OK'd on the far east side, again

The Madison City Council approved a conditional use permit for developer Oak Park Place to construct a five-story, 97-unit senior living facility at 4817 Halley Way on Madison's far east side. The project, called Capitol View at Oak Park, will occupy a 2.5-acre parcel in the Grandview Commons area and includes underground parking, outdoor pickleball courts, a rooftop terrace, and a pub. Prior to full council approval, the Madison Urban Design Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval following presentations in February and April 2026, and the Plan Commission also voted unanimously in favor in May 2026. The revised design reduced total units from 99 to 97 compared to a 2022 approval that had lapsed, shifting the unit mix to one one-bedroom and 96 two-bedroom units. The site has seen four previous approvals fail to result in construction since 2007. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2026.

Source: Capital Times (South Central) | https://captimes.com/news/government/madison-senior-living-facility-ok-d-on-the-far-east-side-again/article_3fa734ff-0ffe-49d9-969f-412d38f1c990.html

Wautoma Common Council approves \$4m townhome development and amends noise ordinance to 11 p.m.

The Wautoma Common Council voted to approve a development agreement between the City of Wautoma and KRH Development LLC, based in Grafton, authorizing construction of eight townhomes valued at not less than \$4,000,000. The council also voted to amend the city's noise ordinance, setting the permissible noise cutoff at 11 p.m. The article does not report specific vote counts, ordinance identifier numbers, or effective dates for either action. KRH Development LLC is identified as the contracting party responsible for the townhome construction. The Wautoma Common Council, as the city's governing legislative body, holds formal authority over both the development agreement approval and the ordinance amendment. No subsequent procedural steps are specified in the available article text.

Source: Waushara Argus (Northeastern) | <https://wausharaargus.com/stories/wautoma-common-council-approves-4m-townhome-development-and-amends-noise-ordinance-to-11-pm,336667>

Vernon County moves to block data centers, for now

The Vernon County Board of Supervisors voted to enact a temporary moratorium blocking data center development within the county, according to reporting updated May 19, 2026. The board's action constitutes a formal land-use governance decision placing a hold on data center projects for an unspecified interim period while county officials assess regulatory frameworks. Specific vote counts, ordinance identifiers, and the duration of the moratorium were not detailed in the available reporting. The action follows broader regional discussion about data center expansion across Wisconsin. The next procedural step is not specified, but moratoriums of this type typically require a subsequent board vote to either extend, make permanent, or lift the development restriction.

Source: WKBT CBS8 La Crosse (Western) | <https://www.news8000.com/news/originals/>

After public hearing, McFarland Plan Commission recommends added restrictions on short-term rentals

The McFarland Plan Commission, following a public hearing, voted to recommend updates to the village's tourist rooming house ordinance, including grandfather provisions for existing short-term rental operators and added restrictions on new permits. The Plan Commission, acting in its formal advisory capacity to the McFarland Village Board, reached this recommendation after conducting the required public hearing. The recommended changes would amend the village's land use regulations governing tourist rooming houses within McFarland's jurisdiction. No vote count, specific ordinance identifier, or effective date was reported in the available text. The recommendation now advances to the McFarland Village Board, which holds final authority to adopt, modify, or reject the proposed ordinance amendments before any changes to the tourist rooming house regulatory framework take effect.

Source: Waterloo/Marshall Courier (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/

Governance and Elections

Village of French Island officially incorporated

The Town of Campbell was formally incorporated as the Village of French Island following a referendum vote held on May 20, 2026, in which residents approved the measure 1,493 to 30.

Village officials announced the Certification of Incorporation on May 22, 2026. The newly incorporated village in La Crosse County has an estimated population of 4,284. The incorporation converts the municipality's governing structure from a town to a village under Wisconsin statutes. The next required procedural step is the election of a village board consisting of one village president and six trustees. Candidates seeking office may begin filing papers immediately but may not circulate nomination papers until May 26, 2026. The deadline to submit completed nomination papers to election authorities is Friday, June 12, 2026.

Source: WKBT CBS8 La Crosse (Western) | https://www.news8000.com/news/local-news/village-of-french-island-officially-incorporated/article_c8934d4c-a897-4658-b4cd-8b8831825e53.html

DeForest establishes vacancy policy for village board seats

The DeForest Village Board unanimously adopted Resolution 2026-059 on May 19, 2026, establishing a standardized policy for filling future village board vacancies by appointment. The resolution codifies a multi-stage process requiring the village clerk and administrator to develop application questions, a minimum two-week public application window posted on the village website, board review of submissions, selection of up to five finalists for interviews, secret ranked scoring by trustees, and a final majority vote by the board to confirm an appointee. In the event of a tied score, a coin flip determines the appointee. The policy also establishes a nomination and roll-call majority vote process for filling the village board president vacancy. Appointments will not be made within 30 days prior to a spring election. The policy does not mandate that future boards fill vacancies or use the appointment method; special elections or leaving seats vacant remain options. Appointed trustees will serve the remainder of the replaced trustee's term.

Source: Sun Prairie Star (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/the_star/local_news/deforest-establishes-vacancy-policy-for-village-board-seats/article_ff4ae77b-d826-479c-8a71-f64f6664a9cb.html

District 18 Supervisor, Coon Fork Cabin fees voted on by County Board of Supervisors

The Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors voted 21-3 on May 19, 2026, to approve Kirk Carlson as District 18 Supervisor, filling a vacancy created when elected supervisor Aiden Vollmer resigned shortly after winning the April 7, 2026, election uncontested. Carlson will serve a two-year term. In the same meeting, the Board unanimously approved rental fee schedules for new Coon Fork Cabin facilities, affirming rates previously set by the Eau Claire County Parks and Forest Committee. Cabins will be priced at \$110 per night on weekdays and \$130 per night on weekends during the May 1 to September 15 peak season, and \$95 per night on weekdays and \$110 per night on weekends during the September 16 to April 30 off-season. A pet fee of \$10 per pet per night, capped at two pets, was also adopted. No further procedural steps were reported.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | <https://www.weau.com/2026/05/20/district-18-supervisor-coon-fork-cabin-fees-voted-by-county-board-supervisors/>

Douglas County asks towns to notify neighbors of land use applications

The Douglas County Zoning Committee approved a procedural change to its land-use decision form at its May 13, 2026, meeting, requiring town officials to document whether adjacent property owners were notified of land-use applications, and to specify how and when that notification occurred. The action was taken without a recorded vote count in the article. County Board Chair Mark Liebaert, who also serves as an Amnicon town supervisor, identified the change as a response to recurring instances in which county zoning reviews proceeded without prior neighbor notification at the town level. The revised form does not compel towns to provide notice but creates a disclosure mechanism within the existing dual-approval process, under which both a town board and the Douglas County Zoning Committee must approve zoning changes. The Amnicon Town

Board's pending vote on the Quetico zoning change and conditional-use permit applications remained tabled as of May 13 pending town-level action.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/douglas-county-asks-towns-to-notify-neighbors-of-land-use-applications>

Lake Geneva revises parking ordinance to help BID program

On May 11, 2026, the Lake Geneva City Council amended the city's parking ordinance by a 6-2 vote, with Alders Joel Hoiland and Brian Smith voting no. The amendment allows holders of a city parking sticker to park for free on Wednesdays during the paid parking season, which runs from the last Wednesday of January through November 14. The revision is tied to the Lake Geneva Business Improvement District's We Love Local Wednesdays campaign, announced at the BID's Annual Meeting and Community Improvement Awards on April 1, under which participating downtown businesses offer sales and specials on Wednesdays. Prior to the amendment, parking sticker holders were limited to three hours of free parking per day during the paid season. The ordinance amendment is in effect for the current parking season.

Source: Lake Geneva Regional News (Southeastern) | https://lakegenevanews.net/news/local/government-politics/article_8ec0069c-c390-4a32-ae4d-ccfb6e525847.html

County supports wake boat legislation

The Barron County Board of Supervisors took a formal position on wake boat regulation at its May 18, 2026, meeting, voting to weigh in on pending Wisconsin legislation governing wake boating. The Board of Supervisors, as the county's governing body, recorded its support for the legislation during the regular meeting session. No specific vote count, ordinance identifier, or resolution number was reported in the available text. The article does not detail the specific bill being referenced or the precise nature of the board's action beyond the expression of support. No next procedural step was identified.

Source: Barron News-Shield (Western) | https://news-shield.com/news/top_stories/

Human Services

La Crosse County to hire social worker for homeless services

The La Crosse County Board approved the use of \$102,734 in federal homeless prevention grant funding, transferred to the county by the City of La Crosse, to hire one full-time social worker dedicated to connecting homeless residents with existing services. The position will be embedded with Pathways Home, the joint city-county initiative targeting functional-zero homelessness by 2029. Jim Drees, Pathways Home project lead, presented the staffing need to the county board, describing the role as filling a pre-engagement gap in the current service continuum. The first year of the position will be funded through the federal grant as gifted by the city; subsequent years are anticipated to be financed through opioid settlement dollars received from pharmaceutical companies implicated in the opioid epidemic. No vote count was reported in the article. The next funding transition is expected after the first year of the position's operation.

Source: La Crosse Tribune (Western) | https://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/government-politics/article_d37a96e8-6720-4826-bf4b-b4f50dd35188.html

Douglas County offers grant to clean up needles in city parks

The Douglas County Health and Human Services Board approved spending less than \$500 in opioid settlement funds on May 14, 2026, to provide a grant to the City of Superior for sharps

disposal containers in city park restrooms. The funding, requested by Superior Superintendent of Parks, Recreation and Forestry Ryan Wintlend and coordinated through Douglas County Public Health Officer Kathy Ronchi, will cover installation of permanent wall-mounted sharps containers in 14 city park restrooms and at Wisconsin Point. The city will assume responsibility for managing and disposing of the collected needles. County Board Chairman Mark Liebaert raised the question of extending the program to county park facilities, which Ronchi indicated could be pursued if interest exists. The grant requires further approval from the Douglas County Administration Committee and the full Douglas County Board, both of which are scheduled to consider the request in June.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/douglas-county-offers-grant-to-clean-up-needles-in-city-parks>

School Districts

Beaver Dam School District chooses new bus company

The Beaver Dam Unified School District School Board voted at its May 11, 2026, meeting to award the district's transportation contract to Go Riteway, replacing incumbent carrier First Student Transportation. Director of Business Services Ryan Cashman presented the procurement action, citing cost savings as the primary factor. Go Riteway's estimated contract cost for the 2026-27 school year is slightly more than \$1.97 million, compared to First Student's estimated \$2.18 million bid; the district's total contracted transportation cost in 2024-25 was \$1.69 million, with \$1.78 million budgeted for the current school year. The contract runs three years with options for a fourth and fifth year. Go Riteway committed to providing 14 new buses and nine new vans in year one. A third proposal was received but deemed not financially viable. Go Riteway will seek to hire existing bus drivers from First Student for the transition to the 2026-27 school year.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/community/bdc/article_e7f0f5a3-bbfe-4b56-b029-13243e4f4000.html

The Madison School District sets GPA tiebreakers for guaranteed UW admission

The Madison School Board approved a Department of Public Instruction waiver request at its May 18, 2026, meeting, authorizing the district to use secondary academic metrics as tiebreakers when determining which students qualify for the Wisconsin Guarantee program, a state law passed in 2024 requiring 12 UW System campuses to admit all in-state students ranking in the top 10 percent of their class, with UW-Madison guaranteeing admission to the top 5 percent. Because the state law permits only cumulative GPA as the qualifying metric, the waiver allows Madison to apply additional criteria, including ACT composite scores, number of completed college credit-bearing courses, and attendance records based on fewest unexcused absences in grades 9 to 11, in ranked order when GPAs are indistinguishable. District Executive Director of College, Career and Community Readiness Mary Janković communicated the tiebreaker criteria to families. DPI must still approve the waiver before the updated process takes effect for the class of 2027, with qualifying students and families to be notified this fall.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_bfdbfc86-9f3d-51ba-b97b-a1db5873ce5d.html

Antigo School Board votes deadlocked

At its May 19, 2026, reorganization meeting, the Antigo School Board reached deadlocked votes of 4-4 on three successive ballots each for the offices of president and vice president, with Mike

Parizek and Jean Adams opposed by Danny Pyeatt's slate backing Pyeatt for president and Angi Schreiber for vice president. The board did resolve its clerk election on a second ballot, with Abby Mattek prevailing 5-3 over Kristin Mattmiller. A separate 4-4 deadlock on a motion by Pyeatt to designate the Antigo Times as the district's official publication also failed to resolve. Superintendent Glenda Oginski consulted district attorney Davis Rune during the meeting regarding procedural options. All unresolved officer elections and the publication designation will return for a vote once a replacement is appointed to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of board member Dave Bardo.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | https://www.antigojournal.com/news/antigo-school-board-votes-deadlocked/article_8d5b265b-117e-48c2-bf9c-8d931fd16a55.html

Grafton board hires experienced leader to head school

The Grafton School Board voted on May 18, 2026, to approve the appointment of Dana Croatt as principal of Woodview Elementary School, with Croatt set to begin in the role on July 1. Croatt, currently principal of Rockfield Elementary School in the Germantown School District, brings more than 17 years of administrative experience to the position. She was selected following an interview process that included administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents. Superintendent Jeff Nelson announced the hire via press release, citing Croatt's alignment with the district's Vision 2030 framework. Croatt succeeds Principal Jill Schwenzen, who resigned from the Grafton district after being hired by the Port-Saukville School Board as assistant principal at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Port Washington. No vote count was reported. Croatt is scheduled to meet Woodview staff on June 11 before her official start date of July 1.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeepress.com/content/grafon-board-hires-experienced-leader-head-school>

Board approves contract for new Sun Prairie superintendent

The Sun Prairie School Board voted at its May 12, 2026, meeting to approve an employment contract for Dr. Antoine Reed as the district's next superintendent, formalizing the executive hiring action. The board, serving as the governing authority for the Sun Prairie Area School District, made the appointment official. No vote count, contract duration, or salary figures were reported in the available text. Dr. Reed had previously been identified as the incoming superintendent, and this contract approval represents the concluding formal governance step in the hiring process.

Source: WISC CBS3 Madison (South Central) | <https://www.channel3000.com/news/education/>

Monona Grove School Board approves budget with significant teacher salary investment

The Monona Grove School Board approved a balanced preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year at a May 2026 meeting, with the budget including a substantial investment in teacher compensation. The governing board voted to adopt the budget, which prioritizes teacher salary increases as a central financial commitment. No specific dollar totals, vote counts, or ordinance identifiers were reported in the available text. The board's action constitutes a formal budget adoption by the elected governing body of the Monona Grove School District. The next procedural step was not specified in the published article excerpt.

Source: WISC CBS3 Madison (South Central) | <https://www.channel3000.com/news/education/>

Bruce School Board OKs shared food services, pay hikes

The Bruce School Board, at its April 20, 2026, meeting, approved multiple formal governance actions including a tri-district shared food service director agreement, 2026-27 salary adjustments,

and a renewed contract with CESA 10. Under the shared services agreement with the Ladysmith School District and Flambeau School District, Bruce's cost share for a 0.2 full-time equivalent food service director position is \$20,600. The board approved a 2.63 percent salary increase for staff, a paraeducator base wage adjustment, a 6.99 percent medical benefits increase, and extracurricular addendum increases, with the updated employee handbook scheduled for June review and approval. The board also approved the 2026-27 CESA 10 contract following Superintendent Anthony Bosco's report projecting a 25 percent reduction in CESA 10 expenses for the current school year and an additional 25 percent reduction in 2027-28. The board tabled a district vehicle replacement plan pending bids from auto dealerships.

Source: Ladysmith News (Western) | https://ladysmithnews.com/news/article_8eb28bc2-398a-4761-9ee8-d433400e8029.html

Flambeau School Board delays pay raise decision

The Flambeau School Board voted unanimously to table a proposed staff pay increase for the 2026-27 school year during its regular monthly meeting on April 15, 2026, deferring the matter to a future meeting without specifying a timeline. The board, acting under its authority over district employment compensation, also amended the meeting agenda to table approval of the food service director's contract. District Administrator Mark Stamper presented fiscal year 2027 budget projections during the same meeting, noting a planned reduction in teaching staff from 61 to 60 positions for the coming school year. In separate personnel actions, the board approved the retirement of bus driver Jerry Gillis, hired Jeff Kopacz as 2025-26 high school co-assistant boys baseball coach, and approved Jeff Zimmer as district groundskeeper. The board additionally approved account access and check signers for Security Financial Bank accounts and requested enhanced oversight of student activity funds through annual planned-spending and year-end expenditure reports.

Source: Ladysmith News (Western) | https://ladysmithnews.com/news/article_6025b3f5-4aa1-419e-89c3-973ba9656c10.html

State-Local Interface

Evers asks Trump for disaster declaration after April storms, flooding across Wisconsin

Governor Tony Evers formally submitted a written request to President Donald Trump on May 22, 2026, seeking a federal major disaster declaration for Wisconsin following severe storms and flooding in April 2026 that caused more than \$27 million in documented damages across 19 counties and the Oneida Nation. Joint assessments by Wisconsin Emergency Management and FEMA identified \$9.8 million in losses to more than 1,570 residential properties and nearly \$17.7 million in public sector damages across 14 counties and one tribal nation. Rock County alone recorded more than \$11 million in verified public damages, while Outagamie County recorded more than \$1.4 million and Waupaca County nearly \$2 million. Janesville City Manager Kevin Lahner estimated approximately \$10 million in public infrastructure damage to his city alone. The Trump administration holds sole authority to approve or deny the request, with no statutory response deadline. The request follows a prior Trump administration denial of a similar Wisconsin disaster relief request totaling more than \$27 million from summer 2024 storms.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) | <https://www.wpr.org/news/gov-evers-asks-trump-disaster-declaration-after-spring-storms-cause-27m-damage>

State officials approve solar farm project near Oconto Falls, despite community pushback

The Wisconsin Public Service Commission voted on May 21, 2026, to grant a certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing construction of the Fox Solar facility in the Town of Morgan, Oconto County, approximately 15 miles southwest of Oconto Falls. The approved project encompasses more than 500 acres and includes over 208,000 solar panels, a collector substation, a generation tie line, and a battery energy storage system, with a total generating capacity of 100 megawatts. PSC Commissioner Marcus Hawkins stated the commission's determination rested on statutory and regulatory requirements and the full evidentiary record. The commission rejected certain Town of Morgan requests, finding they would grant the municipality excessive authority over the project, and determined that Fox Solar's final application was reasonable. The Town of Morgan's updated comprehensive plan, amended to restrict such projects, does not supersede PSC state authority. Fox Solar anticipates construction will begin in 2027, with project completion estimated for late 2028.

Source: WLUK FOX11 Green Bay (Northeastern) | <https://fox11online.com/news/local/state-officials-approve-solar-farm-project-near-oconto-falls-despite-community-pushback-wisconsin-public-service-commission-town-of-morgan-fox-solar-environmental-agricultural-concerns-construction>

Judge dismisses federal government's lawsuit over Wisconsin voter records

U.S. District Judge James D. Peterson of the Western District of Wisconsin dismissed the U.S. Department of Justice's lawsuit against the Wisconsin Elections Commission on May 21, 2026, ruling in a 10-page decision that the department's allegation that the commission violated the Civil Rights Act by withholding unredacted voter roll data fails as a matter of law. The DOJ had sought unredacted voter records including full birthdates, full or partial Social Security numbers, and driver's license information. The Wisconsin Elections Commission had refused the request, citing a state law explicitly prohibiting election officials from disclosing such information to most non-election officials. The dismissal is consistent with rulings in at least seven other states, including Michigan, Oregon, California, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Arizona, and Maine. The Department of Justice has appealed dismissals in Michigan, Oregon, and California; no immediate response regarding the Wisconsin ruling was reported.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Statewide) | <https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/05/wisconsin-voter-records-judge-dismisses-federal-government-lawsuit-election/>

Judge declines to dismiss charges against father of Abundant Life school shooter

Dane County Circuit Court Judge Ellen Berz denied a defense motion to dismiss all charges against Jeffrey Rupnow, 43, of Madison, in a ruling issued May 22, 2026, allowing the criminal case to proceed. Rupnow faces one felony count of contributing to the delinquency of a minor and two felony counts of intentionally giving a dangerous weapon to a person under 18, charges filed by Dane County prosecutors in spring 2025 following the December 16, 2024, shooting at Abundant Life Christian School. Defense attorney Lisa Goldman had argued the charges were factually insufficient and that application of Wisconsin Statute 948.60(2) violated Rupnow's Second Amendment rights. Judge Berz rejected both contentions, finding the State demonstrated that the statute, as applied, is consistent with the nation's historical traditions of firearm regulations protecting minors from unsupervised access to firearms. The court also found several defense arguments were not raised in a timely manner. A scheduling conference is set for June 26.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) | <https://www.wpr.org/news/judge-charges-father-abundant-life-school-shooter-rupnow>

Judge halts some work on Enbridge Line 5 pipeline reroute

Bayfield County Circuit Court Judge John Anderson issued an order on May 15, 2026, partially staying construction permits previously granted to Enbridge Energy for the 41-mile reroute of the Line 5 pipeline in northern Wisconsin. The order bars Enbridge from conducting construction work near four key waterway crossings until the court completes its review of a permit dispute, while allowing construction to continue on the remainder of the reroute path. The stay applies specifically to work areas requiring additional permits beyond those already granted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The judicial review was initiated by Clean Wisconsin, Midwest Environmental Advocates, the Sierra Club, 350 Wisconsin, and the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, with a parallel petition filed by the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa through Earthjustice. Enbridge stated the additional permitting process for the four waterway crossings is well underway. The next procedural step is a full court hearing on the merits of the permit dispute.

Source: Capital Times (Statewide) | https://captimes.com/news/government/judge-halts-some-work-on-enbridge-line-5-pipeline-reroute/article_085e8e4f-cb93-4054-bd07-09a9dcdec70.html

Transmission line fight moves toward the courts

A lawsuit was filed in Vernon County Circuit Court by Coalition Against Maribel 765, Inc., a Wisconsin nonstock corporation formed in 2026, seeking to block siting and construction of the 139-mile MariBell 765kV/161kV double-circuit transmission line through Vernon and Crawford counties. Named defendants are Dairyland Power Cooperative, headquartered in La Crosse, and GridLiance Heartland, LLC, a Florida-based foreign limited liability company. Attorneys Erik Olsen, Andrew Weininger, and Sarah Olsen of Eminent Domain Services, LLC represent the plaintiff group. Separately, at the Vernon County General Government Committee meeting, Vernon and Crawford counties indicated they are considering retaining a mutually shared attorney to advise on navigating the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin permitting process. Crawford County Land Conservation Committee Chairperson Supervisor Gary Koch reported on May 12 that county corporate counsel Mark Peterson is coordinating with Vernon County counsel on a potential resolution in opposition to the line. No court dates have been announced.

Source: SW News Group (South Central) | <https://www.swnews4u.com/local/public-safety/transmission-line-fight-moves-toward-the-courts/>

Ho-Chunk Nation receives 165 acres in Dane County conservation deal

Dane County completed a conservation land transfer conveying a 165-acre property south of Babcock County Park in McFarland to the Ho-Chunk Nation, with Dane County Executive Melissa Agard announcing the deal on May 23, 2026. The parcel, which includes frontage along the Yahara River, Lower Mud Lake, and Lake Waubesa, as well as wetlands, woods, and culturally significant sites, was acquired through negotiations conducted by Groundswell, a conservation group, with the former private landowner. County funding was engaged after negotiations concluded to finance the transfer. Dane County Board Chair Patrick Miles, whose district includes the Town of Dunn and the Village of McFarland, confirmed county involvement at the financing stage. Ho-Chunk Nation President Jon Greendeer stated the tribe's intent is conservation and cultural preservation of the land. McFarland Village Administrator Matt Schuenke raised concerns that the village was excluded from the process. No vote count or specific dollar figure was reported in the article.

Source: WISC CBS3 Madison (South Central) | https://www.channel3000.com/news/ho-chunk-nation-receives-165-acres-in-dane-county-conservation-deal/article_cd2a261b-4034-49eb-95a3-fc07678594b4.html

Douglas County Board shows support for Brule fish hatchery

The Douglas County Board adopted a resolution on May 21, 2026, urging the continued operation of the Brule State Fish Hatchery beyond 2027. The resolution was presented by County Board Chairman Mark Liebaert and Supervisor Scott Luostari. The measure notes the hatchery's role in raising brown trout, coho salmon, and steelhead to stock Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, and the Brule River. The article's language is partly advocacy-oriented. The resolution follows a period in which the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources temporarily closed the Brule and Osceola fish hatcheries and significantly reduced walleye and muskie stocking due to lack of spending authority. The DNR had requested an additional \$4 million in spending authority from the Republican-controlled Joint Committee on Finance on March 27; that authority was granted May 12. No vote count was reported in the article.

Source: Superior Telegram (Statewide) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/douglas-county-board-shows-support-for-brule-fish-hatchery>

Railroad commissioner investigates Superior's rough crossings

The Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Railroads launched a formal investigation, initiated by Superior Public Works Director Chris Carlson's petition to Commissioner Don Vruwink, to evaluate the condition of multiple rail crossings within the city of Superior. The investigation covers Union Pacific and Soo Line crossings at Winter Street and Grand and Ogden avenues, BNSF Railway and associated tracks at Catlin Avenue, and Soo Line tracks at Hammond Avenue, North 58th Street, Stinson Avenue, North 28th Street, Belknap Street, and North 12th Street. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has offered to fund 30 percent of repair costs for crossings along the Eighth Street rail corridor, with the city offering traffic control and paving services, but Soo Line has declined unless WisDOT or the city covers 100 percent of costs. State law mandates railroads maintain crossings in safe condition. No hearing date has been set; once scheduled, the Commissioner will take testimony and may order railroads to complete repairs by a specified deadline.

Source: Superior Telegram (Statewide) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/railroad-commissioner-investigates-superiors-rough-crossings>

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