

Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing

August 29 to September 5, 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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Budgets and Finance

Plymouth Holding Community Info Sessions for Proposed Public Safety Budget Increase

The City of Plymouth will place a referendum question on the November 2026 ballot seeking a permanent \$600,000 annual increase to its public safety budget, funded entirely through a property tax levy increase. The added revenue would pay for three additional police officers. Plymouth Police Department staffing has not increased since the mid-1990s despite continued population growth. The city scheduled three public information sessions ahead of the vote: September 22 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, October 8 at 11:00 a.m. at City Hall, and October 29 at 8:00 a.m. at Generations. Detail on the referendum question is posted at plymouthwi.gov. Voters decide the question at the November 2026 election.

Source: Seehafer News (Southeastern) | <https://www.seehafernews.com/2026/09/05/plymouth-holding-community-info-sessions-for-proposed-public-safety-budget-increase/>

County supervisors put Behnke on the hot seat

The Marinette County Board voted unanimously to depart from its posted agenda so State Rep. Elijah Behnke, a Republican representing District 6 in Oconto County, could address supervisors on shared revenue and the state budget. Behnke, who represented Marinette County's 89th District from 2021 to 2024 before redistricting moved him, told the board he expects rural counties to receive an estimated \$750,000 more each year in shared revenue in the next legislative session. Supervisor Stan Gruszynski called that figure insufficient. Supervisor Connie Seefeldt raised levy limits, Supervisor Jim Bird asked about the PFAS settlement, and Supervisor Peter Noppenberg questioned the state's retention of 60 percent of municipal court fine revenue. Supervisor Mark Anderson cited nearby Forest County officials who describe that county as bankrupt and urged legislators to attend local budget hearings. Board Chairman John Guarisco backed closer legislative engagement with county government.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | https://www.ehextra.com/news/county-supervisors-put-behnke-on-the-hot-seat/article_d61a5306-837c-433f-953a-01b662605468.html

RF to restructure Park Impact Fee model

The River Falls City Council on August 25 approved a motion consolidating the city's Park Impact Fee model, ending the existing split that directed 60 percent of collections to neighborhood parks and 40 percent to regional parks. A single fund now serves all 28 city parks. The Park Impact Fee Fund holds a \$950,000 balance, of which \$280,000 is tied to regional parks, \$435,000 to local parks, and \$234,000 sits in a general pool attributed to no specific park. Sterling Ponds Park carries the largest individual allocation at \$107,000. Conservation and Parks Manager Brooks Ostendorf presented both items. The council also approved Glen Park Phase 2, an \$850,000 project covering removal of existing recreational structures and construction of a multi-use sport court, an open-air pavilion, and an improved trail connection. The amended motion directs staff to pursue grant funding and naming rights for the sport court, which may move completion from 2027 to 2028.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | <https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/rf-to-restructure-park-impact-fee-model,204192>

Neighbors in Saint Germain unite against inflated property assessments, advocate for fair values

The St. Germain Board of Review convened Monday to hear assessment disputes from Pine Acres subdivision property owners who found their land values reassessed at levels they contested. Deb and Douglas Schultz documented an increase in their lot value from \$10,000 to \$26,300, more than 2.5 times the prior figure, driven by a comparable sale of approximately \$26,300 in the adjacent Birch Springs subdivision. After residents met with the assessor during the Board of Review session, the assessor agreed to reduce Pine Acres land values to \$14,000 per parcel, a collective reduction of \$922,000 in assessed value across the subdivision. The Schultzes organized neighbors to appear together and advocate as a group before the board. The article reports no vote count or resolution identifier. The Schultzes urged other property owners to contact their assessors before a Board of Review deadline rather than waiting for a formal hearing.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/neighbors-in-saint-germain-unite-against-inflated-property-assessments-advocate-for-fair-values/article_695c75bc-72d4-4e83-a770-079e6f4595d1.html

Residents encouraged to engage as Dane County looks at another tight budget

Dane County enters its 2027 budget cycle under continued fiscal constraint, with County Executive Melissa Agard required to release a proposed budget on or before October 1, 2026. The County Board will hold three departmental budget request hearings at the City-County Building in Madison on September 9, September 15, and September 16, each beginning at 5:30 p.m. Board Chair Patrick Miles and Supervisor Dave Boetcher of Waunakee cited rising healthcare costs, federal Medicare funding reductions affecting health and human services revenue, and maintenance obligations across 11,000 miles of county road. A hiring freeze on vacant positions that Agard installed in late 2025 remains in effect. The county is negotiating with unions over changes to its employee health insurance plan, with anticipated savings described as a couple million dollars. Boetcher said the county may also pursue service consolidation and strategic hiring to reduce contracted-service spending. A referendum to raise the property tax levy has not been ruled out but was characterized as a last resort.

Source: Sun Prairie Star (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/the_star/regional_news/residents-encouraged-to-engage-as-dane-county-looks-at-another-tight-budget/article_75b371d8-2f5a-4182-8bfe-829a9a78336b.html

Workforce and Labor

Weston trustees to weigh wage costs, job reclassification and summer hours Tuesday

The Village of Weston Board of Trustees and its Finance and Human Resources Committee meet in a joint 2027 budget workshop at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Weston Municipal Center, 4747 Camp Phillips Road, to take up three workforce matters. The village employs 37 full-time and three part-time workers, and 23 full-time positions sit below the midpoint of the pay matrix. Moving all of them to midpoint would cost roughly \$170,000. Each 1 percent across-the-board wage increase costs approximately \$34,700 across all village funds and about \$20,700 in the general fund alone. General fund wages and benefits are budgeted at \$2.72 million for 2027, up roughly \$258,000 from the 2026 estimate of \$2.46 million. Personnel benefits across all funds are estimated at

\$742,808 for 2027, assuming a preliminary 10 percent health insurance increase. Trustees will also consider reclassifying the engineering technician position from FLSA-exempt to non-exempt, backdated to August 24, 2026, with overtime paid in the next available pay period. Budget workshops continue into late October.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | <https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/09/05/weston-trustees-to-weigh-wage-costs-job-reclassification-and-summer-hours-tuesday/>

Forest Co K9 deputy who was forced out after investigation back in policing

Forest County Sheriff Jeffery Marvin began termination proceedings against K9 deputy Adam Boney after an internal investigation into his conduct. The investigation documented a December 2, 2024 incident in which a sheriff's office secretary and Deputy Tracy Priebe reported that Boney refused to provide backup during two welfare checks. Investigators also recorded a prior suspension tied to comments Boney made about killing a dispatcher and a pattern of complaints from multiple employees. Boney resigned on December 26, 2024, after eight years with the Forest County Sheriff's Office, where his final hourly wage was approximately \$30. The Town of Wabeno Police Department, a part-time department operating within Forest County that routinely relies on the sheriff's office for call coverage, later hired Boney as a part-time officer at \$25 per hour. The Wabeno department did not respond to multiple inquiries from The Badger Project.

Source: The Badger Project (Central/Northern) | <https://thebadgerproject.org/2026/09/01/forest-co-k9-deputy-who-was-forced-out-after-investigation-back-in-policing/>

Infrastructure and Utilities

City Hall renovations: Plan cut to \$3.86M, alders raise response-time concerns

Watertown's Finance Committee reviewed a scaled-down City Hall renovation plan totaling \$3,857,694, reduced from an original estimate of approximately \$25 million to \$26 million for a full building complex renovation. Phase one covers Police Department renovations at an estimated \$1,910,000. Phase two covers the second-floor courtroom, staff offices, and ADA restrooms at an estimated \$1,947,694. Mayor Robert Stocks described the scope reduction. District 7 Alder Tony Arnett named plumbing leaks, a police workspace closer to the garage, and ADA restrooms as the three highest priorities, and District 9 Alder Myron Moldenhauer supported limiting scope to those items. The committee also discussed preserving the City Hall garage as a potential EMS satellite station. District 5 Alder Brad Blanke cited extended response-time data affecting the north and northeast corners of the city, and District 6 Alder Fred Smith referenced the Fire Department station on Bernard Street as a companion facility. The city could issue bids in late summer 2027 for a fall construction start.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/city-hall-renovations-plan-cut-to-3-86m-alders-raise-response-time-concerns/article_743a2a64-758d-43dd-b12c-99ee2ea41b86.html

Fairgrounds internet proposal sent back to F&P

The Pierce County Board voted to return a resolution to its Finance and Personnel Committee covering a proposed 10-year partnership between SwiftCurrent Connect and the Pierce County Fairgrounds for high-speed fiber internet service. Under the proposal, parent organization Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services would fund an estimated \$200,000 initial investment covering network design, materials, equipment, and installation labor, in exchange for naming rights at

locations including the Grandstand and entry gates. The annual sponsorship value is listed at \$20,000, and Pierce Pepin would provide the county a \$5,000 annual maintenance allowance, with costs beyond that billed at \$135 per hour. Board Chair Jon Aubart said the donation language had not been corrected from the first reading and questioned whether a \$200,000 infrastructure project triggers competitive bidding requirements. Corporation Counsel Brad Lawrence supported returning the resolution to committee for clarification. SwiftCurrent representative Dave French warned that further delay could keep the system from operating in time for the 2027 fair.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | <https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/fairgrounds-internet-proposal-sent-back-to-fp,204200>

Park Board zeroing in on final East End Park Plan

The Ellsworth Park Board met August 26 and directed engineering firm MSA to combine two draft East End Park master plans into a single concept with probable costs before the plan goes to the Village Board. MSA Landscape Architect Eleanor Brandt presented both options. Concept One, estimated at \$1.8 million to \$2.5 million, includes a daylighted stream, a pedestrian bridge, a relocated restroom, cabin repair, and expanded open lawn. Concept Two, estimated at a lower cost, keeps restrooms in place, relocates the cabin, and retains the basketball court. A public survey drew 370 responses, with a restroom facility, a traditional playground, an open-air picnic shelter, and a basketball court ranking highest. Village President Becky Beissel said drainage problems must be addressed whether or not the stream is uncovered. Separately, the Health, License and Welfare Committee voted to draft a resolution requiring Village Board approval before the Ellsworth Police Department installs any automatic license plate readers. The Park Board finalizes the draft plan for Village Board submission at its next meeting.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | <https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/park-board-zeroing-in-on-final-east-end-park-plan,204196>

Council approves alley/storm sewer improvement plan

The Prescott City Council on August 24 approved alley storm sewer improvement plans and specifications and authorized staff to open negotiations with Prescott Lodging LLC on a development agreement covering public improvements tied to the redevelopment of 216 Broad St., formerly known as Lucille's. Cedar Corporation designed the proposed improvements at an estimated \$70,150. The project addresses a long-standing drainage problem in which the alley behind 216 Broad St. and 220 Broad St. slopes water directly into the buildings. The city's public works department lacks the excavation equipment to complete the project independently, and overhead power lines complicate access. Staff proposed coordinating the public storm sewer work with the private demolition and reconstruction already planned by property owners Megan and Troy Langer in order to minimize construction disruption. Alderpersons Ben Bettis and Bailey Ruona were absent for the vote. Staff will next negotiate a formal development agreement with Prescott Lodging LLC.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | <https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/council-approves-alleystorm-sewer-improvement-plan,204195>

New Phelps Community Center welcomes public with grand opening

The Town of Phelps opened its new Community Center and library on September 4, 2026, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by Governor Tony Evers. The \$5.5 million project drew \$4.25 million from a state Flexible Facilities Grant, with local fundraising and donations covering the remainder. Community Center committee chairman Dave Selby described a five-year effort that ran through financial and design hurdles. Town board and committee member Mark Holcomb said the state grant made construction feasible for a small municipality that could not otherwise afford the project. The building includes a banquet hall, a chamber office, town offices, a library, and meeting rooms. The center will partner with the Vilas County Aging and Disability Resource Center to offer services and health and wellness programs. The facility is now open to the public and accepting reservations for the meeting rooms and the banquet hall.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/new-phelps-community-center-welcomes-public-with-grand-opening/article_b72440bd-db01-4394-a1a5-6085445006ce.html

Milwaukee Mitchell airport receives grant for infrastructure repairs

The Federal Aviation Administration on September 3, 2026 announced a \$14.2 million grant to Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport for taxiway construction and rehabilitation. The award is part of a broader \$481 million FAA announcement covering airport infrastructure and safety improvements at airports in 36 states. The Milwaukee grant draws from the fifth and final installment of a \$2.39 billion tranche under the Airport Infrastructure Grant program, itself a component of the \$14.5 billion total distributed to United States airports under that program beginning in fiscal year 2022. The program was established by the bipartisan infrastructure law signed in 2021. Milwaukee Mitchell previously received \$4.5 million for taxiway construction, realignment, and rehabilitation at the start of fiscal year 2026. U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy attributed the investments to a broader effort to upgrade runway infrastructure nationwide.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Southeastern) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/09/03/milwaukee-mitchell-airport-14-million-federal-grant-taxiway-repairs/>

New Mississippi River bridge will open months earlier than expected

Wisconsin and Iowa transportation officials announced on September 3, 2026 that the \$140 million replacement Mississippi River bridge connecting Crawford County to Lansing, Iowa, will open to traffic in early November 2026, several months ahead of the previously projected spring 2027 completion date. Construction began in late 2023, with Kraemer North America serving as general contractor and a design team including Burns & McDonnell, Parsons Corp., SEH, and Stanley Consultants. The original Black Hawk Bridge carried approximately 2,000 vehicles daily and served as the only river crossing between La Crosse and Prairie du Chien, a span of nearly 60 miles. It closed permanently in October 2025 and was demolished in December 2025. A car ferry has transported approximately 131,000 vehicles across the river since the closure. The new structure carries a concrete deck rather than the steel grate flooring of its predecessor. Officials cited contractor performance and favorable weather and river conditions for the accelerated schedule. An exact opening date was not expected to be set for several weeks.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Western) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/09/04/new-mississippi-river-bridge-wisconsin-iowa-open-early/>

Heart of the Vilas County Bike Trail System to be further expanded with state grant in 2029

The Great Headwaters Trails Foundation and the town of Cloverland received a \$1.3 million state grant through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Transportation Alternatives Program to extend the Heart of the Vilas County Bike Trail east from St. Germain through Cloverland toward Eagle River. The grant covers 80 percent of the total \$1.6 million project cost. The foundation is responsible for fundraising the remaining 20 percent plus engineering costs, amounting to approximately \$500,000. Phase 1 adds 3.6 miles to the existing 55-mile trail, running along Old Highway 70, crossing at Highway 70, and continuing along the Wisconsin River to the Wilderness Trail. Foundation President Laura Van Valkenberg said the application was submitted in October 2025 and that notification came from the governor's office approximately one week before publication. An economic impact study attributes more than \$25 million in annual economic impact to the existing trail system. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2029, when the grant funds become available.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/heart-of-the-vilas-county-bike-trail-system-to-be-further-expanded-with-state-grant/article_46db8b6f-00b0-4b3b-89a3-031972e98ca3.html

Second high-voltage power line proposed to cut through Driftless area

Midcontinent Grid Solutions, a consortium of American Electric Power, Evergy, and BHE Transmission, is advancing the BECI transmission project, a proposed 765-kilovolt line spanning approximately 190 miles from Crawford County through Dane County to the Illinois state line at an estimated cost of \$1.2 billion. MISO selected Midcontinent Grid Solutions in January 2026 from among six competing proposals, including a joint bid from American Transmission Co., Dairyland Power Cooperative, and GridLiance. Potential routes cross Crawford, Richland, Sauk, Columbia, Dodge, Dane, Jefferson, Walworth, and Rock counties. Unlike the separate MariBell project, which would upgrade an existing 161-kilovolt corridor, BECI would require new easements across previously unencumbered land, and the number of easements will not be determined until the Wisconsin Public Service Commission selects a final route. Proposed towers would stand 175 feet tall and require 180 feet of ground clearance. Wisconsin ratepayers would share construction costs with other states in the regional grid. The commission must approve the project and designate the final route before construction can proceed.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Statewide) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/09/01/second-765-kilovolt-power-line-proposed-driftless-wisconsin/>

BECI 765 kV transmission line open house draws a large crowd

Midcontinent Grid Solutions held a public open house August 24 in Gays Mills on the proposed 190-mile BECI 765 kV transmission line, which would connect Bell Center to the Columbia Power Station near Portage and continue to Illinois. The session is one in a series spanning Crawford, Richland, Sauk, Columbia, Dane, Jefferson, Walworth, and Rock counties. More than 150 attendees had entered by the midpoint of the event, where 50 company employees explained the project and identified possible line sitings. Joe Demaree, a Project Outreach Specialist with Transource, a Midcontinent Grid Solutions subsidiary, said he expects proposed and alternative route submissions to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2027. MISO classifies the project as a greenfields competitive bid, distinct from the MariBell upgrade project. Landowners opposing the line face a September 7 deadline to submit

public comments. The commission submission remains contingent on completion of all routing work.

Source: SW News Group (Western) | <https://www.swnews4u.com/local/business/beci-765-kv-transmission-line-open-house-draws-a-large-crowd/>

Developer proposes two large natural gas plants in northeast Wisconsin

Chicago-based Invenergy submitted engineering plans to Wisconsin state regulators for two natural gas-fired power plants in Brillion, Calumet County, with a combined capacity of 1.95 gigawatts. The 750-megawatt Union Depot Energy Center would operate as a continuous baseload facility. The 1.2-gigawatt Forest Junction Energy Center would serve as a peaking plant and, if approved, would be the second-largest natural gas plant in Wisconsin. We Energies plans to purchase the facilities from Invenergy and has targeted a December 2031 in-service date in its ongoing rate case filings. The proposals follow two other Invenergy projects pending before the Public Service Commission, one in Walworth County valued at \$1.7 billion and another in Kenosha County at \$564 million. A commission draft report projects Wisconsin energy demand rising 40 percent by 2032, driven primarily by three data center campuses. Invenergy plans to file a formal commission application in October 2026, with construction expected to begin in the fourth quarter of 2027.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Northeastern) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/08/31/invenergy-proposes-two-natural-gas-plants-calumet-county/>

Public Safety

Mid-State addresses Wisconsin EMS staffing shortage with new Fire Medic program

Mid-State Technical College is launching a Fire Medic associate degree program, a two-year, 65-credit Associate in Applied Science combining fire service and paramedic training, offered through its Wisconsin Rapids Campus with fall and spring start options. Rick Anderson, dean of the Adams Campus and School of Public Safety, said the program creates a direct workforce pipeline for regional fire and EMS agencies. A workforce report identified approximately 384 annual openings for EMTs and paramedics in Wisconsin, and 41 percent of Wisconsin EMS agencies reported staffing inadequate to respond to ambulance requests, with rural agencies facing particular recruitment and retention challenges. Earlier in 2026 the Wisconsin Rapids Fire Department announced plans to add three firefighter/paramedic positions through its regional EMS cooperative. The department employs 39 full-time firefighter/paramedics and responds to approximately 4,900 fire and EMS incidents annually with regional partners. Students may begin general education coursework immediately, with program coursework available in person and in hybrid format.

Source: WSAU 550 AM / 99.9 FM Wausau (Central/Northern) | <https://wsau.com/2026/09/03/mid-state-addresses-wisconsin-ems-staffing-shortage-with-new-fire-medic-program/>

Manitowoc Announces Decision to Deactivate Flock Cameras

The City of Manitowoc deactivated its municipally owned Flock Safety automated license plate reader cameras, with Mayor Justin Nickels and Police Chief John Musial issuing a joint statement on September 5, 2026. The action applies only to cameras the city owns and operates; privately owned Flock systems installed by independent businesses or property owners are not affected.

The city's current contract with Flock Safety runs through early 2027. Over the coming months city officials will evaluate whether to continue, modify, or discontinue that contract and will assess alternative technologies. Nickels and Musial stated the deactivation does not stem from any known local misuse, malfunction, or policy failure, and that the city has no indication Flock accessed or misused Manitowoc data in the manner alleged elsewhere, though verification will continue as a precaution. The city's next procedural step is a formal contract determination before the early 2027 expiration date.

Source: Seehafer News (Northeastern) | <https://www.seehafernews.com/2026/09/05/manitowoc-announces-decision-to-deactivate-flock-cameras/>

Milwaukee police, sheriff's office utilize Flock transparency portals

The Milwaukee Police Department and the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office announced on September 4, 2026 that both agencies activated Flock Safety transparency portals giving the public real-time access to data on their automated license plate reader systems. The portals display the total number of cameras in each agency's network, the number of queries and hotlist reads from the preceding 30 days, the types of alerts officers receive, the categories of offenses investigated, data retention settings, and summaries of governing policies. Mayor Cavalier Johnson announced a concurrent overhaul of the city's Flock camera program the same day, and County Executive David Crowley announced separate county-level policy changes. The disclosures follow criminal charges against a former Kenosha County deputy and a Milwaukee Police internal affairs detective for misusing the Flock database. More than 1,500 agencies nationally have published similar transparency portals. The Kenosha Police Department separately announced it is ending its Flock contract and transitioning to Axon.

Source: WISN 12 ABC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | <https://www.wisn.com/article/milwaukee-police-sheriffs-office-utilize-flock-transparency-portals/73618954>

As southeast Wisconsin agencies drop Flock cameras, Milwaukee residents weigh new transparency portal

The Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office paired its new Flock transparency portal with revised internal rules limiting access to license plate reader data to supervisors only. The policy changes follow criminal charges against two former Milwaukee Police Department officers accused of using Flock for personal purposes, and a separate incident in which a Milwaukee woman was pulled over at gunpoint in Brookfield after the system incorrectly flagged her vehicle. At least four other southeastern Wisconsin jurisdictions are moving in a different direction. The Racine County Sheriff's Office is removing Flock cameras and ending its contract over data concerns, Fond du Lac County is ending its Flock use over investigative-data disclosure concerns, Sheboygan has covered its cameras and plans to terminate its contract, and Kenosha began transitioning from Flock to Axon in January. Brookfield alders are calling for a legislative review of the technology following the wrongful stop.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | <https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/in-your-community/milwaukee-county/as-southeast-wisconsin-agencies-drop-flock-cameras-milwaukee-residents-weigh-new-transparency-portal>

Fond du Lac County law enforcement agencies discontinue Flock camera use effective immediately

Five Fond du Lac County law enforcement agencies jointly announced the immediate discontinuation of their Flock Safety automated license plate recognition systems on September 4, 2026. Fond du Lac County Sheriff Ryan Waldschmidt, Fond du Lac Police Chief Aaron Goldstein, Waupun Police Chief Jeremy Rasch, Ripon Police Chief Bill Wallner, and North Fond du Lac Police Chief Pete Vergos signed the statement. The agencies cited the discovery that search data from their Flock systems, including records tied to active investigations, had been disclosed to the public by law enforcement agencies in other states responding to open records requests. Physical lens covers are being installed over every Flock camera to prevent further image capture. The agencies stated that search capability on their systems ended immediately and that the inability to control how investigative data is handled once it leaves their agencies was the determining factor. No replacement vendor has been announced.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Northeastern) | <https://www.tmj4.com/news/fond-du-lac-county/fond-du-lac-county-law-enforcement-agencies-discontinue-flock-camera-use-effective-immediately>

Racine County sheriff orders immediate removal of Flock cameras used by RCSO

Racine County Sheriff Christopher Schmaling ordered the immediate removal of all Flock Safety cameras operated by the Racine County Sheriff's Office after learning that Flock generates a separate aggregated dataset from information collected by its cameras and markets that dataset to other government and private customers through a product called Traffic Analytics. The office entered its agreement with Flock under the understanding that collected information would be subject to a 30-day retention period and used solely for public-safety and crime-solving purposes. Flock confirmed to the sheriff's office that the aggregated dataset is retained for up to five years, separate from and in addition to the 30-day retention period the agency understood to apply. The office has obtained legal counsel and is taking steps to terminate its agreement with Flock. Schmaling said the office will continue to explore automated license plate reader technology through alternative vendors, noting the technology previously assisted deputies in solving a homicide, a road-rage firearm incident, and a nationwide identity-theft operation.

Source: Kenosha News (Southeastern) | https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/local/article_44274b34-511e-5bc0-9b40-2b8fd4574590.html

Flock cameras paused as Marinette seeks answers

Marinette Mayor Steve Genisot and Police Chief Jon LaCombe ordered the city's Flock safety camera system bagged and taken out of active use, suspending the program while the city council prepares to revisit the contract at a public meeting later in September 2026. No specific incident triggered the suspension. Council members and residents raised mounting questions about data privacy, data-sharing practices, and contract terms. The city remains under contract with Flock for approximately one and a half years, so the council must decide whether to continue, modify, or terminate the agreement. Genisot cited unconfirmed reports that Flock has reduced data retention to seven days and noted that some Wisconsin communities restrict data sharing to their own departments only. The mayor is also monitoring Sheboygan, where officials are scheduled to discuss their Flock contract and possible contract violations. Genisot said he intends to have both local privacy advocates and a Flock company representative present at the same council meeting so members can hear competing claims directly.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | https://www.ehextra.com/news/flock-cameras-paused-as-marinette-seeks-answers/article_859c101a-4d30-43ff-b9f4-548cdf374653.html

Stevens Point to end Flock cameras on Tuesday, September 8

Stevens Point Mayor Mike Wiza announced the city will suspend operation of all Flock Safety license-plate-reader cameras effective Tuesday, September 8, 2026, citing concerns about data misuse and loss of public trust. The suspension follows allegations raised by the City of Sheboygan regarding the sharing and management of data collected by Flock, as well as nationally reported incidents of municipal and state employees misusing system access. City staff will physically enclose the camera units in coverings to block their ability to capture or collect data. The city will also explore termination of its existing contract with Flock, which currently contains language specifying that collected data remains under the city's control and is restricted to law enforcement use by city-authorized personnel. The article reports no vote count or contract dollar figure. A formal review of contract termination options is the next procedural step.

Source: WSAU 550 AM / 99.9 FM Wausau (Central/Northern) | <https://wsau.com/2026/09/04/stevens-point-to-end-flock-cameras-on-tuesday-september-8/>

Have you been Flocked? A new Wausau Pilot tool lets you check your own plate

Wausau Pilot & Review launched the Watch Ledger, a public database tracking automated license plate reader cameras and usage across Wisconsin. The ledger documents that 49 disclosing agencies logged 7,022,808 vehicle sightings in the past 30 days across a 276-agency Flock Safety network. Flock usage audit logs obtained under public records laws by USA TODAY cover 1,867,858 searches run by 249 Wisconsin agencies between 2023 and 2026, and 74 percent of those searches were conducted by agencies that publish no transparency portal. In Marathon County, the Wausau Police Department operates 20 cameras sharing data with 205 Wisconsin agencies and logged 20,020 searches in the USA TODAY records, while the Marathon County Sheriff's Office operates 10 cameras sharing with 1,455 agencies across 40 states and accounts for 23,435 searches. The ledger maps 2,100 volunteer-reported cameras and 759 state Department of Transportation-permitted highway cameras, with highway permits rising from 10 approved in 2021 to 737 through August 2026. The database refreshes every Monday.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Statewide) | <https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/09/05/have-you-been-flocked-a-new-wausau-pilot-tool-lets-you-check-your-own-plate/>

Sussex man alleges Sheriff's Department used Flock cameras to retaliate for complaint

Napoleon Jones, a Sussex resident and Navy veteran, filed a federal civil rights lawsuit in the Eastern District of Wisconsin naming Waukesha County Sheriff's deputies Brandon Shayhorn and Brett Kromrey, Waukesha County, and the village of Lisbon as defendants. The suit follows his May 4, 2025 arrest after he filmed a traffic stop. Jones was held at the county jail for approximately five hours before release, and a resisting an officer charge was not forwarded to prosecutors after a review found no lawful basis for the stop. In July, Jones amended the complaint to add Capt. Lisa Panas, Lt. Cory Farrell, and Deputy Jarrett Scheelk, alleging department members ran Flock license-plate-reader searches on his vehicle on dates unrelated to the arrest or his complaint. The amended suit adds claims of false arrest, retaliation, and conspiracy. Defense attorney Samuel

Hall Jr. filed a motion to dismiss on August 14, arguing the negligence claim was omitted from a required pre-suit notice of claim and that three isolated Flock reviews without government action do not constitute retaliation.

Source: Oconomowoc Enterprise (Southeastern) |

https://oconomowocenterprise.com/oconomowoc_enterprise/news/sussex-man-files-lawsuit/article_ac71424e-f197-4227-8996-1f03f65f8a2e.html

Resolution urges state to prioritize sex trafficking enforcement, prosecution

The Watertown Common Council passed a resolution sponsored by District 5 Alder Brad Blanke urging the State of Wisconsin to prioritize enforcement, investigation, and prosecution of human sex trafficking rather than requiring individual municipalities to develop local regulatory mechanisms. The resolution follows the council's March decision to send a massage establishment ordinance back to the Public Safety and Welfare Committee for further review. District 1 Alder Dana Davis moved to table the resolution, arguing its scope should be narrowed to align strictly with its title. District 2 Alder Jonathan Lampe voted against, characterizing it as an ineffective appeal to a higher body. District 6 Alder Fred Smith voted in favor while sharing concerns about the practical impact of resolutions. The massage establishment ordinance, a local licensing and sanctions mechanism, remains pending before the Public Safety and Welfare Committee as a parallel local regulatory track.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/resolution-urges-state-to-prioritize-sex-trafficking-enforcement-prosecution/article_84d259c8-9c55-42fe-af08-482bc13e6cd6.html

Rural is Madison College's 'jam': Emphasizes coordinated, collaborative efforts for expanded programming

Madison College's Watertown Campus will launch its first daytime EMT course in January 2027 and a new paramedic program in spring 2028. The City of Watertown's Economic Development Plan explicitly calls for enhancing training offerings through Madison College and growing feeder programs through regional high schools. Regional Dean Shawna Marquardt identified Madison College as a recipient of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Rural Health Transformation grant, which provides up to \$41,000 annually per institution across all 16 technical colleges statewide to develop and expand healthcare and human services career pathways. Marquardt said coordinated grant applications among Madison College, the Workforce Development Board, Community Action, and the City of Watertown are intended to prevent duplicative funding requests for the same programming. Madison College President Jennifer Berne authorized restoration of the first year of the liberal arts transfer degree at rural branch campuses. Additional EMT programming launches at the Watertown Campus in spring 2027 ahead of the full paramedic program rollout.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/rural-is-madison-colleges-jam-emphasizes-coordinated-collaborative-efforts-for-expanded-programming/article_098b534a-4afe-415b-ace7-ef5d43f9ab21.html

Land Use and Development

Milwaukee officials consider reversing downtown 10 p.m. food truck curfew

Milwaukee Alderman Bob Bauman introduced legislation to reverse the city's downtown food truck curfew from 10 p.m. back to 1 a.m. The Common Council originally passed the restriction in April 2026 to reduce loitering and crime along Water Street. The ordinance faced immediate legal challenge. The owner of the Fatty Patty food truck sued the city, and a judge temporarily blocked enforcement. Bauman said the legal proceedings could take approximately two years to resolve before a court clarifies whether the city holds authority to impose such a restriction. Mayor Cavalier Johnson stated his support for returning the closing time to 1 a.m. One food truck employee reported that approximately 80 percent of his business occurs after 10 p.m. The Common Council Public Safety and Health Committee is scheduled to vote on the reversal legislation Friday, with the full Common Council holding final authority over the decision.

Source: WISN 12 ABC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | <https://www.wisn.com/article/milwaukee-officials-consider-reversing-downtown-10-pm-food-truck-curfew/73623769>

Bids to raze foundry are good news for Grafton

Grafton's Community Development Authority was expected Wednesday to recommend a contractor to demolish the Goldberg Foundry at 1019-1025 11th Ave., abandoned since 2003, with the Village Board scheduled to consider awarding the contract at its 6 p.m. September 8 meeting. The village received six bids from southeast Wisconsin contractors, all below the project's \$650,000 budget, which covers engineering services and demolition. The lowest bid came in at \$189,000 and the second lowest at approximately \$300,000. Engineering firm Bolton & Menk is reviewing the low bid to determine whether it meets project standards. Funding sources include a \$150,000 Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation grant, for which the Village Board recently approved a required management policy, with remaining costs drawn from TIF District No. 6. Demolition could begin as early as late September and may extend into 2027. The first phase brings the structure down to the slab, after which the village will conduct soil investigation for potential contamination before pursuing site redevelopment.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeeexpress.com/content/bids-raze-foundry-are-good-news-grafton>

City council approves Lake Mohawksin enhanced wake ordinance

The Tomahawk Common Council voted 6-2 on Tuesday, September 1 to adopt an ordinance prohibiting artificially enhanced wakes on Lake Mohawksin and all segments of the Wisconsin and Tomahawk rivers within city limits. Council members Patricia E. Haskin, Robert Soward, Jeff Kahle, Donald Nelson, Will Garske, and Tadd Wegener voted in favor. Mickey Loka and Mike Loka voted against, and Steve Bartz was absent. The ordinance bans use of ballast tanks, ballast bags, or fins to operate a boat bow-high or to increase a boat's wake, and exempts water skiing, tubing, rope-tow wakeboarding, bilge-water clearing, and Kwahamot Water Ski Club shows. First-offense violations carry a \$500 fine; second and subsequent offenses within one year carry a \$1,000 fine. Enforcement authority rests with the Tomahawk Police Department and the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. Because Tomahawk and the Town of Bradley share jurisdiction over Lake Mohawksin, Wisconsin DNR guidelines require collaborative ordinances, and the Town of Bradley is expected to consider a parallel measure.

Source: Tomahawk Leader (Central/Northern) | <https://www.tomahawkleader.com/stories/city-council-approves-lake-mohawksin-enhanced-wake-ordinance,352444>

Residents ask for a moratorium on data centers

The Pierce County Board voted 16-1 on August 25 to approve an ordinance amending the county zoning code and table of uses to address data centers and contractor yards. Supervisor Claire McCarty of District 5 in River Falls cast the lone dissenting vote. The ordinance defines a data center to include facilities providing cloud computing, colocation services, artificial intelligence computing, cryptocurrency mining, blockchain validation, and similar services housed in buildings, modular units, or shipping containers. Under the ordinance, data centers are allowable only in industrial zoning districts and require a conditional use permit carrying 14 submittal requirements. Land Management Director Andy Pichotta noted in a memo that limited heavy-industry-zoned land exists in the county and that any rezone must be supported by the affected town and consistent with that town's adopted comprehensive plan. Several residents urged the board to instead adopt a 12-month moratorium, citing similar actions in Chippewa, Polk, and Rusk counties and ongoing moratorium efforts in the City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, and St. Croix County.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | <https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/residents-ask-for-a-moratorium-on-data-centers,204203>

Downtown redevelopment to employment center: Duffy highlights keys to economic development in Oconomowoc

Oconomowoc Director of Economic Development Robert Duffy outlined the city's economic development trajectory in a September 1, 2026 interview, citing an equalized property value of approximately \$4.39 billion and a city population now exceeding 20,000 residents. Duffy credited a 2004 downtown market analysis as the foundational planning document, with TIF districts serving as financing instruments for public improvements including parking lots, streetscape upgrades, a boardwalk, and a boat launch. The city's asset tax rate stands at \$4.16 per \$1,000 of assessed value in 2026, placing Oconomowoc in the lowest 10 percent of Wisconsin municipalities by tax rate. The in-development Pabst59 project encompasses 59 acres along I-94 and includes four 80,000-square-foot innovation and technology buildings, 162 apartment units, and commercial retail space. A separate Cobalt proposal covering approximately 210 acres along Pabst Farms Boulevard would add nearly 750 housing units, more than 550,000 square feet of retail and office space, and 300,000 square feet of industrial space. City staff and officials are currently meeting with Cobalt regarding that proposal.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (Southeastern) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/downtown-redevelopment-to-employment-center-duffy-highlights-keys-to-economic-development-in-oconomowoc/article_9f40846a-f473-4765-801a-cdb2b6b19947.html

This Dane County town bet against sprawl. Fifty years later, it's still paying off

The Town of Dunn, located approximately 10 miles southeast of Madison in Dane County, has protected more than 7,000 acres, nearly 40 percent of the town's total land base, through a land preservation program residents began developing in 1973. Calvin DeWitt, who served as town supervisor from 1973 to 1977, established the town's Plan Commission in 1977 and has continued advising the town since. Residents crafted the preservation effort in response to

suburban sprawl expanding outward from Madison. Dane County has lost 17 percent of its farmland since 2021, largely to housing development, and Wisconsin lost approximately 15 percent of its farmland between 1997 and 2022. The Town of Dunn's preserved acreage encompasses fields, wetlands, and rolling hills. The article appears in a series examining ongoing farmland loss pressure from housing development, utility-scale solar, and data centers across the Madison region.

Source: Kenosha News (South Central) | https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_002382da-7837-5c6b-91ac-ec420e1cd31b.html

Downtown Milwaukee sees surge in residents and investment

The Downtown Milwaukee Business Improvement District's 2026 Snapshot of Strong Upward Momentum report documents \$5.4 billion in public and private investment since 2015, with an additional \$3.6 billion currently under construction or in the proposal stage. The greater downtown area recorded a 21.2 percent population increase since 2010, reaching more than 42,000 residents, and approximately 7,800 new or planned jobs over the last six years. Two housing projects received tax incremental financing: the 100 East office tower conversion into 373 apartments and the 269-unit Fieldhouse Flats in the Deer District, both including units for middle- and lower-income renters. More than 4,000 new housing units have been proposed since 2020, with roughly 1,000 anticipated to begin occupancy in 2026. Downtown's office vacancy rate stood at 18.1 percent in 2025, below the national metropolitan average of 19.2 percent, though the Commercial Association of Realtors-Wisconsin reported that figure rose to 19.7 percent in the second quarter of 2026.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Southeastern) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/09/04/downtown-milwaukee-residents-investment-growth/>

Traffic planning nears completion for DeForest Buc-ee's

The DeForest Village Board received a status update September 1 on the proposed 74,000-square-foot Buc-ee's travel center at the I-90/94/39 interchange, with Village Administrator Bill Chang reporting that the traffic impact analysis is nearing completion. The diverging diamond interchange reconstruction required to accommodate the development carries an estimated cost of \$17.1 million, a figure Chang said is expected to grow as scope has expanded to include Highway V and Highway I work. Buc-ee's has publicly committed \$8.1 million plus \$520,000 in separate contributions. The village has secured two Department of Transportation grants totaling \$4.9 million and expects to leverage just under \$1.9 million through Tax Increment District #9, leaving a funding gap of approximately \$1.68 million. Staff proposed that Buc-ee's cover that gap through a development agreement currently under the company's review. A state-municipal agreement between DeForest and the Department of Transportation has not yet been presented to the board, and no board action was taken. Buc-ee's must also file a new conditional use permit because the original 2023 permit has expired.

Source: Sun Prairie Star (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/the_star/local_news/traffic-planning-nears-completion-for-deforest-buc-ees/article_66da76a6-86d2-44b3-bb0b-1d4725ae898d.html

La Crosse F&P Committee advances major mixed-use development and acquires Girl Scout building

La Crosse's Finance and Personnel Committee voted unanimously on September 3, 2026 to advance a development agreement for the Copper Rocks project at the former K-Mart site on State Road. The three-phase mixed-use development comprises 214 apartments, 33 townhomes, 163 garage spaces, 136 surface parking spaces, 25,000 square feet of commercial space, and 3,000 square feet of community amenities. The developer plans to demolish the existing K-Mart building as part of the redevelopment, which the city's Comprehensive Plan identifies as an infill and revitalization priority. In the same session, the committee unanimously approved terminating the Girl Scouts of Wisconsin-Badgerland Council's 99-year lease on the former service center at 2710 Quarry Road, with the building and fixtures transferring to the city for \$1, effective June 30. Parks, Recreation and Forestry will assume responsibility for the property, and the city may retain, lease, or declare it surplus and sell it through a request for proposals. Both measures advance to the Common Council for final consideration.

Source: WKBT CBS8 La Crosse (Western) | https://www.news8000.com/news/local-news/la-crosse/la-crosse-f-p-committee-advances-major-mixed-use-development-and-acquires-girl-scout-building/article_9634fe23-59fb-405e-8f5c-7fb93c10fba7.html

Human Services

Funding announced to support local efforts on opioid crisis

The Langlade County Board of Supervisors designated an opioid task force and directed it to allocate funds the county received from opioid settlement proceeds, Health Department Director and Health Officer Meghan Williams announced September 3, 2026. The task force conducted a community needs survey in 2024 and identified six priority funding areas: treatment services, recovery support, mental health support, family support services, transportation and access barriers, and youth prevention and education. The task force has opened a grant application process for external partner organizations seeking portions of the settlement funds and directs applicants to langladecountyhealth.org/opioid-settlement. Williams cited co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders and lack of transportation to treatment facilities as documented ongoing challenges in Langlade County. External partners seeking funding must apply by October 1, 2026. Questions may be directed to the Langlade County Health Department at 715-627-6250.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | https://www.antigojournal.com/news/funding-announced-to-support-local-efforts-on-opioid-crisis/article_b2853963-fb37-428c-9984-3b7ab02821cc.html

Racine County OKs \$8.47 million to help with Behavioral Health Services building debt

The Racine County Board of Supervisors at its August 25, 2026 meeting approved committing a maximum of \$8.47 million in opioid settlement funds from 2027 through 2046 to cover 25 percent of the annual debt service on the new Behavioral Health Services building. That share reflects the approximately 25 percent of the 50,000-square-foot facility dedicated to residential treatment for opioid use disorder, co-occurring substance use disorder, and mental health conditions. Communications Manager Casey Morgenson put total project cost at approximately \$36 million. The building at 1420 Taylor Ave. broke ground in May 2025 and is expected to open in late 2026.

The board also approved a \$200,956 Wisconsin Department of Health Services grant and a \$166,724 Department of Health Services grant, both transferred into the county human services 2026 budget, and \$95,065 from the opioid settlement fund to finance a full-time peer support specialist from September 30, 2026 through December 31, 2027. The board additionally approved a new financial policy manual, which Finance Director Gwen Zimmer said modernizes and adds depth to existing policies.

Source: Kenosha News (Southeastern) | https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/local/government-politics/article_1692aded-e0b4-568a-9b8a-450a45815949.html

ECPD Chief Says Other Communities' Reasons For Unhoused 'Drop Offs' in Eau Claire Are Not Adequate

The Eau Claire City Council on August 25, 2026 unanimously passed a second resolution calling on Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul to respond formally to the city's January 2025 request for legal guidance on non-consensual transportation of unhoused individuals into Eau Claire by outside agencies. Kaul's office acknowledged the original letter but has provided no legal guidance in the intervening 18 months. City Attorney Steve Nick characterized the transports as potential civil rights and Fourth Amendment violations, citing documented drops by the Menomonie Police Department, the St. Croix County Sheriff's Office, the Durand Police Department, and the Washburn County Sheriff's Office. Sojourner House, the area's only overnight shelter, holds a maximum of 53 people against an estimated local unhoused population of 500 to 700. Wisconsin's statewide homeless count reached 5,495 in 2026, a nearly 5 percent increase from 2025, according to a Wisconsin Policy Forum report. The cities of Madison, La Crosse, and Wausau have also supported Eau Claire's request to the Attorney General.

Source: Volume One (Western) | <https://volumeone.org/articles/2026/09/03/401058-after-nearly-18-months-state-attorney-has-not-given-eau-claire-guidance-on-out-of-town-drop-offs>

School Districts

MPSD Operational Referendum Ends Next Year, What's Next?

The Manitowoc Public School District Finance and Facilities Committee opened early discussions on the expiration of its current operational referendum, which Manitowoc voters approved in 2023 at \$61.7 million and which runs through the 2027-2028 school year. Superintendent Lee Thennes reported that the district is levying approximately \$10.25 million this year against a voter-authorized ceiling of \$15 million, a deliberate underlevy intended to smooth and flatten taxpayer bills. Thennes attributed the gap between state aid and operational needs to inadequate state funding of public education. The district previously approved closing two elementary schools beginning this school year, a decision that generated resident skepticism about supporting a future referendum. No referendum has been placed on any upcoming ballot. At a future board meeting the district will present a scenario modeling the service and programming cuts that would result if no subsequent referendum is pursued. No date for that meeting has been announced.

Source: Seehafer News (Northeastern) | <https://www.seehafernews.com/2026/09/04/mpsd-operational-referendum-ends-next-year-whats-next/>

Property value surge is good news for PW-S schools

The Port Washington-Saukville School District's 2026 equalized property value is estimated to increase 12.6 percent, compared with a statewide average of 7.5 percent, according to equalized value estimates recently certified by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, which releases final figures in October. Approximately 6 percentage points of the increase represent net new growth, driven substantially by the Vantage Data Centers Lighthouse Campus under construction in Port Washington. The School Board last week authorized borrowing the final \$10 million of the \$59.4 million referendum voters approved last year, at an anticipated 10-year interest rate of 4.47 percent, complementing the \$49 million already borrowed at 4.59 percent over 20 years. The shorter-term borrowing is projected to save \$70,000 to \$80,000 annually in interest costs. The data center property sits inside a tax incremental financing district, so increment value will fund infrastructure rather than benefit the tax rolls for an estimated 18 years. S&P Global Ratings re-evaluates the district's AA- credit rating this month ahead of the \$10 million borrowing.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeepress.com/content/property-value-surge-good-news-pw-s-schools>

Aquatic Center ceases operations amid missing funds

The Clara R. McKenna Aquatic Center in Antigo ceased all operations on Tuesday, September 1, 2026, after the Antigo School District Foundation failed to produce \$150,000 by an August 31 deadline set by the Antigo School Board. Foundation President Tom Koss confirmed the foundation had delivered \$75,000 to the district on June 29 and a separate \$100,000 donation on July 1, and said the \$100,000 is unaccounted for in current budget projections despite his holding a receipt. At a June special board meeting the board approved a requisition of \$100,000, reduced from an original \$250,000 figure, to continue pool operations. Projected annual operating costs for the facility rose from \$539,727 last year to approximately \$1,000,000 for the current fiscal year, according to budget documents provided to Koss at a recent subcommittee meeting. The pool closed to all activities, including the girls' high school swim team, whose practices relocated to Tomahawk. School Board President Danny Pyeatt said questions about the missing funds would be addressed at a Thursday emergency board meeting.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | https://www.antigojournal.com/news/aquatic-center-ceases-operations-amid-missing-funds/article_b0946eef-7cfc-498f-bae3-b88bac4eefe8.html

After days of uncertainty, Antigo School Board reopens Aquatic Center amid financial difficulties

The Unified School District of Antigo Board of Education voted at an emergency meeting on September 4, 2026 to reopen the Clara R. McKenna Aquatic Center effective immediately, after the facility closed suddenly on September 1 for insufficient funds. The board passed a resolution authorizing the reopening contingent on receipt of \$150,000 from the Unified School District of Antigo Foundation, which agreed to provide the funding by September 21, 2026. Finance Director Kelly Fassbender stated that the \$150,000 would bring the center approximately to a break-even position but would not cover expenses through September. The aquatic center carried a negative balance of \$75,000 as of the June board meeting, at which time the board requested \$75,000 to zero out that deficit and an additional \$100,000 as operating reserves. An \$88,000 deficit subsequently emerged beyond those figures. Board Clerk Mike Parizek characterized repeated

procedural failures as a recurring monthly problem. The district will continue working with the foundation to identify a long-term financial solution.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/after-days-of-uncertainty-antigo-school-board-reopens-aquatic-center-amid-financial-difficulties/article_01b567cd-9fe2-4987-a347-b2321f8113c6.html

D.C. Everest School District may close Junior High School

The D.C. Everest School District is considering closing its junior high school, a building in operation since 1951, citing failing infrastructure and declining enrollment. Director of Buildings and Grounds Jason Jablonski identified clay pipes installed in the 1950s as a primary infrastructure failure, with backing water discovered in multiple areas of the building. Under the proposal, eighth graders would transfer to D.C. Everest Middle School and ninth graders would move to the senior high school. The transition would require remodeling and additions at both the middle school and senior high, along with parking and drop-off improvements. District leaders characterize the process as spanning four years. If approved, the junior high building would not be demolished, but its usable space would be reduced by more than half, with the remaining space designated primarily for athletics. The district is gathering community feedback through two information sessions at the junior high, on September 4 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. and October 6 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Source: WSAU 550 AM / 99.9 FM Wausau (Central/Northern) | <https://wsau.com/2026/09/04/d-c-everest-school-district-may-close-junior-high-school/>

Reed reports on first 100 days as Sun Prairie School District superintendent

Sun Prairie Area School District Superintendent Antoine Reed presented a first-100-days report to the school board covering a tenure that began in May 2026 and extended through mid-August 2026. Reed, who previously served the Rockford School District in Illinois, described his initial 30 days as focused on listening sessions, principal meetings, and data review. During the subsequent 30-to-60-day period, the district hired two new assistant superintendents: Taren Turner as assistant superintendent for teaching, learning and equity, and Jewel Muckln as assistant superintendent for operations. Reed identified closing achievement gaps as the administration's top mission, stating that Wisconsin ranks 50th out of 50 states on that measure and that Sun Prairie's outcomes will not reflect that standing. He announced that students in grades 9 through 12 will be required to carry and wear school-issued identification at all hours of the school day. Safety protocols, including campus access controls, are under review in partnership with local police and fire departments.

Source: Sun Prairie Star (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/the_star/local_news/reed-reports-on-first-100-days-as-sun-prairie-school-district-superintendent/article_27b8c55c-af51-4645-8e72-4317bd90de2a.html

State-Local Interface

Wisconsin voters to decide three Constitutional amendments Nov. 3

Wisconsin voters will decide three constitutional amendments on the November 3 statewide ballot, each having passed the Legislature in two consecutive sessions as required before a public referendum. The first amendment would explicitly protect attendance at religious services during declared state emergencies, barring government officials from capping worship gatherings

during crises such as pandemics; under current law courts assess such restrictions case by case. The second amendment would limit the governor's partial veto authority, prohibiting use of that power to create or increase taxes or fees and restricting certain text alterations within budget bills. The third amendment would bar state and local governments from granting preferential treatment or discriminating based on race, sex, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, education, government administration, and contracting, which could affect diversity programs at public universities and in procurement. All three measures require simple majority approval by voters on November 3 to take effect as part of the Wisconsin Constitution.

Source: Burnett County Sentinel (Statewide) | https://burnettcountysentinel.com/news/wisconsin-voters-to-decide-three-constitutional-amendments-nov-3/article_c1084610-601d-4882-942f-076f192ea4a8.html

'The need is urgent': WI Tech College System asks state for \$168M in budget request

The Wisconsin Technical College System Board approved a \$168 million budget request on September 2 for the 2027-29 biennium, representing a 5.4 percent funding increase over current appropriations. President Layla Merrifield advanced the request, which covers four major spending categories: \$59.4 million for general operations and outcomes-based funding, \$54.2 million for dual enrollment programs enabling high school students to earn workforce credentials or college credit, \$23.2 million for adult basic education programs covering reading, writing, math, English language learning, and financial literacy, and \$22.6 million for industry sector grants targeting workforce shortages. An additional \$8.5 million is requested to modernize data systems and address cybersecurity risks. Wisconsin's 16 technical colleges collectively enroll more than 293,000 students annually. The request now advances to the state legislature for consideration in the 2027-29 state budget process.

Source: WKOW ABC27 Madison (Statewide) | https://www.wkow.com/news/the-need-is-urgent-wi-tech-college-system-asks-state-for-168m-in-budget-request/article_e04c2054-59df-4c37-bbb5-2bef145cbcb5.html

Both gubernatorial candidates, state lawmaker back body camera requirement for Wisconsin officers

State Rep. Sheila Stubbs of Madison announced on September 4, 2026 a legislative push to require all Wisconsin law enforcement officers to wear body cameras, citing the July 2026 fatal police shooting of Corey Ruiz in Madison, where responding officers were not equipped with body cameras. Brian Landers, a former law enforcement officer and expert witness, estimated per-camera costs at \$300 to \$700 and identified ongoing staffing costs for footage storage, review, and redaction. Republican gubernatorial candidate Tom Tiffany's spokesperson stated he would sign a statewide body camera mandate into law, and Democratic candidate David Crowley's team expressed the same support while calling for state resources to assist communities with implementation. State Rep. Jim Piwowarczyk of Hubertus, vice chair of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, said he supports equipping officers with cameras but opposes a statewide mandate, favoring local control over funding decisions. The legislature is not currently in session, and the earliest legislation could advance is January.

Source: WAOW ABC9 Wausau (Statewide) | https://www.waow.com/news/both-gubernatorial-candidates-state-lawmaker-back-body-camera-requirement-for-wisconsin-officers/article_a792920d-5ad4-5632-9587-276c05dad092.html

21st Century ROAD to Housing Act provides boost for affordable housing industry

The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act became law on July 11, 2026, after President Trump declined to sign or veto the bill, triggering automatic enactment. Five numbered provisions carry direct implications for Wisconsin affordable housing developers using federal funding streams. Section 204 authorizes Community Development Block Grant funds to be used for new residential construction for the first time, capping that use at 20 percent of a grantee's total CDBG allocation and requiring the housing to meet HOME program affordability standards. Section 205 expands HUD's authority to delegate NEPA environmental review responsibilities to state and local governments through a new special projects designation. Section 206 directs HUD to broaden categorical exclusions for rehabilitation, scattered-site, and infill housing projects to reduce predevelopment delays. Section 207 establishes a new federal grant program for state and local planning activities supporting affordable housing. Section 501 exempts certain HOME-funded projects from Section 3 procurement requirements under the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968. No implementing regulations or effective dates beyond the July 11 enactment were reported.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Statewide) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/09/04/21st-century-road-to-housing-act-affordable-housing/>

DHS collecting feedback on how to utilize future opioid settlement funds

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services launched an online survey, open through September 30, soliciting public input on allocation priorities for the state's share of opioid litigation settlement funds. Wisconsin expects to receive more than \$874 million in total from 2022 through 2038, with \$11.6 million anticipated in the next fiscal year designated for prevention programming, overdose reduction, infectious disease mitigation, treatment access, and recovery services. Since 2023 the department has invested more than \$86 million in settlement funding, supporting naloxone distribution, student prevention education, mobile medication-assisted treatment units, provider training, and law enforcement needs. Director of Substance Use Initiatives Michelle Haese and Attorney General Josh Kaul are named as leading the effort. Opioid overdose deaths in Wisconsin totaled 818 in 2024, down from 1,422 in 2023. Survey responses will inform department prioritization decisions for future funding allocations.

Source: Tomahawk Leader (Statewide) | <https://www.tomahawkleader.com/stories/dhs-collecting-feedback-on-how-to-utilize-future-opioid-settlement-funds,352531>

DHS Stresses Importance of Vaccinating Schoolchildren

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services issued a public reminder urging parents to vaccinate schoolchildren against measles, mumps, and rubella as measles continues to spread in southern Wisconsin. State-reported MMR kindergarten vaccination rates increased from 84.8 percent in the 2024-2025 school year to 85.1 percent in 2025-2026, a gain of 0.3 percentage points. The department noted that the 85.1 percent rate remains significantly below the 95 percent threshold generally required to prevent measles transmission within a community. State Health Officer Paula Tran issued a public statement recommending that parents review their child's vaccination record and consult a health care provider to schedule any needed doses. Additional vaccination information is available at [DHS.Wisconsin.gov](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov).

Source: Seehafer News (Statewide) | <https://www.seehafernews.com/2026/09/05/dhs-stresses-importance-of-vaccinating-schoolchildren/>

SNAP Cuts Could Lead To Kids Losing Free School Breakfast And Lunch

Federal cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program threaten school meal eligibility for Wisconsin and national school districts through the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision, which reimburses schools for free breakfasts and lunches using a formula tied to the percentage of students enrolled in SNAP and other means-tested programs. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act imposed new eligibility and work requirements for SNAP, and more than 1 million American children have already lost SNAP access nationally. Schools where SNAP participation declines below qualifying thresholds risk losing free-meal funding for all enrolled students, including those from families that never participated in SNAP. More than a quarter of the nation's public schools currently offer universal free meals under the Community Eligibility Provision. The School Nutrition Association, representing 50,000 school meal providers, notes that schools in mixed-income areas face the greatest exposure, while highest-poverty schools are likely to retain eligibility for now. A 30-day grace period applies to previously qualified students who lose SNAP coverage.

Source: Patch (Statewide) | <https://patch.com/wisconsin/across-wi/snap-cuts-could-lead-kids-losing-free-school-breakfast-lunch>

Evers touts release of \$10 million PFAS cleanup fund

The Wisconsin state budget committee released \$10 million from the state's PFAS Trust Fund to address drinking water contamination linked to Tyco Fire Products LP's Fire Technology Center, Governor Tony Evers and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources jointly announced. The funds are designated to provide safe drinking water access to families and communities affected by PFAS contamination from that specific facility. No vote count, resolution identifier, or effective date was included in the available article text. The article does not specify the geographic communities targeted, the disbursement mechanism, or the next procedural step for fund distribution.

Source: Plymouth Review (Statewide) | <https://www.plymouth-review.com/articles/evers-touts-release-of-10-million-pfas-cleanup-fund/>

Judge revises ruling on state's right to buy Veterans Museum building

Waushara County Circuit Court Judge Guy Dutcher this week partially reversed his August 24 summary judgment ruling that had declared the State of Wisconsin lacks an enforceable purchase option on the Wisconsin Veterans Museum building at 22 and 30 W. Mifflin St. in Madison. Dutcher's original ruling found the option unenforceable because it fails to describe the property and purchase price with reasonable certainty. The State Building Commission had approved acquisition of the property for \$9 million in August 2024, a figure the building's four private owners contest as far below market value. Dutcher canceled a previously scheduled November hearing and instead set a January 12 evidentiary hearing at which the state may present additional evidence clarifying the meaning of the purchase option's property description and price formula. Friday's written order preserved Dutcher's core findings that the option wording is legally insufficient on its face. The court's civil clerk declined to specify what effect the January 12 hearing would have on the circuit court outcome or on any anticipated appeal.

Source: Kenosha News (Statewide) | https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_246d5411-18fe-5cc9-8b19-3d9373ea63f2.html

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.
