

# Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing

April 20 to April 26, 2026

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## Workforce and Labor

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### City manager Kevin Lahner announces resignation

Janesville City Manager Kevin Lahner and the City Council mutually agreed to part ways following an April 27 closed session in which the council unanimously approved his severance package. Lahner, city manager since 2023, will leave effective May 29. Council President Larry Squire said the council will discuss interim leadership and the search process in the coming weeks. The departure follows the recent elimination of the deputy city manager position previously held by Ryan McCue and comes as the city remains in a due diligence period with Viridian Partners over a proposed 800-megawatt hyperscale data center at the former General Motors site. Citizen group SNOW has criticized the city's transparency on the data center proposals. Officials said services and day-to-day operations will continue without interruption.

Source: The Gazette (South Central) | [https://www.gazettextra.com/news/city-manager-kevin-lahner-announces-resignation/article\\_ee86ce37-c120-4f33-b1c0-eeede960f562f.html](https://www.gazettextra.com/news/city-manager-kevin-lahner-announces-resignation/article_ee86ce37-c120-4f33-b1c0-eeede960f562f.html)

### MCTS hires new chief operations officer

Milwaukee County Transit System appointed Brian E. Wojcik as chief operations officer with a first day of service of Monday, April 27, 2026. Wojcik succeeds Kevin Pumphrey, who is retiring after 28 years at MCTS, most recently in the COO role. Steve Fuentes, MCTS president and CEO, announced the appointment under his executive authority over organizational leadership. Wojcik previously served as senior manager of bus operations at the Chicago Transit Authority, where he oversaw more than 600 employees across multiple bus routes, and holds a bachelor's degree in business management from Benedictine University. He has completed leadership development programs at DePaul University. Wojcik and Pumphrey are scheduled to work together through a transitional period of approximately one month following the April 27 start date.

Source: The Daily Reporter (Southeastern) | <https://dailyreporter.com/2026/04/20/mcts-hires-new-chief-operations-officer/>

### Monroe selects city's next chief of police

The Monroe Board of Police and Fire Commission approved the appointment of Captain Nathan Foltz as Monroe's next chief of police on April 24, 2026. Foltz, who joined the Monroe Police Department in 2013 in the patrol division and has served as police captain for the past year, was selected through an internal recruitment process that began in February and included application review and interviews before two panels comprising commission members and community stakeholders. The appointment fills the vacancy created by Chief Frederick Kelley, who announced his retirement in February 2026. City Administrator Brittney Rindy confirmed the selection. Foltz holds a bachelor's degree in Law Enforcement and Justice Administration from Western Illinois University and has completed FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association command and executive leadership programs. He is scheduled to assume the role on June 8, 2026, coinciding with Kelley's retirement.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | <https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/04/25/monroe-selects-citys-next-chief-police/>

### **New Antigo city administrator emphasizes collaboration, transparency and community involvement**

The City of Antigo hired Michael Wetzel as its new city administrator with an effective start date of May 26, 2026. Wetzel most recently served as village clerk and deputy administrator for the Village of Marshall, Wisconsin, a position he held beginning June 2024, and holds a Master of Public Administration from UW-Oshkosh. The available reporting did not specify the Common Council vote count, salary figure, or specific governing body action authorizing the appointment. Wetzel's first operational responsibility will be coordinating Antigo's veteran department heads across city departments. The hiring fills a key administrative role following recent municipal transitions in the city.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | [https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/new-antigo-city-administrator-emphasizes-collaboration-transparency-and-community-involvement/article\\_07e9cc42-1312-4337-a085-db1f5a55b57e.html](https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/new-antigo-city-administrator-emphasizes-collaboration-transparency-and-community-involvement/article_07e9cc42-1312-4337-a085-db1f5a55b57e.html)

### **State Sen. Jesse James to become next Lake Hallie Police Chief**

The Village of Lake Hallie Police Commission selected state Sen. Jesse James (R-Thorp) as the next chief of police on April 25, 2026, replacing Edward Orgon, who departed to become Stevens Point Police Chief and was sworn in there February 23. The selection process included a community panel interview and a formal interview with the Police Commission. Village Administrator and Clerk-Treasurer Anastasia Stueber holds administrative authority over the hiring process. James previously served as Altoona Police Chief from 2013 until his resignation in January 2019 upon becoming a state legislator, and has been working part-time for the Village of Cadott. The Lake Hallie Police Department comprises 10 full-time officers. James's appointment is contingent upon completion of pre-employment requirements including a background investigation, medical evaluation, and psychological assessment, with his official start date to be announced after those requirements are completed.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | [https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/state-sen-jesse-james-to-become-next-lake-hallie-police-chief/article\\_47c5404f-4761-4645-87ef-d7692e906413.html](https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/daily-updates/state-sen-jesse-james-to-become-next-lake-hallie-police-chief/article_47c5404f-4761-4645-87ef-d7692e906413.html)

## **Infrastructure and Utilities**

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### **Houston Street reconstruction project gets nod to begin**

The Ripon Common Council approved a \$2,004,145.75 bid from RLAM, Inc. for complete reconstruction of Houston Street, East Seward Street to Selfridge Park, and a short stretch of Aspen Street near the city's Department of Public Works facility. The project encompasses full utility replacement including sewer, sidewalks, driveway reconstruction, curbs, gutters, and street landscaping. A \$639,000 reimbursement grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Local Road Improvement Program will partially offset costs. City Administrator Adam Sonntag confirmed the city will not pursue clean water and safe drinking water federal loans, citing administrative costs that would offset any potential fund forgiveness. The council

also approved an amended contract with MSA for SCADA system construction oversight, increasing the original \$98,000 design contract by \$86,000 in construction oversight fees to a total of \$185,734. Construction is expected to begin within the coming weeks.

Source: Ripon Commonwealth Press (Northeastern) | [https://riponpress.com/news/houston-street-reconstruction-project-gets-nod-to-begin/article\\_f467329a-a72e-45c4-bde1-d416202211b6.html](https://riponpress.com/news/houston-street-reconstruction-project-gets-nod-to-begin/article_f467329a-a72e-45c4-bde1-d416202211b6.html)

### **Amery wastewater plant nears completion**

The Amery Common Council voted unanimously to approve Change Order No. 6 for \$133,573.20 on the city's wastewater treatment plant upgrade, bringing the total contract with Eau Claire-based Market and Johnson to \$15,626,321.84 against an original contract price of \$14.94 million. The change order covers 20 additions including sludge loadout piping, driveway paving, and electrical work in several buildings, partially offset by three deductions. The council also approved Pay Application No. 21 for \$313,500.87 covering work completed in March. Project engineer Caleb Weber of Short Elliott Hendrickson reported the facility has reached substantial completion with all wastewater processes and equipment operational; remaining work consists of exterior seasonal tasks including grading, paving, and fencing. Of the original \$747,000 contingency fund, approximately \$60,678 remains. A final Change Order No. 7, expected to result in a net credit from unspent allowance line items, is forthcoming, with project completion targeted for June 12.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | [https://theameryfreepress.com/news/amery-wastewater-plant-nears-completion/article\\_68d52dad-9aec-49d0-84eb-15181fd12e70.html](https://theameryfreepress.com/news/amery-wastewater-plant-nears-completion/article_68d52dad-9aec-49d0-84eb-15181fd12e70.html)

### **'Floating' stairs to link Clay Bluffs to beach**

Ozaukee County's Natural Resources Committee accepted a \$389,722 bid from About Nature LLC, a Grafton-based firm, to construct a cable-secured floating staircase connecting the Clay Bluffs Cedar Gorge Nature Preserve in Port Washington to the Lake Michigan shoreline. The bid includes a 15 percent contingency for potential change orders. The committee also awarded architectural design and engineering services to Kueny Architects for a visitor center at \$132,020 and a 65-foot wooden pedestrian bridge at \$36,120. Funding sources include the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, DNR Stewardship grants, and a county capital project fund grant. Planning and Parks Director Andrew Struck provided the supporting memo. Bid acceptance is contingent on final approval of the construction contract by the county Planning and Parks Department. Trail system construction at the 134-acre preserve, acquired in 2022, is anticipated to begin as early as fall, with full development expected to span several years.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeepress.com/content/%E2%80%98floating%E2%80%99-stairs-link-clay-bluffs-beach>

### **Rod & Gun Boat Landing now Lake Wissota Reserve Boat Landing**

Chippewa County entered into a new lease agreement with Xcel Energy, the property owner, to assume operation of the former Rod & Gun Boat Landing on Lake Wissota, renaming it the Lake Wissota Reserve Boat Landing. The prior lease held by the Chippewa Rod and Gun Club

concluded in 2025, after which Chippewa County and Xcel Energy negotiated the current agreement to maintain continued public access. The County, which already operates the Anson East and West boat landings on Lake Wissota, will manage the site as a paid public boat launch year-round. The fee structure sets a \$5 daily launch fee and a \$30 seasonal pass, payable on-site, online through the Chippewa County Reservations system, or in person at the Chippewa County Courthouse Facilities and Parks Office, Room 012. Season pass holders will receive a window decal. No vote count or contract dollar figure was disclosed in the announcement.

Source: Bloomer Advance (Western) | [https://www.bloomeradvance.com/news/front\\_page/article\\_43f44ef4-a7ab-403b-a5d3-1980360a06be.html](https://www.bloomeradvance.com/news/front_page/article_43f44ef4-a7ab-403b-a5d3-1980360a06be.html)

### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approves feasibility study for Kinnickinnic River Dam removal**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved the feasibility study for removal of both the Powell Dam and Junction Falls Dam along the Kinnickinnic River in River Falls. The study was conducted under the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP 206) pursuant to a Federal Cost Share Agreement signed by the City of River Falls with the Corps in early 2023. It evaluated the cost and environmental benefits of removing one or both hydroelectric dams. Internal Corps waivers required during the study paused work until November 2024, extending the original 12 to 18 month timeline. Outgoing Mayor Dan Toland and Mayor-elect Alison Page both acknowledged the approval publicly. The next procedural step is engineering design of the dam removal and river restoration, which will require a formal City Council decision and is contingent upon the Corps providing funding for that subsequent phase.

Source: Hudson Star Observer (Western) | [https://riverfallsjournal.com/news/us-army-corps-of-engineers-approves-feasibility-study-for-kinnickinnic-river-dam-removal/article\\_313ea95c-6d89-4ae5-aab8-7a93f058442c.html](https://riverfallsjournal.com/news/us-army-corps-of-engineers-approves-feasibility-study-for-kinnickinnic-river-dam-removal/article_313ea95c-6d89-4ae5-aab8-7a93f058442c.html)

### **Kenosha County Ceremonial Courtroom multi-million dollar facelift nears completion**

Kenosha County's restoration of the historic Ceremonial Courtroom at the Kenosha County Courthouse is scheduled for completion at the end of June 2026. The project, contracted to Michigan-based Historic Surfaces LLC, is restoring the room to its original 1925 décor including decorative ceiling finishes, art glass skylights with LED backlighting, a decorative frieze, and updated mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems. Funding was assembled from more than \$1.35 million in private donor contributions, supplemented by a \$675,000 grant from the Jeffris Family Foundation and a \$100,000 matching grant from the TAWANI Foundation. Upon completion, the restored space will function as a working courtroom and a community venue for weddings, adoptions, and other civic occasions. The Kenosha County Courthouse, designed by architect Joseph Lindl, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Source: Lake Geneva Regional News (Southeastern) | [https://lakegenevanews.net/news/local/government-politics/article\\_0d23fad9-03f4-5012-af3e-baade88d1f78.html](https://lakegenevanews.net/news/local/government-politics/article_0d23fad9-03f4-5012-af3e-baade88d1f78.html)

## Public Safety

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### Council approves fire truck purchase

The Stanley Common Council, at its April 20, 2026 regular meeting at Stanley City Hall, approved the purchase of a Reliant Pierce 4-door second generation pumper fire truck for \$661,246, as recommended by the Police and Fire Committee. The purchase will be funded from a previously authorized \$4,000,000 borrowing, with repayment sourced from fire inspection funds. The council was advised that declining to approve the purchase before May 1 would result in an \$8,000 price increase, with additional potential cost escalation in subsequent years. The new pumper provides increased water pumping capability to the city. The council also approved the hire of new fire department member Dakota Carroll, as recommended by the Police and Fire Committee. No specific vote count was reported for the fire truck approval.

Source: Stanley Republican (Western) | <https://stanleyrepublican.com/stories/council-approves-fire-truck-purchase,187360>

### City council approves new baby box at Rhinelander Fire Department

The Rhinelander City Council approved a memorandum of understanding authorizing installation of a Safe Haven Baby Box at the Rhinelander Fire Department, a project valued at approximately \$30,000 to be funded entirely through private donations. The proposal was originally brought before the council in January 2026 by Rhinelander Fire Chief Adam Johnson and a committee of foster mothers. Calvary Baptist Church and the Tri-County Council on Domestic Violence, represented by President Hannah Novak, each committed \$500 annually toward ongoing maintenance costs. No financial burden to the city was incurred. The next procedural step requires the city to finalize a formal contract with Safe Haven Baby Box, Inc. before community fundraising can commence; committee member Nicole Ziolocowski noted that process may take several weeks due to required modifications to the city-owned fire station building.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | [https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/city-council-approves-new-baby-box-at-rhinelander-fire-department/article\\_dbe0980f-e862-4fb9-a0d3-82def6c8d9e5.html](https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/city-council-approves-new-baby-box-at-rhinelander-fire-department/article_dbe0980f-e862-4fb9-a0d3-82def6c8d9e5.html)

## Land Use and Development

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### New Mexico company wants to move fast on Town of Beloit hospital project

The Town of Beloit Board of Supervisors approved the sale of 6.51 acres of municipally owned land at 1800 E. Inman Parkway to Dallas-based MedCore Partners for \$100,100, enabling New Mexico-based ClearSky Health to construct a 36-bed medical rehabilitation hospital estimated at \$30 million. The board's action transfers the parcel near the Prairie Avenue and East Inman Parkway intersection to MedCore, which will develop the facility on ClearSky's behalf. Town Administrator John Malizio identified a target construction start date of July 1, 2026, contingent on remaining approvals. Community Development Director Tim Kienbaum

noted that the property's existing zoning already permits hospital use, but ClearSky and MedCore must submit site plans for approval by the Town of Beloit Plan Commission and complete planning for township sanitary sewer connections before construction may commence. The completed facility is projected to employ approximately 100 people.

Source: Beloit Daily News (South Central) | [https://www.beloitdailynews.com/news/business-news/new-mexico-company-wants-to-move-fast-on-town-of-beloit-hospital-project/article\\_3a4790a6-c13f-4739-b9c5-e28629968219.html](https://www.beloitdailynews.com/news/business-news/new-mexico-company-wants-to-move-fast-on-town-of-beloit-hospital-project/article_3a4790a6-c13f-4739-b9c5-e28629968219.html)

### **Permit language tweaked as town lives, unhappily, with energy projects**

The Town of Lyndon Board of Supervisors voted to defer finalization of a conditional use permit for a new solar generating facility near the Village of Waldo, allowing approximately one month for officials to revise the permit's language. The governing body, composed of town supervisors, acknowledged during the public session that local authority to block energy development projects is limited under state law. Public comments submitted by town residents reflected opposition to solar power projects in the area. No vote count, dollar figures, or ordinance identifier were reported in the available article text. The next procedural step is the revision of the conditional use permit language by town officials, with a finalized permit expected to return for board consideration within approximately one month.

Source: Plymouth Review (Southeastern) | <https://www.plymouth-review.com/articles/permit-language-tweaked-as-town-lives-unhappily-with-energy-projects/>

### **Town poised to make offer on mill property**

The Fredonia Town Board was scheduled to consider authorizing a purchase offer for the Waubeka Mill and Button Factory properties from owner Charles Sheridan and his son, with the town intending to subsequently transfer the Milwaukee River parcels to Ozaukee County for conversion into a boat launch and park. The town retains eminent domain authority to compel acquisition at fair market value if a negotiated purchase fails. The action follows a prior Town Board authorization permitting Town Chairman Chris Janik to execute an intergovernmental agreement with Ozaukee County to coordinate demolition and parcel transfer. Separately, Ozaukee County was awarded a \$142,800 brownfield assessment grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, contingent on owner permission for site access by the county and the state Department of Natural Resources. County Planning and Parks Director Andrew Struck has characterized the flood-hazard-zone structures as unbuildable under any circumstances. The next procedural step is the Town Board's formal vote on the purchase offer.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | <https://ozaukeepress.com/content/town-poised-make-offer-mill-property>

### **Dining on Lake Monona?**

The Monona City Council approved conceptual plans on April 20, 2026 for the rehabilitation of the historic Frank Allis house at San Damiano Park into a dining, event, and recreational venue. The action authorizes Friends of San Damiano, the nonprofit that maintains the 10-acre lakeshore park under agreement with the city of Monona, to proceed with plans that include

daily food and beverage service, an outdoor terrace, improved vehicle and pedestrian access, trails, natural play areas, and a Lake Monona pier for boat access. No vote count was reported. Approval is contingent on private fundraising; no construction cost figures were disclosed. The Frank Allis house, an 1893 local landmark currently lacking heat, accessible restrooms, and potable water, could qualify for federal historic preservation tax credits if state and federal historic status is obtained. Friends of San Damiano plans to issue a request for proposals from food and beverage operators to lease and manage the dining space as the next step.

Source: Isthmus (South Central) | <https://isthmus.com/news/news/dining-on-lake-monona/>

## **Governance and Elections**

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### **Wausau City Council elects new president**

The Wausau City Council elected District 3 Alderperson Terry Kilian as council president at its organizational meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2026, in a 6-5 recorded vote over Alderperson Michael Martens, who had also been nominated by council members. Kilian, representing District 3, assumes two formal responsibilities under the role: chairing the committee of the whole and serving as acting mayor in the mayor's absence. The election occurred at the same organizational meeting where newly elected alderpersons were sworn in following the April 7, 2026 spring election. The council's next scheduled meeting is April 28, 2026.

Source: WSAW CBS7 Wausau (Central/Northern) | <https://www.wsaw.com/2026/04/22/wausau-city-council-elects-new-president/>

### **Wausau mayor recommending city move to a four-committee structure**

Wausau Mayor Doug Diny announced a formal recommendation to reduce the City Council's standing committees from six to four, each comprising five alderpersons, with the proposal presented at the Council's organizational meeting Tuesday, April 22, 2026. The proposed structure would consolidate existing committees into four bodies: Finance and Administration; Infrastructure, Facilities and Parks; Economic Development and Community Affairs; and Public Safety and Health. The plan also calls for elimination of the Executive Committee, which Diny noted has not convened in over two years. Each new committee would absorb the responsibilities of the merged predecessor committees, including budget development, personnel matters, utilities, capital improvement projects, zoning, public health policy, and emergency management. The recommendation carries no ordinance identifier yet reported. Following the swearing-in of newly elected alderpersons at the same organizational meeting, the Council holds authority to act on the proposed restructuring.

Source: WSAW CBS7 Wausau (Central/Northern) | <https://www.wsaw.com/2026/04/21/wausau-mayor-recommending-city-move-four-committee-structure/>

### **Hitting the ground running: New mayor makes city appointments**

Laura Holmes was formally seated as Medford's new mayor at a Medford City Council meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2026, having won the mayoral election with 624 votes against runner-up Dave Brandner's 380 votes. Holmes succeeded Mike Wellner, who served 24 years in the position, with Wellner ceremonially passing the gavel to Holmes at the meeting. Upon taking office, Mayor Holmes exercised her formal appointment authority to make city appointments, the specific positions and appointees of which were not fully detailed in the available article text. The transition of executive authority from Wellner to Holmes represents a formal change in the city's chief elected executive, with Holmes assuming all mayoral powers and responsibilities under Medford's municipal governance structure effective April 22, 2026.

Source: Medford Star News (Central/Northern) | <https://www.centralwinews.com/news/2026/04/22/hitting-the-ground-running-new-mayor-makes-city-appointments/>

### **Madison's police monitor office threatens legal action against the city**

The Madison Common Council voted 16-4 on April 21, 2026 to refer an ordinance proposal governing the Office of the Independent Police Monitor to a June 17 civilian oversight board meeting and the council's August 4 meeting for further revision in collaboration with the monitor's office and its civilian oversight board. The ordinance, originally proposed by then-Ald. MGR Govindarajan, would clarify that the office is subject to standard city administrative procedures, restrict outside legal counsel retention to investigation-related matters or complainant representation, and mandate quarterly reports from the office. Ald. Davy Mayer amended the proposal to require one alder on the civilian oversight board. The office carries a \$50,000 annual legal counsel budget allocation that has never been used, while the city has incurred more than \$136,000 defending the office against two lawsuits. City Attorney Michael Haas stated that under Wisconsin law, one city agency cannot sue another.

Source: Isthmus (South Central) | <https://isthmus.com/news/news/madison-police-monitor-office-threatens-legal-action-again/>

### **Judge denies Madison council president's request for restraining order against former challenger**

Dane County Judge Ben Jones on April 25, 2026 denied Madison Common Council President Alder Sabrina Madison's petition for a permanent injunction barring constituent Sean Burke from contacting her, following an injunction hearing. Judge Jones simultaneously denied a cross-petition filed by Burke against Madison. The ruling dissolved the temporary restraining order that had been granted to Madison on April 10, 2026. The case arose from Madison's allegation that Burke repeatedly contacted her over three years regarding local nonprofit Urban Triage and confronted her at Common Council meetings. Burke contested the characterization of his conduct, stating his last direct contact with Madison occurred at a March 2025 Common Council meeting. No further procedural steps were reported following the court's denial of both petitions.

Source: WISC CBS3 Madison (South Central) | [https://www.channel3000.com/news/judge-denies-madison-council-presidents-request-for-restraining-order-against-former-challenger/article\\_934f17d4-83e9-4285-988e-85c87cf21e39.html](https://www.channel3000.com/news/judge-denies-madison-council-presidents-request-for-restraining-order-against-former-challenger/article_934f17d4-83e9-4285-988e-85c87cf21e39.html)

### **City Council pushes back vacancy appointment again after no majority vote**

The Eau Claire City Council postponed a vote to fill the council seat vacated by former Member Emily Anderson at its April 20, 2026 session after failing to achieve the required six-vote majority across multiple rounds of balloting. In each round, five members, Aaron Brewster, Clara Serrano, Andrew Werthmann, Nate Otto, and Ethan Reed, voted for candidate Joyce Orth, while three members, Charlie Johnson, Larry Mboga, and Josh Miller, voted for Shelley Janke. Council Member Jessica Schoen was absent, and Council President Jeremy Gragert's seat remains unfilled, leaving the body short of the six-vote threshold. Candidate Brian Trowbridge was eliminated in the first round. The appointment process was previously delayed from April 13 due to inclement weather. The council will resume voting between Janke and Orth at its next legislative session on April 28, 2026; the appointed member will serve approximately one year before the seat goes to a public election in spring 2027.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Western) | [https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/city-council-pushes-back-vacancy-appointment-again-after-no-majority-vote/article\\_b8fc1c81-c9b2-4a87-bf02-9de5158d2c36.html](https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/city-council-pushes-back-vacancy-appointment-again-after-no-majority-vote/article_b8fc1c81-c9b2-4a87-bf02-9de5158d2c36.html)

### **Stower Trail agreement is sent to be rewritten by county**

The Polk County Public Safety/Public Works Committee approved a motion directing corporation counsel to draft a resolution governing the county's Memorandum of Understanding with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the Stower Seven Lakes Trail. The action was taken at the committee's meeting reported on April 23, 2026, following a presentation by County Administrator Emil "Moe" Norby, who outlined three options: continuing negotiations on a revised MOU placing greater responsibility on the DNR, terminating the existing DNR agreement, or continuing under the current MOU while opening a public hearing, a path Norby noted would reopen the county to litigation. DNR representative Melissa Vanlanduyt addressed supervisors' questions regarding volunteer management systems. The approved motion sends the matter back to corporation counsel, with the resulting resolution to return to the committee for either a recommendation to the full Polk County Board or further committee consideration.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | [https://theameryfreepress.com/news/stower-trail-agreement-is-sent-to-be-rewritten-by-county/article\\_34988b1a-a27a-49b0-bc56-88a8ed99028e.html](https://theameryfreepress.com/news/stower-trail-agreement-is-sent-to-be-rewritten-by-county/article_34988b1a-a27a-49b0-bc56-88a8ed99028e.html)

### **Council sets fees, amends ordinance for new vendor rental spaces**

The Superior City Council on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 approved two measures governing vendor activity in city-managed spaces. The first established a fee schedule for renting four city-built shelters: the two larger 10-by-12-foot structures rent for \$50 per day at non-city events and \$100 per day at city events; the two smaller 8-by-8-foot structures rent for \$25 and \$50 per day respectively. Additional fees include a fixed \$860 weekly rate to rent all four buildings for a makers market running May 1 through October 1, a \$1,000 moving fee for relocating small structures off Barker's Island, and a \$100 refundable security deposit. The second action amended the city's peddlers and solicitors ordinance to exempt vendors

participating exclusively in city-approved special events from the \$50 seller's permit fee. Both measures were recommended by the License and Fees Committee on April 13 before advancing to full council adoption.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/council-sets-fees-amends-ordinance-for-new-vendor-rental-spaces>

### **Rules for outdoor music modified**

The Elkhart Lake Village Board approved a revised noise ordinance at its Monday meeting, modifying permitted hours for live outdoor music on Sundays. The adopted ordinance sets Sunday outdoor music hours from 1 to 6 p.m., a five-hour window that represents a reduction from the six-hour window originally requested by resort owners. The board made a final adjustment to the Sunday start and end times before approving the measure. The vote count and specific ordinance identifier were not reported in the available text. Village trustees hold formal authority over municipal ordinance adoption. Resort owners had petitioned for the expanded Sunday hours prior to the board's deliberations. No further procedural steps were reported, indicating the revised noise ordinance takes effect as adopted by the Village Board.

Source: Plymouth Review (Southeastern) | <https://www.plymouth-review.com/articles/rules-for-outdoor-music-modified/>

## **School Districts**

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### **Antigo board won't vote to sell/close pool**

The Antigo School Board voted during its April 21, 2026 meeting to enter closed session, with district attorney Davis Runde participating by phone, to discuss potential valuation parameters related to the possible future sale of 111 Western Ave., the Clara R. McKenna Aquatic Center. The motion to enter closed session passed with five members in favor: Board President Danny Pyeatt, Dave Bardo, Kristen Mattmiller, Jill Mattek Nelson, and Catherine Solin; and three opposed: Bobbi Braun, Abby Mattek, and J.D. Schroeder. Angi Schreiber, appearing virtually, abstained. Board member Abby Mattek made a failed motion to move the discussion to open session. Pyeatt stated that any formal vote to sell district property must occur in open session and that no sale vote was scheduled for this meeting. The board was scheduled to meet the following evening with a community task force regarding the aquatic center's future.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | [https://www.antigojournal.com/news/antigo-board-wont-vote-to-sell-close-pool/article\\_1b368bfd-ac89-42cc-8254-31c59e7e03fc.html](https://www.antigojournal.com/news/antigo-board-wont-vote-to-sell-close-pool/article_1b368bfd-ac89-42cc-8254-31c59e7e03fc.html)

### **Board approves two-tiered approach in teacher contracts**

The Antigo School District Board of Education voted at its April 21, 2026 meeting to adopt a two-tiered liquidated damages clause in teacher contracts for the 2026-27 school year. Under the approved structure, full-time teachers and new hires who leave the district after signing their contracts must pay \$4,000 in liquidated damages if they depart before June 30, rising to \$7,500 for departures on or after July 1. The vote passed with all board members in favor except Abby Mattek, who voted against, and Board President Danny Pyeatt, who abstained.

Board member Dave Bardo cited a district-calculated replacement cost of approximately \$20,000 per departing teacher as justification for the penalty amounts, with Business Director Kelly Fassbender confirming those figures are derived from tracked onboarding and training expenditures. Superintendent Glenda Oginski reported eight current open vacancies in the district. Teachers received their contracts the following Tuesday and were given five days to sign or decline.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | [https://www.antigojournal.com/news/board-approves-two-tiered-approach-in-teacher-contracts/article\\_d7bbe0aa-7c4a-49b1-9cce-1bbae9b068e9.html](https://www.antigojournal.com/news/board-approves-two-tiered-approach-in-teacher-contracts/article_d7bbe0aa-7c4a-49b1-9cce-1bbae9b068e9.html)

### **Hustisford adopts transportation deal with Dodgeland, seeks sports waiver**

The Hustisford School Board and the Dodgeland School Board each adopted a transportation resolution authorizing Hustisford to bus students across district boundaries to Dodgeland High School in Juneau, according to Hustisford Interim Superintendent Todd Bugnacki. The boards are finalizing a separate tuition agreement governing financial terms for students attending Dodgeland under open enrollment; that agreement has not yet received final approval. Bugnacki disclosed that the district is seeking a Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association eligibility waiver to prevent open-enrolling student-athletes from losing a year of athletic eligibility due to the district's pending closure following a failed referendum. The district is also working with Dodgeland special education staff to determine per-student costs for approximately 40 special education students. The next procedural step is a regular school board meeting where WASB Finance and Operational Consultant Todd Gray, WASB Associate Executive Director Bob Butler, and Baird Associates representative Michael Clark will address dissolution details.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (Southeastern) | [https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/hustisford-adopts-transportation-deal-with-dodgeland-seeks-sports-waiver/article\\_5c866310-87ae-4e4c-8570-d28f4561e582.html](https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/hustisford-adopts-transportation-deal-with-dodgeland-seeks-sports-waiver/article_5c866310-87ae-4e4c-8570-d28f4561e582.html)

### **Details of newly-approved 4K programs discussed**

The Plymouth School Board voted to approve two new four-year-old kindergarten program options for the 2026-27 school year, expanding the district's existing half-day format. The board's action, taken at its Tuesday night meeting, adds a full-day 4K program and a tuition-free 4K enrollment option for local families. The article did not specify the vote count, associated program costs, or the formal resolution identifier. The Plymouth School Board holds formal authority over district curriculum and program offerings under Wisconsin school governance statutes. No further procedural steps were reported in the available text, though program details were discussed following the board's approval action.

Source: Plymouth Review (Southeastern) | <https://www.plymouth-review.com/articles/details-of-newly-approved-4k-programs-discussed/>

### **Superior School Board adopts sexual misconduct reporting policies**

The Superior School Board voted on Monday, April 20, 2026 to adopt amended district policies on student supervision and welfare and on child abuse and neglect reporting, aligning both with 2025 Wisconsin Act 57, signed into law in December 2024. The revised policies require

school officials to notify parents or guardians by 5 p.m. the same day when a credible allegation of sexual misconduct by a staff member is received before the end of the school day; reports received after hours require notification by noon the following day. Notification must be delivered in person or by phone, including voicemail, to parents or guardians of the student believed to be a victim, target, or recipient of the conduct. The policies also mandate notification if a staff member or volunteer is convicted of a serious child sex offense or if a sex offender captures a representation of a child without written parental consent. The board is additionally required to annually inform parents of their rights to access school employee discipline records.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | <https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/superior-school-board-adopts-sexual-misconduct-reporting-policies>

## State-Local Interface

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### Special electric rates set for data centers in a first for Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Public Service Commission unanimously approved a modified special rate structure for data centers served by We Energies on Friday, April 24, 2026, the first such tariff of its kind in the state. Commissioners Summer Strand, Kristy Nieto, and Marcus Hawkins set the applicability threshold at 100 megawatts of demand, lower than We Energies' proposed 250 megawatts and consistent with the position urged by Clean Wisconsin and the Sierra Club. The approved structure requires data centers to pay 100 percent of generation infrastructure construction costs built to serve them and establishes a 15-year minimum service commitment, exceeding the utility's proposed 10-year term. Commissioners rejected the alternative We Energies proposal that would have allowed data centers to cover only 75 percent of new generation construction costs, and operators must cover full generator costs even if they exit service contracts early. The commission received more than 2,000 public comments during the 13-month review and will issue a written final decision in the coming weeks. Major data center projects in Mount Pleasant and Port Washington fall within We Energies' service territory.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Statewide) | <https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/04/wisconsin-regulators-data-centers-must-cover-full-cost-of-their-energy-needs/>

### Wisconsin data center tax break to cost state more than \$2 billion

The Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau projected that the state sales tax exemption for hyperscale data centers, enacted in the 2023-25 state budget signed by Gov. Tony Evers and passed by the Republican-controlled Legislature, will result in \$1.5 billion in forgone state sales tax revenue during construction of facilities in Beaver Dam, Mount Pleasant, Port Washington, and Verona, plus an additional \$369 million in annual forgone revenue once those facilities are operational. The exemption, introduced by Sen. Romaine Quinn and Rep. Shannon Zimmerman in 2023, eliminates the 5 percent state sales tax and applicable local sales taxes on construction and equipment purchases for qualifying data centers. Sen. Jodi Habush

Sinykin, who requested the fiscal bureau estimate, has called for an extraordinary legislative session to consider attaching conditions to the exemption, such as environmental requirements, rather than waiting for the next regular session beginning January 2027. No formal extraordinary session call has been issued.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Statewide) | <https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/04/wisconsin-data-center-tax-break-to-cost-state-more-than-2-billion-lost-revenue/>

### **UW-Madison plans to air condition 3 dorms, reducing total beds**

The University of Wisconsin Board of Regents voted Monday to authorize construction to begin this fall on a \$79.2 million renovation of Kronshage, Jorns, and Humphrey residence halls on the Lakeshore complex. The project, presented by Deej Lundgren, UW System Associate Vice President for Capital Planning and Budget, will add air conditioning, elevators, upgraded restrooms, new laundry rooms, kitchenettes, outdoor patios, and updated fire suppression and plumbing systems, along with exterior improvements including new windows and roofing. The renovations will permanently reduce total bed capacity by 18 and temporarily reduce capacity by approximately 40 beds at any given point during construction. Funding of \$79.2 million will come entirely from University Housing program revenue without taxpayer dollars. The project was originally authorized through a 2023 agreement between the UW System and Republican legislators. Approval from the State Building Commission is the next required step before contractor bidding can begin, with renovated buildings expected to reopen by fall 2029.

Source: Capital Times (Statewide) | [https://captimes.com/news/education/uw-madison-plans-to-air-condition-3-dorms-reducing-total-beds/article\\_351ede67-e788-4c4f-aabd-9c8d7fc85db4.html](https://captimes.com/news/education/uw-madison-plans-to-air-condition-3-dorms-reducing-total-beds/article_351ede67-e788-4c4f-aabd-9c8d7fc85db4.html)

### **Martini named UWEC chancellor**

The Universities of Wisconsin Board of Regents formally approved the appointment of Edwin Martini as Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, following a recommendation from a Special Regent Committee selection process. Martini was selected from a field of four finalists following a week of public forums held as part of the formal search process. He currently serves as provost and vice chancellor of Academic Affairs at University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. No salary figure or contract terms were reported. Upon assuming the chancellorship on July 1, 2026, Martini will oversee both the main Eau Claire campus and the satellite campus UW-Eau Claire-Barron County in Rice Lake. Martini participated in a public campus forum on April 15, 2026 where he addressed institutional priorities including expansion of adult learner enrollment, online offerings, micro-credentials, and dual enrollment partnerships with local school districts. The Chancellor's Office and executive team have prepared an onboarding plan for the two-month transition period before his start date.

Source: Leader-Telegram (Statewide) | [https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/front-page/martini-named-uwec-chancellor/article\\_dc5dacba-7c9b-4644-a200-797ff14baf9f.html](https://www.leadertelegram.com/news/front-page/martini-named-uwec-chancellor/article_dc5dacba-7c9b-4644-a200-797ff14baf9f.html)

### **Wisconsin expands breast screening coverage under 'Gail's Law'**

Governor Tony Evers signed Senate Bill 264, now 2025 Wisconsin Act 103, requiring health insurance policies to fully cover medically necessary supplemental breast screenings and diagnostic breast examinations for women at increased risk of breast cancer. Evers also signed Senate Bill 23, now 2025 Wisconsin Act 102, extending postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to one year. Coverage under Act 103 takes effect immediately for current plan types, with mandatory compliance extended to governmental self-insured health plans, small group health plans, and individual market plans by January 1, 2027; Medicaid members gain coverage July 1, 2026. The postpartum extension also takes effect July 1, 2026, pending Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approval of Wisconsin's state plan amendment. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services estimates the postpartum extension will benefit approximately 5,000 additional qualifying Medicaid-enrolled women. The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance, led by Commissioner Nathan Houdek, published a bulletin to health insurers regarding Act 103 compliance requirements.

Source: WISC CBS3 Madison (Statewide) | [https://www.channel3000.com/news/wisconsin-expands-breast-screening-coverage-under-gails-law/article\\_a1cc8424-97e6-5013-9cce-982ef806347d.html](https://www.channel3000.com/news/wisconsin-expands-breast-screening-coverage-under-gails-law/article_a1cc8424-97e6-5013-9cce-982ef806347d.html)

### **Gov. Evers urges federal aid amid storms**

Governor Tony Evers transmitted a formal letter to Wisconsin's congressional delegation urging members to press the president on federal disaster aid, following his April 16, 2026 state of emergency declaration in response to severe storms producing tornadoes, flooding, and structural damage statewide. The declaration activates state emergency authority and positions Wisconsin to submit a request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for public assistance, which would reimburse government agencies for storm response costs. Evers noted that the Trump administration previously denied a public assistance request following historic flooding last fall, though individual assistance was approved for Wisconsin homeowners. The governor's letter states that the prior denial and delays have left Wisconsin more vulnerable to current storm damage, and indicated that a new federal assistance request could be prepared for many of the same communities still rebuilding from the previous flooding event. The next procedural step is Wisconsin's formal submission of a federal public assistance request to FEMA.

Source: WISC CBS3 Madison (Statewide) | [https://www.channel3000.com/news/gov-evers-urges-federal-aid-amid-storms/article\\_39ac8583-0c71-4d65-ab57-8f2ed7f71aa4.html](https://www.channel3000.com/news/gov-evers-urges-federal-aid-amid-storms/article_39ac8583-0c71-4d65-ab57-8f2ed7f71aa4.html)

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*This edition of the Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing has been lightly reviewed for accuracy, but errors in source reporting or in the curation process may occur. If you notice an inaccuracy or a story of statewide governance significance that was missed, please let me know. Some Wisconsin news outlets restrict automated access to their content, which can limit coverage in any given edition. Each edition is a refinement of a workflow I have spent considerable time designing, and I expect the product to keep improving. Your*

*feedback is essential to that process. I welcome hearing from you about this briefing, about how it was built, or about any other way BoldPath Consulting can support your work in Wisconsin local government. Reach me directly at **[patrick@boldpathconsulting.com](mailto:patrick@boldpathconsulting.com) or (920) 522-2413.***

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