



MARATHON COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE AGENDA WITH MINUTES

Date & Time of Meeting: **Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 1:30pm**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room, Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI 54403**

Jean Maszk	Present(W)
Yee Leng Xiong	Present
Deb Hoppa	Present
Al Opall	Present
Tim Sondelski	Present
Jason Wilhelm	Present
Nicholas Endres	Absent

Staff Present: Lance Leonhard, Candice Pesch, Brian Desmond, Lauria Yarie, Chad Billeb, Bill Milhausen, Ryan Weber, Jeff Stefonek, Kyle Mayo, Ruth Heinzl, Phil Rentmeester, Laurie Miskimins(W), Jeff Pritchard(W)

Others Present: Sandra LaDu, Judge O'Neill

[Meeting Recording](#)

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – Vice-Chair Xiong called the meeting to order at 1:30pm
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Comment** - None
4. **Approval of the November 11, 2025, Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes** – (00:01)
Motion by Opall, Second by Wilhelm to approve the minutes. Motion carried on voice vote, unanimously.
5. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, Resolution, or Policy**
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by PUBS
 - B. Discussion and Possible Action by PUBS to Forward to County Board for Consideration
 1. Sheriff's Office JAG Drug Task Force grant and Law Enforcement Drug Trafficking Response grant – (00:02)
Motion by Opall, Second by Hoppa to approve receiving both grants. Motion carried on voice vote unanimously.
6. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**
 - A. 2025 Marathon County Jail Inspection report review – (00:08)
 - B. Update from Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee Chair Judge O'Neill, including discussion of process of addressing defendants' failure to appear – (00:13)
 - C. Marathon County 2026 Comprehensive Plan Draft available for review – (01:05)
<https://www.marathoncounty.gov/about-us/comprehensive-plan>
7. **Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements and Future Agenda Items**
 - A. Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion.
 - B. Next meeting: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 1:30pm
8. **Adjournment**
Motioned by Opall, Second by Hoppa to adjourn. Motion Carried on voice vote, unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 2:40pm

Minutes Prepared by David Holcomb



MARATHON COUNTY AGENDA MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Safety Committee
FROM: Kyle Mayo, District Attorney
DATE: 02/25/2026
SUBJECT: National Crime Victims' Rights Week 2026

Action Requested

The Marathon County District Attorney's Office (MCDA) is requesting that the Marathon County Board of Supervisors pass a resolution proclaiming the week of April 19-25, 2026 as Crime Victim's Rights Week in Marathon County.

Background

The first Crime Victims Week (later renamed to National Crime Victims' Rights Week) was established by President Ronald Reagan in 1981. The U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime leads the national in the observance of National Crime Victim's Rights Week. Communities across the nation sponsor local events to mark the week and raise awareness about victims' rights and services.

Governing Statute/Ordinance/Policy

Wis. Stat. Ch. 950, as well as Article I, Section 9m of the Wisconsin Constitution (Marcy's Law) provide a comprehensive bill of rights for victims to ensure all victims are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.

Neither Ch. 950, nor Marcy's Law, require the Marathon County Board of Supervisors to adopt this resolution.

Discussion/Analysis

The MCDA plans to commemorate National Crime Victims' Rights Week 2026 in several ways. One of those ways is by asking that this resolution be adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Adoption of this resolution by the Board of Supervisors would highlight to the community that Marathon County is committed to a justice system that works with state and local agencies to ensure that victim's rights are protected and that no victim is forced to navigate the criminal justice system alone. This resolution would also recognize and express gratitude for the Victim Witness Specialists in the MCDA who provide services to victims of crime every day in Marathon County.

Recommendation

The Marathon County District Attorney's Office recommends that the Marathon County Board of Supervisors adopts the proposed resolution proclaiming the week of April 19-25, 2026 as Crime Victims' Rights Week in Marathon County.

Attachments and References

No additional documents will be attached.

Financial Review

No funding is being requested through this resolution.

RESOLUTION #R-_____-26
National Crime Victims' Rights

WHEREAS, the impact of crime ripples throughout our community, affecting the physical, emotional, and financial well-being of survivors and their families; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 950 of the Wisconsin Statutes and Marsy's Law (Article I, Section 9m of the Wisconsin Constitution) provide a comprehensive "Bill of Rights" for victims, ensuring they are treated with dignity and have an enforceable voice in the justice system; and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Crime Victim Services provides essential statewide resources, including the Crime Victim Compensation Program, which helps survivors with the financial burden of medical bills, counseling, and lost wages; and

WHEREAS, The DOJ's Victim Resource Center serves as a vital bridge for Marathon County residents, offering a toll-free helpline, rights-enforcement assistance, and the Safe at Home address confidentiality program for those in fear for their safety; and

WHEREAS, the Marathon County District Attorney's Victim Witness Program works in daily partnership with state and local agencies to ensure that these rights are protected and that no victim is forced to navigate the criminal justice system alone; and

WHEREAS, National Crime Victims' Rights Week provides an opportunity for Marathon County to reaffirm its commitment to a justice system that is inclusive, equitable, and supportive of survivors.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Marathon County Board of Supervisors does hereby proclaim the week of April 19-25, 2026, as Crime Victims' Rights week in Marathon County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board encourages all citizens to learn about the rights and services available to victims through the Marathon County District Attorney's Office, and expresses its profound gratitude to the Specialists who provide these life-changing services.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Ayes _____ Nays _____ Abstain _____ Absent _____ [] Voice Vote

Approved and adopted this 24th day of March, 2026

Denied this 24th day of March, 2026

Approved as to Form:

SEAL

Brian Desmond, Corporation Counsel

Approved as to Financial Impact (if necessary)

Attest:

Samantha Fenske, Finance Director

Kim Trueblood, Marathon County Clerk

From: [Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy Inc](#)
To: [Abigail Miles](#)
Subject: PROCLAMATION REQUEST: April 2026 Missing Persons Awareness Month
Date: Friday, February 20, 2026 2:21:30 PM
Attachments: [Proclamation_Missing Persons Awareness Month.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from info@wimissing.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon,

We respectfully request that you proclaim April as Missing Persons Awareness Month in your county. This proclamation has been recognized at the State level since 2015 and remains a meaningful way to publicly support families of the missing while strengthening community awareness.

Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc. serves families across the state by sharing missing person information, supporting loved ones, and working alongside law enforcement and community partners. A local proclamation sends a clear message that your community stands with these families. It helps amplify their voices, increases public visibility, and can generate renewed attention that leads to tips, media coverage, and continued hope.

For many involved with our organization, this work is deeply personal. Our founder, Marsha Loritz, has experienced the life-altering reality of having a missing family member. Her lived experience, along with that of another board member, informs our work and reinforces the importance of continued awareness, advocacy, and family support.

In **2025**, Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc. reported the following based on publicly available data:

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- **More than 400 individuals were reported missing in Wisconsin during 2025 alone**, not including cases from prior years.

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- **250+ missing persons cases remain active statewide.**

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- These figures reflect public research using sources such as NamUS and the Wisconsin Clearinghouse. We do not have access to NCIC; however, our data represents the most accurate publicly available estimates.

Throughout the year, Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc.:

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- Maintained and updated a statewide list of missing persons using verified

public sources.

- Partnered with Lamar Advertising for our annual **statewide Missing Persons Awareness Billboard Campaign**, running throughout the month of April.
- Partnered with the Brown County Sheriff's Office for our annual Missing Persons Awareness Event, supported by law enforcement, businesses, and community organizations.
- Collaborated with the City of Green Bay to light the bridge in honor of Missing Persons Awareness Month.
- Partnered with Secure I.D. to distribute free Child ID cards to families.
- Participated in National Night Out and community events to educate the public on missing persons alerts, prevention, and available resources.
- Supported families through resource navigation, poster printing, and advocacy.
- Independently organized and hosted a retreat for families of the missing, providing direct support and connection opportunities.
- Collaborated with law enforcement agencies, Crime Stoppers, and media outlets to bring continued attention to missing persons cases.
- Successfully secured Missing Persons Awareness Month proclamations at the **state level since 2015, city level since 2017, and county level since 2018.**

Missing Persons Awareness Month has a meaningful impact across Wisconsin communities. By designating April as Missing Persons Awareness Month in your county, you would demonstrate support for families of the missing, increase public visibility, and affirm your community's commitment to ensuring missing individuals are not forgotten.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We would be honored to have your support.

Respectfully,

Abigail Miles

President

Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc.

Marsha Loritz

Founder/Board Member

Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc.

Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc.

1794 East Allouez Ave Ste C #194 Green Bay, WI 54311

www.wimissing.org info@wimissing.org

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Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc.

Based in Wisconsin | Advocating for the Missing

www.wimissing.org

[Facebook.com/WIMissing](https://www.facebook.com/WIMissing)

Raising awareness. Supporting families. Advocating for answers.

RESOLUTION #R-____-26
MISSING PERSON AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, according to the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), a national database used by law enforcement, medical professionals, and the public to assist in locating missing persons and identifying unidentified individuals, approximately 600,000 people are reported missing in the United States each year; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, 533,936 missing person reports were entered into the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center (NCIC), including 349,557 reports involving youth; and as of December 31, 2024, the NCIC contained 93,447 active missing persons records, with youth accounting for 27 percent of those active cases; and

WHEREAS, according to NamUs, there are currently 224 missing persons and 62 unidentified persons associated with Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, children and women of color are disproportionately represented among missing and unidentified persons, and individuals facing disabilities, mental health challenges, unsafe living conditions, homelessness, exploitation, trafficking, or unstable immigration status are at increased risk; and

WHEREAS, the ongoing crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) in the United States has highlighted significant gaps in reporting, investigation, and data collection, and the Wisconsin Department of Justice has established the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force to improve coordination, data practices, and response efforts; and

WHEREAS, every missing person is someone's loved one and deserves continued attention and effort, regardless of how long they have been missing or the circumstances of their disappearance, and families often rely on public awareness and media engagement to assist in locating their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc. has worked in collaboration with communities across Wisconsin for more than a decade to raise awareness for missing persons. During this observance, counties and municipalities across Wisconsin are invited to join the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy, Inc., and organizations statewide in promoting awareness, supporting families, and encouraging cooperation among the public, law enforcement, and search and rescue agencies.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the governing body hereby proclaims April 2026 as Missing Persons Awareness Month and encourages residents, community organizations, and public safety agencies to participate in efforts that promote awareness, support families of the missing, and strengthen cooperation in the search for missing persons.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Ayes _____ Nays _____ Abstain _____ Absent _____ [] Voice Vote

Approved and adopted this _____ day of _____, 2026

Denied this _____ day of _____, 2026

Approved as to Form:

SEAL

Brian Desmond, Corporation Counsel

Approved as to Financial Impact (if necessary)

Attest:

Samantha Fenske, Finance Director

Kim Trueblood, Marathon County Clerk



Search the site

InsideTrack Weekly

January 14, 2026

January 14, 2026

New Bar Exam, More Wisconsin Lawyers?

A Board of Bar Examiners petition before the Wisconsin Supreme Court would initiate the Uniform Bar Exam for applicants unable to be admitted on proof of practice or diploma privilege, offering greater ability to transfer bar exam scores to Wisconsin.

By Jay D. Jerde

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Jan. 14, 2026 – A petition filed in the Wisconsin Supreme Court recently by the Board of Bar Examiners (BBE) would add Wisconsin to the states using the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) – in theory making it easier to draw new attorneys who passed the UBE in other states.

[Petition 25-04](#) reflects one action item in the Supreme Court's [Attorney Recruitment and Retention Committee Report and Recommendations](#) released in November.

The report highlighted possibilities to increase the supply of lawyers in Wisconsin, especially in rural areas.

Thirty-nine states and the District of Columbia have approved using the UBE, including all states surrounding Wisconsin.

The Supreme Court has not acted yet on the petition filed Dec. 17. The BBE has not requested a hearing but does not object if the Supreme Court sets the petition for public hearing. The BBE's petition requests adoption before the July 2026 bar exam.

Rule Changes

The petition primarily would change or create sections of [Supreme Court Rule \(SCR\) 40.04](#).



***Jay D. Jerde**, Mitchell Hamline 2006, is a legal writer for the State Bar of Wisconsin, Madison. He can be reached by [email](#) or by phone at (608) 250-6126.*

SCR 40.04(2) would mandate the BBE administer the UBE prepared by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE), starting in July. Starting in July 2028, the BBE would begin using the NCBE's successor to the UBE, commonly known as the NextGen Bar Exam.

If that schedule is too ambitious, the BBE suggested making the change effective for the February 2027 bar exam.

New SCR 40.04(9) would make a UBE score from any jurisdiction of at least 260 (out of 400 points) within the last 36 months eligible for admission to Wisconsin's bar.

Applicants to the Wisconsin bar using the UBE or NextGen – regardless of where the applicant took the test – would also have to complete 30 hours of education on Wisconsin law and practice, based on course requirements for diploma privilege in [SCR 40.03](#), according to proposed SCR 40.04(10).

In its [memorandum](#) in support of its petition, the BBE anticipates that such online classes would be available from various sources, including the State Bar of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's diploma privilege, which supplants the bar exam for U.W. Law School and Marquette University Law School graduates who complete the required courses, means a majority of annual admittees to the Wisconsin bar never need to take a bar exam.

Although attorneys admitted to bars in other states may move the Supreme Court for admission based on proof of practice, that process requires three years of practice in the previous five years.

Like many states, Wisconsin's bar exam includes an essay component with questions about state-specific law and the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE), a multiple-choice test.

The UBE includes a Multistate Essay Examination (30%), a Multistate Practice Examination (20%), and the MBE (50%). States may change the weight of the components and create requirements covering state-specific law, the NCBE [website](#) explained.

All applicants to the Wisconsin Bar must pass BBE's character and fitness evaluation.

Report Documented Declines

The Supreme Court's Attorney Recruitment and Retention Committee Report set out six recommendations for further research by component groups of the committee established by Chief Justice Annette Kingsland Ziegler in 2024.

The full committee is scheduled to reconvene in November to review progress in developing the committee's recommendations.

Citing the American Bar Association's (ABA) Profile of the Legal Profession 2024, the report said Wisconsin has an average of 2.6 attorneys per 1,000 residents.

That's well below the ABA national average of 3.9 and lower yet than averages in neighboring Illinois, of 4.9, and Minnesota, of 4.6 attorneys per 1,000 residents.

The Milwaukee and Madison metropolitan areas contain about three-quarters of the state's attorneys – but less than half the population.

Statewide the “number of active attorneys associated with circuit court cases of any type ... has decreased by about 10% over the past eight years,” the report said.

It's harder yet to find a lawyer in a criminal proceeding. Between 2017 and 2024, defense attorneys in criminal felony cases have declined 14% while the number of such cases has increased 14%.

Southwestern and northern Wisconsin have experienced the largest declines of practicing lawyers, as much as 13% in southwestern Wisconsin between 2020 and 2025.

A 'Pathway' to Wisconsin Practice

The committee recommended adoption of the UBE as an "additional pathway[]" for admission to the State Bar of Wisconsin.

"By broadening eligibility through the UBE, Wisconsin may be better able to draw upon the services of attorneys who attended law school outside of Wisconsin."

Transferability of UBE test scores offers to "expand options for recent graduates from adjacent states to become licensed in Wisconsin more readily," the report explained, addressing specifically "the decline in Wisconsin's attorneys ... most pronounced in areas that border neighboring states."

The BBE had been reviewing NCBE test offerings and recommended UBE adoption in a letter to the Supreme Court in October, the BBE explained in its memorandum in support of its rule petition.

Law Deans Approve

"At the Court's request," the memorandum explains, the BBE "asked that the Wisconsin law school deans provide their individual comments or concerns about the proposal. Both the Deans responded favorably to the proposal and did not note any concerns about it."

The deans expanded on their support.

"I support authorizing the use of the UBE in Wisconsin for the reasons stated in the recent report of the Attorney Recruitment and Retention Committee, of which I was part," said U.W. Law School Dean Dan Tokaji.

"Moving to the UBE could make it easier for lawyers who have taken that exam in other states to become members of the Wisconsin bar. It could therefore help ease the shortage of legal services in rural parts of the state."

Marquette University Law School Dean Joseph Kearney's support noted the process.

“I have been impressed by the way the Wisconsin Supreme Court has been ensuring that it connects with multiple stakeholders, not only the state’s law school deans but also any number of other individuals, in reviewing the form of the bar exam,” which “is consistent with its hands-on approach to regulating the legal profession in Wisconsin.”

“It seems to me that the Court is remaining attentive and responsive to national developments concerning lawyer regulation while keeping a close eye on what is needed and works in Wisconsin,” Dean Kearney said.

First UBE Adoption in 2010

Missouri became the first state to adopt the UBE in 2010, when 10 to 20 other states were considering the change.

Although Missouri historically tested on state-specific law, the director of its board of bar examiners said the UBE offered sufficient abilities to test lawyer competency.

Assistant deans of career planning at Wisconsin’s law schools noted then that a test that offered transferable scores would increase opportunities – and competition.

For Law Students

Welcome! The State Bar of Wisconsin offers a variety of [resources to help you](#) connect with the legal profession while you’re a student.

[Become a State Bar of Wisconsin Law Student Associate](#) today and take steps now to boost your future legal career. You can network with your future colleagues at events, stay up-to-date on what’s happening in the law, be added to the monthly Law Student Associate Newsletter, and access research and career resources.



[Comments \(0\)](#)

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026

- 8:00 a.m. **Registration & Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00 a.m. **Welcome & Pledge of Allegiance**
Lance Pliml, Chair, WCA Board of Directors
- 9:05 a.m. **Opening Remarks**
Mark D. O'Connell, President & CEO, Wisconsin Counties Association
- 9:10 a.m. **Evers' Administration**
Moderator: Mark D. O'Connell, President & CEO, Wisconsin Counties Association
- 9:30 a.m. **Washington Update**
Matthew D. Chase, CEO & Executive Director, National Association of Counties
Mark D. O'Connell, President & CEO, Wisconsin Counties Association
- 10:15 a.m. **Break**
- 10:30 a.m. **Transportation Delivers: A Sustainable Funding Discussion**
Debby Jackson, Executive Director, Transportation Development Association
Robb Kahl, Executive Director, Construction Business Group
Moderator: Collin Driscoll, WCA Government Affairs Associate
- 11:00 a.m. **Legislative Update**
WCA Government Affairs Team
- 12:00 p.m. **Lunch**
- 12:45 p.m. **Forward Analytics**
Kevin Dospoy, Director, Forward Analytics
Jacob Anderson, Research Analyst, Forward Analytics
Moderator: Michael Lamont, Vice President of Programs & Services, Wisconsin Counties Association
- 1:15 p.m. **Leadership Staff Roundtable**
Maggie Gau, Chief of Staff, Governor Tony Evers
Jenny Toftness, Chief of Staff, Speaker Robin Vos
Ashley Czaja, Chief of Staff, Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu
Moderator: Marcie Rainbolt, WCA Government Affairs
- 2:00 p.m. **Break**
- 2:15 p.m. **Keynote Address**
Mark D. O'Connell, President & CEO, Wisconsin Counties Association
- 3:00 p.m. **Legal Update**
Andy Phillips, Attolles Law, s.c.
- 3:45 p.m. **Conclude**
- 5:00-7:00 p.m. **Reception Honoring County Government**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026

- 7:30 a.m. **Hot Breakfast Buffet**
- 8:30 a.m. **Call to Order & Welcome**
Mark D. O'Connell, President & CEO, Wisconsin Counties Association
- 8:35 a.m. **Legislative Leadership Roundtable**
Devin LeMahieu, Senate Majority Leader
Dianne Hesselbein, Senate Minority Leader
Robin Vos, Assembly Speaker
Greta Neubauer, Assembly Minority Leader
Moderator: Kyle Christianson, Partner at Wimmer & Company
- 9:35 a.m. **Break**
- 9:50 a.m. **Ask The Attorney**
Andy Phillips, Attolles Law, s.c.
- 10:50 a.m. **Keynote Steve Ackerman, Badger Talks**
The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald: The Ship, the Storm, and the Song
We explore the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald from perspectives of the weather, the ship and the song by Gordon Lightfoot.
- 11:50 a.m. **Conclude with Giveaways**
Grab a boxed lunch

Wisconsin Counties Association - Magazine

The March magazine will be available on the above site in the near future

- <https://www.wicounties.org/publications/>

WCA Legislative Conference Materials are not available at this time