



MARATHON COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE AGENDA WITH MINUTES

Date & Time of Meeting: **Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 1:30pm**

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

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

Staff Present: Kyle Mayo, Candace Pesch, Kelly Schremp, Mara Ryan, Lance Leonhard, David Holcomb

Others Present: Kurt Gibbs

[Meeting Recording](#)

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – Chair Maszk called the meeting to order at 1:30pm
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Comment** - None
4. **Approval of the January 13, 2026, Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes** – (00:00:42)
Motion by Wilhelm, Second by Hoppa 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 INFR
 - B. Discussion and Possible Action by INFR to Forward to County Board for Consideration
 1. Resolution recognizing National Crime Victim's Rights Week – (00:01)
Motion by Wilhelm, Second by Opall to forward the resolution to the full county board. Motion carried on voice vote unanimously.
 2. Resolution recognizing April as Missing Persons Awareness Month – (00:03)
Motion by Wilhelm, Second by Hoppa to forward the resolution to the full county board. Motion carried on voice vote unanimously.
6. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**
 - A. Update on State Bar of Wisconsin Attorney licensure process (state specific bar exam requirement) – (00:05)
 - B. Discussion of WCA Legislature Conference – are there areas for further review by this committee? – (00:11)
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, April 7, 2026 at 1:30pm
8. **Adjournment**
Motioned by Opall, Second by Wilhelm to adjourn. Motion Carried on voice vote, unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 1:57pm

Minutes Prepared by David Holcomb

**RESOLUTION #R-____-26
NATIONAL POLICE WEEK 2026**

WHEREAS, in 1962, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed May 15th of every year as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which May 15th falls, as National Police Week;

WHEREAS, there are more than 800,000 law enforcement officers serving in communities across the United States, including the dedicated members of all Marathon County Law Enforcement agencies;

WHEREAS, since the first recorded death in 1786, there are currently more than 24,500 law enforcement officers in the United States have made the ultimate sacrifice and been killed in the line of duty, including six members of state and local law enforcement agencies here in Marathon County;

WHEREAS, the names of these dedicated public servants are engraved on the walls of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC;

WHEREAS, it is essential that all citizens know and understand the duties, responsibilities, hazards, and sacrifices of their law enforcement officers and that members of our law enforcement agencies recognize their duty to serve the people by safeguarding life and property, by protecting them against violence and disorder, and by protecting the innocent against deception and the week against oppression;

WHEREAS, the men and women of law enforcement agencies across Marathon County unceasingly provide a vital public service at all times and in all conditions;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Kurt Gibbs, Marathon County Board Chair, call upon the citizens of Marathon County to observe May 11-16, 2026, as National Police Week in Marathon County, and publicly salute the service of law enforcement officers in our community and in communities across the nation.

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

ORDINANCE #O - _____-26
Amending Marathon County Ordinance §6.01 (Emergency Management)

WHEREAS, Marathon County Ordinance §6.01 establishes the framework for local emergency management, including the authority to declare a state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 323 governs emergency management authority at the state and local level; and

WHEREAS, 2025 Wisconsin Act 61 amended Wis. Stat. §323.14(4)(b) to define “Chief Executive Officer” to include a County Administrator and individuals acting in that capacity; and

WHEREAS, Act 61 further establishes that emergency proclamations issued by a Chief Executive Officer may not exceed sixty (60) days unless extended by the governing body, and clarifies the authority of the County Board to ratify, modify, extend, or repeal such declarations; and

WHEREAS, the current Marathon County ordinance limits emergency declaration authority to the County Board Chair and Vice-Chair and does not incorporate the statutory definition of Chief Executive Officer or the required time limitations; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend Marathon County Ordinance §6.01 to ensure consistency with current state law and to provide clarity regarding emergency declaration authority and procedures;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Marathon County Board of Supervisors that Marathon County Ordinance §6.01 is amended as follows:

SECTION 1. Amendment to §6.01(3) – Declaration of Emergency

(3) The County Board may declare, by resolution, a state of emergency for the County or any portion thereof in accordance with § 323.11, Wis. Stats.

In the event an emergency occurs within Marathon County at a time when the County Board is unable to meet for the purpose of declaring an emergency, the Chief Executive Officer of Marathon County, or a person acting in that capacity, may by proclamation declare a state of emergency and exercise all powers conferred upon the governing body under §§ 323.11 and 323.14, Wis. Stats., that appear necessary and expedient.

(a) For purposes of this subsection, “Chief Executive Officer” means:

1. The County Administrator; or in the absence or unavailability of the County Administrator, any individual lawfully acting in said capacity.

(b) Any proclamation issued under this subsection shall:

1. Be effective immediately upon issuance;
2. Not exceed sixty (60) days in duration unless extended by resolution of the County Board; and
3. Be subject to ratification, alteration, modification, extension, or repeal by the County Board as soon as practicable after the Board is able to convene.

(c) Any action taken pursuant to a proclamation issued under this subsection shall remain valid unless and until modified or repealed by the County Board.

SECTION 2. Amendment to §6.01(4) – Authority in Emergencies

(4) Authority in Emergencies. Pursuant to § 323.11, Wis. Stats., the emergency power of the County Board includes the general authority to order whatever is necessary and expedient for the health, safety, protection, and welfare of persons and property within the County in the emergency.

Such authority may also be exercised by proclamation of the Chief Executive Officer consistent with subsection (3) when the County Board is unable to meet.

SECTION 3. Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication as required by law.

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, County Clerk

Kurt Gibbs, County Board Chair



MARATHON COUNTY AGENDA MEMORANDUM

TO: Marathon County Public Safety Committee and County Board
FROM: Candace Pesch, Deputy Administrator
DATE: April 21, 2026
SUBJECT: Amendment to Marathon County Ordinance 6.01

Action Requested

Amend Marathon County Ordinance §6.01 (Emergency Management) to ensure consistency with current state law due to recent statutory changes enacted under 2025 Wisconsin Act 61.

Background

Marathon County Ordinance §6.01 establishes the framework for local emergency management, including the authority to declare a state of emergency and the delegation of that authority when the County Board is unable to convene.

Currently, the ordinance provides that, in the absence of the County Board, the authority to declare a state of emergency rests with:

- The County Board Chair; or
- The Vice Chair, if the Chair is unavailable.

This structure reflects prior statutory language under Chapter 323 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Governing Statute/Ordinance/Policy

Wisconsin Act 61 modifies Wis. Stat. §323.14(4)(b) by:

- 1) Defining “Chief Executive Officer” (CEO) for purposes of emergency declarations to include:
 - a) County Executive
 - b) County Administrator
 - c) County Board Chair (in counties with an administrative coordinator)
 - d) Or individuals acting in those roles

- 2) Establishing a Time Limitation:
 - a) Emergency proclamations issued by a CEO may not exceed 60 days, unless extended by the governing body.

- 3) Clarifying Governing Body Oversight:
 - a) The County Board retains authority to ratify, modify, extend, or repeal the declaration when it is able to meet.

Discussion/Analysis

The current Marathon County ordinance does not fully align with the updated statutory framework in the following ways:

- 1) Designation of Authority
 - a) The ordinance currently limits emergency declaration authority to the County Board Chair (and Vice-Chair).
 - b) Act 61 clarifies that, in counties with a County Administrator structure, the County Administrator qualifies as the “Chief Executive Officer” and is authorized to issue emergency proclamations.

Updating the ordinance will reflect the County Administrator’s statutory authority to act in emergency situations when the Board cannot convene.

- 2) Time Limitation on Emergency declarations
 - a) The current ordinance does not specify a duration limit on emergency declarations issued outside of Board action.
 - b) Act 61 imposes a maximum duration of 60 days unless extended by the governing body.

Updating the ordinance will incorporate this statutory limit to ensure compliance and clarity.

Recommendation

- Amend Marathon County Ordinance 6.04(2)(3) as described above.

Attachments and References

- Marathon County Ordinance 6.01
- WI Act 61
- Draft Amended Marathon County Ordinance 6.01

Financial Review

- None at this time. However, issuing an expedited emergency declaration may position Marathon County to seek reimbursement for eligible response and recovery costs through state and federal disaster assistance programs.

§6.01(3) – Declaration of Emergency (Redline and suggested language)

(3) The County Board may declare, by resolution, a state of emergency for the County or any portion thereof in accordance with § 323.11, Wis. Stats.

In the event an emergency occurs within Marathon County at a time when the County Board is unable to meet for the purpose of declaring an emergency,

the Chief Executive Officer of Marathon County, or a person acting in that capacity, may by proclamation declare a state of emergency and exercise all powers conferred upon the governing body under § 323.11 and § 323.14, Wis. Stats., that appear necessary and expedient.

(a) For purposes of this subsection, “Chief Executive Officer” means:

1. The County Administrator: or in the absence or unavailability of the County Administrator, any individual lawfully acting in said capacity

(b) Any proclamation issued under this subsection shall:

1. Be effective immediately upon issuance;

2. Not exceed sixty (60) days in duration unless extended by resolution of the County Board; and

3. Be subject to ratification, alteration, modification, extension, or repeal by the County Board as soon as practicable after the Board is able to convene.

(c) Any action taken pursuant to a proclamation issued under this subsection shall remain valid unless and until modified or repealed by the County Board.

§6.01(4) – Authority in Emergencies (Suggested language)

(4) Authority in Emergencies. Pursuant to § 323.11, Wis. Stats., the emergency power of the County Board includes the general authority to order, by ordinance or resolution, whatever is necessary and expedient for the health, safety, protection, and welfare of persons and property within the County in the emergency and includes the power to bar, restrict, or remove all unnecessary traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, from the highways, notwithstanding any provision of chs. 341 to 349, Wis. Stats.

Such authority may also be exercised by proclamation of the Chief Executive Officer consistent with subsection (3) when the County Board is unable to meet.

State of Wisconsin



2025 Senate Bill 310

Date of enactment: December 9, 2025
Date of publication*: December 10, 2025

2025 WISCONSIN ACT 61

AN ACT to renumber and amend 323.14 (4) (b); to create 323.14 (4) (b) 1. of the statutes; relating to: time limits on local unit of government chief executive officer emergency power proclamations.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 323.14 (4) (b) of the statutes is renumbered 323.14 (4) (b) 2. and amended to read:

323.14 (4) (b) 2. If, because of the emergency conditions, the governing body of the local unit of government is unable to meet promptly, the chief executive officer or acting chief executive officer of any local unit of government shall exercise by proclamation all of the powers conferred upon the governing body under par. (a) or s. 323.11 that appear necessary and expedient. The proclamation shall not exceed 60 days, unless the proclamation is extended by the governing body. The proclamation shall be subject to ratification, alteration, modification, extension, or repeal by the governing body

as soon as that body can meet, but the subsequent action taken by the governing body shall not affect the prior validity of the proclamation.

SECTION 2. 323.14 (4) (b) 1. of the statutes is created to read:

323.14 (4) (b) 1. In this paragraph, "chief executive officer" means any of the following:

- a. The county executive of a county, the county administrator of a county, or, in a county with an administrative coordinator, the county board chair of a county.
- b. The mayor or city manager of a city.
- c. The village president or village manager of a village.
- d. The town board chairperson of a town.
- e. A person acting as, or temporarily filling the role of, a person listed in subd. 1. a. to d.

* Section 991.11, WISCONSIN STATUTES: Effective date of acts. "Every act and every portion of an act enacted by the legislature over the governor's partial veto which does not expressly prescribe the time when it takes effect shall take effect on the day after its date of publication."