



**MARATHON COUNTY  
REGIONAL MORGUE TASK FORCE MEETING  
AMENDED AGENDA**

Date & Time of Meeting: **Friday, May 5, 2023, at 10 am-11 am**

Meeting Location: **Virtual through WebEx and in-person at the Medical Examiner's Office; 1308 West Street, Wausau WI**

**Regional Morgue Task Force Committee Members:** Craig McEwen, Chair; Greg Bean; Dr. Michael Clark, Dr. Lisa Grill Dodson; Phil Rentmeester; Scott Rifleman; Kimm Weber; Mark Westen; Greg Zoromski; Dr. Jeannie Worden

**Marathon County Mission Statement:** *Marathon County Government serves people by leading, coordinating, and providing county, regional, and statewide initiatives. It directly or in cooperation with other public and private partners provides services and creates opportunities that make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business. (Last updated: 12-20-05)*

Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the **telephone conference beginning five (5) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number:**

**Phone#: 1-408-418-9388**

**Access Code: 2499 063 7414**

**Attendee ID: (Do not have to enter a number, just press #)**

When you enter the telephone conference, **PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Public Comment**
3. **Approval of February 23, 2023, Morgue Task Force Meeting Minutes**
4. **Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**
  - A. Informational updates, including funding, planning, and partnership updates.
5. **Policy Issues Discussion and Committee Determination to the County Board for its Consideration**
  - A. Recommendation of next steps to Public Safety Committee, **HR/Finance Committee**, and County Board
6. **Scheduling of Future Meetings and Identifying Agenda Topics**
7. **Announcements**
8. **Adjournment**

***"Any person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation in order to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 715-261-1500 or e-mail [countyclerk@co.marathon.wi.us](mailto:countyclerk@co.marathon.wi.us) one business day before the meeting.***

**SIGNED** /s/ Craig McEwen  
Presiding Officer or Designee

Emailed to: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages, and  
Other Media Groups

Emailed by: T. Ranallo

Date & Time: 5/2/2023 at 8:35pm

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE

By: T. Ranallo

Date Time: 5/2/2023 at 8:35am



# MARATHON COUNTY REGIONAL MORGUE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 10:00–11:00 am  
In-person and Virtual through WebEx

Members	Present/Web-Phone	Absent
Chair Craig McEwen	P	
Greg Bean		X
Dr. Michael Clark	W	
Dr. Lisa Grill Dodson	W	
Phil Rentmeester	P	
Scott Rifleman	W	
Kimm Weber		X
Mark Westen	W	
Greg Zorowski	W	

**Present in person:** Marathon County Medical Examiner Jessica Blahnik

**Also Present via Web:** Administrator Lance Leonhard, County Board Chair Kurt Gibbs, NTC Dean Dr. Jeannie Worden, and Kevin O'Brien reporter

- 1. Call Meeting to Order**  
Chair McEwen called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
- 2. Public Comment – None**
- 3. MOTION BY WESTEN; SECOND BY DODSON TO APPROVE THE MINTUES OF THE July 11, 2022, REGIONAL MORGUE TASK FORCE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.**
- 4. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**
  - A. Informational updates, including funding options and ongoing discussions with potential stakeholders**

**Discussion:**

Blahnik shared that since the last Task Force meeting, Marathon County applied for the Neighborhood Investment grant, however, did not receive the grant funding. At the end of September, representatives from Marathon County and Northcentral Technical College had the opportunity to meet with a member of Governor Evers' staff to share the project plans in hopes to obtain support. The meeting went well. The Governor's budget was released last week. There is no line item specific for the project. However, one of his staff members reached out and expressed that Governor Evers does support the project and felt the Neighborhood Investment Funds would be a good funding opportunity. The advice was to reach out to the local legislators and members of the Joint Finance Committee to express the need to support including the Neighborhood Investment funds in the budget.

Administrator Leonhard shared that the Joint Finance Committee will be rewriting the Governor's base budget and we are not sure what the new budget will look like. He plans to work with the Wisconsin County's Association (WCA) for guidance on next steps. There are a few contacts that expressed the legislators support the project. He asked members of the Morgue Task Force to hold off contacting local legislators or members of the Joint Finance Committee until we can get a better understanding of the needed support and next steps. If a member of the Task Force is already meeting with a state legislator or member of the Joint Finance Committee for other matters, they are free to express their support for the project and need for funding.

Chair McEwen stated that Marathon County has \$2 million of ARPA funds allocated to the project already, however, there needs to be additional funding for the project to move forward.

Dr. Worden shared that she met Senator Felzkowski in January, and she supports the project. Senator Felzkowski will be touring Northcentral Technical College's new facilities in the near future and Dr. Worden could include Administrator Leonhard in the meeting.

Administrator Leonhard explained the next steps are to finalize the site location and start to work out the logistical aspects of a partnership with Northcentral Technical College. It would be ideal to complete the

architectural designs in 2023, which will take more than three months to complete. The request for proposal will hopefully go out January 2024 to start construction later in the year.

Chair McEwen stated that the Governor's budget should take effect in July, so we will hopefully know more information by then.

Dr. Dodson asked if we knew how much was allocated and what would happen if there were a funding gap? Administrator Leonhard stated that it was unknown at this time. We believe there is a \$150 million pool of funding, and it was not suggested how much we will receive, if any.

Dr. Clark asked what would happen if we do not get enough funds to cover the entire construction costs? Administrator Leonhard stated that we would have to reconfigure the building and figure out next steps at that time.

Dr. Dodson asked if the county had explored contacting local community foundations for funding? Blahnik explained that in the beginning of the project we had reached out to the community foundations for funding opportunities. They felt that a morgue facility falls under county operations and not something that foundations would support. However, the project has since grown to be more of a teaching facility with great partners, such as the Medical College of Wisconsin and Northcentral Technical College. With the new structure and operations plan, there may be opportunities for funding through the community foundations, such as the teaching spaces and family grief area, which are additional areas beyond county operations. Chair McEwen added that having the county allocate \$2 million of the ARPA funds towards the project also helps show that Marathon County is committed to the project.

Sherriff Westen stated that he will be meeting with Senator Felzkowski on another matter, however had asked if he could express his support for the project and need for state funding? Administrator Leonhard explained that yes, he could express his support. We just did not want everyone reaching out to the legislators for only the project at this time until we knew more. If there was an established meeting already taking place, you can express your support. It would be ideal if the Joint Finance Committee would allocate funds directly in the budget for the project, instead of being only eligible to apply for funding through the Neighborhood Investment Funds. If the Governor supports the project, it would be highly unlikely to be taken out of the budget. Administrator Leonhard had also stated someone from Marathon County will send out the PDF version of the project plans that were shared with Governor Evers.

**Follow Up:**

None

**5. Policy Issues Discussion and Committee Determination to the County Board for its Consideration**

**A. Recommendation of next steps to Public Safety Committee**

**Discussion:**

Administrator Leonhard and Chair McEwen stated that we are currently waiting for more information to know the next steps. We will provide an update to the Public Safety Committee once we know more about the Governor's budget.

**Action:**

None

**Follow Up:**

None

**6. Scheduling of Future Meetings and Identifying Agenda Topics**

Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion.

**7. Announcements**

None

**8. Adjournment**

**MOTION BY RIFLEMAN; SECOND BY DR. DODSON TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 1028 AM. MOTION CARRIED.**

## RESOLUTION #R-\_\_\_\_-23

### **Extending Encumbrance of ARPA Funds for Regional Forensic Science Center Project, Amending 2023 Capital Improvement Program Budget, and Authorizing Expenditure for Design Services**

**WHEREAS**, Marathon County is the recipient of funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Marathon County is authorized to expend ARPA funds pursuant to rules promulgated by the United States Department of the Treasury and Section 602(c)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act as amended; and

**WHEREAS**, the Marathon County Board of Supervisors previously authorized the allocation of American Rescue Plan Act funds in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000.00 to serve as a portion of the funding plan for a Regional Forensic Science Center. The Board further authorized these funds to be encumbered through July 2023 and returned to the County's ARPA fund balance for reallocation for other uses if the remaining funding necessary for the Regional Forensic Science Center project are not received by July 31, 2023. The Regional Forensic Science Center has been a project studied by the Marathon County Board through the creation of a Regional Morgue Task Force in 2017; however, the project does not yet exist in the Marathon County 2023 Capital Improvement Program budget; and

**WHEREAS**, state funding for a Regional Forensic Science Center is being considered by the Wisconsin Legislature as a part of the state's budget process. Additional funds may be received in 2023 through federal sources. A funding decision relative to a Regional Forensic Science Center may not be made, and funds relative to the Center may not be received, prior to July 31, 2023; however, available funding is likely to be known by September 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, Marathon County staff have had ongoing discussions with Northcentral Technical College (NTC) regarding a potential location for a Regional Forensic Science Center on or near property currently owned by NTC and near that college's existing campus in the City of Wausau. NTC is willing to engage Marathon County in a transaction relative to land for the Regional Forensic Science Center and is interested in developing an operational partnership with County staff to provide for significant professional educational experiences at the future Forensic Science Center site; and

**WHEREAS**, the design phase of a Regional Forensic Science Center project will likely require five to six months for completion; and

**WHEREAS**, a portion of the \$2,000,000.00 in encumbered ARPA funds could be utilized to engage with a firm for the design of the Regional Forensic Science Center. Allocation of a portion of these encumbered funds would permit work to be started on the design of the Regional Forensic Science Center as soon as procurement for design services is completed. Delays in completion of the design phase of the project would likely lead to higher project costs should the state-funding be allocated and the construction of the facility be approved by the Board of Supervisors; and

**WHEREAS**, On May 9, 2023, and May 10, 2023, respectively, the Public Safety Committee and the Human Resources, Finance and Property Committee voted to support the extension of the encumbrance of ARPA funds for the Regional Forensic Science Center through December 31, 2023, voted to recommend use of up to \$178,095 of the \$2,000,000.00 in encumbered ARPA funds to procure design services for the Regional Forensic Science Center building and infrastructure, and voted to amend the 2023 Capital Improvement Program budget to add as a project the Regional Forensic Science Center.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Marathon County Board of Supervisors hereby extends its encumbrance of ARPA funds in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000.00 to serve as a portion of the funding plan for Regional Forensic Science Center through December 31, 2023. The Board authorizes these funds to be encumbered through December 31, 2023, and to be returned to the County's ARPA fund balance for reallocation for other uses if the remaining funding necessary for the Regional Forensic Science Center project are not allocated to Marathon County by December 31, 2023.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Marathon County Board of Supervisors hereby amends the 2023 Capital Improvement Program budget to create as an additional project in 2023 the Marathon County Regional Forensic Science Center with funding for the project to include the \$2,000,000.00 in encumbered ARPA funds to be supplemented by state or federal grant dollars upon receipt.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Marathon County Board of Supervisors approves the use of up to \$178,095 of the \$2,000,000.00 in encumbered ARPA funds to procure design services for the Regional Forensic Science Center building and infrastructure. The Board finds that this expenditure is consistent with the use of ARPA funds for capital improvements to public facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and as revenue replacement, both allowable uses of ARPA funds.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the County Board authorizes the amendment of the 2023 budget to reflect the encumbrance and expenditure of the funds identified herein.

FISCAL NOTE:

This Resolution extends the encumbrance of no more than \$2,000,000.00 of Marathon County's ARPA allocation for expenditure towards the costs of a Regional Forensic Science Center contingent upon receipt of the remaining required funds from other sources. If the required alternative funds are not allocated to Marathon County by December 31, 2023, these ARPA funds shall be returned to the County's ARPA fund balance for reallocation.

This resolution also authorizes the expenditure of up to \$178,095 of the \$2,000,000.00 in encumbered ARPA funds to procure design services for the Regional Forensic Science Center building and infrastructure.

Finally, this resolution amends the 2023 Capital Improvement Program budget to add the Regional Forensic Science Center as a project with the funding sources identified herein. The total project cost estimate is \$14,841,266.00, of which up to \$2,000,000 would be funded by ARPA funds and the remaining funding sources would be state and/or federal grants or appropriations.

LEGAL NOTE:

The County Board is authorized to take this action pursuant to §§ 59.01 and 59.51, Wis. Stats. As an amendment to the adopted 2023 County Budget, this Resolution requires a 2/3 vote of the entire membership of the County Board pursuant to § 65.90(5)(a), Wis. Stats.

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

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**HUMAN RESOURCES, FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

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