



MARATHON COUNTY
JOINT CITY OF WAUSAU AND MARATHON COUNTY
HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE
AGENDA



Date & Time of Meeting: Wednesday, November 20, 2024, at 3:00 P.M.

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

Task Force Members: Co-Chair Ron Covelli, Co-Chair Becky McElhaney, Bill Conway, Terry Killian, Kent Olson, Diane Sennholz, Craig Vincent, Vicki Tylka, Matt Barnes, Beth Ann Richlen

Task Force Purpose: The Joint City of Wausau and Marathon County Government Homelessness Task Force is dedicated to developing a shared strategy relative to the role of the City of Wausau and Marathon County governments in addressing the impacts of homelessness in Wausau and more broadly in Marathon County. Its mission is to consider the holistic support needed by homeless individuals, particularly those with mental health and substance abuse treatment needs, and determine the specific, direct role for local governments, beyond our work in fostering collaboration among various stakeholders (e.g., the business community, local non-profits, and faith-based and community organizations).

*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: 146 235 4571

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

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Public Comments (15 Minute limit)**
3. **Committee Discussion and Possible Action**
 - A. Review of Task Force Charter, including but not limited to objectives and timeline, future meeting topics, dates, times, and location for meetings.
4. **Next Meeting Date and Time**
5. **Adjournment**

A quorum of members of City of Wausau and/or Marathon County Government Boards, Committees, or Commissions, or other subgroups may be in attendance; however, no action will be taken by said bodies. This notice is provided in accordance with State ex rel. Badke v. Greendale Village Bd., 173 Wis.2d 553,494 N.W.2d 408 (1993).

“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 one business day before the meeting.

SIGNED /s/ Ron Covelli and Becky McElhaney
 Presiding Officer or Designee

EMAILED TO: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages, and other Media Groups
 EMAILED BY: Kim Trueblood
 DATE & TIME: _____

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE _____
 BY: Kim Trueblood
 DATE & TIME: _____

Charter for the Joint City of Wausau/Marathon County Homelessness Task Force

Mission Statement:

The Joint City of Wausau and Marathon County Government Homelessness Task Force is dedicated to developing a shared strategy relative to the role of the City of Wausau and Marathon County governments in addressing the impacts of homelessness in Wausau and more broadly in Marathon County. Its mission is to consider the holistic support needed by homeless individuals, particularly those with mental health and substance abuse treatment needs, and determine the specific, direct role for local governments, beyond our work in fostering collaboration among various stakeholders (e.g., the business community, local non-profits, and faith-based and community organizations).

Information Gathering Objectives:

Unhoused Population Demographic Assessment and Data Collection: receive a presentation from City of Wausau Outreach Specialist Tracy Reiger, and other identified individuals, relative to the demographics and needs of the homeless population in Marathon County, with a particular focus on understanding employment status/history, age, gender, justice-involved status, community of residence/origin, and other pertinent demographic data.

Shelter and Housing Availability Assessment: receive information relative to the shelter and housing (*i.e.*, emergency, transitional, and permanent) support resources available to the homeless community.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Services: review the results of the continuum of care gaps analysis being conducted by Marathon County.

Other Community Experiences (Positive and Negative): solicit presentations related to the experiences of other communities, including the City of La Crosse and La Crosse County, particularly relative to pitfalls to avoid and lessons learned.

Other information as need: the taskforce is empowered to gather other information as needed.

Policy Recommendation Goals: The taskforce shall provide the following deliverables within the timeframes provided. Reports shall be provided in written form.

Short-Term (within 30 days)

- Provide a recommendation to the City of Wausau and Marathon County governments as to whether acquisition of the Annabelle apartments housing complex should be pursued to ensure its preservation as a transitional housing asset.

Intermediate Term (within 45 days)

- Provide a recommendation to the City of Wausau and Marathon County governments as to whether the demographic data gathered necessitates the development of a formal mechanism to engage surrounding municipalities relative to resource sharing.

Long-term (within 90 days)

- Provide recommendations relative to the specific roles of other local municipalities, particularly those surrounding municipalities and those that have transported unhoused

individuals to the City of Wausau to access services, in developing and implementing a sustainable system of services.

- Identify gaps in existing mental health and substance abuse treatment resources and make recommendations as appropriate relative to the needs of the homeless population in light of services available via non-governmental providers and the mandates and fiscal limitations of local governments.
- Engagement of the Business Community: Explore opportunities for businesses to contribute resources, expertise, and support to homelessness initiatives and report on findings.
- Support from Non-profits and Faith-Based Organizations: Report on the services provided by local non-profits and faith-based organizations relative to transitional housing, transportation, and other supportive services for homeless individuals. Identify opportunities to maximize the effectiveness of these initiatives and enhance comprehensive support for those in need.

Composition:

The task force shall consist of representatives from the following stakeholder groups:

- Elected Officials (two members of the Wausau City Council and two members of the Marathon County Board of Supervisors)
- Business community leader representative
- Local non-profit organizations serving the homeless population
- Faith-based organizations involved in homelessness initiatives
- Mental health and substance abuse treatment providers
- Government agencies responsible for behavioral health services, law enforcement, and housing
- Homeless population advocate

Leadership:

The task force shall be Co-Chaired by one member of the City Council and one County Board, identified by the respective appointing official for each body. The Co-Chairs are responsible for facilitating meetings, coordinating activities, and representing the task force to external stakeholders.

Reporting and Accountability:

Progress reports shall be submitted to relevant government agencies no less than as provided above. The task force shall operate transparently, with decisions made through consensus-building and collaboration among members.

Duration:

The Marathon County Homelessness Task Force shall operate for an initial term of one hundred (100) days, with the option for renewal based on ongoing needs and objectives.