



# MARATHON COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

## AMENDED AGENDA

Date & Time of Meeting: **Tuesday, February 11, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.**

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

**Committee Members:** Kurt Gibbs Chair; Craig McEwen, Vice-Chair; Matt Bootz; Sara Guild, Jacob Langenhahn, Allen Opall, John Robinson, E J Stark, Jeff Zriny

**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)*

**Executive Committee Mission Statement:** *The Executive Committee of the Marathon County Board exists for the purpose of implementing the County's Strategic Plan by coordinating policy formation among the Committees, and providing leadership for all County Board policies through supervision of Administrative staff.*

**In addition to attendance in person at the location described above, Executive Committee members and the public are invited to attend by telephone conference. Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the telephone conference beginning 5 minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number: 715-261-6507.**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Public Comment**
3. **Approval of the January 7, 2020, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**
4. **Policy Issues Discussion and Committee Determination**
  - A. Discussion on Reimbursement of Mileage for County Board Supervisors
  - B. Input for the 2020 Administrator's Work Plan
  - C. Discussion on Membership to the Downsizing of the County Board and Recommendation to the Board
5. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution – None**
6. **Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**
  - A. Selected Non-Profit Performance Contracts interplay with County Procurement Rules
  - B. Update on the Administrator Recruitment
  - C. Update on Board Chairman Letters on Wisconsin Legislative Bills
    1. Supermajority Bill
    2. Land and Water Bills
7. **Next Meeting Date & Time, Location, Future Agenda Items**
  - Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion and educational presentations for the County Board.
  - Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room
8. **Announcements**
9. **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 [infomarathon@mail.co.marathon.wi.us](mailto:infomarathon@mail.co.marathon.wi.us) one business day before the meeting.

SIGNED /s/ Kurt Gibbs  
Presiding Officer or Designee

FAXED TO: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages, and  
FAXED TO: Other Media Groups  
FAXED BY: M. Palmer  
FAXED DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
FAXED TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE  
BY: M. Palmer  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TIME: \_\_\_\_\_



## MARATHON COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Monday, January 7, 2020, 4:00 p.m.  
Courthouse Assembly Room B-105, 500 Forest St, Wausau WI 54403

Attendance:	Present	Absent
Kurt Gibbs, Chair	X	
Craig McEwen, Vice-Chair	X	
Matt Bootz	X	
Sara Guild	X	
Jacob Langenhahn		EX
Allen Opall	X	
John Robinson	X	
E J Stark	X	
Jeff Zriny		EX

**Also Present:** Lance Leonhard, Scott Corbett, Jon Graveen, Becky Frisch, Arnie Schlei, Mary Palmer

### 1. Call Meeting to Order

Meeting was called to order by Chair Kurt Gibbs at 4:00 p.m.

### 2. Public Comment: None

### 3. Approval of the December 10, 2019, Minutes

**MOTION BY STARK, SECOND BY MCEWEN, TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 10, 2019, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED.**

### 4. Policy Issues Discussion and Committee Determination to the County Board for its Consideration

#### A. Recap of 2019 Administrator's Work Plan

#### **Discussion:**

Brad Karger gave the full board an overview of the 2019 Administrator's Work Plan at the end of 2019. Lance Leonhard, Interim County Administrator, went quickly through the 2019 Work Plan to get ready for agenda item 4B and the 2020 Administrator's Work Plan. A couple comments on the 2019 Work Plan emerged:

- Housing for UW students is a big issue for recruiting students.
- Creating a long-term facilities plan - is there anything in the plan for security at other buildings? Don't just do a master plan for specific buildings, but look at all at a high level and enhance services and consolidate departments such as forming a Health and Human Services Department.

#### **Action:**

None Taken.

#### **Follow through:**

A footnote should be added to the 2019 plan that the County Board directed that a considerable amount of the Administrator's time was to be spent on the jail.

#### B. Input for the 2020 Administrator's Work Plan

#### **Discussion:**

Interim Administrator Lance Leonhard handed out a draft of many possible topics that could be addressed in the 2020 Work Plan. This plan also includes 2019 topics that were not completed. The designation by committee was removed. Each committee member was asked by Chair Gibbs to rank the priorities and get him their top 10 items of importance by January 21. He will compile the

information and bring back in February. Other questions are what will we hold the Administrator accountable for in rating his performance?

Were any items missed that should be considered for 2020?

1. New Judge, earliest would be in 2021 budget
2. Close out of jail renovation and completion and ending the emergency. Close out budget portion of the emergency and then aesthetics to be completed in warmer weather.
3. Downsize of board taskforce?

There will be a new financial system and will that work with Priority Based Budgeting?

**Action:**

No action taken.

**Follow through:**

Get top 10 priorities to Kurt Gibbs by January 21. He will compile and bring to the February meeting.

C. Discussion on Membership to the Downsizing of the County Board and Recommendation to the Board

**Discussion:**

The Board approved the creation of a taskforce to make recommendations to the board on possibly downsizing. Each standing committee is asked to bring forward at least one name who would be willing to serve on the taskforce regardless if they will run for re-election or not. The committee wants to make sure the makeup of the taskforce has adequate representation from both rural and urban supervisors. The taskforce members will compile information surveyed from various counties, do foundational development, decide on what information we want and how it relates to Marathon County. Then what do we do with it to change policy?

Becky Frisch, Conservation, Planning & Zoning (CPZ) Director, volunteered her staff to do a survey of counties before the Task Force begins. CPZ will contact the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Council and the Wisconsin Counties Association along with other counties. The timeline would look something like this: The taskforce will meet for the first time in April, continue meeting through October to come up with a recommendation, have a public hearing in November, take the recommendation to the Executive Committee in December and to the full Board in January. Some dates will need to be revised in the Charter by the Board.

Once the census goes out, the County only has 60 days to act on this. February, 2021, would be the latest to do something relating to Board size.

Supervisor Opall had to leave 5:33 p.m.

In March or April make outgoing taskforce members, citizen members for continuity and additional new members.

Chair Gibbs will meet with Becky Frisch to help create a list of information the taskforce may want and then decide if we pursue and direct CPZ to do a survey.

Supervisor Guild excused. 5:37

**Action:**

No action taken.

**Follow through:**

- Chair Gibbs will meet with Becky Frisch to help create a list of information the taskforce may want.
- Each standing committee will submit a name to be on the taskforce.

**5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution - None**

**6. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**

A. Update on the Administrator Recruitment

**Discussion:**

There have been 14 applicants as of today. That recruitment closes on January 13. There will be a tentative committee review of the applicants to see if they meet requirements on January 21.

**Follow through:**

No follow through needed.

**7. Next Meeting Time, Location, Agenda Items and Reports to the County Board**

- Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion and educational presentations for the County Board
- Next regular meeting: Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room

**8. Announcements:**

Supervisor Robinson –Frontier is having difficulty supporting land lines in rural communities and many are not able to dial 911. Infrastructure and Public Safety will be discussing this. Is there anything the county can do and should it go on the work plan? We should do information gathering on where and how many. Provide that information to agencies such as DTCAP and FCC. How would we gather the information? Should not necessarily be on the work plan, but is definitely a public safety issue.

**9. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, **MOTION BY MCEWEN; SECOND BY ROBINSON, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.** Committee adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Mary Palmer  
Prepared on January 31, 2020



February 5th, 2020

Assembly: Committee on Agriculture  
Attention: Chair Gary Tauchen

Senate: Committee on Agriculture, Revenue and Financial Institutions  
Attention: Howard Marklein

Chair Tauchen and Assembly Committee on Rural Development, and;  
Chair Marklein and Senate Committee on Agriculture, Revenue and Financial Institutions:

This letter is in regards to Assembly Bill (AB) 637 and its companion bill, Senate Bill (SB) 575 which primarily proposes increasing involving Farmland Preservation tax credits and decreases the length of agreements from 15 years to 10 years. On behalf of Marathon County Board of Supervisors, I am providing this letter in support of the proposed legislative changes.

The Marathon County Board of approve a Farmland Preservation Plan in 2013 to accomplish the following primary objectives:

1. Farmland Preservation to conserve a critical mass (acres) of agricultural land
2. Protect soil and water resources
3. Keep individual farms from becoming isolated among residential neighborhoods and ensure enough farms to support the critical mass of local agricultural service businesses.
4. Develop Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA) which signifies a community's understanding of the economic importance of agriculture, value and purpose of existing soil resources and infrastructure (drainage, conservation BMP's, and transportation) to support agriculture, and the need to sustain and grow agricultural businesses. The AEA provides a program commitment by local officials and landowners and may encourage investment in agriculture.

Marathon County has a goal to be the safest, healthiest and most prosperous County and these bills aid in that goal in many ways but more specifically promoting the protection of farmland, implementation of conservation practices on the land and tax credits to farmers for good stewardship. The outcome of these proposed bills will help to accomplish Marathon County's Farmland Preservation goals.

I ask that this correspondence be added to the official record of the appropriate Committees.  
Thank you for considering our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Kurt Gibbs  
County Board Chair

cc: Marathon County Legislators  
Wisconsin Counties Association  
Wisconsin Towns Association  
Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association



February 4, 2020

Assembly: Committee on Agriculture  
Attention: Chair Gary Tauchen

Senate: Committee on Natural Resources and Energy  
Attention: Chair Robert Cowles

Chair Tauchen and Assembly Committee on Rural Development, and;  
Chair Cowles and Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy:

This letter is in regards to Assembly Bill (AB) 790 and its companion bill, Senate Bill (SB) 723 which proposes to increase the amount appropriated to the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection for county conservation staffing under the soil and water resource management program by \$2,960,900 from the general fund in fiscal year 2020-2021. Marathon County is in support of this increase in funding.

Marathon County has a goal to be the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous County in Wisconsin, and these bills aid in that goal in many ways.

The Marathon County board has identified and set its priorities related to soil and water conservation. They have been identified in the County Comprehensive plan and the Land and Water Resource plan for Marathon County. If the additional funds are approved for county conservation staffing grants, it will enable Marathon County to strive to achieve some of the highest priorities identified in the county plans, which are as follows:

- Provide technical staff be in the field implementing the Fenwood Creek Watershed project, an impaired waterbody in the county.
- Increase Nutrient Management Plan assistance for quality plan development and more importantly working with farmers to implement their plans.
- Increase Farmland Preservation Program on farm assistance to increase participation which will provide tax credits to farmers who implement soil and water conservation practices on their farm.
- Work with farmers to implement identified strategies to reduce soil erosion phosphorus runoff from farms in the county.

If this bill is approved, it will have a positive impact on the implementation soil and water conservation on farms within Marathon County. I ask that this correspondence be added to the official record of the appropriate Committees. Thank you for considering our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Kurt Gibbs  
County Board Chair

cc: Marathon County Legislators  
Wisconsin Counties Association  
Wisconsin Towns Association  
Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association



February 4, 2020

Assembly: Committee on Rural Development  
Attention: Chair Nancy VanderMeer

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy  
Attention: Chair Robert Cowles

Chair VanderMeer and Assembly Committee on Rural Development, and;  
Chair Cowles and Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy:

This letter is in regards to Assembly Bill (AB) 791 and its companion bill, Senate Bill (SB) 710 which proposes to delay the elimination of the Private Onsite Waste Treatment System (POWTS) Grant program, (also known as the Wisconsin Fund) from June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Marathon County has a goal to be the safest, healthiest and most prosperous County and these bills aid in that goal.

The Marathon County Board has identified the implementation of POWTS to safeguard both surface and groundwater resources from pollution from septage.

The POWTS grant program has played a critical role in assisting the most financially vulnerable homeowners and small businesses with upgrading their POWTS to state standards to protect water quality for their own benefit and the safety and health of all citizens.

Marathon County is in support of extending the elimination of the POWTS grant program to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and beyond due to the direct connection to the expansion of our POWTS Maintenance Program. Marathon County is adding approximately 6,800 POWTS to the current POWTS Maintenance Program, as required by State law. The County estimates that approximately 1,250 of these POWTS are failing systems that will need to be replaced. The POWTS grant fund program would assure financial assistance to low-income residents of Marathon County who need to comply with the regulations to have compliant POWTS on their premises.

I ask that this correspondence be added to the official record of the appropriate Committees. Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,

Kurt Gibbs  
County Board Chair

cc: Marathon County Legislators  
Wisconsin Counties Association  
Wisconsin Towns Association



January 23, 2020

Assembly Committee on Local Government  
Attention: Chair Todd Novak  
State Capitol  
PO Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

Chair Novak and Assembly Committee on Local Government Members:

This letter is in regard to Assembly Bill (AB) 681 which proposes requiring a supermajority of three-fourths the entire membership of the county board vote to enact ordinances that affect only towns. Marathon County first learned of this bill on January 21, 2020, two days prior to hearing. There has not been time to even convene a committee meeting to discuss the impact of this bill, let alone an opportunity for the board to evaluate the pros and cons of such a measure. I have had a limited opportunity to discuss this matter with staff. They have raised the following questions and concerns:

- Is the bill language vague and overly broad?
  - There is no explanation of the problem the legislation is aimed at solving.
  - The applicability of this bill is unknown. There is no definition of what the term “affect” means. Any legislative initiative that has a fiscal impact on the county arguably affects all residents subject to taxation. Is that only towns?
  - What about enactments that only affect one town? Wis. Stats., sec. 990.001(1), indicates the plural includes the singular. Therefore, a speed limit sign in one town will require a three-fourths majority vote.
  - The bill language may cause the courts to be asked to interpret the scope of the statute.
- The bill affects the County’s ability to adopt future or amend existing ordinances.
  - Examples include Marathon County’s Zoning, Land Division and Survey Regulations, Floodplain, Animal Waste Management, Livestock Facilities Licensing.
  - The board would be unable to act, if less than three-fourths of the entire membership was present.
  - Under normal circumstances, 100% attendance at board meetings does not occur in Marathon County. Legislation could be obstructed on a regular basis by the objection of one or two people, which would represent an extreme minority.
- Potential development throughout the State may be affected.
  - Examples include the development of subdivisions and/or business parks in Towns. A proposed subdivision plat which needs a rezoning would require a supermajority county board vote.
- Business growth and development in Towns may be affected.
  - An example would be if an individual wanted to start or expand a business and the parcel needs to be rezoned to accommodate the proposed business it would require a supermajority county board vote.
  - There is sincere concern that veto power could rest in the hands of a small minority.



- The bill may affect public safety and the Sheriff's Department 911 emergency response. An amendment to the Marathon County Uniform Addressing Ordinance to clarify or revise language would require a supermajority county board vote.

The American model of government has historically rejected the idea of forced unanimity. In Wisconsin, supermajority is largely reserved for budgetary amendment or public debt issues. That is because of the contractual nature of these legislative acts and the damage that can occur if the majority changes next month and tries to rescind financial obligations that have already been incurred.

Enactment of policy is different. It has long been recognized that requiring a supermajority for every legislative act, suppresses opposition and stifles debate because the power of a small minority to veto can also bring about enormous pressure by a much larger majority. Under those circumstances, eventual compromise is discouraged. Marathon County's overarching goal is to be the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin. This bill will directly impact our ability to carry out operations directed at achieving this goal.

I ask that this correspondence be added to the official record of the Committee on Local Government public hearing on AB 681. Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,



Kurt Gibbs  
County Board Chair

cc: Assembly Committee on Local Government  
Marathon County Legislators  
Wisconsin Counties Association  
Wisconsin Towns Association