

**LA CROSSE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PLANNING MEETING
PROCEEDINGS; MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2025**

The La Crosse County Board of Supervisors Planning Meeting was held on Monday, September 8, 2025 in the Administrative Center, Room 1700. The County Clerk, Ginny Dankmeyer, took attendance. 26 supervisors were present when Chair Tina Tryggestad called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and those otherwise present, excused or absent are noted in the roll call detail:

District	Name	Attendance
1	Leibold, Kelly	Present
2	Geary, Ralph	Present
3	Pierce, David	Present
4	Freedland, Maureen	Present
5	Anderson, Emily	Present
6	Mathu, Grant	Present
7	Padesky, Gary	Present
8	Isola, Peg	Present
9	Wacek, Dawn	Excused
10	Cable, Kim	Present
11	Scheller, Patrick	Excused
12	Erickson, Randy	Present
13	Tryggestad, Tina	Present
14	Larson, Margaret	Present
15	Kruse, Monica	Present
16	Ferries, Dan	Present
17	Pogreba, Jack	Present
18	Baroni, Mike	Excused
19	Cornforth, Rick	Present
20	Doyle, Steve	Present
21	Balduzzi, Dave	Present
22	Kovacevich, Joe	Present
23	Elam, Travis	Present
24	Tweed, Kristie	Present
25	Jacobsen, Dennis	Present
26	Hundt, David	Present
27	Wuensch, Paul	Present
28	Rothering, Ron	Present
29	Schlimgen, Ken	Excused
30	Mader, Dillon	Present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

County Board Chair Report - Tina Tryggestad

- Chair Tryggestad noted there will be a joint meeting with the City of La Crosse Council for an update on the Pathways Home Plan on Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 5pm; 18 supervisors still need to complete the county harassment training; if attending WCA on September 22, please plan to carpool with other supervisors going; the screening of the Netflix documentary, Heroin, was very impactful.

- Supervisor Conference Reports
 - Supervisor Cable attended Pride in the Park on Saturday at Riverside Park.
 - Supervisor Leibold noted that Habitat for Humanity is hosting veterans and first responders ceremony in the Washburn Neighborhood on Thursday, September 11 from 9-10am.
 - Supervisor Freedland passed out a flyer on a week without driving September 29 – October 5 which is about non drivers getting through their day.
 - Supervisor Jacobsen noted the Mindoro Spanferkel was held this past weekend and attended the quarterly Towns Association meeting.

Administrator Report - Jane Klekamp

PROCLAMATION SEPTEMBER 2025 - LIBRARIES & UW EXTENSION MONTH

WHEREAS, La Crosse County residents benefit from research-based educational programs that support agricultural producers, businesses, local governments, communities, families, and youth; and **WHEREAS**, the La Crosse County Library serves residents through its five locations in Bangor, Campbell, Holmen, Onalaska, and West Salem, offering spaces for community connection, learning, and growth; and **WHEREAS**, UW-Extension brings university research and expertise directly to La Crosse County through programming in Agriculture and Horticulture; Community, Natural Resources, and Economic Development; and 4-H & Youth Development; and **WHEREAS**, UW-Extension faculty, staff, and local library professionals share a commitment to educating and empowering residents, promoting life-long learning, and building a more informed and connected community. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the La Crosse County Board hereby proclaims the month of September as La Crosse County Libraries and UW-Extension Month.

Motion by D. Ferries/J. Pogreba to approve passed on a unanimous voice vote with 26 ayes, 4 excused - M. Baroni, P. Scheller, K. Schlimgen and D. Wacek.

- Library Service Overview – Presented by Library Director Chris McArdle-Rojó
 - September is library card sign-up month. The City of La Crosse first established library services in the area in 1888. In 1901, Wisconsin passed a state law which made it possible for all counties to have a library system. The County Board formally levied for the first time in November 1904 \$500 for county library services. Books were placed in the basement of the Courthouse in 1915. In 1923, the County Library Board was established. The collection of books was moved from the Courthouse to Lakeview in 1985 and to Holmen in 1988. The Winding Rivers Library System serves libraries in Buffalo, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties. For 2026, the WRLS requested \$26, 210 from La Crosse County for operations and vehicles. 381, 160 physical items were checked out in 2024. The library hosts 183 adult programs with 3,900 in attendance and 230 youth programs with 9,958 in attendance. The 2026 County Library request is \$2,596, 300 which is \$37.08 per capita based on 2024 population estimates for out-County area of 70,011, additional revenue of \$60,119 for total operating expenses of \$2,65,419, which is a 2.2% increase. Strengths for the Library is continued support from the municipalities, healthy and increasing use of all locations, increase in program attendance, and the economy. Sustaining digital services, programming staff and longevity vs staffing turnover continue to be some challenges.
- SMRT Bus Update Presented by Associate Administrator Sara Koopman
 - SMRT Bus is a regional bus service that was launched in 2012 and had 13 routes connecting Prairie du Chien, Viroqua, Tomah, and points in between to the City of La Crosse. This was funded by state, federal, and local sources, administered by La Crosse County, and operated under contract by Running, Inc. The County has contributed \$30,000 to \$120,000 in 2025 and projected to contribute \$157,000 in 2026. Ridership is down 12% in 2024 with 33 daily riders on average across all 13 routes. The system cost per one-way ride is \$43. SMRT revenue projected for 2026 is \$620,500 with projected expenses of \$747,716. Current funding issues include the 83% increase next year from \$153,000 to \$280,500 of local match to keep up with rising costs. Federal ARPA funds that once helped SMRT are now gone and there is a need to balance priorities of rising county costs in other

areas make increasing the SMRT subsidy harder to justify. Staff recommendation is to end SMRT contract with Running, Inc effective January 1, 2026. Local partners and Running, Inc have been notified of this potential outcome. This recommendation would free up staff time and generate significant 2026 savings.

- Review of Economic Development Fund Ordinance Change Request – Presented by Community Development Specialist Sam Bachmeier
 - The La Crosse County Industrial Development Agency, Inc. was formed in 1991. In 2001, the La Crosse County Business Fund, Inc. was formed. In 2004, the County transferred land in West Salem to the La Crosse County Economic Development Fund to develop the Lakeview Business Park. The La Crosse County Economic Development Fund, Inc. was created in 2006 under Wis. Stat. 59.57, which is a separate board and entity and can act/operate without County Board approval. The primary duties include sale of land and administration of county grants/loans. La Crosse County is proposing to dissolve the La Crosse County Economic Development Fund, Inc. (LCEDF), and create an Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC). Reasons for this change include the LCEDF owned land in the Lakeview Business Park has all been sold, streamlining economic development efforts, and to align with County Board Strategic Plan. The EDAC will have 9 members: 3 County Board Supervisors, 6 citizen members (1 from higher education and 5 from business/real estate/finance). This committee will oversee the acquisition and demolition grant approval, approval of loans from loan funds, I&D grant approval, arts & culture grant approval, and advise on economic development policies. The next steps in September/October would be for LCEDF to approve and complete transfer of all loan or rail agreements to La Crosse County and remaining land parcels to the Village of West Salem. In October/November, LCEDF would approve to dissolve the legal entity, complete the dissolution of the LCEDF, and create the Economic Development Advisory Committee through changes in ordinances.
- Opioid Settlement Plan Presentation – Presented by Human Services Director Jason Witt
 - The Opioid Settlement Advisory Team consisted of Health Director Audra Martine, Sheriff John Siegel, ISRS Acting Manager Anneliese Skoda, and Human Services Director Jason Witt. The presentation summarized the planned uses of the opioid settlement funds. \$63,800 will be requested via resolution later this month, \$626,100 in approximate spending will be included in the Administrator's 2026 Budget, the remaining funding will be appropriated annually for ongoing items, projects in development and to meet the emerging needs. A 10-year multifaceted plan will be initiated for opioid abatement that will include activities requiring no use of opioid settlement dollars and will include project management, timelines, milestones, and regular updates. Available funds include \$7.6 million in settlement funds and an additional \$63,800 matching grant. Approved purposes are aimed at addressing the opioid crisis and intended for opioid epidemic abatement. The plan develops recommendations for the use of La Crosse County's opioid settlement funds that mitigate harm of the opioid crisis in ways that can directly and significantly reduce the demand for and cost of La Crosse County Emergency Services, particularly Justice Services and Child Protective Services. Additional aims are on anything started to be maintained for 10 years, impact on desired outcomes can be measurable, following the best way to achieve outcomes and not necessarily the most popular programs or providers, and room for re-allocation in future years based on performance, evolving needs, and new opportunities. Planning elements will review available services and capacity, researching how opioid settlement funds are being used across Wisconsin and the nation and researching the best and promising new practices. In addition, check-in with Alliance to Heal participants, incorporate information from CJMC discussions and draw in staff expertise across the Health, Human Services and Sheriff department.
 - Planned use of funding in 2026. Justice System: Jail Services - \$314,600 (includes \$63,776 matching grant), Treatment Courts & Deflection - \$6,000, Justice Connected Housing - \$80,000. Child Welfare: Prevention - \$100,000, Treatment - \$5,000, Housing - \$100,000, Treatment System: Coordination & Implementation - \$48,000, Harm Reduction and Artificial Intelligence - \$10,000, Housing and Service Protection and Flexibility - \$10,000.

(88-25/26)

- Next steps include approval of funding as part of September resolution and 2026 Administrator's Budget Request. Then project set up with onboarding project managers, develop implementation plan, and release published plan. The final step will be to create an annual reporting structure.

APPOINTMENTS

Motion by G. Mathu/K. Tweed to appoint Randy Knapp to the Criminal Justice Management Council for the remainder of a three year term to expire April 18, 2028; appoint James Szymalak to the Criminal Justice Management Council for the remainder of a three year term to expire April 20, 2027; appoint Heidi Svee to the Criminal Justice Management Council for the remainder of a three year term to expire April 20, 2027 passed on a unanimous voice vote with 26 ayes, 4 excused - M. Baroni, P. Scheller, K. Schlimgen and D. Wacek

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS – none offered.

ADJOURN

Motion by P. Isola/G. Mathu to adjourn at 8:27 PM passed on a unanimous voice vote with 26 ayes, 4 excused - M. Baroni, P. Scheller, K. Schlimgen and D. Wacek.

STATE OF WISCONSIN)

COUNTY OF LA CROSSE)

I, Ginny Dankmeyer , La Crosse County Clerk, in and for the County of La Crosse, Wisconsin, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Journal of Proceedings of the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors at the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors Planning Meeting held Monday, September 8, 2025 and that it is the whole thereof. IN WITNESS THEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO SET MY HAND AND AFFIXED THE OFFICIAL SEAL THIS DAY 16 OF SEPTEMBER 2025.