

LWV Observer Corps Report December 2025

***Denotes things to watch for in the future and things that need action!!! Please let your voices be heard.**

Two Rivers City Council Meeting

Observer Summary- Yea!! We have a new reporter who will start covering the TR Council meetings soon. A BIG Thank you to Sharon Titel for volunteering for this position.

12-2025

Highlights:

Two Rivers City Council Meeting

12-2025

Highlights:

Two Rivers School District Meeting

Observer Summary – Mary Wallace

12-8-2025

Highlights:

The school librarian presented the Library Media Plan for the next 3 years. It incorporates national and state standards and the Future Ready Schools Framework which is required by the state. Currently, the District has one full time librarian and 3 part time paraprofessional librarians. One of the librarian's main goals for the next 3 years is to provide more support for the Wit and Wisdom elementary school reading program. The Board approved the plan.

The Superintendent will be speaking at the City Council meeting about the state report cards.

The TR Proud Capital Donation Campaign has started. The first goal is to have 50 businesses commit to donations up to \$1,000. They will have plaques in their names at the new sports complex. The purpose of this initiative is to fund the sports complex.

There will not be a second school board meeting in December.

Two Rivers School District Meeting

12-2025 No Second Meeting

Manitowoc Public School District Meeting Observer Summary- Linda Gratz

12-9-2025

Highlights:

Public Input: The MEA President said she knows the school board has a tough decision to make regarding restructuring and closing schools and that the staff are here to support the board's decision. Two community members asked the board to take some time to look at Stangle and Jackson boundaries, look at all the costs involved, make sure adequate research is done, and be aware that their decisions might end up with families moving to parochial schools.

The alternate student representative Jade gave a report on winter sports teams, and artistic sports teams (dance team, cheering, and gymnastics) that have gone to their first competitions this year. She also reported that a new Poetry Club has started at Lincoln. Jade said that students at the High School have been voicing their concerns and confusion over the District's plans for the schools and how they will affect their siblings.

The Superintendent's Report included presentations by the 5th Grade students at Riverview who have a plan in place where the 5th grade students help the 4K students in their school. Also, staff at Franklin, Madison, Riverview, and Lincoln discussed their 100 Day Plans which included their school's key goals, and action steps designed to strengthen leadership practices, enhance organizational effectiveness, and support continued growth across the district.

There was a long discussion over the proposed changes to the district's schools and boundaries that were presented to the Board for their approval. The plans included closing two elementary schools (Madison and Jackson), turning Riverview into an Early Childhood Center, turning Stangle back into an elementary building with the current students moving to the UWGB Manitowoc Campus, having Washington become the 7-8 school, and Wilson become 5-6 school. Trask, Able, and Hansen voiced concerns that had been shared by members of the community over the proposed plans including only having one northside elementary school, closing the two northside schools that are more like neighborhood schools, bussing concerns, families having children in multiple schools and the need for multiple transitions. Other Board members voiced their support for the plan and stated that change is hard and they understand that but once the plan is put in place students and families will adjust. One member stated that we need to think of our schools as community schools rather than neighborhood schools. They also stressed the need to be fiscally responsible make the hard choices. The plan passed 4 to 3, with Trask, Hansen, and Able voting No. Able moved that the plan be put on the spring ballot. Motion failed to get a second.

The 26/27 School Calendar, the Early Retirement Notice, the HR Restructuring, and the CESA 7 contract for teacher development services all passed.

The Board voted to go into closed session to discuss the superintendent evaluation, and 2026/27 administrative staffing strategies.

Manitowoc Public School District Meeting

12-2025 No Second Meeting

Highlights:

Manitowoc Common Council Observer Summary-Julie Grinde

12-15-2025

Highlights:

PUBLIC HEARING: There was a public hearing on the proposed revenue bond financing for Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church for \$3,600,000 for an addition to classrooms. No one appeared at the hearing.

PUBLIC INPUT: A man spoke about the hazard to his home from a neighbor's metal roof. The accumulated snow slides off the roof onto his property which is near his property line. The snow comes off in large chunks and lands on his property. There is no ordinance for this type of problem and poses a hazard to his property. The neighbor has put 6 metal strips on the other side of his house to stop the snow from coming down. He invited council members to visit his property to see the problem of large amounts of snow falling on his property and, at times, endangering him.

A member of the Board of Directors for the Manitowoc Marine Band spoke about the contract with the city to provide 5 concerts and participate in 3 parades. This year the band had 30 concerts and the parades and has expanded from 25 to 70 members. He thanked the city for supporting the band.

A third person was from Sheboygan, Michigan and asked the council to support the Amtrac services being proposed from Milwaukee along the lakeshore and into upper Michigan. A letter of support would be appreciated to show the city's support.

APPOINTMENTS: The Mayor appointed the Election Inspectors for the coming year and that included 75 inspectors with their name and party affiliation listed as R, D, UA. Four special voting deputies and 3 absentee canvassers were appointed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Committee of the Whole: Approved a list of dates for special events in the city.

Finance Committee:

Resolution to hold primary on February 17, if needed. Approved

Resolution to establish Election Workers' Compensation for 2026. Approved

Resolution to amend the Municipal Service Agreement between City of Manitowoc and Progress Lakeshore that includes the city and 6 communities in Manitowoc County.

Approved.

Resolution regarding Revenue Bond Financing for Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church. Approved.

Resolution to amend the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area and enlarge the area with support from the 14 participating businesses in the DORA. Approved.

Personnel Committee:

Resolution to accept the agreement between the city and the Manitowoc Transit Employees Teamsters Local No. 662. Approved.

Resolution to Revise the Employee Policy Manual. Approved.

Public Infrastructure Committee:

Resolution to approve the Facility Use Agreement with Manitowoc County ADRC Senior Nutrition program at 3300 Custer Street. Approved.

Resolutions for 2026 street improvements, dust palliatives and for 2026 sidewalk construction and repair program. Approved.

Public Safety Committee: Approved the Joint Powers Agreement between Manitowoc County Joint Dispatch Center and the city for one year.

Plan Commission:

Approved the Review of a Subdivision Concept Plan from the Lodel Group. This subdivision is located off of Deerbrook Lane and Kellner Street.

Approved the Review of In-Rem properties in the City of Manitowoc. This is a plan to purchase an empty lot in the 1100 block of Phippen Street with the possible agreement with the Manitowoc Public Schools to have Lincoln Industrial Arts students work with a builder to construct an affordable home for sale in the community. Other vacant property could be purchased by the city for a similar purpose.

The meeting was adjourned in 25 minutes. Reporter Julie Grinde

Manitowoc County Board Meeting Observer Summary- JoEllen Gramling

12-16-2025

Highlights:

PRESENTATION: Public Works Director Craig Breit presented a detailed report on past years 2023-2025, current year 2026, and projected 2027 Capital Projects including the Courthouse and the Office Complex. Largest and most costly is the Law Enforcement Center. Maintenance spending on the UWGB Manitowoc Campus has been reduced in recent years because of uncertainty about the future of the County-owned building, but it now appears that it will continue in service so some large-dollar projects may be coming up. Also, the Manitowoc School District may begin to use part of the building in early 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

CONSENT AGENDA (Any routine or non-controversial items) Approved unanimously by the Board.

Appointments by County Executive:

- >Information Technology Director – Luke Kalista
- >Expo-Ice Center Board: Appoint for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2028. a. Emily Mueller b. Ben Ullman
- >Joint Dispatch Board: Appoint Paul Granger for a two-year term expiring January 2026
- >Local Emergency Planning Committee: Appoint Denny Smith for a two-year term expiring December 2027; appoint Debbie Holschbach to fill a vacancy for the remainder of the term expiring September 2027.
- >Manitowoc-Calumet Library System Board of Trustees: Appoint Natasha Khan, and Charles Krueger for a three-year term expiring December 2028.

Ordinances and Resolutions

- >Resolution Supporting Protection for Wisconsin's Volunteer Drivers – to properly define ADRC drivers for things like Meals on Wheels for insurance purposes.
- >Resolution Authorizing Consortium Agreement Between the Counties of the Bay Area Workforce Development Area
- >Ordinance Amending Zoning Map (Brad and Chris Engelbert)
- >Ordinance Amending Zoning Map (James Kunst)
- >Resolution Adopting Manitowoc County Planning and Park Commission Fee Schedule
- >Resolution Approving Town of Newton Zoning Ordinance (Michael and Tara Bastian)

COMMITTEE REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS, ORDINANCES

- >Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee: Supv Falkowski reported that Drug Court has 14 participants, 6 female and 8 male, 2 are waiting and 2 are in in-patient. Working on a policies/procedures manual.
- >Executive Committee: Will meet late Jan or early Feb to revise County Board rules.
- >Expo-Ice Center Board: Revising fair book and rules, considering entertainment to hire.
- >Highway Committee: Two new employees were hired but only one showed up for work; lots of applicants but hard to find qualified individuals.
- >Human Services Board Committee – Child Protective Services caseworkers have very challenging caseloads. Fee for Intoxicated Driver Program was increased from \$250 to \$300; will exceed 300 participants by year-end. All of the Human Services Dept passed the review by St of Wisc Quality Assurance; two programs in the department were singled out as impressive.
- >Land Conservation Committee: Supervisor R. Phipps reports they're still trying to work through the 5-year manure agreement policy.
- >Personnel Committee: The County's health insurance is self-funded, therefore information on rates for 2026 is not available until Sept, 2025 because the rates are calculated using historical data. Insurance from private companies would be much more expensive, or not available at all. A resolution Establishing Elected Official's Compensation (Clerk of Court and Sheriff) was approved unanimously. A resolution Amending Employee Policy Manual §4.01 (Hiring

Procedure for Regular Positions) was approved unanimously. A resolution Amending Employee Policy Manual §12.05 (Leave of Absence) was approved with 18 ayes and 1 no. Supervisor Metzger-3 voted no.

>Planning and Park Commission: A resolution Authorizing County Conservation Aids Grant was approved unanimously.

>Public Works Committee: Supervisor Sitkiewitz reported that recycling markets are volatile due to the uncertain economy. The Clean Sweep event had an overwhelming turnout of large loads that cut down on processing times; looking into an alternative for county residents to utilize year-round. County-wide IT security training is wrapping up this week.

>Transportation Coordinating Committee: Supervisor Hacker reported that the committee has an opening for the term ending in April '26. Ridership up 12% for 3rd quarter over 3rd quarter '24. Year-to-date rides are up 21% over the same period '24.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm This County Board meeting (12/16/25) is available for viewing at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gZjIxB_qO4