

**Regular Town Board Meeting
January 8, 2025 Kildare Town Hall**

Present: Chairman Dennis Franek, Supervisor Ken Rogge, Supervisor Brian D. Hawkins, Clerk Jennifer Masch and Treasurer Michelle Senzig. Elector Jason Masch Mauston School District Rep. Randy Gyllin, Jack Hammer and Bobbi Steek Lyndon Station Fire Dept. Troy Madland

The Regular Town Board Meeting was called to order by Chairman Dennis Franek at 7:00p.m.

Written Minutes for the December 2024 Regular Town Board Meeting were provided. Motion by K. Rogge to approve the minutes; second by B.D. Hawkins; carried by a voice vote of 3 ayes.

Treasurer's Report was given by M. Senzig: End of December checking account balance was \$228,798.92. Bank of Mauston CD balance was \$100,000.00 Motion by D. Franek to enter the treasurer's report into the official minutes; second by B.D. Hawkins; carried by a voice vote of 3 ayes.

Clerk's Report. Trash and Recycling Calendar can be found on LSi's website and we will be adding it to the town website as well, printed copies can be found at the town hall and the clerk's office. Roger Brainard sent a letter and stats that Bob Watters property has more trash and people on the property that the town should review at the next meeting. Dennis will be contacting the town attorney for information on how to move forward.

Ambulance Report B.D. Hawkins reported that there was no meeting in December.

Supervisor's Report. D. Franek reported that the county missed a few roads when plowing. Dennis went out and plowed and salt/sanding them. They have new drivers so they are still learning the routes.

Public Comments. none

Business:

- A. Troy from the Lyndon Station Fire Dept shared their annual report. They did get the used ladder truck from Kilbourn Fire Dept, and it has been needed and used. The total calls were 76 Fire and 204 EMS with 27 Fire and 94 EMS in Kildare. Staff was given an increase in pay training is \$10 and calls are \$15 per hour. A copy of the full report can be review at the town hall or the clerk's office.

- B. Randy Gyllin, Jack Hammer and Bobbi Steek from the Mauston School District came to talk about the referendum on the February 18, 2025 ballot asking for Operational cost for the school district. Class sizes are large, no Art or Spanish in person all online, Little Eagle childcare is grant funded and WWTC using it for training collage students. A flyer is attached with the information they provided A question was asked about why the Lyndon Station school is still open with only around 25 students, they said this is something being looked at. Another was asked about utility cost for internal businesses like the Graphic Design and they responded that everything is quoted out for materials and costs. The Green house is ran fully on solar panels.

- C. At this time, we will be keeping everything as it is and will wait until the plan commission reviews the smart plan for the township.
- D. County Aid Petition was tabled until the February meeting.
- E. Camper Permit Review The camper at N2856 24th Ave. has been closed up for storage, the renters are no longer there.

Building Permits/Land Use: AT&T C/O Amentum Tel N2355 Plewa Rd - Cell Tower Maintenance | William Trevorrow 26th Ave – 2 Driveways.

Motion by D. Franek to approve application; second by B.D Hawkins; carried by voice vote of 3 ayes.

Payables. Motion by B.D Hawkins to pay bills; second by K. Rogge; carried by voice vote of 3 ayes.

Future Meeting Agenda/ Items: Bob Watters Property, Town Hall Estimates, 50/50, Campers.

Motion by B.D Hawkins to adjourn; second by D. Franek; carried by voice vote of 3 ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

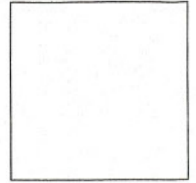
Jennifer Masch, Clerk



School District of Mauston

510 Grayside Avenue

Mauston, WI 53948



2024-25

BUDGET CUTS

- Paused hiring of teaching and support staff
 - **29 unfilled positions**
- Temporary freeze on administrative salaries
- Did not renew contract for Student Analytics, Frontline Technologies
- Reduced curriculum and professional development
- Lowered health insurance rate increase
- Reduced building budgets
- Eliminated Navigate 360 online training for ALICE

APPROVED 2025-26

BUDGET CUTS

- Close Lyndon Station Elementary
- Cut athletics, clubs & field trips
- Eliminate afternoon summer school (1st & 2nd sessions)
- Eliminate one bus route
- Discontinue JEDI program
- Close the OMS swimming pool during winter
- Eliminate elementary Family Fun Nights
- Eliminate the musical

ELECTION DAY

FEBRUARY 18, 2025



Learn more by scanning the
QR code or visiting

www.maustonschools.org



OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM

FEBRUARY 18, 2025

The School District of Mauston is a source of great pride for our community. At the same time, our district faces critical financial challenges that cannot be addressed without additional revenue.

On Tuesday, February 18, 2025, our community will consider a four-year, non-recurring operational referendum. If approved, this measure would raise the district's revenue limit by \$1.75 million annually through the 2028-29 school year.

An operational referendum is necessary to **reduce class sizes and restore programming** that was downsized or eliminated. This will provide residents with the high-quality school district they have come to expect.

DID YOU KNOW?



Mauston has consistently maintained enrollment above 1,390 students over the past six years, with a current total of 1,448, despite the declining trend seen across Wisconsin schools.



Since 2018, Mauston staff have secured over \$10.5 million in grants—without a dedicated grant writer—funding programs like Montessori and iLEAD Charter Schools, Lemonweir Academy, and Little Eagles Child Care, all sustainably managed without impacting the general budget.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETINGS



JOIN US

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
• Tue, Jan 14, 2025	10:00 AM	Mile Bluff Medical Center
• Wed, Jan 15, 2025	6:00 PM	Lyndon Station Elementary
• Mon, Jan 27, 2025	5:00 PM	Hatch Public Library
• Wed, Feb 5, 2025	6:00 PM	Mauston High School

If the school funding formula in Wisconsin does not change and the operational referendum fails, the district is projected to run out of funds after the 2026-2027 school year. This could lead to the **dissolution of the district**, impacting local property values and the economy as businesses may reconsider investing in a community without a stable school system.

Protecting the district's future is crucial for both education and the overall well-being of our community.

Mission Statement

The School District of Mauston, in partnership with our communities, will inspire creativity, and prepare each student to achieve academically, grow personally, and contribute positively to a global society.

Vision Statement

We will create a collaborative, high performing, safe learning environment that is integrated with our communities and focused on preparing students for a global citizenship with a local impact.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MAUSTON

Grant Supported Activity Report



Competitive Grant Efforts

The School District of Mauston actively seeks competitive federal and state grants to support initiatives that align with our mission and advance the goals outlined in the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. Each grant application is developed with clear objectives and detailed action steps to ensure a focused approach. For larger grants, we partner with a Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) for specialized grant writing support. Once awarded, district staff carefully budget the funds, implement the specified actions, and complete required reporting and claims processes. Any changes to the original plan require formal approval to ensure the funds are used as intended. These grants provide vital resources for initiatives that benefit our students, staff, and community.

- Charter School Grants
- 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant
- DWD Fast Forward Grant
- Secondary After School Grant
- Summer School Grant
- Fab Lab Grant
- Transition Grant
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant
- Dream Up Grant
- Peer Mentor Review Grant
- DOJ Safety Grant
- Mental Health Grant
- Equipment Grant
- Youth Apprenticeship Grant
- Perkins Grant
- ESSER Grant
- Farm to School Grant

Competitive Grant	Grant Period	Dollar Amount
iLEAD Charter School Expansion Grant	7/1/2018 - 6/30 2023	\$650,000
Grayside 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant	7/1/2018 - 6/30/2023	\$796,072
Carl Perkins CTE Grant	7/1/2018 - 6/30/2025	\$116,674
Wisconsin Technology Initiative	7/1/2018 - 6/30/2019	\$25,000
Peer Mentor and Review Grant	7/1/2018 - 6/30/2025	\$80,070
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant	7/1/2018 - 6/30/2025	\$77,407
Mental Health Grant	7/1/2019 - 6/30 2025	\$387,884
Safety Grant	7/1/2019 - 6/30/2021	\$227,922
Montessori Charter School Expansion Grant	7/1/2019 - 6/30/2024	\$550,000
Youth Apprenticeship Grant	7/1/2019 - 6/30/2025	\$174,500
Department of Workforce Development Grant	3/31/2019 - 1/15/2021	\$184,180
Transition Grant	7/1/2019 - 6/30/2023	\$87,500
Fab Lab	7/1/2019 - 6/30/2022	\$40,000
Elementary & Secondary Emergency Education Relief Fund	3/13/2020 - 6/30/2022	\$259,792
Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund	7/1/2020 - 6/30/2022	\$212,754
Elementary & Secondary Emergency Education Relief Fund II	3/13/2020 - 9/30/2023	\$1,068,710
Elementary & Secondary Emergency Education Relief Fund III	3/13/2020 - 9/30/2024	\$2,402,254
Lemonweir Academy Charter School Startup Grant	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025	\$800,000
ARP Homeless Children and Youth	4/30/2021 - 9/30/2024	\$8,866
West Side 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant	7/1/2022 - 6/30/2027	\$575,000
Grayside 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2028	\$575,000
Evidence-Based After School Grant (ARPA)	1/1/2023 - 9/30/2023	\$408,750
Evidence-Based Summer School Grant(ARPA)	5/1/2023 - 9/30/2024	\$237,265
*Dream Up Grant	11/7/2023 - 10/15/2024	\$100,408
Federal Farm to School Grant	7/26/2023 - 6/30/2024	\$50,000
Juneau Co. Good Jobs Stronger Economy Community Action Team Grant (ARPA)	7/2023 - 12/21/2024	\$340,000
State Farm to School Grant	7/1/2024- 4/30/2025	\$40,000
Lemonweir Academy Additional Award	7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025	\$250,000
Total		\$10,726,008
*Community Day Care Centers (Community \$86,340), SDM (\$14,068)		
District Paid Grant Consortium costs over this period:		\$46,870



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MAUSTON

Frequently Asked Questions

What is on the ballot?

As printed on the election ballot, the question is *“Shall the School District of Mauston, Juneau County, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$1,750,000 per year for four years, beginning with the 2025-2026 school year and ending with the 2028-2029 school year, for non-recurring purposes consisting of operational expenses?”*

If approved, what is the maximum annual tax impact of the proposed referendum?

We have been diligent in ensuring that the tax impact on our community members is minimal. An approved referendum's estimated property tax impact would be \$0.35 per every \$1,000 of assessed property value. For example, the owner of a home assessed at \$100,000 would see a school district property tax impact of \$35 per year.

What is different from April's and November's referendum questions?

After the referendum failed in April, the Board of Education sent out a survey to see what the Board and Administration had missed. In the results, 50.8% of respondents said the district did not communicate its needs effectively, 48.9% said the district has not shared enough about its budget, and 42.3% cited the tax impact of that proposed referendum being too high. In that survey, three options were presented for potential operational referenda. The option that received the highest level of support was exceeding the district's revenue limit by \$1.75 million a year for four years for a total of \$7 million. The district will still need to cut in areas if the referendum were to pass.

The February 2025 question is the same as the November 2024 question.

Why is the Board considering dissolution?

The reality is that if the school funding formula in Wisconsin doesn't change and if the operational referendum fails, the district is projected to **run out of money after the 2026-2027 school year**. Passing this referendum is crucial to maintaining financial stability, protecting our schools, and preventing any further steps toward dissolution.

Mauston just passed a referendum in 2020. Why can't you use those funds?

The short answer, state law. The long answer is when we passed a referendum in 2020, it was a capital referendum. We told the community that these funds would be used for capital measures, so we can only use those funds for capital improvements. In this operational referendum, we are asking for additional support to help with the **operating costs** of the district: utilities, routine maintenance, salaries and benefits of all staff, insurance, supplies, etc. It is illegal to use capital funds for operating.

What will the District and Board of Education do if the referendum does not pass?

The Board of Education has already approved cuts to offset a \$2 million deficit for the 25-26 school year. Budget cuts include closing Lyndon Station Elementary School, cutting extracurricular (athletics) programming, cutting co-curricular (clubs) programming, cutting all field trips, eliminating afternoon summer school for first and second sessions, eliminating one bus route for pickup and drop off, discontinuing JEDI as a virtual programming alternative, closing the OMS swimming pool during the winter months, eliminating elementary Family Fun Nights and eliminating the musical.

If the referendum passes, many of these cuts will be avoided. Although there will still be cuts, the Board of Education will direct the School Administration to present scenarios that will create a balanced budget and decide based on those scenarios.

How did Mauston spend the federal grant dollars it received during COVID?

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, the district allocated grant funds to address immediate needs that supported both remote learning for families who chose it and in-person learning for those who opted to return to school buildings. Initial expenses prioritized health and safety, including masks, sanitizers, and a limited-term contact tracer.

Technology purchases were also critical, such as providing teachers and students with computers for remote learning. Additionally, funds supported food service operations, including costs for food delivery during the shutdown, warming carts, and approved trays to ensure meals could be safely delivered when students were unable to gather for meals.

As the focus transitioned from health and safety to recovery, spending priorities shifted as well. Funds were directed toward supporting one limited-term position aimed at accelerating learning recovery. Additionally, the district purchased a new English Language Arts curriculum for grades K-8 and renewed the elementary math curriculum to further support academic improvement.

Because the district managed COVID-19 funds carefully, it was able to preserve resources to address additional expenses. This was especially important when state funding remained flat while inflation drove up costs for food, supplies, utilities, and other essential needs.

READ MORE





What has the district done to address these needs so far?

In the face of these challenges, district leaders and the Board of Education have worked extremely hard to make the most of every single dollar community members have invested into their community schools. For the 2024-2025 school year, the district:

- Paused hiring of teaching and support staff
 - **29 unfilled positions**
- Placed a temporary freeze on administrative salaries
- Did not renew contract for Student Analytics, Frontline Technologies
- Reduced curriculum and professional development
- Lowered health insurance rate increase
- Reduced building budgets
- Eliminated Navigate 360 online training for ALICE

The district has made significant expense reductions in recent years, and we worry about harming our schools and students over the long term if this trend continues. A referendum is necessary to reduce class sizes, bring back programming that was downsized or eliminated to provide residents with the high-quality school district they have come to expect.

In addition, Mauston has been aggressive when it comes to writing and accepting grants. Our staff, administration and teachers, have taken it upon themselves to write these grants, and additional revenues that have been generated by grants since 2018 is over \$10,500,000. Mauston does not employ or contract a grant writer.

Has the school district created new programs that have caused this financial crisis?

Every program/opportunity that has been created for our students has been made possible because of **grant funding and donations**. The district is very aggressive in applying for county, state, and federal grants and has been awarded grants that have allowed us to start the Montessori Charter School, iLEAD Charter School, Lemonweir Academy, Little Eagles Child Care Center, and Busy Bee. These programs are all sustainable without increasing any burden on the general budget.

Have you increased administrative positions?

No administrative positions have been added since 2018. In fact, there has been a **reduction** of one administrative position during that time.

How many schools does Mauston have?

The School District of Mauston has eight schools/educational programs: Lyndon Station Elementary, West Side Elementary, Grayside Elementary, Olson Middle School, and Mauston High School. Charter Schools: Mauston Montessori Charter School, iLEAD Charter School, and Lemonweir Academy. The district also participates in a virtual learning program, JEDI.

What was the post-retirement benefit plan that the district used to offer, and did that cause the district to go for an operational referendum?

Prior to Act 10, the School District of Mauston, like many others, offered post-retirement benefits that included health insurance coverage for vested retirees. In 2017-18, the Board of Education developed a plan to address concerns over the growing cost of this benefit, phasing it out in July 2018 due to budget constraints.

To ensure a smooth transition, the Board implemented a plan that considered its commitment to long-term, vested employees nearing retirement.

The last administrator to receive this benefit retired in June 2019, and the last eligible group of eight teachers and staff retired in June 2023. The number of employees receiving this benefit will now decline steadily.

An actuarial study from the 2023 audit report, available on the district's website, shows a \$661,032 reduction in the Overall OPEB Liability from June 30, 2022, to June 30, 2023. The next report, expected in early 2025, is likely to show further reductions due to the 2018 decision.

This liability reduction highlights the fiscal impact of the Board's decision, enabling the district to better allocate resources to current programs while balancing financial responsibility with support for vested retirees.

Where do I vote?

The School District of Mauston is comprised of the City of Mauston and all or part of the Towns of Germantown, Kildare, Lemonweir, Lindina, Lisbon, Lyndon, Marion, Plymouth, Seven Mile Creek, Summit, and the Village of Lyndon Station in Juneau County. Election Day is Tuesday, February 18, 2025. Polls are open from 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM. You can find absentee ballot details and early in-person voting timing by going to My Vote Wisconsin found here: <http://www.myvote.wi.gov/>

If you wish to contact your municipal clerk, they are:

City of Mauston

- Nicole Lyddy, Deputy Clerk
- 608-847-6676

Town of Germantown

- Susan Ganther, Clerk
- 608-562-5751

Town of Lemonweir

- Carin Leach, Clerk
- 608-847-4786

Town of Lisbon

- Andrea L. Hawkins, Clerk
- 608-847-5432

Town of Marion

- Nicole Clark, Clerk
- 608-547-6734

Town of Seven Mile Creek

- Betsy Taylor-Hart, Clerk
- 715-937-4376

Village of Lyndon Station

- Michelle Klein, Clerk
- 608-666-2500

Town of Kildare

- Jennifer Masch, Clerk
- 608-350-0698

Town of Lindina

- Sharie Miles, Clerk
- 608-847-4861

Town of Lyndon

- Denise Giebel, Clerk
- 608-548-2546

Town of Plymouth

- Betty Manson, Clerk
- 608-547-5283

Town of Summit

- Tammy Miller, Clerk
- 608-985-7106