above expectations

BAYFIELD COUNTY

Resolution

No. 2026-81

EMS Sustainability & Statewide Funding

Advocating Statewide Investment, Modernization, and Workforce Support for EMS

WHEREAS, rural Emergency Medical Services (EMS) across Wisconsin face increasing strain due to declining volunteerism, workforce shortages, rising operational costs, and increasing 9-1-1 call volumes; *and*

WHEREAS, local and regional analyses have documented gaps in coverage, including unanswered calls and limited availability of Advanced Life Support (ALS) resources in rural areas; *and*

WHEREAS, EMS agencies are experiencing documented increases in call volume, persistent staffing gaps, and increasing reliance on neighboring ambulance services for coverage, demonstrating that existing local funding and workforce models are increasingly unable to sustain reliable 24-hour emergency response; *and*

WHEREAS, Wis. Stat. § 60.565 requires town boards to contract for or operate and maintain ambulance services unless those services are provided by another EMS agency, yet many rural municipalities lack stable funding and workforce pipelines necessary to sustain reliable EMS coverage; *and*

WHEREAS, counties are increasingly contributing levy resources to stabilize EMS systems, coordinate multi-agency planning, and improve dispatch and system design; *and*

WHEREAS, the sustainability of EMS requires statewide investment, shared service models, and workforce development strategies designed for rural and urban realities; and

WHEREAS, many states define EMS as an "Essential Service" which may open new funding streams and opportunities for sustainability.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Wisconsin Counties Association that the State of Wisconsin establish an EMS Sustainability Fund providing long-term, predictable annual funding to counties and municipalities; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State of Wisconsin designates EMS as an "Essential Service", eligible for state funding and assistance; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State support EMS workforce development in underserved regions; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State modernize EMS statutes and administrative rules to enable flexible staffing and regional/shared-service models while maintaining patient-safety standards and clinical quality; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State fund countywide EMS coordination and regional planning functions, evidence-based system design, and data tools to monitor response times, clinical capability, and patient outcomes; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State partner with technical colleges and universities to address EMS program quality, expand seats, and build rural career pathways aligned to local demand; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that WCA transmit this resolution to the Governor, legislative leadership, and the Departments of Health Services and Safety & Professional Services and that the Wisconsin Counties Association work in collaboration with

the Wisconsin EMS Association (WEMSA), counties, municipalities, and other stakeholders to advance enabling legislation and appropriations.

Adopted by the Bayfield County Board of Supervisors this 25th day of August, 2026.

By Action of the:
Bayfield County Board of Supervisors

Jan Lee, *Chair*

STATE OF WISCONSIN)
) ss.
COUNTY OF BAYFIELD)

I, Lynn M. Divine, *Bayfield County Clerk*, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. 2026-81, Volume 30, adopted by the Bayfield County Board of Supervisors at their meeting held on the 25th day of August 2026.

Lynn M. Divine, *Bayfield County Clerk*