

Resolution No. 2026-02

A Resolution Opposing the Inclusion of Countywide Emergency Medical Services Funding in the County Budget and Affirming the Authority and Interests of the Town of Forest

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Forest, Richland County, Wisconsin, is charged with protecting the health, safety, welfare, and financial interests of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the County has proposed a county budget that includes funding for a countywide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system; and

WHEREAS, the Town currently receives EMS services through existing contractual agreements and/or cooperative arrangements that have provided reliable emergency response to Town residents; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board believes that the decisions regarding EMS service delivery should include meaningful consultation with affected municipalities and should respect local governance and fiscal responsibility; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has concerns that the proposed countywide EMS budget will:

- Increase the tax burden on Town residents;
- Reduce local control over emergency medical services;
- Commit municipalities to long-term financial obligations without sufficient intergovernmental agreement;
- Be implemented without adequate transparency regarding governance, service levels, operational costs, capital expenditures, and future budget impacts; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board believes that any countywide EMS initiative should be based upon a comprehensive financial analysis, operational plan, governance structure, and equitable cost allocation that has been fully reviewed by all affected municipalities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Forest formally opposes adoption of the County budget to the extent it appropriates funds for or otherwise commits County resources toward implementation of a countywide EMS system without support and participation of the affected municipalities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board requests the County Board remove or defer all proposed countywide EMS appropriations until:

1. A comprehensive operational and financial plan has been completed;
2. Municipal governments have been provided meaningful opportunities for review and comment;
3. Long-term funding mechanisms have been clearly identified;

4. Governance and oversight structures have been established through intergovernmental collaboration; and
5. The County demonstrates that the proposed system will improve service levels while remaining fiscally responsible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board supports continued collaboration among municipalities, EMS providers, and the County to identify sustainable, efficient, and locally supported solutions for emergency medical services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to:

- The Chair of the Richland County Board;
- The Richland County Administrator;
- Members of the Richland County Board;
- The Wisconsin Towns Association;
- Municipalities within the County;
- and any other appropriate governmental officials.

Adopted this 14th day of July, 2026.

TOWN OF FOREST

/s/ John Matthes
John Matthes, Town Chair

/s/ Jim Carley
Jim Carley, Town Supervisor

/s/ John Bronski
John Bronski, Town Supervisor

ATTEST:

/s/ Lynette Owens
Lynette Owens, Town Clerk