

## Mayor signals new executive committee formation

Mayor Katie Rosenberg signaled the coming of a powerful new committee that would replace three committees Tuesday.

Rosenberg announced a new executive committee at the city council's reorganization meeting Tuesday. The committee would be comprised of chairs of all the standing committees and would replace the coordinating, administrative review and legislative committees.

The new committee would be charged with executing the city's strategic plan, as well as coordinating policy formation and providing leadership over council policies, Rosenberg says.

The announcement came after the city council re-elected Becky McElhaney over Michael Martens for council president, and adopted a new rule by which two council members can call a Committee of the Whole.

The new council rejected a proposal that would have prevented city council members from chairing more than one committee. Proponents said it would have given more council members leadership opportunities and made sense given the executive committee would be comprised of chairs of the standing committees; but opponents said it would hamstring committees from choosing the chairs they want.

The city next week will further discuss the executive committee idea.

## More money approved for purchasing pitcher filters

City leaders last week approved more funding for pitcher filters as the city copes with the PFAS crisis.

The city council last week approved spending another \$80,000 in American Rescue Act Plan dollars on the pitchers. The city previously spent \$150,000 on bottled water pallets and pitchers, which have all been given out. Details

on how to get on the list for the pitchers are on the city's website.

Wausau discovered elevated levels of PFAS, a set of chemicals dangerous to human health, in all six of the city's wells earlier this year. The city has been scrambling to come up with solutions ever since, including equipping the new drinking water treatment plant to filter the chemicals.

## Three dead following crash in Frankfort

Police say three people are dead following a car crash on Highway 29 in the town of Frankfort Saturday evening.

Officers were called to the scene of a two-vehicle crash around 11:30 pm Saturday. When officers arrived, three people from two vehicles were dead. None of the occupants survived the crash, according to reports from the Marathon County Sheriff's Office.

Police say 38-year-old Jennifer Krug of Medford, 21-year-old Sophie Sullivan of the Appleton area and 20-year-old Audrie Stephens also of the Appleton area were killed in the crash.

Another person who had stopped to render aid to the occupants was struck by a passing vehicle. That person was transported to a hospital with non-life-threatening injuries, deputies say.

The crash is still under investigation by the crash reconstruction team.

## No Mow May likely coming back

A new program last year to help out some area bees is likely to come back — and hopefully be a little less confusing than last year.

The city's Public Health and Safety Committee Monday approved the city holding No Mow May again, which allows residents to not mow their lawns for that month. That helps bees find more pollinating plants, helping them

to sustain healthy populations.

Last year, Mayor Katie Rosenberg reported nearly 500 people signed up for the program, and another 40 volunteered to be citizen scientists.

But, the program created some confusion. Public Health and Safety Chair Lisa Rasmussen said that the requirement of each participating citizen having a sign in their yard created difficulties for the inspection department. And, some residents contacted her thinking that it was a requirement to not mow one's lawn in May. The program is voluntary, and people are still allowed to mow their lawns if they want.

This year's program will not include a sign requirement.

The city council will still need to approve No Mow May for this year, which won't have the sign requirement.

## Policing task force to hold public hearing, finalize report

After nearly two years, the city's policing task force is ready to finalize its report.

That comes on the heels of the task force announcing that it found no evidence of systemic racism within the department.

The task force is expected to come forth with four main areas of recommendation. Generally speaking, the task force found that Wausau's department is an excellent example of policing as it compares with the rest of the country, but also offers areas to expand upon: Additional mental health resources, officer wellness resources, cultural competency and community engagement.

Some examples include expanding the Crisis Assessment Response Team so that it can cover more than 9-5 Monday through Friday, says Task Force Chair John Robinson. The task force would also like to see more community service outreach and conduct a yearly survey.

The task force was formed in the wake of the George Floyd shooting and the protest in Wausau, likely the largest in the city's history. **CP**

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