



WAUKESHA COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COUNTY BOARD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WAUKESHA COUNTY BOARD CHAIR NOMINATES THE COUNTY'S FORMER TOP ATTORNEY THOMAS FARLEY AS INTERIM COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Waukesha, WI – Waukesha County Board Chair and Acting County Executive Jim Heinrich announced today the nomination of Thomas Farley to serve as Interim Waukesha County Executive.

Farley retired in 2016 after a distinguished 31-year career with Waukesha County, serving 25 of those years as Corporation Counsel, the county's lead attorney. Over the decades, he was an integral adviser during three of the county's most significant structural transitions: the transition to the County Executive form of government, the 2005 interim transition following the resignation of Dan Finley, and the 2015 leadership transfer from Dan Vrakas to Paul Farrow.

"In selecting the interim County Executive, my primary focus is stability," said Chairman Jim Heinrich. "I am looking for a leader who brings a steady, experienced hand to our operations, is a dedicated steward of taxpayer dollars, and is committed to ensuring our ongoing initiatives continue to move forward smoothly until the people have their say in the special election."

Heinrich added, "Tom Farley fits the criteria I am looking for in an interim County Executive flawlessly. Having advised four county board chairs and three county executives, and having served as an integral cabinet member, Tom possesses unparalleled institutional knowledge. He was at the table during every major administrative transition in our county's modern history. He requires no learning curve, carries no future political ambitions for this seat, and will hit the ground running on day one to protect our current initiatives and support our talented staff."

Farley, a graduate of Marquette University and Marquette University Law School, currently serves as an alternate on the county's Ethics Board.

"Waukesha County has been my professional home for over three decades, and I am deeply humbled to return during this challenging period of transition," said Thomas Farley. "My sole objective is to provide steady administrative leadership, maintain strict fiscal oversight, and ensure our county departments are fully supported. This is a caretaker role focused entirely on execution, stability, and keeping the county's long term strategic plans firmly on track until a permanent successor is named by the voters."

“Tom Farley is an excellent choice as Interim County Executive,” said former County Executive Dan Vrakas. “His experience is unmatched; he has worked for all three County Executives as well as the County Board and has the maturity and impartiality that we need in this difficult moment of transition.”

Pending approval of the County Board, Farley will serve in this role until a countywide special election is held on Tuesday, December 15, 2026. The appointment recommendation is scheduled to be reviewed by Executive Committee on July 20, 2026. The full County Board will consider the appointment at its meeting on July 28, 2026.

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