

2026 RACE PROFILE: MARATHON COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

Two candidates will appear on the April 7, 2026 ballot for Marathon County Circuit Court judge, progressive candidate Michael Hughes and conservative candidate Douglas Bauman. The open seat on the court was created by the retirement of Judge LaMont K. Jacobson. Circuit court judges serve six-year terms.

Key findings for each candidate are below:

MICHAEL D. HUGHES

Michael Hughes is a defense attorney in private practice in Marathon County and central Wisconsin and currently serves as the president of the Marathon County Bar Association. Hughes' judicial philosophy is that "no one is above the law" and "a judge must be fair and impartial, loyal to the Constitution, and committed to serving the community with integrity." Hughes has asserted that "the legitimacy of our courts rests on the public's perception that they are fair," and noted that Wisconsin has "some of the weakest recusal rules in the country." Hughes believes that the state's "criminal justice system faces real challenges...underfunding...a shortage of public defenders...backlogs that delay justice," and noted that he has handled "thousands of cases and appeared before dozens of judges."

Judicial Campaign

2026: Hughes: "I am running for judge to strengthen and improve our courts and to put my courtroom experience, knowledge of the law, and commitment to this community to work for all the people of Marathon County." "I am running for judge to strengthen and improve our courts and to put my courtroom experience, knowledge of the law, and commitment to this community to work for all the people of Marathon County. We must have a court system that is strong, fair, efficient, and which keeps our community safe. A key part of that system are judges. We need judges who are impartial and who will make decisions based on the law and the facts. We need judges who will treat everyone in the courtroom with respect. We need judges who are committed to serving with integrity." [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Hughes: "I have broad and bi-partisan support within the legal community for my campaign..." "I have broad and bi-partisan support within the legal community for my campaign to become Marathon County's next Circuit Court Judge. I have been endorsed by judges who know best what this job entails. I have been endorsed by elected District Attorneys and dozens of lawyers, some of whom I have worked with and others who I have argued cases against. I have earned support from both sides of the aisle. What brings this diverse group of supporters together is that they trust me to apply the law fairly, and to make sound, impartial decisions as a judge." [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

October 2025: Hughes launched his campaign for Marathon County Circuit Court Judge. "Attorney Michael Hughes announced today that he is a candidate for Marathon County Circuit Court Judge. Attorney Hughes is running to succeed Judge LaMont Jacobson who has filed a notice of non-candidacy, creating an open seat on the Circuit Court. The non-partisan election will be held on April 7, 2026." [WisPolitics, [10/3/25](#)]

Hughes says his philosophy is that "no one is above the law" and "a judge must be fair and impartial, loyal to the Constitution, and committed to serving the community with integrity." "I

have seen firsthand how important it is that a Circuit Court Judge be fair, impartial, and make decisions based on the law and the facts. That is the kind of judge I will be. A judge must be fair and impartial, loyal to the Constitution, and committed to serving the community with integrity. Growing up in Wausau, I learned to work hard, do the right thing, and give back to my community. Those are the values my wife and I instill in our children. And those are the values I will bring to my work as a Circuit Court Judge. The rule of law will guide me every day. No one is above the law. Applying our laws evenly in every case and ensuring everyone in the courtroom is treated respectfully is the cornerstone of our democratic system. No one should have special access to justice or be prosecuted unfairly. To maintain the trust and confidence of the people we serve, Judges must demonstrate independence, integrity and above all impartiality.” [Michael Hughes For Judge, accessed [1/27/26](#)]

BACKGROUND & PHILOSOPHY

Hughes is a defense attorney in private practice in central Wisconsin. “Michael has handled thousands of cases in courtrooms throughout Marathon County and Central Wisconsin for over 15 years. As an attorney, Michael has represented individuals in a wide range of cases, including homicide, sexual assault, truancy, as a Guardian ad Litem representing the best interests of children, defending individuals and families against insurance companies, and in disputes where the State has taken property from landowners. Circuit Court judges preside over a large number of cases in many areas of the law, and Michael’s extensive legal knowledge will enable him to hit the ground running when he takes the bench.” [Michael Hughes for Judge, [accessed 1/27/26](#)]

Hughes serves as President of the Marathon County Bar Association. He currently serves as the President of the Marathon County Bar Association (the professional association of lawyers in the County), where his leadership has focused on working collaboratively with Law Enforcement and other stakeholders to improve the criminal justice system. He volunteered as the Mock Trial Coach at Wausau East High School (2024) and Youth Soccer Coach at the Woodson YMCA (2023-2024). He is also on the board of the Wausau Noon Optimists.” [Michael Hughes for Judge, [accessed 1/27/26](#)]

Hughes lives in Wausau with his wife and twin 7-year-olds. “The dad of 7-year-old twins Malcolm and Sam, Michael, is active in the Marathon County legal community and in volunteer organizations. [...] Michael and his wife, Meghan, a physician, live in Wausau.” [Michael Hughes for Judge, [accessed 1/27/26](#)]

2008: Hughes graduated law school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. “After growing up in Wausau, Michael attended the University of Pittsburgh, graduating with honors and a BA in Political Science and Communication. He returned to Wisconsin for law school, earning his law degree from UW-Madison in 2008. While in law school, he was a legal Intern for Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson on the Wisconsin Supreme Court and worked as a student attorney at the Frank J. Remington Center.” [Michael Hughes for Judge, [accessed 1/27/26](#)]

2001: Hughes graduated from Wausau West High School. “At Wausau West High School's commencement, the graduates rejected that stereotype by announcing their intention to meet the world head-on and to refuse to be bound by image or convention. [...] Students approved when senior Michael Hughes rattled off moguls and leaders who had underachieved or failed at school and went on to achieve epic success. He, as Wanner, encouraged his peers to pursue a sense of fulfillment and purpose outside of common definitions, including education. The graduates cheered Hughes, even as 74 percent of the class planned on furthering its education. Ambition and determination should be our barometers of a successful citizen, not 4.0 grade points or gold cords of the National Honor Society, he said. ‘Everyone

graduating here tonight has done something special,' Hughes said. 'I know that we all can attain success.'" [Wausau Daily Herald, 5/31/01]

2026: Hughes: “We need to trust the court system to resolve disputes by applying facts to the law. The public needs to know that decisions...are legally-sound and created in an environment of dignity and integrity.” “The Supreme Court of Wisconsin’s 2016 decision in *State v. Lynch* had a negative impact on the people of Wisconsin. The decision did not help advance the law due to a divide in the Court. Additionally, many statements within the justices’ opinions reflect a stray from legal analysis and focused on unnecessary personal statements that should be beneath the integrity and institution of the Court. In *Lynch*, the Court was tasked with determining whether to overrule the *Shiffra/Green* line of cases that (at that time) permitted a criminal defendant to, after making a fact-specific showing to the trial court, obtain a person’s privileged mental health treatment records. While much of the Court’s opinions in the decision focused on an analysis of the applicable legal issues, at times they strayed into unnecessarily personal mud-slinging. At one point, a justice noted that ‘[t]o say the court of appeals took some liberties interpreting and applying [precedent] would be an understatement.’ Another justice accused colleagues of demeaning other justices instead of focusing on the legal issues, and went so far as to state that the writing of fellow justices “evidence[d] a pattern of joint writing that is bottomed in a desire to injure rather than to inform.” Yet another justice characterized a fellow justice’s writing as akin to an episode of the *Twilight Zone*, where court procedure and precedent was guided by imagination and not the rule of law. And after all of that unnecessary saber-rattling? The Wisconsin Supreme Court noted that ‘[a]s a result of a divided court, the law remains as the court of appeals has articulated it.’ We need to trust the court system to resolve disputes by applying facts to the law. The public needs to know that decisions from the court are legally-sound and created in an environment of dignity and integrity. Conversely, when judicial decisions reflect partisanship or personal quarrels, our confidence in the stability of the courts is undermined. And when we cannot trust our courts to operate effectively, the public loses an important pillar of government.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Hughes: “The legitimacy of our courts rests on the public’s perception that they are fair and judges are impartial...” “The legitimacy of our courts rests on the public’s perception that they are fair and judges are impartial decision makers. Everyone should know they received a fair shake in court and that the outcome, which one party will probably dislike, is the product of an unbiased and transparent process. Judges have a key role to play in establishing and maintaining the legitimacy of our courts. My pledge to the people of Marathon County is to uphold the highest standards in applying the facts of a case to the laws, as they are written; to treat all before me with respect; to explain my decisions in clear and understandable language; and to ensure the rule of law – the idea that no one is above the law – is a reality in my courtroom. I am honored that a bi-partisan group of attorneys, judges, law enforcement personnel, and community leaders supports my candidacy precisely because they have trust and confidence in my ability and dedication to be an independent and impartial Judge.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Hughes: “Wisconsin’s criminal justice system faces real challenges...underfunding...a shortage of public defenders...backlogs that delay justice...” “Wisconsin’s criminal justice system faces real challenges: underfunding of our courts; a shortage of public defenders and private bar attorneys unable to take court appointments; and backlogs that delay justice for victims, witnesses, and defendants. Those are all obstacles to what I believe is a shared commitment among stakeholders in our court system to provide equal justice under the law to all who come into contact with our courts. Judges are leaders in our court system and in their local communities and as such, judges have a responsibility to work collaboratively and effectively in identifying and addressing issues that impede access to justice and

undermine individual rights. Judges must be open to changes and best practices that improve how our courts function and how they are perceived by the public in these highly politicized and polarized times. That is why equal justice under the law must be our goal and judges must work tirelessly to demonstrate their ability and commitment to realizing that goal.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

“I have handled thousands of cases and appeared before dozens of judges.” “In my nearly 20-year legal career, I have handled thousands of cases and appeared before dozens of judges. I have litigated cases in one-third of the 72 counties in this state. Throughout my legal career, I have handled a wide array of cases including criminal matters ranging from misdemeanors to Class A felonies. I have served as a Guardian ad Litem in family court, representing and advocating for the best interests of children. I have worked as a civil litigator, representing families in disputes against insurance companies. I have even served as a Comdemnation Commissioner, helping resolve issues where the State has taken property from landowners.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Hughes: Wisconsin has some of the weakest recusal rules in the country. “Wisconsin has some of the weakest recusal rules in the Country. I am pleased that the Wisconsin Supreme Court has indicated it will be holding public hearings on what could, should, or might be done to strengthen them. Proposals that would require recusal when a party in a case has contributed to a judge’s campaign are among the ideas that have been suggested. Until such time as new rules are put into place, I will faithfully and carefully adhere to the existing rules that govern a judge’s conduct and role.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

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Hughes says his philosophy is that “no one is above the law” and “a judge must be fair and impartial, loyal to the Constitution, and committed to serving the community with integrity.” “I have seen firsthand how important it is that a Circuit Court Judge be fair, impartial, and make decisions based on the law and the facts. That is the kind of judge I will be. A judge must be fair and impartial, loyal to the Constitution, and committed to serving the community with integrity. Growing up in Wausau, I learned to work hard, do the right thing, and give back to my community. Those are the values my wife and I instill in our children. And those are the values I will bring to my work as a Circuit Court Judge. The rule of law will guide me every day. No one is above the law. Applying our laws evenly in every case and ensuring everyone in the courtroom is treated respectfully is the cornerstone of our democratic system. No one should have special access to justice or be prosecuted unfairly. To maintain the trust and confidence of the people we serve, Judges must demonstrate independence, integrity and above all impartiality.” [Michael Hughes For Judge, accessed [1/27/26](#)]

NOTABLE CASES

2011: Hughes represented a man convicted of robbing a Wausau grocery store. “A man who asked for a new attorney before his sentencing in April following his conviction for robbing a Wausau grocery store will now be sentenced Aug. 26, according to court records. Tony Berry, 41, of Wausau pleaded guilty Feb. 16 to a charge of robbery with threat of force and was scheduled to be sentenced April 26. Instead, Berry requested that his attorney Russ Van Skike be replaced. Attorney Michael Hughes is now representing Berry.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 6/10/11]

- **Hughes said the perpetrator “wasn’t trying to victimize anyone” when he robbed the grocery store.** “A Wausau man was sentenced Thursday to six years in prison for robbing a west-side Wausau grocery store clerk 10 months ago. Tony Berry, 41, pleaded guilty Feb. 16 to a charge of robbery with threat of force. Marathon County Circuit Judge Greg Grau ordered that Berry serve five years of extended supervision after he is released from prison. [...] Berry was under the influence of cocaine and alcohol at the time of the robbery, Jacobson said. Berry apologized to the victim, who was not in court Thursday, and said his stress and frustration led him to commit the robbery. He was deep in debt after having heart surgery and owing child support, said Berry's attorney, Michael Hughes. ‘He wasn’t trying to victimize anyone that day; he was just trying to pay the bills,’ Hughes said.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 9/16/11]

2013: Hughes represented a man accused of committing Social Security fraud. “A Portage County judge ordered a psychiatric evaluation Tuesday for one of three accused in a Social Security scam, a day after a second suspect in the case failed to reach a plea deal with prosecutors. Charles Jost, 67, of Amherst entered a modified plea in Portage County Court on Tuesday of not guilty by reason of insanity to charges of theft, unauthorized use of an individual's personal document, forgery and fraud. The new plea means that the case will not go to trial as scheduled in October. Portage County Circuit Judge Thomas Flugaur ordered that Jost undergo a psychiatric evaluation. He told defense attorney Michael Hughes that Hughes also is free to get his own evaluation in addition to the one ordered by the court. Jost, along with Ronald Disher, 72, of Almond and Dolores Disher, 70, of Almond, is accused of cashing Social Security checks belonging to the mother of Charles and Dolores, Marie Jost. Authorities have been unable to locate Marie Jost or Charles and Dolores' brother, Theodore Jost. Authorities say they believe both most likely are dead; Marie Jost would be more than 100 years old if alive today, and she has not used her Medicare benefits since 1980.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 10/2/13]

- **Hughes’ client was found not guilty by reason of mental defect.** “One of three individuals accused of cashing the Social Security checks of a dead relative was found not guilty by reason of

mental defect Monday. Charles Jost, 67, of Amherst will undergo an evaluation by the state health department after Portage County Circuit Court Judge Thomas Flugaur ruled that Jost was unable to understand, to a reasonable degree, that his actions violated the law. [...] The not guilty by reason of insanity or mental defect plea came after Jost's attorney, Michael Hughes, entered an Alford plea, a rare plea in which the defendant maintains innocence but pleads guilty to a crime." [Wausau Daily Herald, 12/31/13]

2016: Hughes represented an 18 year old charged with the shooting death of his girlfriend's mother. "An 18-year-old Nekoosa man charged with first-degree reckless homicide in the August shooting death of a Saratoga woman testified Tuesday that he never meant to hurt anyone other than himself. Miguel-Angel Oertel, 18, said he never meant to kill Theresa C. Coates, 47. Oertel, who was 17 at the time of the shooting, said he thought Coates could stop him from killing himself. [...] Oertel's attorney, Michael Hughes, told jurors at the start of the trial Tuesday that it would be clear that Oertel caused Coates' death. He asked the jury to find Oertel guilty of negligent homicide, not reckless homicide. Homicide by negligent use of a dangerous weapon carries a maximum sentence of 10 years. First-degree reckless homicide carries a maximum sentence of 60 years." [Wausau Daily Herald, 4/20/16]

- **2016: Hughes' client was found guilty of first-degree reckless homicide.** "An 18-year-old Nekoosa man tried to blame his mother's decision to treat his mental illness with religion rather than medication for the troubles that ended with him killing his girlfriend's mother before trying to kill himself. Jurors on Wednesday ultimately rejected Miguel-Angel Oertel's insanity defense and convicted him of first-degree reckless homicide in the shooting death of Theresa C. Coates, 47, of Saratoga. It took jurors just over three hours to determine Oertel was guilty, and another hour to decide he was responsible for his actions. They made those decisions after hearing extensively about Oertel's mental health problems, which defense attorney Michael Hughes said became apparent when Oertel first tried to commit suicide at the age of 6 by jumping out of a family car. Oertel was raised by his mother and the impoverished family couldn't afford or didn't want to get the mental help Oertel needed, Hughes said." [Wausau Daily Herald, 4/21/16]
- **2019: A judge ruled that Hughes had provided ineffective counsel to the teen found guilty of killing his girlfriend's mother.** "A 21-year-old Nekoosa man pleaded guilty Monday in Wood County Circuit Court to the shooting death of his girlfriend's mother on Aug. 17, 2015. Miguel-Angel Oertel, who is in prison in Boscobel, wore a green state prison uniform, handcuffs and shackles during his plea hearing Monday morning. His hair was cut short. Oertel as part of a plea agreement pleaded guilty to second-degree reckless homicide in the shooting death of Theresa C. Coates, 47, of Saratoga. Oertel previously had been found guilty by a jury of first-degree reckless homicide, but Wood County Circuit Judge Greg Potter later ruled Oertel's attorney had not done enough during the insanity portion of the trial to show Oertel suffered from a mental illness that may have contributed to his actions. [...] Potter said Oertel's trial attorney, Michael Hughes, called the state-appointed psychologist to the stand during the sanity portion of the trial but did not hire his own expert to examine Oertel and testify during the first insanity plea case trial in April 2016. Hughes also did not consult with an expert to get help on how to question the state's psychologist, Potter said. The expert could have provided advice on how to question the state's expert in order to challenge his finding that Oertel could comply with the law at the time he killed Coates, Potter said. Potter said during a motion hearing in March 2018 that he felt he had no other choice but to find that Hughes was ineffective when handling Oertel's trial in 2016. Although Oertel agreed to Hughes' decision not to hire an expert for the trial, Oertel's age and mental state at the time would have made him unable to make that decision for himself, Potter said." [Wausau Daily Herald, 2/5/19]

2022: Hughes represented a 67-year-old woman convicted of killing her husband. “A 67-year-old woman will spend the rest of her life in prison for the 2006 shooting death of her husband, a pharmacist whose slaying had gone unsolved for over a decade. Marathon County Circuit Judge Michael Moran sentenced Cindy Schulz-Juedes to life in prison Wednesday morning, calling her actions following the death of her husband, Kenneth Juedes, ‘callous and unfeeling.’ Moran ordered that Schulz-Juedes never be eligible for release from prison. [...] Schulz-Juedes' attorney, Michael Hughes, said the appeals process for the conviction already is under way. He told Moran the sentencing wasn't the time to argue the facts of the case. That will be done in the appellate process, he said. Hughes focused on what is called a presentence investigation report. The writers of the reports use a series of questions to place defendants on a scale in a number of areas, including likeliness to reoffend, violence and anger. Schulz-Juedes had the lowest possible score in every category, except violence, and she was high on that because of the homicide conviction, Hughes said. Hughes said he's never seen comparable scores with any other defendant.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 6/8/22]

DOUGLAS BAUMAN

Douglas Bauman has been serving as a Marathon County Circuit Court Commissioner since 2001. In that role, he conducts preliminary court hearings and presides over traffic court and small claims cases for the county. Bauman has twice attempted to win a seat on the Marathon County Circuit Court, running an unsuccessful campaign in 2009 and applying for an appointment to a vacant seat in 2012. During his 2009 judicial campaign Bauman stated that he believes, “A good judge is someone who can listen to people, sort out what's important, can understand the law and make sense of very complex legal questions.” Bauman has said that “becoming a judge is the best way to continue and expand my service to the community.” When asked to describe a court opinion that has had a “significant...impact on the people of Wisconsin,” Bauman responded that “regardless of how you feel about abortion, the Dobbs opinion should give you pause because of the reasoning it adopted...Our rights do not come from the Constitution...the Constitution comes from our rights. Our rights are inherent, inborn—endowed by our Creator...” He has called the law “an agreement that society has entered into, but that agreement breaks down when society has reason to doubt that it is benign upheld.”

BACKGROUND & PHILOSOPHY

2026: Bauman: “Becoming a judge is the best way to continue and expand my service to the community.” “I have spent the last 24 years serving the people of Marathon County in the dual position of court commissioner and staff attorney. As such, becoming a judge is the best way to continue and expand my service to the community. It would also make my service more direct and comprehensive. In the position I hold now, I work on pieces of particular cases, but the ultimate decider is a judge. I want to become a judge in order to cut out the middleman. Becoming a judge would allow me to take the experience I’ve gained during my 28-year legal career, particularly the last 24 years at the circuit court, and apply it directly to the legal disputes that come before the court. It would also allow me to ensure that litigants have the opportunity to feel heard, and that they are treated with compassion and respect.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Bauman: “Regardless of how you feel about abortion, the Dobbs opinion should give you pause because of the reasoning it adopted...” “The recent opinion with perhaps the greatest impact on the people of Wisconsin has been Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, the 2022 opinion that overruled Roe and repealed constitutional limitations on abortion laws. Regardless of how you feel about abortion, the Dobbs opinion should give you pause because of the reasoning it adopted. The

majority opinion repeatedly asked whether the Constitution ‘confers’ a right to obtain an abortion, but that is the wrong question. The Constitution is not a source of rights — it is a set of prescriptions and limitations that defines the scope of government power. Our rights do not come from the Constitution. In fact, it works the other way around: the Constitution comes from our rights. Our rights are inherent, inborn — endowed by our Creator, in the words of the Declaration of Independence. Those rights are why the founding generation was justified in casting off British rule and creating the Constitution in the first place. And the inherent nature of those rights is why the Ninth Amendment recognizes that the enumeration of certain rights in the Constitution ‘shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.’ But the Dobbs majority took a much more limited view, and denied that any constitutional right to bodily autonomy can be said to limit abortion laws. In so doing, at least some members of the Court (particularly Justice Thomas) expressed a desire to review a whole slew of long-standing precedents that found a constitutional right to privacy, suggesting a willingness to allow more governmental invasion into the lives of the American people.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Bauman: “I am twice-divorced, and both divorces were initially difficult to process.” “The most challenging situations I have experienced have been personal, not professional. I am twice-divorced, and both divorces were initially difficult to process. I handled them by leaning on friends and family, and reflecting on who I am as a person, and I believe that I am now a better person as a result. I draw on those experiences every time I hear a divorce case and every time I hear a request for a restraining order following a breakup. I know firsthand how difficult the end of a marriage can be, and the challenges for parenting that can result, so I try to help the parties navigate those difficulties so they can emerge, as I have, on the other side.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

2026: “The law is an agreement that society has entered into...the agreement breaks down when society has reasons to doubt that it is being upheld.” “The short answer is yes. As I wrote in answering a previous question, the law is an agreement that society has entered into, but that agreement breaks down when society has reasons to doubt that it is being upheld. Confidence in the legal system is undermined when people doubt the impartiality of the judge or justice making the decisions. Even the appearance of bias should be enough of a reason to recuse, for the sake of protecting public confidence in the judicial system. And deciding a case involving a person or company who made a sizable donation does create at least an appearance of bias. As for what constitutes a ‘sizable donation,’ to some extent, I think that depends on the jurisdiction, just like the contribution limits do. I don’t think that the donation needs to be at the maximum contribution limit to create a basis for recusal, but I’m not sure exactly where the number should be — or even whether setting a particular number is a good idea, since it suggests that anything below that amount is not a problem.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Bauman: “The greatest obstacles that judges face when trying to deliver true justice are probably those involving scarcity of resources.” “The greatest obstacles that judges face when trying to deliver true justice are probably those involving scarcity of resources. For instance, every week I see criminal defendants who are eligible for an attorney through the State Public Defender, but who are forced to wait for the SPD to find someone to appoint. Our local SPD office has been three positions short for months, and they have been further hampered by a shortage of attorneys in private practice who are willing to take appointments. This situation leads to delays, despite the constitutional provisions guaranteeing those defendants the right to the assistance of counsel, the right to due process, and the right to a speedy trial.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

Bauman is a court commissioner and staff attorney for the Marathon County Circuit Court. “Douglas Bauman, U.W. 1998, is a court commissioner and staff attorney for the Marathon County Circuit Court in Wausau.” [Wisconsin Lawyer, [October 2024](#)]

2012: Bauman applied for a judicial vacancy on the Marathon County Circuit Court. “Ten central Wisconsin attorneys have applied for the judicial vacancy created when Marathon County Circuit Court Judge Vincent K. Howard announced his retirement in November. Marathon County Corporation Counsel Scott Corbett and Marathon County Assistant District Attorney LaMont Jacobson likely are the most well-known of the group. The others are: Taylor County District Attorney Karl Kelz, Marathon County Circuit Court Commissioner Douglas Bauman and attorneys Benjamin Krautkramer, Thomas Roley, Anthony Schmoldt, Kimberly Haas and Mark Seidl. One additional applicant has requested anonymity, said Julie Lund, deputy communications director for Gov. Scott Walker.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 12/19/12]

2009: Bauman unsuccessfully ran for Marathon County circuit court. “There is nothing like an open seat to bring out a diverse group of judicial candidates. In a year which will have 18 contested judicial races, the one generating the most interest from candidates is in Marathon County. [...] The race is between attorneys Rotter and Alan E. Grischke, court commissioners Sandra J. Marcus and Douglas Bauman, and District Attorney Jill N. Falstad.” [Wisconsin Law Journal, [1/12/09](#)]

- **Bauman called the campaign a “great experience.”** “With the primary election done, I'd like to thank everyone who supported my candidacy for circuit court judge, and especially everyone who helped me with my campaign. As it turned out, this wasn't my time but it was a great experience, and I am glad I had the opportunity to meet and talk to people around the county.” [Douglas Bauman Letter to the Editor, Wausau Daily Herald, 3/2/09]

2001: Bauman began serving as Marathon County Court Commissioner. “Douglas Bauman, who has been a Marathon County court commissioner since 2001. He has presided over traffic court and small claims cases for the county. His position also involves doing legal research for Marathon County judges. ‘A good judge is someone who can listen to people, sort out what's important, can understand the law and make sense of very complex legal questions,’ Bauman said.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 2/13/09]

2000: Bauman was an attorney in private practice in Wausau. “Judge James P. Jansen said he would not issue a restraining order, said Douglas Bauman, an attorney with Piehler and Strande in Wausau who represented Proulx.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 6/29/00]

1998: Bauman received his law degree from the University of Wisconsin. [Wisconsin Lawyer, [October 2024](#)]

Judicial Campaign

2026: “My opponent is a fine person...” “My opponent is a fine person; personally, I like him. And if he were to win, it would be my job to help him succeed (as I would continue to be the staff attorney assisting all of the county’s judges). But, again, I would like to cut out the middleman. I want to be able to take the experience I’ve gained in my 24 years working on the bench and behind the scenes at the Marathon County Circuit Court and apply it directly to the legal issues that the people of Marathon County bring to court.” [Wisconsin Justice Initiative, [2026](#)]

NOTABLE CASES

2019: Bauman was featured in a USA Today network story about attorney shortages leaving poor defendants indefinitely jailed in Marathon County. “On a Friday afternoon, when most activity in the Marathon County Courthouse had slowed, Court Commissioner Douglas Bauman sat on a judge's bench and looked at a television monitor. The courtroom was empty except for a clerk and a USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin reporter. The hallways outside the doors were nearly vacant, as other courthouse staff prepared to head home for the weekend. The monitor showed a stark room with the camera centered on a lone table and chair. A metal door in the wall behind the table had a window. The setup, similar to those found in courtrooms across the state, allows Marathon County inmates to make some court appearances by video from jail as a public safety measure. The defendants appearing before Bauman by video in the Sara Quirt-Sann Memorial Courtroom weren't there to learn if they could post bond, to hear the charges against them, to enter a plea, or to face a sentencing. The group of men who filed into the tight jail room one at a time, to sit in the chair behind the table and get a few moments of Bauman's time, were there to find out when they'd ever get a real day in court. All of the men brought before Bauman qualified for a public defender, but they were without an attorney. The defendants, all held on a cash bond they couldn't pay, were feeling the effects of a shortage of attorneys who will take cases for the state public defender's office. Some defendants wait for weeks, even months, to get assigned an attorney, Bauman said. In the meantime, they sit in jail - not knowing when they'll be released or when their cases will move forward.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 8/27/19]

- **2021: The Wisconsin Supreme Court heard a case involving a Marathon County defendant whose case was stalled for more than 100 days for lack of an attorney.** “A 45-year-old Green Bay man whose court case stalled in Marathon County more than 100 days while officials tried to get him an attorney is waiting for a decision from the Wisconsin Supreme Court on whether things were done according to the law. Nhia Lee is charged with amphetamine possession with intent to deliver, identity theft and drug paraphernalia possession. On Sept. 11, 2018, Marathon County Circuit Judge Lamont Jacobson set a \$25,000 cash bond for Lee. The Wisconsin Public Defender's Office determined Lee qualified for a public defender. During the next three months, Lee appeared before Marathon County Court Commissioner Douglas Bauman 11 times. During each appearance, Bauman would check the status of Lee's case and find the Public Defender's Office had not found him an attorney. Bauman would find "good cause" to waive time limits in the case.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 6/11/21]

2001: Bauman conducted the wedding of a man who later charged with bigamy because he already had a wife and children in Georgia. “A 31-year-old Georgia man was charged Friday with bigamy after he married a Schofield woman in October. He already had a wife and kids down South, authorities said. Jonathan R. Langley of Douglasville, Ga. - described in court records as a professional bounty hunter - faces up to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine if convicted of the felony charge. ‘It definitely is a very unusual case,’ said Marathon County District Attorney Jill Falstad. ‘And yet the report and information seem very clear that he had a wife in Georgia and he married another wife here.’ Langley and the 32-year-old Schofield woman were married by Marathon County Court Commissioner Doug Bauman on Oct. 29, according to court records.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 1/12/02]

- **2002: Bauman conducted the wedding of another man subsequently charged with bigamy.** “A 31-year-old man is scheduled to appear in Marathon County court this week after marrying a Wausau woman while he still was married to a woman in Mexico. Prosecutors charged Alejandro Romero-Trigotenco of 2504 Gowen St., Apt. B, with bigamy last month after he and the 36-year-old Wausau woman were married on July 2 by Marathon County Court Commissioner Doug Bauman, according to court records. Romero-Trigotenco already had a wife, now 28, of almost eight years

and two daughters, now ages 7 and 2, in Tlaxcala, Mexico. Romero-Trigotenco is in the United States illegally.” [Wausau Daily Herald, 11/18/03]