

Wisconsin Environmental Initiative: Community town hall featuring Charlie Berens to address data center impacts in Beaver Dam

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Beaver Dam, Wisconsin — March 5, 2026 — Residents of Beaver Dam will gather at the Juneau Community Center **on March 10** for a community-led town hall on the local impacts of large-scale data center development, featuring Wisconsin comedian and journalist **Charlie Berens** alongside community leaders, technical experts, and residents living near the project site.

The event is being organized by **Sarah Zarling**, project lead for the statewide *Power Wisconsin Forward from the Frontlines* initiative, in partnership with the **Beaver Dam Education on Data Center** group. Founded by local midwife **Joey Larson**, the grassroots organization has worked since October to raise awareness about the project by hosting community events and encouraging residents to engage with city leaders. Their efforts have helped sustain public discussion around the data center and its potential impacts.

Doors open at **5:45 p.m.**, with speakers from **6:30-8:30 p.m.** followed by a **community discussion and Q&A from 8:45-10:00 p.m.** A cash bar and food will be available until 10:00 p.m. Donations are appreciated in lieu of charging admission.

The town hall comes as Beaver Dam residents seek greater transparency following approval and construction of a **Meta A.I. data center** that many community members say advanced without broad public awareness. A second proposed data center is expected to come before the **Beaver Dam Common Council** for

consideration later this month.

Speakers will discuss potential impacts related to electricity demand, water use, land use, and long-term community costs.

Featured speakers include:

- **Charlie Berens**, comedian and creator of *The Manitowoc Minute*
- **Tom Content**, Executive Director, Citizens Utility Board
- **Michael Greif**, Midwest Environmental Advocates
- **Prescott Balch**, retired technology executive
- **Maily Kocinski**, Beaver Dam resident living near the construction site
- **Emily Luy Tan**, Beaver Dam native lives near the construction site
- **Brit Bumpus**, former Meta employee and Beaver Dam resident
- **Dr. Brittany Keyes**, PT, Clean Air Policy Manager, Healthy Climate Wisconsin
- **Angela Davis**, local resident and wildlife professional whose family lives adjacent to the site

The event is part of **Power Wisconsin Forward from the Frontlines**, a statewide organizing initiative that supports community participation in decisions related to energy infrastructure, utility accountability, and energy affordability.

“When large infrastructure projects move faster than public understanding, communities deserve the opportunity to ask questions and participate in the decisions that affect them,” said **Sarah Zarling**, project lead for the initiative.

Rapid expansion of **A.I. and hyperscale data centers** is increasing electricity demand nationwide. These facilities can require substantial power, water, and infrastructure investments that may affect local ratepayers, farmland, housing markets, and municipal services.

Organizers say the Beaver Dam town hall aims to provide residents with information and an opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue as communities across Wisconsin confront similar development proposals.

Event Information

The People's Town Hall with Special Guest Charlie Berens



Juneau Community Center, Juneau, Wisconsin

Doors open: **5:45 p.m.**

Date: **Tuesday, March 10, 2026**

Media Contact

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