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A resolution by Supervisors Nicholson, Clancy, Czarnezki, Goodwin, Sr., Haas, Johnson, Jr., Martin, Rolland, Shea, Wasserman, Moore Omokunde, and Taylor, condemning racial injustice across the United States and in Milwaukee County and seeking the dismantling of institutional and structural racism, and requesting informational reports from the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office, Department of Transportation, and Circuit Court about policies and practices to achieve racial equity, by recommending adoption of the following:

**A RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, on May 25, 2020, a white Minneapolis police officer killed George Floyd, a black male, by pressing his knee to Floyd’s neck for nine minutes, while three other Minneapolis police officers stood by and watched; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Attorney General charged the officer who killed Mr. Floyd with second degree murder, while the other three officers involved in the confrontation were charged with aiding and abetting second degree murder due to their lack of intervention in the crime; and

WHEREAS, although all four officers were immediately fired following Mr. Floyd’s death, criminal charges were brought by the Minnesota Attorney General because of the community’s vocal outrage; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced they would also be pursuing an investigation as to whether Mr. Floyd’s civil rights were violated by the actions of the officers, amid powerful protests and demonstrations; and

WHEREAS, instances of police brutality, violence, aggression, and profiling are systemic problems occurring across the United States with high frequency; and

WHEREAS, across the country, demands for justice were heard through the rise of protests, demonstrations, and calls for justice and reform; and

WHEREAS, on August 13, 2016, Sylville Smith was fatally shot by Milwaukee police officers who claimed that Mr. Smith was reaching for a gun; and

WHEREAS, released body camera footage showed that Mr. Smith had, in fact, thrown away his gun after the first shot was fired, and did not attempt to reach for any other weapon before the second, fatal shot was fired; and

WHEREAS, the officer charged with first-degree reckless homicide in Mr. Smith’s death was acquitted; and

46 WHEREAS, for the three days following Mr. Smith’s death, protests and riots  
47 erupted in Sherman Park and, although the protests began peacefully, they devolved  
48 into violence, looting, and arson; and  
49

50 WHEREAS, the Sherman Park riots were not only a response to Mr. Smith’s  
51 death, but to the continued inequality and segregation of black Milwaukeeans and the  
52 death of Dontre Hamilton at the hands of a Milwaukee police officer in Red Arrow Park;  
53 and  
54

55 WHEREAS, protests following the death of Mr. Hamilton resulted in positive  
56 outcomes, including the mandate that all Milwaukee police officers receive Crisis  
57 Intervention Team training, and the policy that required most Milwaukee police officers  
58 to wear body camera devices at all times while on duty; and  
59

60 WHEREAS, unlike other large urban metropolitan areas, Milwaukee County (the  
61 County) is unique in its extremely high rates of segregation; and  
62

63 WHEREAS, a 2018 publication of the Wisconsin Poverty Report found that the  
64 black poverty rate is more than two-and-a-half times the overall poverty rate in  
65 Wisconsin, and three to four times the white poverty rate, and that the County has the  
66 highest rate of poverty as compared to all Wisconsin counties; and  
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68 WHEREAS, in the County, high poverty rates were concentrated in the City of  
69 Milwaukee, drastically diverging from the lower poverty rates in the suburban  
70 municipalities; and  
71

72 WHEREAS, poverty leads to a wide range of difficult outcomes including reduced  
73 access to jobs with high wages, adequate healthcare, education, affordable housing,  
74 increased chance of incarceration, amongst others; and  
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76 WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has emphasized  
77 these divisions as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that black  
78 Americans accounted for 31 percent of COVID-19 hospitalizations, despite composing  
79 only 13 percent of the United States (U.S.) population; and  
80

81 WHEREAS, a Washington Post analysis of state health department data found  
82 that “counties that are majority black have three times the rate of infections and almost  
83 six times the rate of deaths as counties where white residents are in the majority”; and  
84

85 WHEREAS, these racial disparities also exist within the criminal justice system;  
86 and  
87

88 WHEREAS, in Wisconsin, black citizens make up six percent of the overall  
89 population, but 38 percent of the incarcerated population; and  
90

91 WHEREAS, in Wisconsin, for every 100,000 black citizens, 4,042 are  
92 incarcerated, compared to 416 of every 100,000 white citizens; and  
93

94 WHEREAS, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors (County Board)  
95 adopted File No. 19-397 in 2019, declaring racism as a public health crisis, which is  
96 apparent now more than ever as COVID-19 ravages black communities in the U.S. and  
97 Milwaukee, and as black individuals are more than two-and-a-half times more likely than  
98 white individuals to be killed by law enforcement; and  
99

100 WHEREAS, the County, in its goal of achieving racial equity, undertook several  
101 policies, plans, and programs, including:  
102

- 103 • County-wide racial equity training administered by the YWCA throughout
- 104 2019, including additional training for managers and leadership
- 105 • Development of a racial equity plan
- 106 • Implementation of a Racial Equity Ambassador Program for employees
- 107 • Development of a racial equity budget toolkit

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109 ; and  
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111 WHEREAS, the County Board adopted File No. 20-174, creating Chapter 108 –  
112 “Achieving Racial Equity and Health” in the Milwaukee County Code of General  
113 Ordinances, which seeks to:  
114

- 115 • Establish short-term and long-term goals for creating a diverse and
- 116 inclusive workforce and eliminating systemic racism in the County’s
- 117 institutional practices
- 118 • Evaluate services provided by the County to ensure they are effective and
- 119 reaching their intended communities
- 120 • Seek the perspective of employees to improve upon institutional practices
- 121 and service delivery
- 122 • Hold external partners accountable for their policies and practices
- 123 • Examine the County budget to better inform policy decisions

124  
125 ; and  
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127 WHEREAS, the County recognizes that a recent audit of its workforce indicates  
128 that there is room for improvement in diversifying along racial and gender lines; and  
129

130 WHEREAS, the County seeks continual improvement in order to achieve its goal  
131 of becoming the healthiest county in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity; and  
132

133 WHEREAS, in pursuing racial equity, the County is working towards greater  
134 investment in the communities where the need is greatest and seeks to hold  
135 accountable those who work in and for those communities; and  
136

137 WHEREAS, the County demands reform and change throughout its operations;  
138 and

139  
140 WHEREAS, the Committee on Finance, at its meeting of June 18, 2020,  
141 recommended adoption of File No. 20-464 (vote 7-0); now, therefore

142  
143 BE IT RESOLVED, Milwaukee County (the County) continues to view the  
144 pandemic of racism as a public health crisis and is dedicated to those pursuits which  
145 are actively anti-racist and promote racial justice; and

146  
147 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County is committed to reviewing and  
148 evaluating its own internal practices to eliminate racism and inequity; and

149  
150 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
151 (County Board) hereby requests that the Office of the Sheriff provide a report with:

- 152
- 153 • Information, policies, and practices undertaken by the Office of the Sheriff
  - 154 related to community policing
  - 155 • Information about deputy training, including any training related to racial
  - 156 equity, community policing, Crisis Response Intervention, and appropriate
  - 157 use of deadly force
  - 158 • Breakdown of budgetary spending on community policing and deputy
  - 159 training

160  
161 ; and

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163 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby requests that the  
164 Department of Transportation provide a report with:

- 165
- 166 • All policies and procedures used to determine the ceasing of bus service
  - 167 in general, and during times of civil unrest
  - 168 • Specific data related to the shut-down of transit service during protests
  - 169 and demonstrations in May and June of 2020

170  
171 ; and

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173 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby requests that the  
174 Milwaukee County Circuit Court provide a report with:

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- 176 • Information related to racial disparities in sentencing
  - 177 • A report on diversion programs and their use
  - 178 • Combined operations with the Office of the Sheriff related to racial equity

179  
180 ; and

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182 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the aforementioned reports are requested for  
183 submission for the July 2020 cycle.

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186 srb

187 06/18/2020

188 \\Fi01wpchc\comclerk\$\Committees\2020\June\FINANCE\Resolutions\20-464 condeming racial injustice.docx