



MARCELIA NICHOLSON

MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD CHAIRWOMAN

Marcelia Nicholson Statement of Candidacy for Chairwoman

April 15, 2024, Organizational Meeting

2024-2026 Term of the Milwaukee County Board

Representation Matters: It has been an honor to serve as the first Black Latina elected to the position of Chairwoman, and a privilege that the Board has given me these opportunities to amplify the voices and interests of the diverse constituencies each of us is elected to represent across the County.

This term, more than half of Supervisors elected to the Board are women! I am energized by this historic achievement and moved to ask Supervisors for your vote in support of my candidacy for Chairwoman.

Vision for Equity: As Chairwoman, my intention is to empower and provide tools and lend my support to Supervisors so they can best serve the districts they are elected to represent. Our commitment to making Milwaukee County a healthier place for all to live and work is rooted in values and action that predate my election as Chairwoman, and, as a Board, we are propelling our vision with:

- Budget and legislative action, with the leadership of Supervisor Gómez-Tom and Supervisor Martinez, to make our hearings and resources more accessible through multilingual services. Para actuar en el espíritu de esta política, mi oficina está lanzando un servicio para traducir reconocimientos al español.
- Resources for an external audit of the jail with more funds added for mental health and the dental services Supervisor Wasserman advocated for.
- An historic County investment in the state's first and only Black owned bank with leadership from our longest serving member, Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr.
- Increased budget commitments for County Parks and Transit with support from Supervisor Shea who serves as Vice Chair of these standing Committees.
- A reimagined Youth Commission with Supervisor Vincent as an adult advisor.
- A Task Force on expenditure of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, led by Supervisor Rolland, that is now a national model.
- A financial tool with support across the board with an amendment co-sponsored by Supervisor Alexander and Supervisor Logsdon that coupled adoption with a request to provide a report on spending and reduce the overall property tax levy leading us to a budget surplus for the first time in decades and the largest property tax levy reduction in County history.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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- Adoption of legislation asking the state and counties to make positive policy changes to eliminate systemic poverty and inequality. Responding to that call, I have presented alongside Jeff Roman and Paula Phillips from the Office of Equity at the Annual Conferences of the Wisconsin Counties Association on equity and inclusion and creating a culture of belonging. At the 2023 session, I lifted how 1st Vice Chair Taylor, Supervisor Martin, and Supervisor Coggs-Jones legislated the renaming of several parks as examples of how other counties could model intentional inclusion.

We Evolve Together: The Milwaukee County Board is a diverse body with Supervisors from all walks of life who have other work and family obligations. When we ask residents for their vote, we take on the responsibility of public service. Since my election as Chairwoman, the Board has made it easier for Supervisors to show up. In that spirit, we have:

- Changed our rules to allow for remote participation. The body may decide to further modernize Board rules to adapt to the reality that many Supervisors, who do not receive County health insurance, have jobs outside the Courthouse.
- Transformed the Board Room with capital improvements and legislative oversight of this Health Safety and Public Access project by the Committee on Community, Environment, and Economic Development chaired by and championed by Supervisor Taylor-17.
- Adopted legislation to enhance access for all with funds for technology and facility improvements that will improve functionality and increase engagement with plans underway to reopen 201B as a hybrid public meeting space.
- A welcome to our Supervisors-Elect Justin Bielinski, Sky Capriolo, Jack Eckblad, and Anne O'Connor! Our Team has been working with County partners to execute a successful onboarding under our newly adopted policy that brought in transition support for elected officials from the Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance.

Guiding Leadership Principles: My lived experience is rooted in the systemic inequity of one of our most vulnerable neighborhoods where my family saw the joy and pain of daily lives in Milwaukee and thrived. The grace of many in our community led me on the path to becoming a public-school teacher and then later a local union leader. These experiences as an educator and an organizer and now a national trainer on civic engagement and transitioning to public office inspire how I lead and seek to bring others along.

The principles we set over these last two terms will continue to guide my approach at every decision point: racial equity, preparation, collaboration, sustainability, and decorum. As Supervisors elected to the Board kick off the 2024-2026 term, let's do more together as we advance the County's vision for equity with legislation that reflects the values and needs of our community. I ask you to cast your vote for "Nicholson" as Board Chairwoman.

(examples are hyperlinked)