

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE : May 18, 2018

TO : Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., County Board Chairman

FROM : Joseph Lamers, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget,
Department of Administrative Services (DAS-PSB)

SUBJECT : Balancing Act – 2019 Milwaukee County Budget Engagement
For Information Only

OVERVIEW

As part of the 2019 budget process, Milwaukee County is again implementing the use of Balancing Act, an online interactive budgeting tool, to collect feedback on citizen priorities and to educate residents on the financial status of the county. Balancing Act is currently being developed for the 2019 budget, and DAS-PSB would like to provide a demo of the software tool to the Finance & Audit Committee during the June Board cycle.

BACKGROUND

Balancing Act is a mobile optimized website loaded with the financial information of Milwaukee County that provides citizens with an easy, interactive way to learn about the choices elected officials face during the budgeting process. Each user can adjust expenditures and revenues based on their priorities to balance the Milwaukee County budget and submit their preferences for consideration to policy makers.

Balancing Act was first used by Milwaukee County in the 2018 budget process as an additional way to engage the public and collect input on citizen priorities. Input through Balancing Act from the 2018 budget resulted in 3,364 page views and 240 unique budget submissions. Using data and information collected from last year, a more robust outreach strategy has been formulated to capture a larger audience and inform more citizens of the importance of the Milwaukee County budget.

Balancing Act is planned to be launched in June and citizen feedback will be collected through mid-August. Staff will conduct outreach in the community to inform residents of the tool and encourage participation. A tutorial video will be incorporated into the tool and additional background on the financial status of the county will be available for users. Upon closure results will be reported back to the Milwaukee County Board.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is for information purposes only. No action is required.



Joseph Lamers, Director
Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
Department of Administrative Services

Cc: Chris Abele, Milwaukee County Executive
Willie Johnson, Vice-Chair Finance Committee
Sheldon Wasserman, County Supervisor
Supreme Moore-Omokunde, County Supervisor
Jason Haas, County Supervisor
Sequanna Taylor, County Supervisor
Eddie Cullen, County Supervisor
Teig Whaley-Smith, DAS Director
Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board