

1 Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr., Chairperson,
2 From the Committee on Finance, Personnel, and Audit, reporting on:

3
4 File No. 15-351

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6 (ITEM) A resolution by Supervisors Dimitrijevic, Haas, Rainey, Broderick, Romo
7 West, Johnson, Jr., Jursik, Weddle, and Moore Omokunde authorizing Milwaukee
8 County to develop a comprehensive, multi-targeted plan to address the issue of food
9 deserts and food insecurity within Milwaukee County neighborhoods and authorizing an
10 appropriation transfer to reallocate up to \$200,000, by recommending adoption of the
11 following:

12
13 **AN AMENDED RESOLUTION**

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15 WHEREAS, people in areas across the country known as “food deserts” are
16 faced with the challenges and barriers of gaining access to fresh produce and nutritious
17 food in communities with high incidences of poverty and limited resources; and

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19 WHEREAS, food security is a worthwhile wellness investment that serves to
20 produce healthy outcomes and address health disparities in our community such as
21 infant mortality, obesity, and high blood pressure, which are costly to society; and

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23 WHEREAS, food insecurity is increasingly becoming a health and social problem
24 and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has examined the impact of
25 income volatility, diet and nutrition, and community access and participation in relation
26 to programs focused on food security; and

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28 WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) has identified that food
29 security relies on three determining factors: food availability, food access, and food use;
30 and

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32 WHEREAS, Wisconsin has a long and proud tradition of promoting sustainability
33 of its natural environment, and has demonstrated that through various actions including
34 former Governor Gaylord Nelson’s establishment of the first Earth Day Celebration in
35 1970; and

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37 WHEREAS, many municipalities and local government agencies have
38 implemented programs that encompass numerous approaches to address food deserts
39 such as the P-Patch community gardening program in Seattle, Washington, new zoning
40 laws passed to promote the presence of farmers markets in high poverty neighborhoods
41 in Rancho Cucamonga, California, and a New Jersey Bill enacted in 2012, launching a
42 pilot program for mobile farmers markets in food insecure areas; and

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WHEREAS, the City of Milwaukee has partnered with various agencies through the HOME GR/OWN Milwaukee Program to encourage residents and community groups to transform vacant city lots into community gardens for the purpose of healthy food production; and

WHEREAS, in efforts to address and reduce Milwaukee’s own local food insecurity and food desert issues, the USDA’s Food Insecurity Nutrition Program has recently granted the nonprofit Fondy Food Center \$76,654 in federal funds to assist food stamp recipients to buy fresh produce from local farms; and

WHEREAS, the 2015 Appropriation for Contingencies included \$781,120 reserved for the Behavioral Health Division (BHD) for anticipated employee fringe benefit costs, however the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services has stated the allocation will not be needed, as other funds have been identified for that purpose; and

WHEREAS, a portion of the unused BHD allocation could serve to improve the health and well-being of residents by being repurposed for healthy food production, accessibility, and consumption within Milwaukee County; and

WHEREAS, Hunger Task Force has developed a proposal to purchase and operate a Mobile Micro Market within Milwaukee County that would serve as a micro food store on wheels to travel to impoverished neighborhoods, designated senior meal sites, and subsidized housing settings in coordination with the existing Stockbox delivery program, especially areas labeled as food deserts, to sell affordable and nutritious foods to residents in need, with the mobile market estimated to cost \$68,200; and

WHEREAS, there may be opportunities for Hunger Task Force to coordinate with University of Wisconsin-Cooperative Extension (UW-Extension) to provide educational materials and nutritional information at the locations the Mobile Micro Market would serve; and

WHEREAS, there is a role for Milwaukee County to make our community a more sustainable place through efforts to mitigate and alleviate local food insecurity for residents by implementing its own programs to strengthen food availability, access, and use, as outlined by the WHO; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Finance, Personnel, and Audit, at its meeting of May 14, 2015, recommended adoption of this resolution as amended (vote 7-1); now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, Milwaukee County (the County) will develop the Sowing, Empowering, and Eliminating Deserts of food (SEED) Program, which will include a

88 comprehensive, targeted plan that utilizes three approaches to address the issue of
89 food insecurity for residents in the form of the following initiatives:

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- 91 • Community Gardening and Food Production
- 92 • Mobile Food/Farmers Market
- 93 • Food Preparation and Preservation

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97 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture
98 (DPRC) shall work with the Economic Development Division (EDD), Department of
99 Administrative Services (DAS) to develop an inventory of at least 30 acres of available
100 and appropriate vacant surplus land within the County that has access to an adequate
101 water supply to be used for gardening and agricultural purposes of food production; and

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103 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County shall establish a long-term partnership
104 with Growing Power for the purpose of planting fruit tree orchards on a minimum of 10
105 acres of adequate, available County land that has sufficient access to a sustainable
106 water source, to be leased from the County; and

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108 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County, through EDD, DAS, or other
109 departments as appropriate, will explore partnering with local agencies including, but
110 not limited to, Growing Power, University of Wisconsin-Cooperative Extension, Urban
111 Ecology Center, Victory Garden Initiative, and Milwaukee Urban Gardens to lease up to
112 20 acres of County land for community gardens and food production, assisted with
113 County grants in a maximum total amount of \$65,900; and

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115 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County shall provide a grant in the maximum
116 amount of \$68,200 to Hunger Task Force to purchase the Mobile Micro Market and
117 implement the proposed Mobile Micro Market to make fresh and nutritious food
118 available to residents dealing with food insecurity issues; and

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120 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Mobile Micro Market grant to Hunger Task
121 Force shall include terms to collaborate with the County's community gardens to
122 transport and sell food produced from the gardens' harvest in areas considered to be
123 food deserts; and

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125 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the grant to Hunger Task Force shall require the
126 Mobile Micro Market to be developed in a manner to be eligible to accept FoodShare,
127 Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women's, Infants, and Children, and other
128 low-income subsidized food assistance benefits as payment for the food products
129 available at the market; and

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131 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, EDD, DAS, shall submit a report providing an
132 inventory of existing, available kitchen space within County facilities, and the County
133 shall then develop a suitable grant to Growing Power and/or Hunger Task Force in a

134 maximum total amount of \$65,900 to make necessary renovations or improvements to
135 available kitchen space that is equipped for food preparation for the purposes of
136 freezing, canning, and packaging fresh produce for the freshness and preservation of
137 foods that may otherwise spoil before they are able to be consumed; and
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139 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Director, DPRC, is requested to provide
140 oversight to each of the partnering agencies of the SEED Program and provide written
141 reports to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors (County Board) each quarter on
142 the program's overall progress, including updates on each agency; and
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144 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget,
145 DAS, is authorized to process an appropriation transfer to reallocate a maximum
146 amount of \$200,000 from the \$781,120 reserved in the 2015 Appropriation for
147 Contingencies account for Behavioral Health Division employee fringe benefits to the
148 appropriate departmental accounts to effectuate the components of this resolution; and
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150 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, DPRC and EDD, DAS, shall submit their reports
151 on the identified acres of County land inventory and available kitchen space to the
152 County Board no later than the July 2015 cycle; and
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154 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Corporation Counsel is requested to prepare a
155 lease agreement with Growing Power for long-term agricultural purposes in the amount
156 of \$1 annually, to be reviewed by the County Board at the July 2015 cycle.
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