

DEANNA
ALEXANDER
MILWAUKEE COUNTY SUPERVISOR

April 15, 2022

Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Milwaukee County Board Organizational Meeting, 2022-2024 Term

RE: Statement of Interest for County Board 1st Vice Chair

Dear Supervisors,

Congratulations to each new and returning Supervisor on your election to the 2022-2024 Board of Supervisors! **I am writing to offer myself as a candidate for the position of 1st Vice-Chairwoman of our Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors.** Please consider my background and goals detailed below as you consider the candidates for this important role.

Education

- Doctor of Business Administration, Concordia University, *in process*.
- Master's Degree in Public Administration, Regent University, 2019.
- Bachelor's Degree in Business Management-Accounting, UW-Parkside, 2007.

Experience Overview

- **Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors** – Elected in 2012, 2016, 2018, and 2022.
 - Vice Chair of Committee on Intergovernmental Relations.
 - Has served on nearly every County Board committee.
 - Chair, EMS Council – 2013 to 2020.
- **Village Administrator, Clerk, and Treasurer; Village of Newburg** – 2019 to 2022.
 - Transitioned in-jeopardy municipality going through crisis to a position of financial and operational stability. Village became fully staffed, eliminated negative press, and Trustees became confident in the activities of their government.
 - Manages village government operations including village hall, public works, sanitary sewer utility, community center, police department, and elections.
 - Writes annual budget, prepares levy and tax bills, administers retirement operations, payroll, and all HR functions. Creates agendas, meeting minutes and public notices. Coordinated website overhaul, digitized paper file documents, and realigned village processes for efficiency.
- **Chief of Ongoing Services, WI Dept. of Children & Families** – 2016 to 2018.
 - Managed \$50 Million in contracts for child placing agencies, group homes, residential care facilities and operational program results for 600+ contracted staff.
 - Wrote policies for improving the child welfare system in Milwaukee. Evaluated, monitored, and implemented strategies to improve compliance with outcome-based settlement agreements and corrective action plans.
 - Filed in federal court for discrimination and harassment resulting in state settlement.
- **U.S. Military, Enlisted Soldier, WI Army National Guard** – 2002 to 2008.
- **Board of Directors, Villa St. Francis, Assisted Living Community.**
- **Licensed Treatment Level Foster Parent. Three placements.**
- Trained in Agile Project Management, Racial Equity in County Government, and Supervisor Development in HR & Performance Planning.

Statement of Intent

Those of you who have worked with me in the past are familiar with my courage to stand up for what I believe is right and the level of importance I place on clarity and fairness in our operations as a diverse body. I understand our County's departments, their operations, and how to hold them accountable, because we as Supervisors serve the people, not the government.

Those new to the Board, who I am yet to develop rapport with one-on-one, may have seen how I respectfully challenged our County's departments and attorneys to be transparent with our elections process. In addition, I represent a majority-minoritized wholly City of Milwaukee district that generally votes for progressive leaders yet continues to elect me as a conservative voice over and over again. I am active and engaged. Further, I have a positive and respectful relationship with both Chairwoman Nicholson and County Executive Crowley.

My transformational leadership style would be a complement to work hand-in-hand with either of the two candidates¹ running for Chairperson – each of whom are collaborative leaders. But this is only a partial component of why I ask for your support.

It's no secret that Milwaukee County has been through a lot, has been continuously embroiled in partisan controversy. I admit that in the past I fueled some of that division; it's easy to swat at the bear and then point and complain when he growls at you. But even if that is an effective way to shine a light on problems, it's not an effective way to move a group of diverse leaders with many different perspectives forward as a board. As I took an intentional break from elected office the last two years, I have worked in a role whose sole intent is collaboration and helping the municipality recover from negative media and political rumor mills and have been very successful in that endeavor. Now, I not only want to help the County move forward, but I want to do so strategically. So how do we start?

Well, right now, some of leaders in our state – the ones that Milwaukee needs to build some meaningful relationships with in further supporting Milwaukee - are able to complain that Milwaukee has only "liberal" or "progressive" leadership. Optics and perception are important, especially in a county that as the economic engine of the state, as elected such a variety of officials in County-wide elections, from David Clarke and Scott Walker, to Chris Abele and David Crowley.

Our board has a magnificent opportunity before it, if members choose to select me to serve as the 1st Vice Chairwoman. Not only could the chairperson and I work together to pursue joint efforts meeting the collaborative points of both Supervisor's progressive and conservative goals, which serves the diversity of the county residents as a whole; and not only could our non-partisan body prove that it's really about the public service of what's good for Milwaukee County, rather than just talking points on either side of the aisle; but a move like this would take away the fuel of many County's critics. We could form strategic alliances as a team like never before.

Here's the bottom line: We as a nation have become more divisive in politics. But we in Milwaukee County can be one of the first urban communities to say enough is enough and embrace our common goals. I suggest we play chess instead of checkers.

I am hopeful to earn your support.

Kindly,



¹ Presumed to be Marcelia Nicholson and Tony Staskunas at the writing of this letter. Formal statements from potential additional candidates will not be available until after the due date for submitting this document.