

October 31st, 2019
Supervisor Deanna Alexander

Good morning members of the Finance Committee,

I regret that I can not be with you today to discuss my proposed amendments for the 2020 budget in person. I hope that this letter finds you well and will provide the answers to any questions you may have as you consider the amendments.

1A015 - This amendment has two goals. The first is to recognize that the HOC would be rightfully placed under the direction and oversight of the County Sheriff's Office as a matter of revised policy. The county has historically moved this back and forth under different structures. The Sheriff's Office, in 2020, will have had more stability than the County Executive's office, and it seems to be a better policy to have the HOC system and the jail system better connected. The second goal is that the conversion would allow the HOC and the MCSO to better share resources, including potential savings on future joint contracts, and better allocation of personnel shared from a larger pool. As you know, many of our MCSO and HOC staff are recruited to other agencies, or can find jobs with similar salaries and much less personal risk. As a retention mechanism and a policy change pointed at reversing some of those trends, I believe this amendment would help provide management the tools needed to reduce overtime across the workforce and even in the long term begin addressing retention efforts and line staff salaries. A question may be asked about the position of HOC Superintendent. Under this policy and organizational change, the HOC Superintendent would begin reporting to the position of Sheriff rather than to the County Executive; the HOC Superintendent position would not be eliminated as an automatic result of this amendment. Ultimately, this amendment will help us streamline and consolidate similar operations. Others may ask if we should instead have a study done on the topic. I would rather move forward for the simple reason that a study is not necessary: while it was difficult to pull the departments apart years ago, it is not so difficult to consolidate - that process is much easier, and it is one the county has been through before. Further, when we know we have a new CEX starting in April, what better a time to make such a transition?

1A016 - It was brought to my attention earlier this year that some inmates encounter problems with the jail phone system. For example, if an inmate places their "free phone call" to home, hoping to reach someone to let them know they have been arrested, and their family member picks up the phone, but the call is dropped 5 seconds later; the inmate is done using the phone and their phone call has been depleted. Similarly, if an inmate needs to place one phone call to arrange child care, and another to call in to work, they can currently be left in a situation of being forced to decide between the two. In particular, I had a constituent who was arrested on a Friday, held through the weekend until Tuesday, and experienced some of these phone call problems. When his call was erroneously used up with just a few seconds on the register upon his arrest, he was told the problem could not be addressed until after the weekend (when the right staff would be available.) As a result, the constituent couldn't call in to work, lost his job and lost his home. A second 5-minute phone call shortly after arrest could have prevented this

downward spiral. Therefore, this amendment seeks to ensure the next telephone service contract offer more than one call.

1A017 - I have strong concerns that if the county moves forward with reducing / effectively eliminating the Huber program for inmates and instead putting them in the community, there may be times when it is not feasible or practical for an inmate to check in with WCS as the HOC currently plans to have as a requirement of the program. For example, WCS is only open for participant check-in Monday through Friday during daytime first-shift hours. If a program participant works a first shift job during those hours, they would have a very difficult, if not impossible time transporting to WCS in a timely way while also not having to ask for special time off of work as a result. If the participant does not have a drivers' license or a car, and relies on public transportation such as MCTS, the situation is worsened. This budget amendment seeks for the HOC to work with WCS to develop options for accommodating participants who make such a request, if the request is reasonable. An example would be for a WCS worker to meet with the participant during their lunch break at a workplace; or allowing the participant to video-call (ie. facetime) the WCS worker for their check in if there was inclement weather keeping them from making it in during the required hours. This budget amendment would not make such accommodations blanket policy, but would rather influence the HOC and WCS to develop reasonable policies.

1A018 - This amendment is quite simple; it speaks to the idea that not all county services must be centralized downtown. For example, what if there were a way to have a child support worker or worker from the county clerk's office stationed at another county location a few days a week in order to provide community-based services? Another option might be for County Board Supervisors to be able to have their offices closer to their districts, or to be able to have their LA's work from time to time closer to their districts if not downtown. This amendment does not propose moving forward with anything at this time, but rather, asking DAS to study potential benefits and drawbacks of decentralizing some of the county's face-to-face constituent service options.

1B003 - There are two components to this amendment. The first is that I believe the capital budget for project WP62501 (Dretzka Park Lighting, Storm Water, Parking Improvements) has been grossly overstated. The \$140K budgeted for 2019 is for PLANNING only! I believe that if the county really wanted to, we can achieve planning for what is essentially some repairs and minor upgrades in a parking lot, for much less than \$140,000. The second component is something you have heard me ask for in the past - a sign for Noyes Pool. I have come to this committee repeatedly over the years and while the committee has in the past found value in such a proposal, it was never enough to move forward with action when compared to all of the other county needs. Admittedly, in the past, I proposed using tax levy for the improvement. This year, I am proposing moving funding from one capital project in District 18, to another capital project in District 18. The pools have been under scrutiny in the past, and at times slated for closure. As many residents in the Noyes Pool area still do not even realize they have a public pool there for their use, a sign outside the pool on Good Hope Road is a necessity if we plan to keep this pool open; usage must increase. The reason a sign might cost up to \$35,000 is because there is a cost associated with running electrical wiring from the building out to the edge of the property in order to erect a commercial sign.

1A019 - The Milwaukee Police Association has a fallen officers' memorial statue just east of the courthouse on property above the MacArthur Square parking (near the reflection pools). The MPA has concerns that the public can not easily access the memorial and because it is located in an area not properly cared for by the city (which takes care of that portion of the area) it is often defiled by people living outdoors there, and surrounded by garbage. The MPA has requested of the city that they be allowed to relocate the monument to another place and has reported that the city has been supportive. The MPA would like to move the monument to the lakefront, to a County-owned location near the War Memorial. This amendment would clarify and affirm in writing that the DPRC shall begin planning for such a relocation and report to supervisors when a mutually agreeable plan is available.

1C003 - The CAMPAC is certainly a good investment in our community; this is why we fund it year after year. But our budget is a listing of our priorities. Given that the Historical Society has been telling the board for many years that their staff has gone without raises (I think they don't even receive COLA increases), recruitment and retention is becoming very difficult, and they are having an increasingly difficult time addressing records preservation, I believe that a small portion of the funds presently earmarked out of tradition for CAMPAC would be best reallocated to preservation of our county's history. Further, as a budget priority, I wanted to put a focus on the Housing Division's constraints - year after year we have exasperated issues in aiding the homeless in our community. Year after year, the Housing Division tells us that their funding is heavily restricted because they do not receive enough unrestricted tax levy funding. In order to remedy this and give the Housing Division more tools to do their jobs well, I wish to prioritize a small portion of what would be arts funding for supporting things like rooftop ballet, and instead focus on our fellow citizens who face the streets again this winter season. I also note that this amount is even less than what was requested in 2018 prior to the 2019 budget, and the county board's response at that time was "we'll take a look at it in the budget," but then no action was taken - as a result, I request this allocation for 2020.

1C004 - Similar to 1C003 above, this amendment seeks to move funding - a meager amount - from the Charles Allis Villa Terrace Art Museums to the Milwaukee County Historical Society. There is no doubt that the Historical Society would never ask for this as they would wish to keep good relations with their peer organizations; however the fact remains: The Charles Allis / Villa Terrace programming is a desire - and one with its own fundraising capabilities - while the Historical Society is a need. The historical society has had a stagnant budget for years and is tremendously in need of additional funding in order to continue with effective operations.

I hope you will give each of these recommended amendments your favorable consideration.

Kindly,

Deanna Alexander
Milwaukee County Supervisor