



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DAVID CROWLEY

MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

July 27, 2022

Honorable members of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors:

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 59.17(6), I have vetoed File Number 22-799, “A resolution transferring \$175,000 from Org. Unit 1940-1945 – Appropriation for Contingencies to Org. Unit 9000 – Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture for the purposes of effectuating a summer roller skating program at Red Arrow Park.”

I do not object to the general principle of this resolution – in fact, I applaud the Board’s continued willingness to consider out-of-the-box ideas on how to utilize our world-class parks to maximize our constituents’ experience. My objection stems from the compressed timeline of this proposed project, and the necessity to consider Milwaukee County’s overall and ongoing fiscal health.

First, this resolution contemplated an extremely compressed timeline in which to make this program a reality, placing an even greater burden on our already overburdened and under-resourced Parks Department. The basis for the Parks Department’s informational report (File No. 22-542) was a preliminary cost estimate that, in the report’s own words, “should not be used for budgetary purposes without a separate procurement process.” Prior to the meeting of the Full Board on June 23, 2022, Parks Department staff relayed that the vendor with which Parks had communicated would not be able to travel to Milwaukee and begin construction “until next year,” and that there is approximately a 3-month lead time from the beginning of a procurement process to when work would begin. Since this file was approved by your body in late June, work could not reasonably begin on this project until September – well past peak outdoor roller-skating season for 2022.

Second, I urge Supervisors to consider the precarious financial position in which the County finds itself – both long-term and in 2022, specifically. As the Finance Committee heard in Reference File Number 22-41 in both the June and July cycles, Milwaukee County is projected to be in a deficit for 2022. That projected deficit, as of May 31, 2022, stands at \$800,000; it also assumes that “the entire \$3.9 million of the current appropriation contingency is not spent and is used to offset departmental and non-departmental deficits.” In other words, as Contingency funds are spent, less of those dollars are available to offset deficits in other areas of the County.

Further, I am concerned by funding what will be an ongoing operational cost with our Appropriation for Contingency. As you know, Milwaukee County operates in a long-term structural deficit – each time we propose new projects and programs without a sustainable funding source in place, we place the burden of covering those costs on our departments who are already having to do more with less. The 2023 budget cycle is quickly approaching, and I would greatly



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prefer hearing this item as part of the overarching 2023 budget discussion to better understand the long-term sustainability of this project (and, with implementation of this project, if approved, impossible until at least 2023, the timeline matches well).

In closing, I want to reiterate my appreciation of your honorable body in attempting to provide innovative ways to make the most of County resources and amenities. I hope that this innovation will continue, though I urge each of you to collaborate with our experts and administrators within departments to fully understand the feasibility of these ideas. I also want to reiterate that I support – in concept – the idea of creating a roller rink at Red Arrow Park for use during summer months, so long as it is funded sustainably. I look forward to continuing dialogue and partnership as we seek the common goal of maximizing the County’s utility for our residents while balancing long- and short-term fiscal sustainability.

Respectfully,

David C. Crowley
Milwaukee County Executive