



Public Hearing Statement

2013 Milwaukee County Budget By the Public Policy Forum

Rob Henken, President
October 29, 2012

Good evening. My name is Rob Henken, and I am President of the Public Policy Forum, a non-partisan, nonprofit organization established in 1913 to enhance the effectiveness of government through objective research of public policy issues.

Hopefully, each of you has read the Forum's analysis of the 2013 Recommended Budget. In that analysis, you may have noticed a more optimistic tone than in previous years, a development for which both branches of county government deserve credit. Your ability in the past few years to rein in health care costs, control salaries and wages, and effectively manage your capital debt has reduced the county's structural deficit and enhanced its prospects for long-term sustainability.

That being said, I know I don't have to tell you that there are programmatic costs associated with this fiscal progress – including fewer workers to perform important tasks and a daunting list of infrastructure repair needs. Consequently, I would like to underscore our suggestion that long-range planning resume to determine how best to reconcile the imperative for further structural deficit reduction with the need to maintain a quality workforce and appropriately address your physical assets.

With regard to the actions taken thus far by the Committee on Finance, Personnel and Audit, we believe that the budget as it stands today largely preserves recent progress on the structural deficit and does not rely on unreasonable increases in taxes and fees. We would, however, offer the following general observations:

- First, your amendments to reduce the magnitude of cuts to employee health care and the sheriff's budget – while perhaps justifiable from a programmatic perspective and possible in a relatively “calm” budget year – may not be sustainable in the long run, unless you are willing to identify some other parts of county government you would rather cut, and/or realistic ways to generate new revenues. Again, some type of planning process that would identify **your** deficit-reduction priorities appears to be in order.
- Second, we remain concerned about the administrative capacity of this government to conduct financial analysis, modernize human resources procedures, and engage in overall fiscal planning. I do not mean to second-guess the budget amendments relating to these issues, but as a former DAS Director, I would suggest that an appropriately staffed Department of Administrative Services, Comptroller's office and County Board should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. As you move forward, I would urge you to objectively analyze the resources needed to effectively administer this government and place the right positions in the right places without regard to which branch oversees them.
- Finally, while not speaking to the merits of your decision on parks and lakefront patrol, the Forum hopes it does not reflect the board's overall disposition toward intergovernmental service sharing and consolidation. Having worked on this issue with the ICC for the past 18 months, we are convinced there are real possibilities for service sharing in areas like public works, public health, public safety, and property assessment that can enhance service delivery and save taxpayer dollars. We also are convinced there is little choice but to explore those possibilities in light of the new fiscal paradigm in which counties and municipalities now find themselves. Some of the service sharing opportunities that may have the greatest potential, incidentally, could involve consolidating services at the *county* level, as opposed to spreading out county services to municipalities. We hope you will be supportive of future exploration in this area and we would be happy to lend our assistance.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Testimony at the Milwaukee County Public hearing on
October 29, 2012 regarding the 2013 Budget

Chairwoman Dimitrijevic and member of the County
Board

My name is Candice Owley, and I am the President of the
WFNHP, the union that represents Health professionals
in public and private facilities in the area including the
RNs and Therapists working for Milwaukee County. I am
appearing to in strong support of many of the budget
actions taken by the Finance committee and urge the
final adoption of these actions.

I want to summarize the specific items that we support:

- 1. Restoration of the health insurance benefits for
part time employees.** Of the thousands of
employees that work for the County only 140 are
affected by the plan to eliminate health insurance
for half time employees but of that group over have
75 are nurses working for the mental health system
and over 90% or 70 of that group are women. The
proposal to eliminate their health insurance will
have an immediate negative effect not only on those

nurses but equally as concerning it will have a negative mental health system because I can assure you if these nurses no longer have health insurance they will have to leave to gain employment elsewhere. Every health care system in our city has health insurance benefits for half time nurses so for those that claim the purpose of this proposal is meant to bring the County in line with the private sector it just shows the ignorance of the private health care system and the jobs of registered nurses. Your decision to restore these benefits was the right thing for those nurses and for our County services.

2. Applaud the Support for continuing county run correctional health services and opposition to turning those services over to a private Florida based for-profit company. The committee made absolutely the right decision to reject the Sheriff and County Executives plan to bring in the Armor Corporation to run health services. If the contract with Armor is adopted not only will dozens of county nurses and other health care workers lose their job but the staffing plan from this company has been labeled as

dangerous and irresponsibly and will not even meet the requirements imposed by the courts.

3. Thank the committee for its Opposition to turning the Downtown Community Support Program over to a private company. Our nurses and therapists along with the county social workers do an excellent job providing these community based services. Turning this program over to a new company will create disruption in therapeutic relationships and is also the wrong way to treat experienced, psychiatric professionals who have proven their dedication not only to this patient population but also to the County.

4. Wages and benefits. I want to commend the Finance committee for coming up with a wage and health benefit package that is both fair to the County employees but also saves the county money. The committee's approach of increasing the amount of money paid by both employees and retirees for the health insurance coupled with a 1.5% raise in May of 2013 is the right action. In talking to my members I

can tell you they are fully supportive of eliminating the second raise proposed by the County executive and using the money instead to help offset some of the increases in health insurance costs. We know some employees without health problems might have preferred a higher raise but as nurses we know full well you can never predict who among us will end up with significant health issues in any given year. This is why we also stand in strong support of the wellness initiative promoted by Chairwoman Dimitrijevic and adopted by the committee. We also support the committee's rejection of the County Executive's proposed \$500,000 merit pay fund. I have had the opportunity to negotiate merit pay programs for nurses and health professionals that work in the private sector. There are ways to create a system that is fair and supported by the workers but I can tell you without question that a fund under the control of the manager without clear criteria is not such a system. What the County Exec. Proposed can only cause resentment and hard feeling and lead to the worst forms of favoritism which again is why I commend the committee for recognizing there are

better ways to use the money as part of a fair wage and benefit program.

Let me close by saying Our members are workers. They are not rich but are part of the middle class that struggle everyday to make ends meet, care for their children and pay for their health benefits and they feel strongly that the County Board, also members of our community understand these challenges.

I am also have to say that I am Milwaukee County tax payer and have been for all of my adult life and I believe strongly that the Finance committee has made changes to the Exec. budget that are fair to both the employees and the taxpayers.

VETERANS COMMUNITY RELATIONS TEAM

VCRT Statement for Public Hearing on the proposed 2012 Milwaukee County budget - October 29, 2012

My name is Charles Mulcahy and I am delivering this message on behalf of the Veterans Community Relations Team (VCRT).

At this time I ask all veterans to rise as this is your message.

Veterans recognize and appreciate the historic role which Milwaukee County has played with War Memorial including the War Memorial Center, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Villa Terrace, Charles Allis and the Milwaukee Art Museum. All have benefited from county support for which we express our thanks.

The WMC is perhaps in the most critical time of its history. The WMC is fighting to maintain its independence.

The VCRT was formed about 6 months ago as an independent but supportive group of the War Memorial Center/Veterans in their negotiations with the Milwaukee Art Museum.

Members of the VCRT also serve on both the board of the War Memorial Center Facilities board and the War Memorial Center Veterans board of directors which allowed us to monitor both the progress and the remaining issues in the bargaining.

Veterans want the War Memorial to remain independent in perpetuity. Veterans want the WMC to be financially secure and able to provide needed and expanded services to veterans and their families.

Veterans also want the War Memorial Center properly maintained and restored to proper and fitting condition. Veterans thank County Executive Abele and those members of the county board who have submitted positive amendments to benefit the WMC. That additional funding is greatly needed. Thank you.

As you know, there are remaining issues involving the WMC/Veterans, MAM and the county. Those issues need to be resolved as part of any settlement.

Veterans are also interested in returning to the time when the War Memorial and the MAM worked in harmony with one another with mutual respect, trust and collaboration. We did this before and we can do it again.

June, 2014 marks the 70th anniversary of the landings at Normandy and the 35th Anniversary of Douglas MacArthur Memorial Week in Milwaukee.

The WMC and Milwaukee County Historical Society spearheaded the 1979 MacArthur Memorial week which featured unveiling the 9 1/2 bronze statue of General MacArthur at MacArthur Square, a special MacArthur exhibit at MCHS and a veteran's dinner with the General's widow, Jean Faircloth MacArthur.

Plans are currently underway to celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the MacArthur event. Veterans have invited the MAM to join in this celebration

including jointly developing exhibits at WMC and MAM.

We feel the combination of MacArthur and the Calatrava would send a message of unity, healing and mutual respect as we move ahead following the inevitable WMC/MAM/County settlement.

There has been a great awakening in the veterans community. Veterans have stepped forward to not only preserve the independence of the War Memorial; but, also to expand services to Afghanistan and Iraq veterans and their families in the WMC.

Genuine and sincere credit needs to be given at this time to the Vietnam Veterans who helped us mobilize our forces to preserve the independence of the War Memorial. We veterans owe a debt of gratitude to the Vietnam Veterans for their leadership and commitment. The Vietnam Veterans are the force behind this eventual settlement.

In conclusion, I would like to take you back in history to April 27, 1951. General Douglas MacArthur was in Milwaukee to receive an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Marquette University and to participate in the dedication of MacArthur Square. General MacArthur was informed that plans for a Milwaukee County War Memorial Center were being finalized.

The General was shown the model of a plaque symbolizing the proposed War Memorial was to be completed in 1956. He was requested to share his feelings about the proposed Milwaukee County War Memorial:

General McArthur stated:

"I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to participate in the dedication of this magnificent monument. It will be a fitting tribute to the valor and sacrifice of the American soldier, whose glory will be an imperishable reminder to all mankind of those deeds which preserved our liberties on the battlefields of the world. It stands a solumn warning to those who would destroy our freedom either externally or internally."

MacArthur continued:

"America will not now, nor in the future, yield that for which so many of these men died. I do not know the dignity of their birth. I do know the glory of their death. They died that mortal ideals might not perish."

MacArthur concluded:

"This monument will do even more than to commemorate them; it will serve to rally all Americans to the task of maintaining the moral strength which has built our past. It will constantly remind of those sacred and immutable concepts: Liberty, Justice and Truth, upon which long has rested the republic's faith. It will be for all eyes and for all time a symbol of an even stronger nation whose history still is in the future".

The WMC and veterans welcome the support of Milwaukee County and the Milwaukee Art Museum in preserving the integrity, independence and mission of the War Memorial Center to continue "To honor Our War Dead by Serving The Living".

Thank you.



*Advancing transportation solutions
that link people with jobs and
spur economic development.*

Milwaukee County Board 2013 Budget Hearing
October 29, 2012
Marcus Center, Milwaukee
Testimony delivered by Kerry Thomas, Executive Director, Transit NOW

Thank you for this opportunity to give our input into the county budget.

Transit NOW, is a regional SE Wisconsin non profit organization made up of diverse civic and business leaders and citizens that work to link people with jobs, spur economic development and enhance the quality of life in SE WI.

We'd like to extend our sincere appreciation to you for your past and current support of vital public transportation services. Last year you assisted in pro-actively finding a creative solution to repurpose CMAQ dollars from shelved projects, and keep transit service levels intact, despite nearly \$7 million in cuts in state transit aids.

Your commitment to transit kept more than 35,000 people a day who rely on transit to get to work or college connected to their jobs, and moving forward on their education. And, many thousands more were able to continue shopping and visiting healthcare providers.

Your actions literally kept patrons arriving at Summerfest and Miller Park and myriad other Milwaukee County events and destinations that provide jobs and support a 2 billion-dollar tourism economy in the downtown alone. You also helped keep seniors living independently, a serious health issue and a major cost savings for seniors, and for all taxpayers by reducing the necessity of institutionalized care.

In the 2013 County Board budget, you have wisely upheld this strong commitment to public transportation and the vital access to jobs and school that it provides. We thank you and encourage you to maintain your transportation priorities and positive outcomes.

At the same time it is important to prepare solutions for 2014, when the temporary Federal, one-time CMAQ funding runs out that will create a \$7 million hole in the transit operating budget.

In addition, MTS has released it's 5-Year Sustainability Report, which indicates that

(page 2, Transit NOW testimony, October 29, 2012)

the options for MCTS are: increase tax levy contribution to transit from \$19 million to \$47 million by 2017, or decrease service between 19%-30% by 2017.

As you are well aware, the time has come when finding efficiencies and unexpected federal dollars to save and provide needed improvements to our transit system have run out. Solutions are needed: restoration of state transit aids, and a local dedicated, sustainable source of funding are urgently needed to address the clear dangers to our transit system, and the well being of families and businesses in our county and region.

We encourage you to work collaboratively and strategically with other leaders in SE WI, and in Madison to develop transit funding solutions, and a strategy to move it forward. Experience tells us that it will take a collaborative regional effort—a united front—to advance solutions in Madison.

We stand ready to assist. Please do not hesitate to call on us.
Thank you again for this opportunity to speak.

PUBLIC HEARING - 10/29/12
MILWAUKEE COUNTY SUPERVISORS
Marcus Center - 929 N. Water St.
Rose Stietz, O.P., Chair of MICAHA AODA Committee

AODA PREVENTION BUDGET

I UNDERSTAND THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIVISION HAS RECOMMENDED A 35% CUT IN ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION SERVICES IN THE 2013 BUDGET. THE REASONING IS THAT THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THE AODA BLOCK GRANT AND THAT, IN THE PAST, THIS CONTRACT HAS BEEN UNDERSPENT.

MICAHA AND WISDOM ARE IN THE MIDST OF A 4-YEAR CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE WISCONSIN'S PRISON POPULATION IN HALF BY THE YEAR 2015. THIS GOAL REQUIRES PREVENTION ON THE FRONT END; RE-ENTRY SERVICES ON THE BACK END; AND REHAB AND EDUCATION DURING INCARCERATION.

CUTTING PREVENTION FUNDS THAT WOULD KEEP PEOPLE FROM ENTERING THE PRISON SYSTEM WHILE CONTINUING TO PAY MORE THAN \$30,000 PER YEAR TO INCARCERATE THESE SAME PEOPLE MAKES NO FINANCIAL OR MORAL SENSE. IT APPEARS TO CONTINUE A NEGATIVE PATTERN OF CULTURE AT THE COUNTY LEVEL AS WELL AS AT THE CITY LEVEL.

FINALLY, BHD SAYS THE PREVENTION CONTRACT HAS BEEN UNDERSPENT IN PREVIOUS YEARS. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HAVE BEEN ASKING FOR AODA PREVENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YEARS. WHY ARE THEIR NEEDS NOT BEING MET? IN LIGHT OF SERIOUS ALCOHOL ABUSE AMONG OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE PROBLEMS WE ARE EXPERIENCING ON OUR COLLEGE CAMPUSES, AGAIN, THIS MAKE NO SENSE.

PREVENTION WORKS AND IS COST EFFECTIVE. WHY DO WE CONTINUE TO FIND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO LOCK PEOPLE UP WHEN WE COULD TREAT THEM FOR A FRACTION OF THE COST WHILE KEEPING THEM WITH THEIR FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY?

Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force 2013 County Budget Priorities:

INCREASE THE INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Behavioral Health Division (BHD) budget request DECREASES funding in community mental health services.

ADULT COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	
2012 ADOPTED BUDGET	\$29,713,678
2013 REQUEST	\$29,690,605
Adult Community services for 2013 are reduced by	\$23,073

WHAT ARE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES?

Community Services are NOT Crisis Services or Inpatient Services. They are services people living in the community can use to help maintain their health and limit the need for expensive and traumatizing crisis and inpatient services

- Outpatient mental health services including psychiatric services and therapy
- Benefits Counseling
- Housing
- Case Management and Care Coordination including medication management
- Drop in Centers
- Club House
- Support groups and helplines
- Peer specialist services offered in any of the above community settings
- Employment Services
- Psycho-social rehab services. (We support CRS and CCS but these services will not be available in 2013)
- Substance abuse treatment (these services are funded in the AODA budget which is reduced by \$1,803,857)

DOWNSIZE RESPONSIBLY:

INVEST EVERY DOLLAR SAVED FROM DOWNSIZING IN COMMUNITY SERVICES

The BHD budget request downsizes institutional care – but reduces the funding for community services:

Budget Initiatives	Projected Savings
Close one of four acute care units at the Mental Health Complex	\$875,224
Close 24 beds at Hilltop, the intermediate care facility at the Mental Health Complex	\$193,030
Outsource BHD operated downtown Community Support Services (CSP)	\$397,569
PROJECTED SAVINGS THAT SHOULD BE INVESTED IN COMMUNITY SERVICES	\$1,465,283

- Downsizing institutional services without increased community services is not responsible. When people leave the hospital and the crisis facilities, no more help will be available to prevent the next crisis.
- As institutional services are downsized, all savings should be invested in community services: this was the recommendation of the HSRI study, the Community Advisory Board, the Redesign Task Force, and the County Board. The BHD budget request fails to make this investment.
- County Board resolution (RES 11-516) signed by the County Exec last fall states:

"The county must commit to continued funding of mental health care services at current levels with any savings produced as a result of the transition to a community-based service delivery model reinvested into the program to allow for expanded community services".

The 2013 BHD Budget Request does not make that investment in community services.

Keep the Community Promise: *There's No Place Like Home*

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