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A resolution by Supervisors Taylor, Shea, and Sebring, encouraging the local homeless services community to adopt a "Code Blue Emergency" policy to open overnight warming centers when outside temperatures fall below 32 degrees, by recommending adoption of the following:

AN AMENDED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, in the City of Milwaukee (the City), overnight warming rooms operate December through the end of February, when outside temperatures fall below 20 degrees; and

WHEREAS, warming rooms are primarily operated by non-profit groups, and provide a limited number of beds and meals for homeless people seeking relief from frigid outside temperatures; and

WHEREAS, at its December 18, 2018, meeting, the Milwaukee Common Council appropriated \$75,000 from the Housing Trust Fund on an as-needed basis for warming room capacity; and

WHEREAS, in January 2019, WE Energies donated \$100,000, and United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County donated \$17,000, to five warming centers to support the City's efforts to keep warming centers open when temperatures fall below 20 degrees; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Adopted Milwaukee County Budget provides \$718,000 annually in tax levy funds for emergency shelter assistance for homeless people in need of temporary housing for up to 90 days; ~~and the Milwaukee Continuum of Care, via the City's Community Development Grants Administration provides \$1,114,000 annually to local emergency shelters; and~~

~~WHEREAS, funds were distributed to Guest House, Hope House, Cathedral Center, Sojourner Family Peace Center, Salvation Army, and Pathfinders to finance operational and essential services; and~~

WHEREAS, the warming rooms are operated independently by voluntary organizations with financial and volunteer support from the community; and

WHEREAS, annual funding from corporate and philanthropic donors will be needed to support the logistics and day-to-day needs of warming rooms opening at 32 degrees or below; and

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WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates people who stay outdoors for long periods of time can develop hypothermia and/or frostbite in temperatures as low as 40 degrees; and

WHEREAS, several cities and counties within the states of New Jersey, Maryland, and Pennsylvania declare “Code Blue Emergency” when outside temperatures drop below 32 degrees, and warming centers operate until weather conditions improve, or the alert is cancelled; and

WHEREAS, the local homeless services community is urged to adopt a “Code Blue Emergency” policy to open warming centers when temperatures drop to 32 degrees or below to alleviate the stress and suffering of homeless people struggling to stay warm outdoors overnight; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Health and Human Needs, at its meeting of April 17, 2019, recommended adoption of File No. 19-330 as amended (vote 4-0); now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors supports the concept of a “Code Blue Emergency” policy that allows overnight warming centers to be open whenever outside temperatures are at 32 degrees or below; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County encourages the local homeless services community to adopt a “Cold Blue Emergency” policy so whenever outside temperatures are 32 degrees or below, overnight warming centers for homeless people are opened.