File No. 20-672

By Supervisors Clancy, Shea, Goodwin Sr., Czarnezki, Johnson Jr., and Nicholson

**A RESOLUTION**

Requesting and authorizing the Department of Administrative Services, Information Management Services Division, to establish a cost estimate and strategic timeline to develop and support a multi-platform mobile app that provides users with access to a full range of emergency and non-emergency Milwaukee County Services

WHEREAS, Milwaukee County (“the County”) provides numerous emergency and non-emergency services to its more than 150,000 residents, including emergency management, law enforcement, health and human services and many other services; and

WHEREAS, mobile apps were downloaded an estimated 240 billion times in 2019 and statistics forecast that the number of downloads will continue to rise as the shift to online services grows; and

WHEREAS, County departments have limited resources to promote services available for residents via a mobile app and few departments have a mobile app to inform residents about the services of the department; and

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management has a comprehensive mobile app which lists protocols, skills, tools, and resources related to emergency management services; and

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO), is also one of the few County departments with a mobile app that has been active since December 2018; and

WHEREAS, the MCSO’s mobile app allows two-way communication between the Office of the Sheriff and its users, as the mobile app allows residents and non-residents the ability to submit tips, chat tips, pay citations, access news, view the department directory, access the Sheriff’s social media accounts and more; and

WHEREAS, while the MCSO’s mobile app is a reliable resource for users, it has limitations: the app only connects users to resources in the MCSO and this at times burdens the Sheriff’s office to respond to calls outside of their preferred scope of services; and

WHEREAS, in July 2020, Milwaukee County Sheriff publicly stated on Milwaukee’s Public Radio, WUWM, that *“despite our best efforts, we’re not trained to deal with persons in mental health crisis. We’re not trained to deal with persons that have… addictive behaviors”*; and

WHEREAS, other states have implemented solutions to help those suffering from a mental health crisis, including the State of Oregon’s Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Street Team (CAHOOTS) which has specialized training to de-escalate people having a mental health crisis and responds to calls that involve mental help assistance; and

WHEREAS, the CAHOOTS team relies on accessibility to resources for people in need, such as transportation for mental health care services, free and low-income medical facilities, wraparound services, and more; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the CAHOOTS team responded to over 20,000 calls, of which 20 percent were dispatched by 9-1-1 operators, and backup assistance from law enforcement was requested only 250 times; and

WHEREAS, in the 2020 Adopted Budget, funding was included to support the Department of Health and Human Services “No Wrong Door” initiative that links county residents with resources and services of other county departments which the resident may be eligible; and

WHEREAS, United Way of Utah County, Utah has a downloadable mobile app that connects residents with a variety of human services near them and allows them to connect by phone, text, or email; and

WHEREAS, United Way of Greater Atlanta has a similar mobile app that connects residents to community resources such as housing, food, and employer services; and

WHEREAS, residents of Milwaukee County and non-residents of the County can greatly benefit from a robust mobile app that provides an alternative response to emergency calls to alleviate the burden of law enforcement responding to such calls and shift the focus to accessing specialized county resources; and

WHEREAS, connecting Milwaukee County residents and non-residents conveniently to services via a mobile app will allow easier access to a wider range of services that the county offers as well as services available within the community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors hereby requests and authorizes the Department of Administrative Services Information Management Services Division develop a cost and timeline estimate for the development and support of a multi-platform app: Milwaukee County’s Alternative Response to Emergency Calls (MCARE); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the review shall include options that connect residents directly to county services, including the Office of the Sheriff, Office of Emergency Management, Homeless Outreach, Behavioral Health, Psychiatric Crisis Services, as well as one-click access to 2-1-1 and 9-1-1 voice services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Information Management Services Division shall furnish a written report, including cost and timeline estimates, to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors no later than the March 2021 cycle.