From the Executive Director, Milwaukee County Ethics Board, per the request of the Milwaukee County Office of the Comptroller - Audit Services Division, recommending an amendment to Section 9.14(2)(a) of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances to modify the Statement of Economic Interest form to include information regarding the status of a vendor’s relationship with a department when a gift has been received in excess of fifty dollars ($50.00)

**A RESOLUTION/ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee County Code of Ethics (the Ethics Code) contained in Chapter 9 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances (the Code) requires certain employees and officials to file a Statement of Economic Interest (“SEI”) form upon entering County service as well as annually with the office of the Milwaukee County Ethics Board; and

WHEREAS, the contents of the SEI form are dictated by Sections 9.04 and 9.14 of the Ethics Code; and

WHEREAS, Section 9.14 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances (the Code) states that, “except as provided for in paragraph (b), every county public official or employee who is required to file a statement of economic interests, pursuant to section 9.03 and who received any lodging, transportation, money, or other thing with a combined pecuniary value exceeding fifty dollars ($50.00), not including the value of food or beverage offered coincidentally with a talk or meeting, shall report on his/her statement of economic interests the identity of every person from whom the county public official received such lodging, transportation, money, or other things during the preceding taxable year, the circumstances under which it was received, and the approximate value thereof.”; and

WHEREAS, in February 2021, the Milwaukee County Office of the Comptroller - Audit Services Division (ASD) released a report entitled “Former ROD’s Willful Disregard for County Policies and Procedures and Cooperative Vendors Facilitated Development of a “Pot of Gold” for Improper Use of County Funds” (the Report) in which they detailed both their investigation into the conduct of former Register of Deeds John La Fave as he sought to circumvent Milwaukee County policies and procedures as well as recommendations for improving internal and external controls regarding said policies and procedures; and

WHEREAS, on pages 73 to 74 of the Report and in reference to the SEI form, ASD determined that “[t]he current version of the form does not require any disclosure of whether a vendor that has given a gift to an official or an employee has a contract with the department official who is filling out the form. The lack of that information limits the effectiveness of the form since it then requires a reader to be aware of all vendor relationships within a department when reviewing the form.”; and

WHEREAS, ASD’s recommendation for addressing this issue was that “[t]he Administrator of the Ethics Board prepare a resolution to be considered by the County Board to modify the Statement of Economic Interest form to include information regarding the status of vendor’s relationship with a department when a gift has been received in excess of $50.”; and

WHEREAS, at the County Board’s March 25, 2021 meeting, the County Board affirmed ASD’s recommendations contained in the Report; and

WHEREAS, at the Ethics Board’s May 2021 meeting, the Executive Director of the Milwaukee County Ethics Board presented the report to the Ethics Board for discussion in the interest of developing a proposal for an amendment to the Ethics Code contained herein; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Ethics Board and its Executive Director hereby recommend that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors amend Section 9.14(2)(a) of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances by adopting the following language:

**AN ORDINANCE**

The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors does ordain as follows:

**Section 1. Chapter 9.14 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances is hereby amended as follows:**

**9.14 - Honorariums, fees, and expenses.**

(2)(a) Except as provided for in paragraph (b), every county public official or employee who is required to fie a statement of economic interests, pursuant to section 9.03 and who received any lodging, transportation, money, or other thing with a combined pecuniary value exceeding fifty dollars ($50.00), not including the value of food or beverage offered coincidentally with a talk or meeting, shall report on his/her statement of economic interests the identity of every person from whom the county public official received such lodging, transportation, money, or other things during the preceding taxable year, the circumstances under which it was received, whether the gift was given by or on behalf of a County vendor contracted to work with that official or employee’s department, and the approximate value thereof.

**Section 2.** The provisions of this Ordinance will be effective upon passage and publication.