



David A. Clarke Jr.
Sheriff

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office ***NEWS RELEASE***

Fran McLaughlin
Public Information Officer
Cell: 414-254-9488
Phone: 414-278-5226
fran.mclaughlin@milwenty.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 18, 2014



Sheriff Clarke: Setting the Record Straight



Sentinel Journal Editorial Writer Ernie Franzen

Milwaukee, WI – Sheriff David A. Clarke sets the record straight in response to a Sentinel Journal editorial regarding the MCSO budget:

Once again, it is necessary for me to set the record straight as to the Sentinel Journal's attempt to mislead and misinform readers, distort the truth and otherwise engage in a propaganda campaign designed to negatively portray my leadership as Sheriff of Milwaukee County.

Their reason is simple. They do not like my tough on crime stance, or my support of both the role of punishment in corrections, and law-abiding people's right to defend themselves against crime and violence. Additionally, I continue to do what they will not do, and that is to point out the city of Milwaukee's decline into irrelevancy under their favorite politician, Mayor Tom Barrett. Their biggest fear is my considering a run for mayor in 2016, so they want to get a head start on painting a false image of my ability to actually solve problems.

Editorial Board member Ernie Franzen and his cabal have two goals in mind: First, to silence me by marginalizing my views which run counter to their liberal agenda; and second, to eliminate me from the leadership platform entirely. This is the same group that talks about the importance of Milwaukee having a diverse group of city and county officials. A diverse makeup of area leaders goes out the window, however, if public officials do not walk lockstep with a soft-on-crime orthodoxy.

-more-

For more information about the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office, visit our website at www.mksheriff.org and our facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/MilwaukeeCountySheriff>
Follow us on Twitter @MCSOSheriff

Here is the truth about my ability to work a budget. Twelve years ago, I inherited an agency where multi-million-dollar budget overruns were routine. The Sentinel Journal did not run critical stories about Sheriff Lev Baldwin, who created those overruns. I reversed his trend by balancing every budget I was handed, and I even returned surpluses to the county. The Sentinel Journal never wrote about those accomplishments then, and didn't mention them in their editorial Monday.

I was handed the House of Correction (HOC), described by the National Institute of Corrections as one of the worst-run detention facilities in America. At the time, the HOC had a \$5.5 million budget deficit that the Sentinel Journal also never wrote about. I erased that deficit and balanced the HOC budget in one year. My turnaround of that facility was described by the same National Institute of Corrections as "nothing short of miraculous." The Sentinel Journal won't tell you that either. For the Sentinel Journal editorial board and its fiction writers to say otherwise is laughable. They are counting on an uninformed reader to swallow their lies whole.

The truth about the current budget is this. I was given a budget by County Executive Chris Abele that compromised public safety, and which had an intentionally built-in \$4.5 million structural deficit. That means I started January 1, with a massive hole in the budget. This is Chris Abele's budget.

Abele is another favorite of the SJ editorial board and is working behind the scenes to undermine me. Abele supports having me defeated. His hiring of Graeme Zielinski for \$10,000 as a "consultant" to smear me was chronicled briefly by the Sentinel Journal. Coincidence? I think not.

The budget I proposed was balanced, but was rejected by Abele in favor of his structural budget deficit. I said at the time he proposed it that this is how deficits occur. The Sentinel Journal didn't report that either. Fortunately, the County Board agreed with me and restored many of Abele's cuts that hurt the safety of county residents. Chris Abele's massive hole remains, yet he is touting a budget surplus of over \$20 million countywide. He got there by imposing a structural deficit on my office. This is not honest budgeting. It is playing politics with the public's personal safety.

The Sentinel Journal pointed out that Abele thinks my command staff is top heavy, but offered no reason as to why he thinks that. He has zero experience running a law enforcement agency, and has no idea as to what I need to supervise the second largest law enforcement agency in the state. The truth is, when I got here ten years ago, there were 7 Deputy Inspector (DI) positions, and 22 Captain positions filled. Today I have 5 DI positions and 17 Captains. Sentinel Journal didn't tell you that either.

This is election year politics being played by this newspaper. The Sentinel Journal writers have a duty that goes along with their First Amendment freedom of the press protection. With rights come responsibilities. They have a responsibility to tell readers the truth.

###