



Joe Sanfelippo



Milwaukee County Supervisor - 17th District

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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Parks, Energy and Environment (Vice-Chair)

Judiciary, Safety and General Services

Transportation, Public Works and Transit

Dear Friends and Constituents,

Please enjoy the August 2009 edition of the 17th District E-Newsletter. Once again, your comments, questions, and concerns are appreciated fully by my office. If you would like to continue to receive the E-Newsletter, please be sure to register for E-Notify at <http://www.milwaukee.gov/enotify>. If your neighbors are interested in the E-Newsletter as well, please pass along this information.

Important Benefit Contacts Have Changed as of July 1, 2009

Important telephone numbers have changed for the following Milwaukee County programs:

- ❑ BadgerCare Plus, Food Share, Medicaid, Caretaker Supplement and Wisconsin Shares (child care)

To report changes, you may:

- ❑ Go to ACCESS.wi.gov
- ❑ Call/Change Center at 1-888-947-6583 (voice), 1-888-947-6711(TTY)
 - ❑ Mail or fax your verification/proof to:
Milwaukee Enrollment Services Center
P.O. Box 05676, Milwaukee, WI 53205-0676
Fax: (414) 438-4580

For Appointments, Child Care Eligibility and Authorizations:

Call (414) 289-6464 (voice) or 711 (TTY)

You may apply for FoodShare and health care benefits online at ACCESS.wi.gov.

Now, more than ever, checks and balances needed in Milwaukee County

County Board Chairman Lee Holloway has proposed the elimination of the separately elected County Executive position in Milwaukee County government and recommended replacing it with a county administrator position appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. The reasons cited for the change were to “undo perceived gridlock, lessen political infighting and improve professionalism.”

I do not believe that any individual taking an objective look at Milwaukee County Government would disagree on the need for reform. When you tout the change as an antidote to gridlock and political infighting, the need for reform seems all the more dire. However, is the elimination of one branch of government by another branch of government really a recipe for reform or merely just a means by which the branch doing the eliminating guarantees that it always gets what it wants?

Our founding fathers, after living under decades of tyranny, declared America's independence 233 years ago based in part on the premise that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. To limit power and assure that America would have a government of, by and for the people, our Constitution divided the new government's power into three equal branches to ensure proper checks and balances. This form of government has served us well at the federal level since our country's birth and has been copied by Milwaukee County for the past four decades. I cannot imagine a scenario in which we would be better off eliminating presidential elections and allowing Congress to appoint its own “national administrator.” The implication of this proposal on its face is that the County Board is much more suited to pick the leader of this County than the voters at large, which is both condescending and insulting to the electorate.

Under this proposal, the County Board and its hand picked administrator would have complete, unchecked power to do whatever they want. While Milwaukee County is made up of 19 different municipalities, 16 of the 19 current County Board Supervisors represent City of Milwaukee neighborhoods and eight of those 16 districts are entirely in the City of Milwaukee. You could very easily wind up with Milwaukee Supervisors calling all the shots when it comes to County government while the 16 other municipalities sit powerless on the sidelines. Outside of the City of Milwaukee, I can't imagine any other municipality within Milwaukee County being too fond of that idea. An elimination of the executive branch would almost assuredly require drastic changes to the legislative branch as well to prevent the disenfranchisement of suburban Milwaukee County voters.

Our dismal fiscal condition dictates that we explore every option offered that has the potential to improve the efficiency of Milwaukee County government, and for that reason I will keep an open mind and consider Chairman Holloway's proposal, and any other proposals that may emerge, very carefully. However, the separation of powers and the system of checks and balances that it spurs is one of the few things that I feel the federal government does right, and Milwaukee County should not hastily rush to dump them.



Extra Parks Funding

At the July County Board meeting, I introduced a resolution to give our parks department an additional \$2 million in funding for 2010 to help address deferred maintenance projects such as remodeling or rebuilding some of the restrooms in our parks.

My plan set aside \$2 million from the proceeds of the County Grounds land sale to UWM for their new school of engineering. The County will receive a total of \$13.5 from this land sale and, considering that we sold the County's parks administration building as part of this deal and because the land itself, while not park land, was a nature area, I thought that investing some of the money back into our parks made sense.

Unfortunately, some of my colleagues on the Board did not agree, and the resolution was laid over until the 2010 budget process. In fact, one of the Supervisors made a statement that, even though we were not appropriating this money to parks, people should just "trust us" to do the right thing with the money.

"Trust us?" Hmmm. These are two of the scariest words any government official can utter to voters.

Since I joined the County Board last year, I have heard all sorts of lip service coming out of some members mouths about how the parks are in terrible shape and how we must do something. Well, it's time for a little less talk and a lot more action.

I am very disappointed that some of my colleagues have decided to once again short-change the parks department. Instead, they prefer to hold on to the money until budget time when it will no doubt be used to fill budget holes created by spending from other programs. If we are going to sell a hard asset such as land, common sense tells us that we should not simply use the proceeds from such a sale for short-term gains. The money should instead be used to reduce debt or improve current assets. These two uses would produce long lasting financial benefits for county taxpayers.

As we enter the "budget season" next month, I will resume my fight for additional parks department funding. The last thing we should do is use \$13.5 million for short-term gains. If that happens, we will have nothing to show for the land sale once the money is spent.



August Community Calendar

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel a la Carte

Feast with the Beasts with 28 area restaurants from Mexican cuisine to Brazilian at the Milwaukee County Zoo!

Thursday, August 20th-Sunday, August 23rd, 2009

Thursday- Saturday 9:00am-10:00pm

Sunday 9:00am-8:00pm

Visit the a la Carte [information page](#) on the Milwaukee County Zoo website for admission prices and general information

Village of Greendale

Greendale Village Days

August 7-9th, 2009

Downtown Greendale

Visit the Public Celebrations Committee [website](#) for more information

City of Greenfield

Concert in the Park

Featuring Becca and the Boys

Tuesday, August 18th, 2009 from 6:30pm-8:30pm

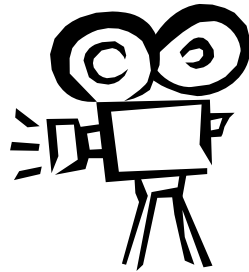
Konkel Park under the gazebo, 51st & Layton

Movie in the Park

Featured movie: Bolt

Saturday, August 22, 2009 at sunset

Konkel Park, 51st & Layton



City of West Allis

6th Annual Settler's Weekend

Sunday, August 30th, 2009 from 11:00am- 4:00pm

Historical Society Grounds, 84th & National

Contact: 414-545-7679

Summer Band Concerts

Thursday, August 13th & 20th, 2009 at 7:00pm

Vets' Park, 70th & National

Contact: 414-302-8872

Wisconsin State Fair

Thursday, August 6th-Sunday, August 16th, 2009

640 South 84th Street

[State Fair Website](#)

