



Joe Sanfelippo



Milwaukee County Supervisor ~17th District

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May 2010

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Parks, Energy and Environment (Vice-Chair)

Judiciary, Safety and General Services

Personnel

Dear Friends and Constituents,

May is a very special month as it contains the single-day out of the entire year that we pause to honor our mothers and thank them for all they have done for us. When you stop for a moment to consider everything a mother does for her family, one day out of the year hardly seems appropriate. But then again, mothers are not in it for the “thanks.” We know this because, day-in and day-out, they are there for us, even when their work seems to go unnoticed.

I hope every mom gets a chance to enjoy their very special day this month in their own way. Whether visiting with family and friends, sitting down with a good book, walking in the park or sleeping till noon, this is your day. Enjoy it!

Thanks mom,



Mother's Day Brunch at the Museum

Enjoy your Milwaukee Public Museum and Mom all in one day! An extravagant Brunch will be served which includes Museum admission for the day, butterfly crafts for the kids and two butterfly releases in the vivarium.

Mother's Day Sunday, May 9, 2010

Seating times are 10:30am, 11:30am, 12:30pm and 1:30pm

Cost: Members and moms: \$29; nonmembers: \$34;

member children (ages 4-11): \$15; nonmember children (ages 4-11): \$20

Reservations required by Friday, May 7th.

Call (414) 278-2728 to make your reservations today!



Moms Golf for Free on Mother's Day

Get your Mom into the “Swing of Things” on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9 when she can golf for FREE! Purchasing one round of golf and a single rider cart lets Mom golf and ride for FREE. Golf Courses include: Brown Deer, Dretzka, Oakwood, Whitnall, Currie, Grant, Greenfield and Lincoln.

Free golf begins after 1:00pm.

Visit www.countyparks.com or call the Milwaukee County Golf Office at 414-257-8024 for information.

Waukesha Water Plan

The City of Waukesha has been working on a plan to buy water from the City of Milwaukee for the past several years because Waukesha's own water, which it obtains through several deep wells, is contaminated with high levels of radium. As Waukesha works to put an agreement together with Milwaukee, one of the key components of the arrangement will be finding a way for Waukesha to return the used water back to Lake Michigan. Waukesha has submitted an application to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) utilizing either the Underwood Creek or the Root River as its preferred method of returning treated water back to the lake.

This issue came before the County Board last month when some of our members authored and ultimately passed a resolution opposing this plan. While I am skeptical of any plan that involves putting more water into the Root River for fear that it would increase flooding events, I did not support the resolution because we do not have enough information to make a sound decision.

Throughout the debate, concerns were raised as to the lack of communication. There is no doubt that Waukesha failed to keep Milwaukee County informed thus far, however that is no reason for us to slam the door in their face now. The City of Waukesha has spent years researching this plan and has compiled documentation that we have never seen. The City of Waukesha requested that we delay our vote by one month and allow them the opportunity to present the details of their plan to us. Since the DNR has a lengthy approval process (including public meetings for comment) and is unlikely to approve Waukesha's plan prior to our next board meeting, this request seemed reasonable so I voted for the layover.

Reacting on emotions and misconceptions rather than acting on facts and data is not a sound way to conduct our business. Opposing this plan may very well be the correct decision. However, since doing so without taking the time to investigate all the information available, we will never know.

Public Listening Sessions on 2011 Budget

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker will host three Public Listening Sessions on the 2011 Budget. Please [CLICK HERE](#) for a downloadable PDF of the news release.

Monday, May 3, 2010 - Noon to 1:30pm

Wilson Park Senior Center, Main Hall - 2601 W. Howard Ave.

Wednesday, May 5, 2010 - 1:00pm to 2:30pm

Washington Park Senior Center, Main Hall - 4420 W. Vliet St.

Monday, May 10, 2010 - 10:00am to 11:30am

Elks Lodge #46, Main Hall - 5555 W. Good Hope Rd.



Inmate Transportation Services

The Sheriff's department requested permission from the County Board to hire a private contractor to provide transportation services for inmates currently housed in the County Correctional Facilities.

Currently, twenty-seven Sheriff Deputies provide daily transportation of inmates going to court appearances, medical appointments and other detention facilities. The proposal offered Milwaukee County the chance to save \$1.8 million over three years without having to lay off any employees, a win for both the taxpayers and employees.

All the Deputies currently providing transportation would have been transferred to other vacancies within the department allowing them to fill other badly needed public safety positions. I fully support approval of this proposal.

Ironically enough, despite this proposal receiving a full vetting from the Judiciary, Safety & General Services Committee, with representatives from both the Sheriff's Department and the proposed contractor providing testimony and a strong recommendation to approve from Chairman Holloway, this item was sent back to Committee for further review (while the resolution to oppose the Waukesha water plan that had no proper Committee hearing and no testimony was acted upon.) I will urge approval of this resolution so we can begin to realize the cost savings as soon as possible.



Curing the County's Financial Ills, Part II

This year, for every dollar we spend on employee payroll, Milwaukee County will spend another ninety-four cents on fringe benefits. That is an incredible and unsustainable number. Think about it. For every person we have working, we are practically paying for two people. General Motors went bankrupt in large part due to overly excessive fringe benefit costs that were much lower than ours.

Last month I wrote discussing the need to reform our pension system in order to help get the County back on sound financial footing. This month I am going to discuss health benefits. Any hope of restoring our financial standing rests primarily on our ability to reduce our fringe benefit expenses.

In 2007, as the result of strong cooperation between the County Board Chairman and County Executive (it is amazing what can be done with a little cooperation) Milwaukee County switched to a self-insured health care plan. This move has generated more than \$100 million of savings so far and is the primary reason Milwaukee County has been able to tread financial water. This relief, however, is only temporary. In order to properly address our structural deficit, fundamental changes to our health care plan must be enacted soon.

There are roughly 19,800 members on the County's health plan, with just over 9,000 of them being retirees. This is important, as the overwhelming majority of

retirees pay nothing toward the cost of their coverage. While the County has the option to increase the amount of money an active employee must contribute toward the plan, we cannot require exempted retirees from contributing. As a result, the County has budgeted \$135 million to be spent on health care for 2010 with \$130 million of that coming from taxpayers.

To help control skyrocketing health care costs, many companies in the private sector and organizations and governments in the public sector have updated their benefits to provide Health Savings Accounts (HSA) or Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRA).

HSA's and HRA's control employer costs by increasing the out-of-pocket expenses to employees. The plans generally include an upfront cash infusion into an account that is controlled by the employee. The employee then has a vested interest in controlling expenditures as they will directly benefit from the savings. By shopping around for the best prices and only utilizing services when really needed, employees help to lower the overall medical expenses paid by the employer. Because the county is self-insured, those savings would directly benefit taxpayers.

For employees, HSA's and HRA's result in lower monthly premiums that employees must contribute towards their health care coverage. Because unused co-pay money is allowed to rollover and accumulate in an employee's health care account, careful spending in the initial years of the plan can result in employee out-of-pocket expenses being reduced or eliminated. HSA and HRA funds can also be used to pay for a wide range of goods and services that traditional plans do not cover such as over-the-counter medications and cosmetic procedures. HSA's also give employees flexibility to take the plan with them when they change jobs or draw out unused funds without penalty after retirement when they would most likely be taxed at more favorable rates.

Updating our health care plan to include an HSA, HRA or something similar would lower the county's overall health care costs, and free up county funds for discretionary areas such as parks and transit, spread increases more evenly between retirees and active employees, and save taxpayers money by working toward eliminating our structural deficit. This is a winning situation for everyone.

Memorial Day Activities

West Allis Memorial Day Parade

Monday, May 31, 2010

10:00am Start time, 11:00am Service at Veterans' Memorial Park
69th and National Avenue

Visit the City of West Allis [website](#) for more information.

Milwaukee Memorial Day Parade

Monday, May 31, 2010

2:00pm Start time, Parade begins on 4th and Wisconsin and travels down the Avenue to Veterans Park where an Honoring Ceremony will take place at the Reflecting Pool. Please visit the Milwaukee Memorial Day Parade

[website](#) for more information.

