



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors **Supervisor Jason Haas, 14th District**

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Finance Committee Chair Haas Praises Supervisors for Amendments that Improve Service Delivery and Honor Milwaukee County's Mission *Committee Recommends 25 Amendments for Adoption*

MILWAUKEE – In a statement released Monday, Supervisor Jason Haas, who serves as the Chair of the budget-setting Finance Committee, expressed appreciation to his colleagues for submitting [budget amendments](#) that invest in essential public services or otherwise help Milwaukee County leaders and employees implement the County's mission while delivering a balanced budget, as required by law.

“Balancing the Milwaukee County budget becomes increasingly difficult as we are forced each year to cut expenditures and delay repairs to our crumbling infrastructure due to a lack of sufficient revenue. I truly appreciate the efforts of my esteemed colleagues who sought to improve service delivery with thoughtful solutions to this intractable problem. While we may not all agree on every funding mechanism or on which services should be prioritized over others, I’m honored to work beside so many dedicated public servants who consistently put Milwaukee County residents and our mission to serve them first. Maintaining those services upon which the public relies on is more difficult with every budget, and we urgently need sustained, long-term funding to adequately fund services and invest in infrastructure, especially to protect and preserve our County parks,” said Haas.

The Finance-Budget Committee met eight times to listen to department requests and consider supervisor amendments since the County Executive introduced his budget on October 1 and recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt 25 amendments as part of the final budget.

The Finance Committee's approved amendments include three from Haas: one to explore the transition of the County's fleet of vehicles to electric rather than gasoline power (1A005); one to improve park safety with better lighting (1A016), and one to create two positions (1A045) to help configure and deploy the Enterprise Platform Modernization project, which will streamline and improve the efficiency of County procurement, payroll, financial, and other services.

The Finance Committee also approved amendments that would further advance racial equity goals, by encouraging the Wisconsin Counties Association to adopt racial equity principles (1A001, Czarnezki), allowing the families of youth justice system-involved youth to access programming designed to maximize opportunities for success and integration into the community (1A032, Taylor), and analyzing the possibility of establishing a “Right to Counsel” program to provide legal counsel for persons facing eviction or foreclosure (1A044, Clancy). An amendment from Supervisor Weishan (1B005) would place funds for a local alternative to Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake into a contingency account pending submission of a written plan that details the scope of the project and the new location for the facility.

In addition, the Finance Committee approved amendments that would potentially save the County money by renegotiating lease agreements with several cultural amenities (Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee Art Museum, Marcus Center, Charles Allis/Villa Terrace) in order to reduce the County’s obligations to fund these institutions (1A036, Rolland), report on the status of the integration of the Department on Aging and the Department on Health and Human Services (1A037, Taylor), report on annual legal settlements and insurance costs (1A043, Clancy), mitigate increases in airline rates at General Mitchell International and support a more efficient recovery of the airport during the Coronavirus pandemic (1A003, Weishan), slow funding for a new bus route to the Amazon facility in Oak Creek (1A004, Wasserman), and explore the development of a consolidated mobile app to allow the public improved access to County services (1A011, Czarnezki).

The Finance Committee also recommended for adoption several parks-related amendments, including one to prohibit mid-year fee increases in County parks (1A012, Weishan), facilitate the restoration of the baseball practice field at Manitoba Park (1A015, Weishan), supplement seasonal Parks staffing needs (1A017 and 1A018, Czarnezki), advance an initiative to propagate hemp plant clones at the Mitchell Park Domes greenhouses (1A025, Ortiz-Velez), promote ethnically diverse food offerings in County parks (1A026, Wasserman), convert five unpaid Zoo internships to paid internships (1A029, Clancy), and conduct a sound study at The Rock Sports Complex (1A041, Weishan).

Regarding personnel matters, the Finance Committee recommended several amendments, including to provide for a 1% increase in airport employees (1A003, Weishan), develop an easily accessible online “suggestions form” for improving workplace safety during the Coronavirus pandemic (1A034, Czarnezki), create two new positions in the Office of Corporation Counsel to address the large number of guardianship and mental health cases assigned to the office (1A038, Johnson, Jr.), and report and track excessive overtime (1A042, Clancy).

Lastly, the Finance Committee approved an omnibus amendment from Chairwoman Nicholson (1A020) that invests nearly \$2.5 million in County parks and cultural amenities, in services for youth justice system-involved youth and for senior citizens, in combatting homelessness, and the County’s federated library system, among other measures.

Amendments recommend for adoption by the Finance Committee are likely to be adopted by the Board of Supervisors when it meets to adopt the budget at [9:30 a.m. on November 9](#).

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