



SHELDON A. WASSERMAN

MILWAUKEE COUNTY SUPERVISOR - 3RD DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

November 14, 2017

Dear Neighbors,

Last Monday, the County Board of Supervisors voted to approve a budget with a \$30 wheel tax and cuts across department budgets. I've had time to think and reflect upon the budget we created and this year's budget process and I wanted to share some of my thoughts about Milwaukee County's financial situation in the coming years.

I went through seven budgets as a State Legislator in Madison and I've done two in Milwaukee. Through every budgetary process you see the pros and cons and the philosophy of how a group envisions their future. This budget was a tough one for me because our district was the only one to vote yes to a \$60 wheel tax. Our district supported the wheel tax because we did not want to see service cuts and we know that paying more can get you a high-quality, long-lasting product.

In our district, we want a fiscally responsible government. We want government to run efficiently and get the most bang for our buck. Money is supposed to be spent wisely. If we can get a deal, we should take it—as long as it doesn't short-change our long-term goals. However, our budget situation is not the best. Our expenditures, from pensions and basic services, exceed our revenues. I have tried both this year and last year to make expenditure cuts, as well as raise revenues. This year, I was able to get the Board to agree to a \$1 increase in admissions prices to the Domes for non-Milwaukee County residents, but it was not easy. My proposal failed twice, until finally I had the votes to agree to a \$1 increase, bringing the total admission cost to \$8 and an increased revenue of about \$50,000.

The real problem is in Madison and, as I spoke about in my last newsletter, shared revenue cuts from state government cut away at our funds, while the State of Wisconsin continues to balance its budget on the backs of Milwaukee County. The Chairman and the County Board created a budget to meet the needs of the majority of Supervisors and their districts. However, cuts are coming to transportation, parks, and other services.

Our next County budget will be even worse than the one we have just worked on, but the bottom line is very basic: we are either going to raise revenues, continue to cut services, or a balance of both. Over the next week, you will be receiving a newsletter in the mail with a survey requesting your opinion on how I should achieve that balancing act. If you would like to participate in the survey online, you can find the link here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X7VRSTV>. I look forward to hearing your guidance.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or thoughts you might have about the budget or any other issues in Milwaukee County. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Wasserman
District 3 Supervisor

MILWAUKEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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