MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisor Jack Eckblad • Supervisor Shawn Rolland

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Supervisors Eckblad and Rolland Secure Unanimous Passage of Budget Transparency Amendment

Amendment calls for accountability, transparency, and a plan to prevent future errors

MILWAUKEE – Supervisors Jack Eckblad and Shawn Rolland, alongside co-sponsors Supervisors Kathleen Vincent, Felesia A. Martin, Leevan D. Roundtree Jr., Anne O'Connor, Deanna Alexander, Caroline Gómez-Tom, Justin Bielinski, Steve F. Taylor, Sky Z. Capriolo, Juan Miguel Martinez, Patti Logsdon, Priscilla E. Coggs-Jones, Steven Shea, and Willie Johnson Jr., secure unanimous passage of their budget transparency amendment requiring the Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance (OSBP) to review its budget preparation and verification procedures and report back to the County Board during the January 2027 meeting cycle.

The amendment addresses a $4.6 million error in the 2027 Recommended Budget. While the County Board received a memo disclosing the error the day before the budget adoption meeting, supervisors raised concerns about the limited opportunity to review the information and address its implications before adopting the budget.

The required review will examine how technology and automated processes are used to prepare and verify budget figures, evaluate existing internal controls and safeguards, and identify improvements to prevent similar errors. The January report must also identify funding sources, potential savings and corrective actions needed to address the shortfall and keep the 2027 Budget balanced, along with an implementation timeline.

> *"The budget error is a major problem,"* said Supervisor Shawn Rolland. *"The loss of trust here is much worse. We should have found out about this immediately. We should have had an opportunity to address this in our budget discussions. For six years, we have worked together to solve difficult budget challenges. This time, we were left out, left in the dark, and left wondering what is going to happen. The public was too. We can't do our jobs as supervisors if we're not getting timely, accurate and complete information. This amendment asks for a full accounting of the process and the steps that were missed. It also asks for a detailed report explaining what levers we will pull to ensure we end 2027 with a balanced budget - one that ends with a $5M surplus so we can have contingency funds in the future."*

> *What this amendment requires is that the office of budget meet standards of transparency and accountability that every resident of Milwaukee County expects,"* said Supervisor Jack Eckblad. *"In the context of a $1.5 billion budget, a $4.6 million error may not seem like much - but the fact that this error was known weeks ago, that no Supervisors were informed, and that the administration continued to provide testimony to the committee on finance and at public budget town halls is disturbing. This will require the office of budget to provide full details on how this error happened, the timeline of when it was discovered and what was or was not done in response, and how the office will prevent similar mistakes in the future. If that report from the budget office is insufficient in its detail or transparency, then I will author a resolution calling for a full audit by the comptroller's office. This is the first step to ensure the public receives the transparency and accountability it deserves."*

Eckblad and Rolland emphasized that the January report must provide a thorough accounting of the error and the procedures that allowed it to occur. If the report is not sufficiently detailed, the supervisors will call for an audit by the Milwaukee County Audit Office.

The amendment has no tax levy impact.

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