

CHAIR

Finance and Personnel Committee

VICE CHAIR

Milwaukee Arts Board

MEMBER

Zoning, Neighborhoods and
Development Committee

Licenses Committee

Library Board



NIK KOVAC
ALDERMAN, 3RD DISTRICT
CITY OF MILWAUKEE

Under new configuration, Finance and Personnel Committee will continue precedent of fiscal responsibility

Statement of Alderman Nik Kovac February 14, 2014

I would like to thank Common Council President Michael Murphy for entrusting me with the responsibility of chairing the City of Milwaukee's Finance and Personnel Committee. I have been a member of this committee for six years and the vice chair for two. During that tenure, I was able to learn directly from Alderman Murphy's example how this gavel can be used to shed light on fiscal realities and help make the implications of tough decisions more clear.

I would also like to thank President Murphy for the appointments he has made to serve with me on this committee. All four of my colleagues on the committee bring great experience to our budgeting process. Together, they represent a broad range of expertise and advocacy that will help guide our decisions.

Alderman Joe Dudzik, the vice chair, knew the on-the-street effects of city budgets even before he got to vote on them. His front-line experience as an employee of the Department of Public Works has given him many opportunities to educate the rest of us on what really happens to the money after it is allocated. In the six years we have served on this committee, he has often helped me connect the dots between lines on a spreadsheet and the holes in our streets.

Alderwoman Milele Coggs has served on the committee for those same six years, and has consistently been a voice for broadening our view of essential services. She also serves on the Library Board, the Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation Board and the Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and through these and other advocacy efforts, has helped the committee focus on how budgets affect communities.

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Alderman Ashanti Hamilton joined this committee two years ago, and for six years has served as chair of the Judiciary and Legislation committee, which sets our lobbying priorities with other governments. He understands well how our process works, and is thus able to communicate effectively with state legislators, explaining why they should learn from our example rather than impede it. He consistently reminds us that how our money is spent should always reflect our shared values and stated priorities.

Alderman Terry Witkowski is formally joining the committee this week, but we have always known him as the honorary sixth member every budget season. For as long as I have been here, he has attended all of the annual departmental reviews, and like Alderman Dudzik, he brings a perspective from the other end of the budgeting process. Prior to being elected to the Common Council, he served as the city safety director.

I am honored to be serving on a committee with two lawyers, a former safety director and a former front-line public worker. Together we will do our best to provide good advice to the entire Common Council about how to organize and allocate the resources of this great city.

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