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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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September 1, 2005

Ald. Jim Bohl  
(414) 286-2219

## Mayor Urged To Use Potawatomi Windfall To Help Fund Third Police Recruit Class In 2006

*Council Members Join Ald. Bohl In Seeking Use of Tribe's Payment Increase For  
Getting New Classes Trained Next Year*

Several members of the Common Council are joining Ald. Jim Bohl in calling for the city to use a more than \$1 million increase in the City of Milwaukee's annual payment from the Forest County Potawatomi Community to fund three classes of police officer recruits next year.

Ald. Robert G. Donovan, chair of the Public Safety Committee, Ald. Robert J. Bauman, chair of the Public Improvements Committee, Ald. James N. Witkowiak, chair of the Utilities & Licenses Committee, and Aids. Willie C. Wade and Tony Zielinski have now joined Ald. Bohl in his call to use the Potawatomi windfall to fund three recruit classes in 2006. The council members say the city's public safety needs are critical and must be met, and the Milwaukee Police Department's current 230 vacant police officer positions can and should be addressed by earmarking the extra Potawatomi money for additional officers by next year.

In a letter sent to Mayor Tom Barrett last week, Ald. Bohl urged the Mayor to move forward with using the Potawatomi money for the new recruits.

"Officer vacancies, coupled with retirements and officers on military leave, have left our police department stretched too thin and we're seeing across-the-board increases in reports of various crimes," Ald. Bohl said.

"A wave of crime and violence has plagued our community, and unfortunately our community has become less safe," the alderman said.

**-More-**

## **More Council Members Endorse Potawatomi-Police Recruit Plan/ADD ONE**

Milwaukee's 2004 homicide total of 88 was eclipsed on August 25, and the city is on pace to reach 137 homicides, which would be a 10-year high and the greatest number since 1995, when there were 138.

Last week the Potawatomi announced that the tribe's annual payment to the city and Milwaukee County would increase \$2.1 million over last year's amount (of that amount, the city's payment increase was \$1.3 million). This year the city and the county will each receive \$4.9 million payments.

Under Ald. Bohl's plan, the 2006 recruit classes would be spread out to be four months apart. For example, a May recruit class would be moved to April, a November class would be moved to August, and the last class would start in December 2006. A recruit class starting in November 2005 would end in April 2006, but a new class would start up immediately that month, Ald. Bohl said.

Mayor Barrett has said that he would call for two police recruit classes in his proposed 2006 budget, with classes scheduled to start in May and November. After decades of the city supporting at least two annual police recruit classes, Mayor Barrett's 2005 budget provided for only one class. Efforts on the part of a majority of Council members to advance the timing of that class were met with a mayoral veto.

In July, Ald. Bohl joined Ald. Bob Donovan and five other Aldermen in calling upon the Mayor to support moving this year's police recruit class to a September start date and support the budgeting of three recruit classes for next year.

"Each year you have so many officers retire, and the whole point of my plan is get enough new officers trained and on the street to positively counter the retirements and cut into the vacancy rate," said the alderman. "Even our Police Chief (Nannette Hegerty) is pushing for a third recruit class next year. We need to stop the bleeding by getting more officers on the streets to respond to calls and proactively police our neighborhoods."

"Unfortunately, the two police classes the Mayor has called for in 2006 will at best maintain the status quo, and will more likely lead us to lose more ground in our already serious police officer shortfall," said Ald. Bohl. "Three recruit classes is the only true way for us to make up ground. My plan to utilize the Potawatomi money for this purpose provides the city with a mechanism for this to happen without burdening the taxpayers or reducing services elsewhere in the upcoming budget," said the alderman.