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ROBERT G. DONOVAN
Alderman, 8th District

Donovan urges merger of MPS public safety with MPD

Alderman says move could put hundreds of additional officers on city streets during summer months

Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan August 27, 2013

In a letter (**attached**) sent today to the mayor and to the superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools, I am calling for serious discussion on merging MPS security services with the Milwaukee Police Department.

MPS spends \$14 million per year on security services. I believe that money would be better spent by having MPD officers and the department's existing command staff handle MPS security. For the record, \$14 million could be used to hire 200-plus MPD officers, and it is more than the police budgets of Cudahy, Shorewood and Whitefish Bay combined!

In these difficult economic times, I believe we simply have an obligation to make sure we get the most out of every taxpayer dollar. Furthermore, I believe our residents expect a consistent presence of police officers both at our schools and in our neighborhoods to provide much needed security.

MPD already receives a huge number of calls from MPS schools each year, and a drive past schools between September and May often includes the sight of a squad car (or cars) parked just outside the school's doors. In other words, officers are already constantly responding to MPS schools for various calls for service.

One key advantage of having officers take over MPS security is that during the summer, those officers will be freed up to patrol our streets. The summer months are by far the busiest in terms of street calls for MPD officers, and having the officers from the schools available would help bolster security for everyone in our city.

-More-

Now I know that the mayor and others are calling on the state to pitch in more for city police resources – and I am a big supporter of finding a workable state-city partnership in that area – but I believe strongly that we have an obligation first to make sure we are using local taxpayer dollars in the best possible way. What’s more, adding the MPS-assigned officers to our streets during the summer months will help to stabilize and make safer our challenged neighborhoods, where we desperately need those additional resources. In my opinion, the change makes sense as a comprehensive and long-term tool to address neighborhood public safety and crime issues.

I believe the time is now to at the very least begin the process of examining an MPD merge with MPS for security services.

I believe such a merger will better serve our citizens, and will help provide for a safer Milwaukee.

Any merger may need to take place over a period of a year or two. But Milwaukee will still be here two years from now, and it seems to me that the problems aren’t going away.