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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Amended 2021 budget addresses key community issues including public health and safety, housing and more

In a collaborative effort amongst members, the Milwaukee Common Council today adopted an amended 2021 City of Milwaukee budget in the amount of approximately \$1.55 billion. The budget tackles many of the pressing issues facing the city including public health, alternative solutions to addressing public safety, and much more. The budget will now head to Mayor Tom Barrett who will have until the close of business on November 17 to sign the budget or issue any vetoes.

“Milwaukee faces budget difficulties due to a lack of options in terms of raising revenues, something we will continue to advocate to change at the state level. Despite these challenges, the Council was able to work collaboratively to make sure residents receive the greatest impact for their tax dollars, and I appreciate the teamwork amongst Council members,” said **Common Council President Cavalier Johnson**.

Among the top priorities in this year’s budget is public health. To tackle the lead issue in Milwaukee, position authority was given to fill 25 new positions including public health nurses, lead risk assessors, chemists, lab techs, and environmental health coordinators. This was done with the goal of providing active case management to children with blood lead levels at a lower threshold of 5 micrograms per deciliter and above. An additional \$500,000 in funding will be dedicated to a new SafeHomes Lead Abatement Initiative created in the Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) and funded with Tax Incremental Financing resources. In total \$1 million in capital abatement funding will be available for the MHD with 2020 carryover funds.

-More-

2021 Budget/ADD ONE

A further budget amendment impacting public health includes \$200,000 for the Department of City Development's Healthy Food Establishment Fund to provide financial support for activities and development that increase access of underserved consumers to healthy food choices.

The amended 2021 budget places an emphasis on public safety alternatives. Among the amendments is funding for three licensed mental health clinicians creating three additional Crisis Assessment Response (CART) teams. These clinicians represent a co-responder model in which teams will respond to mental health 911 calls and offer residents wraparound services and mental health support. According to the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division, 80% of the time, CART is able to provide an outcome that connects residents with resources or voluntary services instead of emergency mental health detention. CART teams were implemented in 2013 in partnership with Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division with the goal of reducing repeated law enforcement interactions for residents with mental health needs and reducing use of force instances with residents during mental health crises. Funding was also provided to support the work and recommendations of the Community Collaborative Commission, a civilian oversight body created to provide a forum for and solicit community input regarding policing and law enforcement policies, and funds were also added to the violence prevention special fund in the Health Department with the intent of providing expanded neighborhood funding for Community Resource Navigators.

Additional amendments also include: \$50,000 of funding to the Fire and Police Commission's professional services account in order to conduct a Police Public Satisfaction survey; funding for one SafeVote post card mailing to Milwaukee households prior to the spring elections to promote safe voting practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. This amendment also funds additional staffing as needed to cover two weeks of voter assistance at libraries prior to the spring elections; a footnote was approved directing the Commissioner of DCD to collaborate with the Community Development Grants Administration, the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee, and other local stakeholders to develop a comprehensive, interagency housing plan; and a footnote directing the Department of Public Works to work with the Milwaukee Police Department to establish an appropriate scope of work for a consultant to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the City's crash statistics and establish tools, such as predictive modeling, that would help City officials target priority locations to reduce fatalities and severe injuries resulting from traffic crashes.

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2021 Budget/ADD TWO

“The Mayor’s proposed budget was one of the most difficult the city has faced in years, and the Finance and Personnel Committee worked to address concerns of the community in a fiscally responsible way. I want to thank the residents for sharing their thoughts and opinions throughout the process, Council members and other staff as we strived to balance multiple priorities with limited resources,” said Finance and Personnel Committee chair **Alderman Michael J. Murphy**.

In the interest of providing budget relief where possible, one amendment was also approved to lower the overall budget and tax levy. Borrowing for the police vehicle capital program was reduced by \$350,000, new borrowing for the district station repair program was reduced by \$125,000, new borrowing was reduced for City Hall foundation & hollow walk by \$75,000 and overall borrowing authorizations by were reduced by \$375,000. A subsequent \$175,000 in borrowing was added to the Department of City Development In Rem capital program to fund minor capital repairs to properties obtained by the City through foreclosure. In total this amendment reduced the budget by \$382,500 and the tax levy by \$7,500.

All amendments to the 2021 city budget can be viewed [here](#) along with previous department information and presentations. In total, the Council passed 28 amendments to the Mayor’s proposed budget. An average homeowner will pay \$86.11 more compared to 2020’s budget. The levy total will be \$299,200,570 which is a 2.8% increase from the year before.