
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

July 22, 2005

Ald. Robert G. Donovan
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Multi-Pronged Approach To Combat Violence Offered; Has Initial Backing Of Several Council Members

*Spearheaded By Ald. Donovan, Effort Includes Proposal to Use \$500,000 From
Contingency Fund to Fast Track MPD Recruit Class*

A city besieged with deadly violence almost daily needs immediate help on several fronts and an understaffed and overworked Milwaukee Police Department deserves to be bolstered and reinforced with a fresh crop of new officers, Ald. Robert G. Donovan said.

In a multi-pronged effort to reduce violent crime and to make Milwaukee's streets and neighborhoods safer, Ald. Donovan announced today that he has introduced legislation that would allow the Common Council to withdraw \$500,000 from its contingency fund to cover the costs of moving up a police recruiting class from December to September. The move is designed to help fill some 230 vacancies that have – according to Ald. Donovan – “brought undue stress and exhaustion upon the rank and file officers” and left major parts of the city underserved when officers are called to major incidents such as shootings in other parts of the city.

The recruit class legislation and other public safety proposals will be discussed by Ald. Donovan during a news conference on Monday, July 25, 2005 at 10:30 a.m. at S. 19th St. and W. Forest Home Ave., where a man was shot and killed overnight. Ald. Donovan will be joined by Ald. Robert J. Bauman, Ald. Robert W. Puente, Ald. Jim Bohl, Ald. Joe Dudzik, Ald. Terry L. Witkowski, Ald. Tony Zielinski and representatives of citizens' groups, including the Southside Organizing Committee. State Sen. Jeff Plale and state Rep. Josh Zepnick have been invited to attend. Media coverage is invited.

Other initiatives and proposals being offered are:

- Urging the Common Council and Mayor Tom Barrett to support Police Chief Nannette Hegerty's proposal for three police recruit classes next year.

-More-

Expanding Police & Public Safety Initiatives/ADD ONE

- Calling on Chief Hegerty to explore expanding the role of auxiliary or reserve officers to assist in public safety and crime prevention, and to explore ways of possibly using the “vast experience and wealth of talent” of retired officers to help fight crime in the city.
- Calling on all citizens, business people, clergy, and elected officials to “come out of your homes, churches, businesses and offices to take back our city one block at a time and one neighborhood at a time.”
- Calling on Governor Jim Doyle to explore providing additional State Patrol officers to provide patrol coverage on Milwaukee freeways so Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke can assign sheriff’s deputies to assist MPD officers and augment city patrol coverage.
- Calling on the state Legislature to expand Milwaukee’s portion of shared revenue or create a special funding mechanism to help pay for the increased police services needed in the city.
- Asking all officers who are close to or contemplating retirement to stay on the job indefinitely to keep the department’s strength up and to help provide mentoring and training for new officers.

The recent wave of homicides and shootings in the city has had a draining effect on the already manpower-strapped police department, and major steps need to be taken immediately to eventually fill the vacancies in the department, Ald. Donovan said. “I’m not saying the additional officers will be able solve all of our current problems, but I think it’s a step in the right direction and they (new officers) would go a long way toward restoring order in some of our more challenged neighborhoods,” said Ald. Donovan.

If approved by the council, the resolution approving the withdrawal of \$500,000 from the contingency fund to pay for the September recruit class would then go to the mayor for his signature.