

Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lipscomb: Invites public to annual county budget hearing

Posted on Monday, Oct 30, 2017

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MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Board Chairman Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., asks residents of Milwaukee County to attend the board’s annual budget hearing tonight at 6:30pm at the Marcus Center, to share their views on the 2018 budget. The entire County Board of Supervisors is expected to be in attendance and focused on listening to their constituents.

“Tonight is our opportunity to listen to the public, and hear directly from our constituents about their priorities for Milwaukee County,” said Lipscomb.

Since it was released on September 28, Milwaukee County Supervisors have been deliberating over the County Executive’s \$1.16 billion budget proposal, which is built around an increase in the wheel tax from \$30 to \$60, and increases expenditures by .5%, or \$5.9 million.

Voters rejected the wheel tax increase in an April referendum on the issue, saying “No” by an overwhelming majority of 72%. Voters in 17 of 18 supervisory districts voted against the increase, which would bring in \$16 million in new revenue for the county in 2018 under Abele’s proposal.

“Abele left supervisors with the tough choices of how to fix a budget that he built around a \$30 wheel tax increase that the voters rejected. I’ve proposed a

responsible solution that respects the will of the voters and finds savings that protect essential services, while giving department and division heads control over how to prioritize their spending,” said Lipscomb.

After requesting department and division heads offer ideas for savings or finding other revenue on October 3, and then listening to department and division reps present their requested budget to the Finance Committee during the next two weeks of October, Chairman Lipscomb offered an amendment to eliminate the wheel tax from County Executive Abele’s budget on October 24.

Lipscomb’s amendment, if adopted with no changes by the board, would balance the budget without using Abele’s \$30 wheel tax increase. Lipscomb’s amendment would spend millions less, borrow less, use less of the county’s savings, and tax homeowners less than Abele proposed.

Lipscomb’s proposed budget amendment finds savings from a variety of methods, including an across the board reduction in departmental budgets of .75%, for a savings of \$3.75 million, rejects some new position requests, and reprioritizes other capital expenditures.

Supervisors have offered other amendments to the budget, which will be adopted November 6.