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County Board Allocates \$2 Million for Homeless Day Shelter

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Supervisors Support Search for Downtown Location after Town of Madison Location Scuttled

The Dane County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a resolution adding \$2 million to the 2015 budget to acquire a property to serve as a daytime shelter and service center for the area's homeless, and to work with private nonprofit organizations, the faith community, the City of Madison and other local governments to develop a collaborative approach to find an appropriate site.

The 2013 budget included \$600,000 for the same purpose, but that amount proved inadequate to purchase an appropriate facility in Downtown Madison, where homeless advocates and several County Supervisors felt the shelter should be located.

Supervisors said they're glad to be moving forward after running into red tape and other snags at sites on East Washington Avenue and Martin Street.

"We're moving in the right direction. We went into a couple of dead ends, but we kept going," said Supervisor John Hendrick.

Supervisor Jeff Pertl, chief sponsor of the resolution, added, "This is the right step forward. I supported our previous efforts to find a good facility, but due to tremendous opposition by the Town of Madison, we are unable to move forward. These funds will enable us to obtain a better facility that is centrally located. By collaborating with our partners in the City of Madison, not-for-profit organizations, and the faith community and we can do this together."

"This is a really important step in the right direction, but we have a lot of work ahead," said Supervisor Heidi Wegleitner.

The resolution directs County real estate staff to explore available properties and report to the County Board by September 1.

In other business, the Board voted 31 - 3 to purchase 83 acres to expand CamRock County Park near Cambridge. County officials said CamRock is one of the most-used County Parks, with 80,000 visits last year, due to its outstanding scenery and year-round recreation opportunities, including nine miles of single-track

mountain bike trails. The new acquisition, at the price of slightly less than \$1 million, will increase the size of the park by nearly 20 percent.

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