

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Brian Benford  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 1:21 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** Please Fund EOC Investigator Position

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

November 14, 2023

City of Madison Common Council

210 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Madison, WI 53703

Dear Alders and Mayor

I hope that this letter finds you all well. Thank you for your service. Perhaps many of you know that this last Saturday, some of your colleagues attended a celebration marking the sixtieth anniversary of the City of Madison Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC). Since 1963, the City of Madison's Equal Opportunities Commission has studied the existence, character, causes and extent of denial of equal opportunity because of sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, age, handicap, marital status, source of income, arrest or conviction record, less than honorable discharge, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, domestic partnership, familial status, political beliefs, non-religion, retaliation for housing complaints, Social Security Number, credit history (employment only) or the fact that person is a student; giving us the most protected classes of any municipality or state in the United States. As a member of the EOC, and resident of this city, I am very proud of this fact, and hope that you are too.

In addition, the EOC formulates policy regarding the processing of complaints of discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, city facilities and credit; formulates policy regarding educational outreach programming; administers policy; reviews cases on appeal from decisions issued by EOC Hearing Examiner and appeals of administrative dismissals issued by EOC Director on complaints filed under Ordinance.

It goes without saying that many of our protected classes are under constant attacks at the state and federal levels. As a former alderperson, I too have lamented that the state legislature has oftentimes "tied" our hands or made it extremely difficult for our city and other municipalities to flourish. As local policy makers, it would perhaps be easy to blame the state for our budgetary woes and limitations. Yet today -I am writing with great concerns and hopes that you will fund an EOC Investigator position to ensure that anybody that might fall under one or more of our protected classes can have the right to thrive in the City of Madison. With longer wait times in processing current complaints, along with a projected rise in caseloads, while I understand potential budget restraints, I find it worrisome that the City of Madison will not be able to address discrimination complaints in a timely manner. A few weeks ago, Kids Forward released their Race to Equity- 10 Year Report. As highlighted in this report, horrendous racial disparities continue to permeate our community and multiple challenges remain. Funding an Investigator position would signal that the City of Madison Common Council supports the idea that everybody, regardless of backgrounds, should be free from discrimination. Please know that any considerations would be greatly appreciated-and noticed.

Best wishes and care.

Brian Benford

2722 Center Avenue, Madison WI 53704

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** City of Madison <noreply@cityofmadison.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 12:23 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** [All Alders] City of Madison 2024 Operating Budget

Recipient: All Alders:

Tue, 11/14/2023 - 12:19

Jamie Blessing  
they/them  
101 Riverside Dr  
Madison, Wisconsin. 53704 Yes, by email. [emfblessing@gmail.com](mailto:emfblessing@gmail.com) All Alders City of Madison 2024  
Operating Budget

Dear members of the Common Council,

I'm writing today because it's city budget season and I want to see the City invest in the measures that meet our community's needs.

Specifically, I'm writing to urge you to significantly expand staffing, staff pay, and hours of operation for CARES by redistributing money from the police budget. I'm also writing in support of the proposed amendment to invest \$275,000 in CARES. If we want to undo decades of damning statistics about our racist policing and incarceration, if we want to build a future in this community for everyone, we need our common council to make a serious commitment to alternatives to policing and the status quo.

I would also like to see the City make significant and robust investments in our youth by increasing funding for our neighborhood centers, youth programs, and youth workers. We know that real safety begins with the love and care of our youth. And we know that youth need our clear-eyed and open-hearted investment, not the ongoing harm of being policed and not youth programs led by police.

At minimum, I'd like to see the Common Council direct the proposed \$77,000 in neighborhood centers and youth workers.

Thank you for your time,  
Jamie Blessing

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Lynn <madwisconner@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 6:38 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** Please add to police budget-don't cut

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good Morning

In a time of unprecedented growth in population and density, reckless driving, record homicides, a growing gang and gun problem, and significant police staffing issues, should our city leaders really be cutting the police budget by nearly **\$3 million!** Plus the demand that ALL departments in the city cut by 1% while the mayor is increasing hers by 26%. I implore you to read this through, consider the safety and well-being of the citizens you represent and do the right thing to vote to increase the much needed police protection for our city. With the present cuts for police you are setting the officers up to fail. Would you work in a job like that?

Dear Alders,

Thank you for all the work you do as you try to lead our rapidly growing city, especially at a stressful budget time.

I hope you will all read not only my excerpts, but also the whole article linked below. Minneapolis is in a police staffing crisis and about to spend at least **\$15 million** on hiring and retention (as you can read below).

Before you start thinking Minneapolis is much bigger than Madison, no wonder they need so many officers, realize the Minneapolis Police Department only covers the city proper, with its population of **425,336** residents. The Minnesota State Supreme Court ruled they're required to have at least **731 officers**.

Here in Madison, we have **223** total patrol officers responding to the calls of our **275,000+** residents. You are about to cut their budget by **3%** (nearly **\$3 million**) when **89.9% of the budget goes to personnel**. A cut of 1% off the top (for nearly \$1 million) and another 2% through an additional salary savings requirement.

Turns out the salary savings requirement was calculated based on the amount of previous positions being held vacant (which were the result of previous year's budget cuts) and previous attrition (which is high due to an unsustainable work environment and the aftermath of 2020). What a catch 22! This year's budget cuts will result in the doubling of positions held vacant and likely increase attrition further. In case anyone doesn't realize it, this younger generation does not value working a lot of overtime. They value time off, predictable time with family and friends, and planned vacations.

This massive cut to the police budget is putting our residents and our police officers in danger. But there is no way to stop this moving train. The majority on this Common Council is bent on it, and you justify it by looking at your bleak budget and saying every department is taking a 1% cut and it just isn't true. **The Mayor's Office budget is going up 26%. Metro Transit is increasing by some 6%**, to name a few.

The reality of what this cut will do to our already understaffed police department will only be compounded moving into the coming years of **rapid growth in terms of population and density** and the significant and

**rapidly growing structural deficit.** I wish you would all look at the current reality and where this is headed, and the plight of the cities that have gone before us down this road, because the results of these decisions are on you. You set the priorities and you hold the purse strings. **And you are accountable for the consequences.**

*I hope even just one of you will rise to the challenge and consider some key metrics, easily found in police documents:*

- When is the last time the minimum patrol requirement was increased? How many thousands of residents ago was that?
- How much time are patrol officers spending on Priority Calls Only status?
- Is the police department's Authorized Strength number high enough?
- How many patrol officers were responding to 911 calls in 2020 (221), and how many now, many thousands of residents since then? (223) Yet the number of beats increased by just 3, from 95 to 98, and that was when 5,000+ residents of the Town of Madison came into the City.
- How many officers have retired or resigned this year?
- How much city money is being spent on officer overtime? (\$3.1 million in just the first 3 quarters of this year. That does not include state and federal overtime grant money, that is just what the city is spending on police overtime).

From the article:

"The mayor of Minneapolis and the city's top cop are ready to recruit, and they have a new plan to put more police back on the beat as Minnesota's largest city is down hundreds of officers.

Police Chief Brian O'Hara said his department's dangerously low numbers are not sustainable.

"The reality on the ground is our cops are **going from call to call to call all day long,**" O'Hara said.

**So are ours.**

<https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/minneapolis-police-chief-brian-ohara-unveils-new-plan-for-hiring-more-police-officers/>

*Anyone willing to read about more cities that have gone down this road and its harmful effects before you vote to take this plunge?*

The city of Portland, Oregon preceded us on this path. And now it will pay \$1 million from its budget to begin paying officers double their standard rate of pay to work overtime in hopes of better filling vacant patrol shifts amid the bureau's ongoing staffing crisis.

<https://www.koin.com/news/portland/ppb-offering-officers-double-overtime-to-fill-vacant-shifts-amid-staffing-crisis/>

<https://manhattan.institute/article/portlands-police-staffing-crisis>

The Oakland Police Department has one year to speed up its notoriously slow emergency response times, California officials have warned, or the city risks losing important state funding — and even the authority to answer 911 calls at all. "The situation is at a crisis point given the volume of calls and the level of crime that's reported," Barry Donelan, the head of the city's police union, said in an interview. "It just seems to be us pedaling like mad on a stationary bicycle."

The number of pending calls, or those received by the police but for which officers are not immediately available, is frequently above 200 at a given time — much higher than previously recorded highs in recent years, which scarcely topped 100, according to department data.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2023/08/31/oakland-police-have-a-year-to-speed-up-911-response-times-and-a-lot-to-lose-if-they-dont/>

Or Seattle:

“The city’s police staffing crisis, now in its third year, has resulted in only 937 police officers available for deployment in the city as of August 31, 2023, the lowest number of in-service officers since 1991 and significantly below per-capita staffing relative to similarly situated jurisdictions,” a briefing memo in Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell’s 2024 budget proposal “The SPD has lost hundreds of officers since 2020, when the Seattle city council voted to defund the department. The council has since backtracked on defunding and has approved budget increases to the department, but the trend of more officers leaving than being hired has continued. “The number of staffing is alarming, and people should be concerned. Now, all the community policing officers are just on patrol being reactive to 911 calls, and still, our response times are too slow,” said Councilmember Alex Pedersen.

<https://komonews.com/news/local/seattle-police-department-staffing-level-lowest-since-1991-recruiting-incentive-investment-spd-king-county-budget-mayor-bruce-harrell-alex-pederson-applicants-law-enforcement-understaffed-fbi-sara-nelson>

*Please think about the consequences of these actions and do the right thing.*

For the sake of the residents you represent,

Lynn Brother  
District 15

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Dusten Carlson <dustencarlson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 13, 2023 4:29 PM  
**To:** Mayor; All Alders  
**Subject:** #Defund the police? In 2024? \*Really\*?

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

If I can't appeal to your common sense, or rising statistics about gun violence and homicide (which, let's face it, you're already aware of!), maybe I can appeal to your naked and craven senses of self-preservation.

Defund the police, even at the height of its popularity, [has always been underwater with voters](#).

Stop governing according to the diktats of out-of-touch progressive activists.

Yours truly, a Millennial DEMOCRAT voter.

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** City of Madison <noreply@cityofmadison.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 10, 2023 2:52 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Budget

Recipient: All Alders:

Fri, 11/10/2023 - 14:48

Carrie Cooper

She/her

6 Ward Court

Madison , Wisconsin. 53713 Yes, by email. [carriecm11@gmail.com](mailto:carriecm11@gmail.com) All Alders Budget Dear Alders,

I'm writing today because it's city budget season and I want to see the City invest in the measures that meet our community's needs.

Specifically, I'm writing to urge you to significantly expand staffing, staff pay, and hours of operation for CARES by redistributing money from the police budget. I'm also writing in support of the proposed amendment to invest \$275,000 in CARES. If we want to undo decades of damning statistics about our racist policing and incarceration, if we want to build a future in this community for everyone, we need our common council to make a serious commitment to alternatives to policing and the status quo.

I would also like to see the City make significant and robust investments in our youth by increasing funding for our neighborhood centers, youth programs, and youth workers. We know that real safety begins with the love and care of our youth. And we know that youth need our clear-eyed and open-hearted investment, not the ongoing harm of being policed and not youth programs led by police.

At minimum, I'd like to see the Common Council direct the proposed \$77,000 in neighborhood centers and youth workers.

Thank you for your time,

Carrie Cooper

6 Ward Court, Madison WI 53713



## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Araceli Esparza <wisconsinmujer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 1:29 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** In favor of more funding for a new EOC position

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Subject: Support for Increased City Budget to Fund Equal Opportunities Investigator in Madison, Wisconsin  
Dear Common Council of Madison, Wisconsin I am writing to express my strong support for the proposal to increase the city budget to allocate funds for an Equal Opportunities Investigator for the city of Madison, Wisconsin. In our dynamic and diverse community, it is essential to prioritize initiatives that promote fairness, inclusivity, and equal opportunities for all residents. The establishment of a dedicated Equal Opportunities Investigator position will play a crucial role in addressing potential disparities and fostering a more equitable environment within our city. This professional will be instrumental in investigating and resolving issues related to discrimination, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, have a fair chance to thrive and contribute to the community. Investing in such a position reflects a commitment to upholding the principles of justice, diversity, and inclusion that are fundamental to the well-being of our residents. By proactively addressing concerns related to equal opportunities, we not only enhance the quality of life for individuals but also contribute to the overall strength and unity of our community. I urge you to consider the long-term benefits that investing in equal opportunities can bring to Madison. A city that actively promotes fairness and inclusivity is better positioned for sustained growth, increased civic engagement, and a more positive reputation. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I am confident that your support for this budget increase will contribute significantly to the ongoing development and prosperity of our beloved city. Sincerely, Araceli Esparza

**Matthias, Isaac L**

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**From:** Linda Ketcham <linda@justdane.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 12:31 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** Support of Operating Amendments related to EOC Investigator and Violence Prevention Services for At Risk Apartment Buildings

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to express JustDane's support for the Amendment adding 1.0 FTE Equal Opportunities Investigator position to the Department of Civil Rights. This position is crucial to the DCR's ability to handle the increased volume of discrimination complaints being received. As an organization that works with individuals who are frequently discriminated against whether due to conviction history, race or ethnicity, income, we believe the additional investigator is needed so that complaints can move more quickly through the process. We have been pleased that part of DCR's outreach to our community has included attending our Reentry Service Fairs to make sure people impacted by the criminal legal system know that they have rights. We would hate to see this vital outreach function diminished due to lack of staffing within DCR, a critical department in a community that has some of the highest racial disparities in the country related to homelessness, poverty and arrest and incarceration rates. As an agency we are doing our part, becoming part of the DCR Community Partner Program to assist the individuals with whom we work in filing a complaint, now we are hoping the Common Council will do its part and add the additional investigator position so that complaints can move more quickly to resolution helping individuals who have been discriminated against find remedy and resolution. We urge you to support this Amendment.

We also support the Amendment for Violence Prevention Services for At Risk Apartment Buildings. These funds will support building residents while reducing violence at the sites. These funds will provide additional resources for the non-profit agencies in our community that have already stepped up to provide violence reduction services so that there can be a greater presence at those sites. Currently the organizations working to provide support and services are not specifically being funded for work at those units, they have taken it on because the work needs to be done. The additional funds under this Amendment will help the organizations add staff hours and resources to increase their presence and better address challenges residents are facing while offering initiatives and services to reduce violence and tensions in the identified apartment buildings in our City. We urge you to support this Amendment.

Sincerely,

Linda Ketcham (she, her, hers)  
Executive Director  
Madison-area Urban Ministry, Inc. (dba JustDane)  
128 E. Olin Ave. Suite 202  
Madison, WI 53713  
608-256-0906  
She, her, hers

*"Compassion and justice are companions, not choices." Wm. Sloane Coffin*

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Corinda Rainey-Moore  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 2:28 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** Amendment #4

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good afternoon City Alders. I am writing you all to say that I am in favor of including the funding for a new position in the Department of Civil Rights. This position is very much needed to support the work in this area also to support the work of the Equal Opportunities Commission. This work includes work around housing, zoning, policy, and discrimination and training and education to community members and to businesses. Because of this, more resources including another staffing position is needed. I am asking you all to consider this as you make your decisions on the budget. Thank you all for your time and for your service.

Sincerely,

Corinda Rainey-Moore

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Neil Rainford <NRainford@afscme32.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 12:58 PM  
**To:** All Alders; Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.  
**Cc:** Lara Mainella; Walt Jackson; Joe Seifert; Bonjour Shawn (sbonjour97@gmail.com); jeff blicharz; Gregg Gotzion; Hillson, Erin; Rolfs, Daniel  
**Subject:** FW: Support for Operating Budget and General Municipal Employee's Wage Parity  
**Attachments:** 2023 Draft Communications Wage Equity 11 14 2023.docx

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good Afternoon Council members and Mayor Rhodes-Conway,

Attached to this email you will find a letter in support of the Mayor's Proposed Operating Budget on behalf of all General Municipal Employees, including those represented by AFSCME, Local 6000.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the Mayor and her Staff to close this pay gap, and hope that you will support the passage of the Operating Budget with pay parity during your budget deliberations. We look forward to working collaboratively into the future to continue to address the challenges that face our City.

Best regards,  
Neil

*Neil Rainford*  
*AFSCME Representative*  
*(608) 212 – 2296*  
[nrainford@afscme32.org](mailto:nrainford@afscme32.org)

## Madison's Municipal Employees Request for Wage Equity

November 2023

Dear Alders:

We are the city of Madison's municipal employees, and we are writing to ask for your support for the 2024 Operating Budget:

As you may recall, the City's general municipal employees fell six percent behind the city's protective service employees (police and fire) early in this decade and RES-20-00789 (File 62649) concluded with the Council's directive,

“BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Common council recommends a wage package that achieves wage equity by 2024.”

Thanks to your work in 2023 and in previous years, there was progress in closing the wage equity gap. For 2024, Mayor Rhodes-Conway has included general municipal employee wage increases in her executive operating budget to finish closing the wage equity gap. We appreciate her efforts to implement your longstanding commitment.

This week, we ask for your support for the Mayor's proposed Operating Budget, as currently drafted and amended, that closes the wage equity-gap completely.

Gregg Gotzion, President - Local #6000

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

Jeff Blicharz, President - Local #236

Laborer's International Union of North America (LIUNA)

Lara Mainella, President –

Madison City Attorneys' Association (MCAA)

Dan Rolfs, President –

Madison Professional and Supervisory Employees' Association (MPSEA)

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Bonnie Roe <bonnie.roe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 11, 2023 11:17 AM  
**To:** Mayor; All Alders; Tishler, Bill  
**Cc:** Patterson, John  
**Subject:** Police Budget Cut

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor and Alders,

Thank you for all the work you do as you try to lead our rapidly growing city, especially at a stressful budget time.

I hope you will all read not only my excerpts, but also the whole article linked below. Minneapolis is in a police staffing crisis and about to spend at least **\$15 million** on hiring and retention (as you can read below).

Before you start thinking Minneapolis is much bigger than Madison, no wonder they need so many officers, realize the Minneapolis Police Department only covers the city proper, with its population of **425,336** residents. The Minnesota State Supreme Court ruled they're required to have at least **731** officers.

Here in Madison, we have **223** total patrol officers, working 24/7 across 5 shifts, responding to the calls of our **275,000+** residents. You are about to cut their budget by **3%** (nearly **\$3 million**) when **89.9% of the budget goes to personnel**. A cut of 1% off the top (for nearly \$1 million) and another 2% through an additional salary savings requirement.

Turns out the salary savings requirement was calculated based on the amount of previous positions being held vacant within the police department (which were the result of previous year's budget cuts) and previous attrition (which is high, in part, due to an unsustainable work environment and the aftermath of 2020). What a catch 22! This year's budget cuts will result in the doubling of positions held vacant and likely increase attrition further. In case anyone doesn't realize it, this younger generation does not value working a lot of overtime. Most value time off, predictable time with family and friends, and planned vacations.

This massive cut to the police budget is putting our residents and our police officers in danger. But there is no way to stop this moving train. The majority on this Common Council is bent on it, and you justify it by looking at your bleak budget and saying every department is taking a 1% cut and it just isn't true. **The Mayor's Office budget is going up 29%. Metro Transit is increasing by some 6%**, to name a few.

The reality of what this cut will do to our already understaffed police department will only be compounded moving into the coming years of **rapid growth in terms of population and density** and the **significant and rapidly growing structural deficit**. I wish you would all look at the current reality and where this is headed, and the plight of the cities that have gone before us down this road, because the results of these decisions are on you. You set the priorities and you hold the purse strings. **And you are accountable for the consequences.**

*I hope even just one of you will rise to the challenge and consider some key metrics, easily found in police documents:*

- When is the last time the minimum patrol shift requirement was increased? How many thousands of residents ago was that?
- How much time are patrol officers spending on Priority Calls Only status?
- Is the police department's Authorized Strength number high enough?
- How many patrol officers were responding to 911 calls in 2020 (221), and how many now, many thousands of residents since then? (223) Yet the number of beats increased by just 3, from 95 to 98, and that was when 5,000+ residents of the Town of Madison came into the City.
- How many officers have retired or resigned this year?
- How much city money is being spent on officer overtime? (\$3.1 million in just the first 3 quarters of this year. That does not include state and federal overtime grant money, that is just what the city is spending on police overtime).

From the article:

"The mayor of Minneapolis and the city's top cop are ready to recruit, and they have a new plan to put more police back on the beat as Minnesota's largest city is down hundreds of officers.

Police Chief Brian O'Hara said his department's dangerously low numbers are not sustainable.

"The reality on the ground is **our cops are going from call to call to call all day long**," O'Hara said.

**So are ours.**

<https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/minneapolis-police-chief-brian-ohara-unveils-new-plan-for-hiring-more-police-officers/>

*Anyone willing to read about more cities that have gone down this road and its harmful effects before you vote to take this plunge?*

The city of Portland, Oregon preceded is on this path. And now it will pay \$1 million from its budget to begin paying officers double their standard rate of pay to work overtime in hopes of better filling vacant patrol shifts amid the bureau's ongoing staffing crisis.

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The Oakland Police Department has one year to speed up its notoriously slow emergency response times, California officials have warned, or the city risks losing important state funding — and even the authority to answer 911 calls at all. “The situation is at a crisis point given the volume of calls and the level of crime that’s reported,” Barry Donelan, the head of the city’s police union, said in an interview. “It just seems to be us pedaling like mad on a stationary bicycle.”

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Or Seattle:

“The city’s police staffing crisis, now in its third year, has resulted in only 937 police officers available for deployment in the city as of August 31, 2023, the lowest number of in-service officers since 1991 and significantly below per-capita staffing relative to similarly situated jurisdictions,” a briefing memo in Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell’s 2024 budget proposal “The SPD has lost hundreds of officers since 2020, when the Seattle city council voted to defund the department. The council has since backtracked on defunding and has approved budget increases to the department, but the trend of more officers leaving than being hired has continued. “The number of staffing is alarming, and people should be concerned. Now, all the community policing officers are just on patrol being reactive to 911 calls, and still, our response times are too slow,” said Councilmember Alex Pedersen.

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Please think about the consequences of these actions and do the right thing.

For the sake of your residents,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11  
608-239-1748

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Dan Rolfs <dwrolfs333@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 7:09 AM  
**To:** All Alders; Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.  
**Cc:** Neil Rainford; Lara Mainella; Walt Jackson; Joe Seifert; Bonjour Shawn (sbonjour97@gmail.com); jeff blicharz; Gregg Gotzion; Hillson, Erin  
**Subject:** Support for Operating Budget and General Municipal Employee's Wage Parity  
**Attachments:** 2023 Draft Communications Wage Equity 11 14 2023.docx

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Good morning Council members and Mayor Rhodes-Conway.

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We greatly appreciate the efforts of the Mayor and her Staff to close this pay gap, and hope that you will support the passage of the Operating Budget with pay parity during your budget deliberations. We look forward to working collaboratively into the future to continue to address the challenges that face our City.

Best regards,  
Dan Rolfs  
MPSEA Board President.

## Madison's Municipal Employees Request for Wage Equity

November 2023

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Gregg Gotzion, President - Local #6000

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

Jeff Blicharz, President - Local #236

Laborer's International Union of North America (LIUNA)

Lara Mainella, President –

Madison City Attorneys' Association (MCAA)

Dan Rolfs, President –

Madison Professional and Supervisory Employees' Association (MPSEA)

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Paul Soglin <psoglin@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 11, 2023 11:15 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** ARPA  
**Attachments:** ARPA and the 2024 Madison Budget.docx

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Madison' s use of ARPA funds is creating a long term problem. See attached.

Paul R. Soglin

Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest. Mark Twain

Paul Soglin  
121 Standish Court  
Madison WI 53705  
608-770-0947  
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### Madison Budget and ARPA

The commitments Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway is making in the 2024 budget in regard to the expenditure of ARPA funds raises concerns and questions.

There is no question that the city could justify doubling its present expenditures for community services, tackling the challenges of poverty, health, and housing. But this must be done within the limits imposed by state law regarding the size of the municipal tax levy and the capacity of residents to pay.

While the concerns raised here are focused on 2025 and beyond, I am sure that you are aware that when tax bills go out in December, many renters will subsequently experience great pain from their significant rents increases as will home owners who directly pay their property tax.

The problem is what happens when ARPA funds run out. On pages 9-10 of the city budget there is a discussion of the use of ARPA funds.

ARPA was created to do two things. First ARPA was to replace lost revenues from the pandemic. The assumption was that by 2024 municipalities would recover their lost revenues and could continue providing basic services. An examination of anticipated revenues for Madison shows that to be true. Everything from property tax revenues to the operation at golf courses and Monona Terrace are at or approaching previous levels.

Secondly, ARPA was also designed to address the increased needs for public services in areas where demand would grow because of the pandemic: public health and housing.

On page nine of the 2024 budget there is a breakdown of how the money was spent by topic. The breakdown does not say where the money went – to fund non-profits or into the city budget.

Page ten tells us how the remainder of the money will be spent next year. Note that in the next to last paragraph it says the project total for Homeless Support is \$7.1 million.

If these ARPA funds were spent, as intended - to deal with pandemic generated displacement, then there would be no problem.

If these funds were used for NEW and emerging programs then there is a significant problem and the outline on pages nine and ten do not provide information to make an intelligent decision.

The single basic question is this: How much money does the city need to continue its operations and nonprofit support in 2025 when the ARPA funds expire.

Additional questions include

Do the nonprofits receiving these funds know there is no guarantee the city will continue funding in 2025?

How much will be needed to continue operating the homeless shelter after ARPA and where will it come from?

What existing city programs are in jeopardy for lack of funding after ARPA?

Solutions to the spending of this money for well-intentioned and vital programs needs a dose of reality, especially after the significant property tax increase schedule for 2024 and any subsequent increases should they exceed the levy limits in 2025.

I would suggest a realistic solution be approached that is fashioned after Milwaukee's success with the last state budget. Investment in a city in-house lobbyist as well as a contracted lobbying firm is in order. It is possible that the state would increase the payments in lieu of taxes for service to state owned property and or provide Madison with a transit sales tax.

Do not dismiss a sales tax since in most cases it is actually more progressive than the property tax. For a household making \$50,000 a year a significant portion of their income goes for sales tax exempt purchases: housing, food, and health care. For a household making \$100,000 a year, a significant portion of their income goes to discretionary purchases that are subject to the sales tax.

In addition, visitors to Madison will pay the sales tax which might account for over 15-20% of the revenue.

Footnote: How this happened.

ARPA was principally designed to make up for lost local and state government revenues caused by the pandemic. The principle revenue sources are income taxes, sales taxes and property taxes. The greatest losses occurred in the first two categories: income and sales tax.

As most Wisconsinites, especially Madisonians know, local governments in the Badger State are greatly dependent upon property taxes. For Madison it is usually about 74% of annual revenues.

Consequently, when local governments received their ARPA funds, localities used most or all of it to make up for the loss of income and sales tax revenues. Madison like most communities used a portion of ARPA funds to make up loss revenues for the transit system though it was not an overwhelming number since public transit systems operate at a loss. In fact the lower the service level, the lower the subsidy.

Then Madison's Mayor realized that our cities revenue losses were far less than most other cities'. Lost property tax revenues were minimal compared to cities that were incurring losses from income and sales taxes.

That meant ARPA funds could be spent on a number of very popular programs designed to combat poverty, homelessness, and the disparity caused by historical racism. Of course, some of these politically popular ideas were hastily assembled and violated the federal ARPA law, which is noted on pages nine and ten of the 2024 budget.

With "other people's money" (the Federal government's) it was easy for the Mayor to propose and have the city council approve the past two years of spending. This is what is referred to as "feel good" legislation. "Feel good" is when you pass something that makes people happy and there are no serious consequences.

In this instance not immediately.

Other cities who principally spent their ARPA money on lost tax revenues and the temporary displacements caused by the pandemic are now flowing into the future without much pain.

Madison now faces a major financial crises starting in 2025 (Actually it is already here but gimmicks in the proposed 2024 budget totaling over \$25 million put it off.).

The pain will hit two ways. First there is no existing source of revenues to continue the combined folly of BRT and wild ARPA expenditures. Secondly Madison residents will find that the first and most stable necessity, housing, is under pressure created by the Mayor's budget.

There are four pressures that drive up the cost of housing. (1) A shortage. (2) Energy costs. (3) Interest rates. (4) Taxes.

While there is record new construction the past decade addressing the shortage, it is not alleviating the cost of housing as it should. That is in part because of the last three variables, only one of which the city has control: Taxes.

Most existing housing **is not** impacted by rising interest rates. Energy costs have stabilized. Last year, this year, next year, and subsequent years, it is property taxes that will drive up rents and the cost of home ownership.

With all of the clamor about the cost of housing, one has to wonder if Mayor Rhodes Conway understands the city role in the increased cost of housing.



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November 12, 2023

Dear Alders (and the public):

Mayor Satya Rhodes Conway requested that every city department prepare a 2024 operating budget lower than 2023. Most followed that direction with one major exception.

The Mayor's own 2024 operating budget contains a 26% increase driven by a \$119,850 Public Information Officer (PIO) and another \$75,000 "in consulting services to augment the capacity of the city wide PIO..."

As most of you know that is not the purpose of this massive budget increase. The purpose is to gain political support and paid media when the Mayor attempts to solve her financial crisis in November of 2024 with a referendum that will allow Madison to exceed the state levy limits.

Some of you know when the Mayor privately contacted you, the city is facing a horrible problem, made by her own hand and she desperately needs this money. By 2025 the financing gimmickry she used will collapse. The wheel tax, the garbage tax, the use of borrowed Reoffering Premium, the application of "Rainy Day" funds, the increase in Salary Savings\* will be exhausted.

She needs to raise a minimum of an additional \$35 million\*\* annually to pay for her irresponsible budgeting.

Some of you are a members of Progressive Dane which says in its Mission Statement: "We will work to improve our local government by making it open..."

It is time to end the deceit. It is time for open and honest government. Tell the voters that this is to prepare for a media campaign to raise property taxes.

The 2024 property tax bill will provide a painful increase. Renters realize that the rising property taxes are a significant portion of rising rents. Homeowners will also feel it. If the proposed November 2024 referendum passes, the pain will be unbearable for many.

For those of you who have a progressive vision of providing Madisonians with affordable housing atop the insanity, stop the 26% increase in her budget, stop making Madison housing unaffordable.

\*which reduces basic city services

\*\* More likely \$50 million

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Kathy <kaviets@charter.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2023 11:32 AM  
**To:** Mayor; All Alders  
**Subject:** Budget Cuts

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello All,

I understand that times are tough financially and hard decisions have to be made. I am asking that you reconsider cutting funds for MPD.

Our once great and safe city has changed so much. It is no longer safe to live in our homes or travel in our city.

MPD's current budget doesn't provide enough funding to maintain the department we need to have. Cutting their budget more will cause dire consequences.

Please reconsider these cuts. It is truly a matter of life and death.

Respectfully,

Kathy Viets