Awarding the 18th Annual Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award to
Madelyn Leopold

WHEREAS, the Madison Common Council created the Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award in memory of Jeffrey Erlanger's contributions to the City of Madison; and

WHEREAS, the Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award Committee has selected Madelyn Leopold as recipient of the 2024 award. She is an individual who exemplifies the values that are fundamental to this award and were so admirably demonstrated by Jeff Erlanger; and

WHEREAS, Madelyn served on the City of Madison Board of Park Commissioners from 2010 to 2021 and as President from April 2018 to May 2020. Madelyn also served as the Park Commission representative on the Board of the Madison Park Foundation, the Parks Long Range Planning Committee, the Parks Habitat Stewardship Subcomittee, and the Golf Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, Madelyn cares deeply about the protection and enjoyment of the land that makes up Madison's public parks. She is an avid user of public parks, never taking for granted the opportunities they provide. As a Park Commissioner, Madelyn invited, led, and actively participated in constructive conversations about the issues brought before the Board. She carefully questioned any use of parks that would limit public access to them. She argued for the value of "unprogrammed" parks, where it's possible to simply be in a natural setting and appreciate its gifts. She helped the Park Commission and members of the public balance the competing priorities of the park system; and

WHEREAS, Madelyn left a legacy of policies to protect park ecosystems and foster equitable access to park amenities. Examples of Madelyn's deft touch were her work with the Golf Subcommittee during the time it was developing long-term recommendations about the continued existence of public golf in Madison in the face of significant financial and logistical challenges. She also led meetings regarding the inclusion of community garden space in parks; the Garver Feed Mill development; the adoption of standards for sound amplification in parks; more consistent evaluation of private events that would exclude the public from park use and enactment of a new policy on dogs in parks. By focusing on both process and outcome, while prioritizing access for all, Madelyn was a voice for equity and inclusion in our park system; and

WHEREAS, Madelyn is a regular reader at the Arboretum's "Madison Reads Leopold" - an event in commemoration of the conservation ethic developed by Madelyn's grandfather, Aldo Leopold, the first director of the UW-Madison Arboretum. It promotes young people learning about the natural world and the land ethic about which her grandfather so eloquently wrote. Madelyn is on the advisory board of the Wisconsin Sea Grant academic program that supports research, education and outreach for the conservation and sustainable use of Wisconsin waters, particularly the Great Lakes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Madelyn Leopold has been chosen to receive the 18th Annual Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and the Common Council of the City of Madison, Wisconsin, congratulate and thank Madelyn for all she has done, and continues to do, for our Madison community.

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Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway
Signed and sealed this 28th day of January, 2025 at City Hall