

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

April 13, 2007

Ald. Tony Zielinski  
(414) 286-3769

## Council Members Could Put Onus On Administration For 3<sup>rd</sup> MPD Class

*Measure at Council Tuesday Would Put Budget Office Promise to Hire Third 2007  
Officer Recruit Class on the Record*

Milwaukee Ald. Tony Zielinski says he wants Mayor Tom Barrett's administration to back up a promise made by the city's budget office that there will be funding for a third police recruit class in 2007.

In fact, Ald. Zielinski has drafted a resolution to be considered by the full Common Council on Tuesday (April 17) that – if approved – puts the Council on record as supporting the hiring of a third class of police officer recruits as promised by the Department of Administration's Mark Nicolini, the city's budget director.

In an unusual twist earlier this year, Nicolini told Council members that a Council request for funding for a third 2007 police recruit class – funding that would have come from the city's damages and claims fund – wasn't necessary because the class could be funded through savings from other police department budget sources.

Ald. Zielinski, the primary sponsor of that original legislation, said the announcement by Nicolini (also outlined in an attached March 27 letter to Public Safety Chair Ald. Bob Donovan) caught many Council members off guard. "We certainly appreciated the good news that we wouldn't need to take any action as a Council, but I think it's very important for the Council to take this proactive step of passing this resolution and keeping this important measure on the record," said the alderman, a member of the Council's Public Safety Committee.

**-More-**

### **Third Recruit Class – On the Record/ADD ONE**

John Balcerzak, president of the Milwaukee Police Association, said he strongly supports the resolution, which was passed by the Public Safety Committee on March 29.

“We need to make sure this promise and this plan by the administration doesn’t suddenly go by the wayside, because we need to get these officers on the street,” Balcerzak said. “The (March 27) letter puts the administration’s promise of a third officer class on the record, and we need to hold the mayor’s feet to the fire on this.”

Ald. Zielinski’s proposal also included adding 10 positions of police service specialist investigator (PSSI) to help the Milwaukee Police Department wade through background investigations of police recruit candidates. Ten temporary PSSIs were brought on board this month after the budget office was able to locate funding from within the MPD budget. He has indicated that having the PSSIs handle the police recruit background investigations is absolutely essential if the city is to successfully add a third recruit class and move up the second class to mid-August (from December 2007), which the budget office has said can happen without Council action.

Ald. Zielinski and several colleagues have said a third police officer recruit class this year is critical because of a spike in vacancies resulting from smaller than anticipated 2006 recruit classes and increased retirements and other separations from employment.

**The regular meeting of the Common Council will begin at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, April 17, 2007, in the third floor Council Chamber at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.**