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**To:** <rleonh@milwaukee.gov>  
**Date:** 10/10/03 1:34PM  
**Subject:** Budget Hearing 10/13/2003

October 10, 2003

Good evening Common Council Member:

This is the speech I would have given Monday night October 13, 2003 at the public budget hearing, but I had surgery and cannot attend.

The 2004 budget is a fine kettle of fish. The current administration has let infrastructure repairs go unfixed for far too long, slowly chipped away at basic services and backed our fair city into a corner. Even though the loss of shared revenue has hurt us badly, the proposed elimination of all 600 vacancies and layoffs will cost us more than it will save.

I am a property tax payer and will pay more, if necessary, to keep basic services and save money in the long run.

First, this new budget does not mention file number 020790 passed on March 4, 2003. Until we get a new Mayor this probably will not be pushed. This resolution was passed to earn revenue for the city by optional use of Public Works equipment and employees for provision of services to public and private agencies. This resolution has not been implemented except for street sweeping in Wauwatosa. I blame the cabinet form of government system. It is politically driven and not cost effective. I challenge the next mayor, who is sitting in this room, to eliminate it and go back to Civil Service as before 1988.

The executive summary of the DPW section calls for reduced plowing of non-arterial streets. Cutting back on plowing of side streets is a disaster waiting to happen.

Cutting back on all the vacancies will cost us a lot more in the long run. Just one example: we are eliminating vehicle technicians and garage attendants in 2004. Right now our own employees do these repairs for a total cost of \$55 per hour, that is labor, facilities overhead and all benefits etc.. The cheapest outside vendor is \$85 per hour. This will cost more for every private repair. Some vacancies MUST be filled.

Save \$2.5 million by NOT planning to relocate or eliminate our asphalt plant, infrastructure facilities and Central Repair Services Garage on Canal Street. We cannot afford it. It is money wasted, like last years move of the SW shop to Canal St. We have reorganized when not needed, moved the parking checkers twice. What is next?

Right now, the Menominee Valley is a mix of industrial, athletic, entertainment, and public facilities. We must defeat this new, UNNEEDED debt.

High weed cutting on lots should go back to Operations Division for revenue producing purposes. Dump the private contractors, do it in-house, we have the equipment.

Keep a minimum of three Prentice Loaders working this winter, just like last year. Each one man PIL, working on special pick-ups will save the city over \$4,300 per month.

Together, the Common Council, the new Mayor and the workers can dig ourselves out of this hole that we have been left in. We can do it if we work together.

Just like we did in the Marine Corps.

Semper Fi.

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As I will be unable to attend the hearing on October 13, 2003, please have this letter typed into the record.

Thank you