

Lee, Chris

From: Bohl, James
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2015 9:59 PM
To: Lee, Chris; Owczarski, Jim
Subject: Fwd: Please enter this statement into the record for the CC's ZND Committee
Attachments: PWS Remarks to CC PND Committee 9.15.15.docx; ATT00001.htm

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Patrick Small <patwills53211@yahoo.com>
Date: September 14, 2015 at 9:53:16 PM CDT
To: "jowcza@milwaukee.gov" <jowcza@milwaukee.gov>
Cc: "jbohl@milwaukee.gov" <jbohl@milwaukee.gov>, Nik Kovac <nkovac@milwaukee.gov>
Subject: Please enter this statement into the record for the CC's ZND Committee
Reply-To: Patrick Small <patwills53211@yahoo.com>

Dear Mr. Owczarski:

Ald. Bohl's aide said I could send this to you and request that it be entered into the public record with other files relating to the arena-subsidy package for the September 15th meeting at 9 a.m.

Thank you.

Pat Small
2860 N. Shepard Ave., Milwaukee, 53211

September 14, 2015

To Members of the Milwaukee Common Council:

I've attended Bucks game since 1968. I've lived in Milwaukee for over 40 years, paying taxes as a homeowner and, for many years, as a real-estate investor.

I am very concerned about the city's proposed arena subsidies for many reasons, but especially about the lack of transparency and forthright information. Figures and narrative defining the city's contributions to this deal do not represent all the valuable public assets this council seems intent on giving the billionaire owners of the Milwaukee Bucks. City officials are disguising or denying many facts. Taxpayers are not being treated honestly and equitably, or being shown any respect. Marquette University polling has revealed that the public is overwhelmingly opposed to these giveaways.

The city plans to borrow \$35 million for a new garage and \$20 million in TIF funding for so-called public plazas. That's \$55 million, not \$47 million, as city officials keep repeating. Why the discrepancy?

Also, a courtyard within the Bucks mall is no more a public space than the Grand Avenue atrium or any courtyard connected to a bar. Plazas will be controlled by the Bucks--and *the state arena bill has mandated they can be used only by the Bucks to generate income*. They would serve as a cash-corral sports bar—not a public space.

There's been no council discussion or public input about how and why major public assets are being declared surplus and given away. In 2012, taxpayers paid \$769,000 for the Sydney Hih lot on 3rd & Juneau, plus demolition costs. Last April, city officials said the parcel was worth \$1.1 million. Now the comptroller says it's worth only \$198,000. Now taxpayers will get a big fat zero for this prime land across from the Moderne.

The 4th Street garage is also being declared "surplus." In April, the city said it was worth \$7.4 million. We paid \$30 million to build this garage just 27 years ago. Commissioner Rocky Marcoux acknowledged in June the garage could be productive for another 30 years.

City officials originally said taxpayers would be credited \$8.5 million for the garage and Sydney Hih lot toward the city's portion of the Bucks' legalized extortion. Now, neither giveaway is credited in this horrible bait-and-switch scheme. They will simply be given to the billionaire Bucks owners, valued at zero and called surplus. What's really worth zero is the credibility of Commissioner Marcoux, Mayor Barrett, County Exec Abele, and Governor Walker.

Taxpayers will also pay about 4.5 million for arena-related infrastructure from other Tax Increment District accounts. The city also has agreed to cover unknown costs for sewer upgrades

for public land the Bucks have been given, and repaving of streets not included in TIF borrowing. Those costs to taxpayers will likely remain hidden.

As mandated in the state's bill, the Bucks will also not pay property taxes on a team merchandise shop in their mall. Nor will the Bucks pay taxes on the mall's courtyard--what Wes Edens hopes will be "the country's biggest outdoor sports bar." That's contrary to assertions that mall businesses will all pay taxes.

Also, \$35 million for the unnecessary new garage seems inflated. Last fall, Northwestern Mutual said it would spend \$20,000 per space for a garage (and they don't build anything on the cheap). Thus, the city should pay at most \$25 million for 1,243-spaces. That's another mysterious \$10 million giveaway to Bucks owners.

All these gifts are mere cherries on the sickeningly sweet arena-deal sundae the state and county already gave Bucks owners. City taxpayers will pay for this deal coming and going--through four taxing authorities--including every time we eat out.

Insiders say enough Common Council votes were counted long ago favoring this deal without any attempt to improve it for taxpayers. There's been no public engagement about plans for the arena, the Bucks bar mall, or development of Park East and other public land they're getting for free. It's been a 100-percent top-down and secretive process. There's still not even a business plan or detailed drawings on the table. This mall will surely cannibalize nearby businesses. Yet no council member or Milwaukee business leader has expressed any concern.

In closing, I ask the council to demand a totaling of the real taxpayers costs, and to delay a vote until the HVS financial review of costs and fiscal impacts, commissioned by Comptroller Martin Matson, is released and able to be analyzed by taxpayers.

I urge you to not simply rubber stamp this horrendous deal. Please protect taxpayers' interests, as demanded by your role as public stewards. Negotiate a fair deal. Keep the 4th Street garage. Do not enable the Bucks to siphon off downtown's beverage business into their "revenue stream."

Pat Small

2860 N. Shepard Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53211