## 2015-16 Legislative Session Wrap-up

The City of Milwaukee's Intergovernmental Relations Division (IRD) recently concluded its efforts for the 2015-16 State of Wisconsin Legislative Session. The following are some statistics regarding the City's legislative efforts.

- The Legislature introduced 1,800 bills in the 2015-16 session, 1,005 in the Assembly and 795 in the Senate.
- IRD reviewed all 1,800 of those bills and the City of Milwaukee registered to lobby on 136 of them (roughly 7.5%), including 74 Assembly bills and 62 Senate bills. All but 20 bills had companions, meaning that 58 of the bills were identical in the Assembly and Senate.
- Of the 1,800 bills that were introduced, the Governor signed 392 into law and vetoed or partially vetoed six. This includes 2015 WI Act 55, the State Budget.

## **Items We Supported**

- IRD was authorized to register in support of 74 bills.
- 12 bills and 4 budget items were enacted that addressed 18 items supported in the City's legislative package that was adopted in November of 2014:
  - Act 55 (State Budget) limits the provision of mental injury duty disability benefits to those resulting from a situation of greater dimensions than the day-to-day mental stresses that similarly situated employees experience as part of employment.
  - Act 55 (State Budget) creates a system of representation by the City Attorney that avoids legal conflicts between the City and MPS.
  - Act 55 (State Budget) increases the number of authorized Enterprise Zones from 20 to 30.
  - Act 55 (State Budget) limits the use of a junk bill of sale in auto salvage transactions.
  - ➤ Act 60 (Arena Bill) secured state support for the Milwaukee Bucks Arena.
  - ➤ Act 60 (Arena Bill) authorizes cities of the first class to establish a timeframe for the payment and/or adjudication of parking citations in Municipal Court.
  - Act 60 (Arena Bill) requires new owners of real estate to record the property with the Register of Deeds within 10 days.

- ➤ Act 126 –relating to a sales and use tax exemption for building materials that become a part of a facility for a local unit of government.
- Act 255 eliminates the requirement that local assessors include the value of tax exempt city-owned parcels in a TID for calculating the base value.
- ➤ Acts 265-268 expands the HOPE heroin package.
- Act 275 authorizes a first class city to adopt a new complaint-driven procedure to suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew a cigarette and tobacco products retailer license.
- ➤ Act 317 allows charge backs of refunded or rescinded property taxes from other taxing bodies under all circumstances.
- ➤ Act 321 requires the Department of Revenue to provide municipalities with a preliminary determination of equalized value annually by August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- ➤ Act 351 granting victims of certain crimes the right to be accompanied by a victim advocate.
- ➤ Act 392 restores financial assistance to recycling programs by \$3 million, or \$300k for Milwaukee.

## • 5 additional bills that were enacted were supported through separate Judiciary and Legislation action:

- ➤ Act 46 requires certain persons to hold certificates of food protection practices in order to operate school lunchrooms.
- ➤ Act 51 provides directional signage for the Basilica of St. Josaphat.
- Act 169 authorizes libraries to notify collection agencies and law enforcement agencies of delinquent accounts.
- > Act 219 prohibits adverse possession against the state or a political subdivision.
- ➤ Act 233 relating to the treatment of an animal that is taken into custody as an unclaimed animal, or when it is believed to have been used in a crime against animals.
- 3 additional bills were enacted that improve or preserve situations addressed in the legislative package:
  - ➤ Act 79 regarding publication of certain legal notices on an Internet site maintained by a municipality.
  - ➤ Act 55 (State Budget) removed enumeration of the I-94 East West project.
  - ➤ Act 141 secured an amendment that preserved the ability of MPD investigations to be completed before evidence was returned.

- 1 additional item from the legislative package was resolved through other means:
  - Establish reasonable towing and storage charges and set the form and manner of properly posted. Resolved through DOT Administrative Rule, the City's Metal Salvage Taskforce, and the City's newly enacted towing regulations.
- **15 additional items** from the legislative package were **introduced** as bills or budget amendments but **did not pass into law**:
  - ➤ AB 12 increasing the state minimum wage.
  - ➤ SB 30/AB 36 increasing the regulation of novelty lighters.
  - ➤ AB 85 restoring indexing provisions to the homestead tax credit.
  - ➤ AB 247/SB 159- requiring a criminal background check on all gun sales.
  - ➤ SB 209 (Arena Bill) establishing a presumption in municipal court that a parking ticket is presumptive evidence of the facts therein.
  - ➤ AB 260/SB 172 creating racial impact statements for bills that create a new crime or modify the penalty for an existing crime.
  - ➤ AB 274/SB 199 banning habitual offenders and violent misdemeanants from possessing a firearm and obtaining a concealed carry permit, and making unlawful possession a felony.
  - ➤ AB 350 increasing state payments for municipal services.
  - ➤ AB 484/SB 356 providing additional funding for the Transform Milwaukee job program and the Transitional Jobs program.
  - ➤ SB 621 creating a product stewardship law under the DNR where multiple product classes can be considered for designation under producer-funded stewardship programs.
  - > SB 625 allowing a municipality to designate additional satellite in-person absentee voting locations during each election.
  - AB 879/SB 675 prohibiting consideration of the conviction record of an applicant for employment before the applicant has been selected for an interview.
  - ➤ AB 895 requirement to report a lost or stolen firearm.
  - ➤ AB 945 reducing the penalty of a repeat offense of the possession of marijuana from a felony to a misdemeanor.
  - ➤ AB 948 prohibiting felons from possessing ammunition and providing a criminal penalty.

- Another 10 items from the legislative package were drafted as bills or budget amendments but were not introduced:
  - ➤ LRB 1320 —creating a procedure by which Business Improvement Districts may amend their boundaries.
  - ➤ LRB 3617 clarifying the taxability of triple-net leased properties.
  - ➤ LRB 4858 creating authority in Wis. Stat 349 to enable municipalities to designate bike parking and other customized parking areas on the street.
  - ➤ LRB 4427 including 6 technical items from our legislative package:
    - Creating a statute of limitations on refunds of remissions of property taxes.
    - Removing the ability of 1<sup>st</sup> class cities to sell land for non-payment of taxes since the City has not done this since 1947.
    - Deleting or changing outmoded and illegal references in the language of the city civil service statute.
    - Increasing HACM's threshold for bids from \$25,000 to \$100,000 to be consistent with US HUD procurement regulations.
    - Including any public housing unit subsidized by US HUD as exempt from taxation, consistent with federal law.
    - Increasing the Port's contract limits to match those of DPW and general city procurement.
  - ➤ LRB XXXX requiring community notification and the formation of community advisory committees for adult family homes. *Waiting on draft*.

## **Items We Opposed**

- IRD was authorized to oppose 39 bills that were introduced. 12 of those bills were enacted.
  - ➤ Act 16 regulation of transportation network companies.
  - Act 22 eliminates the waiting period for handgun purchases.
  - ➤ Act 23 allowing off-duty and former law enforcement officers to go armed with firearms near school grounds.
  - ➤ Act 65 limiting the authority of a city to create new occupational licenses or fees.
  - ➤ Act 122 exemption from lead inspection requirements for sampling or testing during certain lead-safe renovations.
  - ➤ Act 176 various provisions affecting landlord tenant law and city ordinances related to property inspections.
  - ➤ Act 261 eliminating special registration deputies and the counting of late arriving absentee ballots.

- ➤ Act 302 prohibiting local regulation of certain containers that are designed to be reused (i.e. plastic bags).
- ➤ Act 339 alcohol beverage violations involving underage persons issued to bartenders rather than the licensed premises.
- ➤ Act 374 regulating the production and use of photo identification cards by local units of government.
- ➤ Act 376 relating to the redemption period and procedures regarding an abandoned property in a foreclosure action.
- > Act 391 enhancing private property rights.
- We opposed **28 bills** that **did not become law**. Some highlights of the bills/provisions we defeated include:
  - > State Budget proposal to limit the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit to annual awards of \$10 million. Secured *Joint Finance amendment*.
  - > State Budget language that would have prohibited counties from incurring costs or forfeiting revenue related to streetcar construction. Secured partial veto.
  - > State Budget language to require a high deductible health insurance program that matched the state's program. Secured partial veto.
  - ➤ AB 774/SB 624 assessing certain items as real property for property tax purposes.
  - ➤ AB 269 funding of post-employment retirement benefits.
  - > SB 203 changing the assessment method for business improvement districts.
  - ➤ AB 480/SB 363 allowing firearms on public university campuses.
  - ➤ SB 369 prohibiting local ordinances and policies that prohibit immigration status inquiries and reports to/cooperation with other units of government about the presence of illegal aliens.
  - ➤ AB 554/SB 432 regarding out-of-state sewer and water affiliates of public utility holding companies and the sale or lease of municipal water or sewer public utilities to investor-owned public utilities.
  - ➤ AB 562 restricting state expenditures on a rail fixed guideway transportation system in a first class city.
  - ➤ AB 583/SB 446 restricting a local government's ability to restrict a person from renting out the person's residential dwelling.
- We also opposed **2 budget amendments** that we **prevented from being introduced**:
  - Amendment to eliminate the 12-year phase out of the school choice funding flaw.
  - Amendment to shift PSAP funding to counties only and require one PSAP per county.

- We opposed several items in the State Budget, 2015 WI Act 55, **that did become law,** such as:
  - ➤ Provision creating an opportunity schools and partnership program and requiring the City to implement a new system to sell underutilized school buildings to education operators.
  - > A \$4 million cut to the recycling grant program.
  - > Provision eliminating state funds for the community sensitive design program.