



[Free Film Festival Tickets](#) - [Become a Member](#) - [Member Login](#)

Search...



*Promise Keep*

Real Estate

Politics

Food & Drink

Arts & Entertainment

Events



3 Easy Steps:

- 1) Click 'Listen Now'
- 2) Download on our website!
- 3) Get Free Live Radio



Free Live Radio



CITY HALL

## How Long Will Flag Debate Last?

Arts Board might not have decision on the city flag by the end of 2018.

By Jeramey Jannene - Oct 11th, 2018 03:59 pm

Sign-up for the Urban Milwaukee daily email

Email Address...

Subscribe



Peoples' Flag of Milwaukee. Photo from [www.milwaukeeeflag.com](http://www.milwaukeeeflag.com).

Milwaukee will get a new flag, but how or what remain big questions.

The [Milwaukee Arts Board](#) is now [hours deep](#) into debating the merits



### Latest Articles & Columns



**"Beautiful" Trash Containers for Clarke Square** by Madison Marx



**Eyes on Milwaukee: The Little Windmill That Could** by Jeramey Jannene



**The Contrarian: Shorewood Looks Silly** by George Mitchell



**Eyes on Milwaukee: Michels Groundbreaking Coming Soon** by Jeramey Jannene



**Last Minute Amendment Saves Job Line** by Graham Kilmer

of the People's Flag and the process that selected it, but appears no closer to rendering a decision on that particular flag.

The 17-member board is debating the issue after the Common Council punted the issue over to them in late July with the stipulation that a decision on a new flag come back by the end of the year.

The full board decided Tuesday that the city needs a new flag, but a subcommittee wasn't prepared to recommend anything else. "We have discussed and agreed that we need a process," said flag subcommittee chair **Bill DeLind**. Members of the subcommittee also informed the full board that a Legislative Reference Bureau study has found that official adoption of a new flag would cost the city approximately \$3,000.

Summarizing why the city needs a new flag, Alderman **Nik Kovac** stated: "I don't think there's anyone who thinks the old Braves logo is appropriate." The current flag, from 1955, features an homage to the Milwaukee Braves baseball team with a Native American head in wardress. The team left Milwaukee for Atlanta in 1965 and has seen its logo become the source of controversy.

The issue has come to a head after widespread community adoption of the "People's Flag of Milwaukee" that was chosen from a 2016 design contest. The "People's Flag," known originally as Sunrise Over the Lake, was designed by **Robert Lenz** and selected from over 1,000

entries in a design contest held in 2016 by graphic designer **Steve Kodis**. The entries were narrowed to a field of five by flag expert **Ted Kaye**, Milwaukee native **Xavier Ruffin**, graphic designer **Jena Sher**, historian **John Gurda** and Kodis. An online ranked-choice voting process was held to select the winner. Mayor **Tom Barrett** and Council President **Ashanti Hamilton** were present during the unveiling of the finalists and **Reggie Jackson**, head griot at America's Black Holocaust Museum, gave a keynote speech at the event.

The Arts Board's flag subcommittee has met twice, including most recently with the coalition behind the People's Flag effort, and intends to meet again in the coming weeks to debate the flag and the process that selected it. Kodis, Jackson, Greater Together chair **Ken Hanson** and Def Perception branding specialist **Los Glover** spent over an hour



The official flag of the City of Milwaukee.

## Press Releases



**The Water Council Launches New Competition for Water Technology Innovators** by The Water Council



**New Book from Milwaukee Art Museum Inspires Writing and Discovery Through Art Exploration** by Milwaukee Art Museum



**New Marquette Law School Poll finds Walker, Evers tied in Wisconsin's race for governor** by Marquette University

**Read more Press Releases**

## 3 Most Popular



answering questions on the flag selection process.

DeLind, who initially trashed the People's Flag at the first subcommittee meeting appears to have softened, if not reversed, his position. At the first meeting, DeLind said: "I don't like the flag. Even if I hear what they have to say, I probably still won't like it." But on Tuesday he told the committee that the presentation was "very informative" and that Kodis and team did a "good enough" job getting the 1,000 submissions. "Yes, we have a lot of work to do, but it was a very good presentation. Many of our questions were answered," said Delind.

Subcommittee members clearly still have reservations about certain aspects of the process. **David Flores**, a veteran theatrical performer who works in the administration of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee, said there were points in the People's Flag process that city employees would have raised issues with right away. "We will give you a full report on what we thought was good or lacking," said Flores.

## How Long Could This Go?

The board could bless the People's Flag, create a new design contest or shelve the entire matter altogether. They could also solicit more designs and simply refer them back to the council, with the legislation allowing the "possible recommendation of one or more designs."

Kovac, serving as chair in the absence of Ald. **Michael Murphy**, suggested the board could also do something else. "Our recommendation could be we recommend [the Common Council] give us more time." The alderman characterized his displeasure with the December 31st, 2018 deadline, introduced in an amendment by Ald. **Mark Borkowski**, as "an unnecessary rush to a generational decision."



**LUVYLE**

suggested one way to put the issue to rest: simply eliminate the official city flag. Morris also suggested that if the process is to be redone, a

Arts Board members expressed reluctance to make a choice on what to do next. "My big concern is no matter what happens there are going to be really offended people here," said **Sandra McSweeney**. Lynden Sculpture Garden director **Polly Morris**



**Urban Milwaukee**  
15,581 likes



12 friends like this



### Become a Member

Get members-only benefits

Help assure the future of city's fastest growing publication.

**Join Today**

### Recent Comments

Thomas Martinsen on **Milwaukee**

consultant should be hired to draw up a proper request for proposals.

**Tina Klose** suggested another way to get the issue over with at an earlier subcommittee meeting. “It’s already out there,” she noted. “It’s stickers. It’s bicycles. It’s beer. It’s (on) everything. I don’t think we can rein [the People’s Flag] back in.” Perhaps, she suggested, “We can just adopt it, get on with our life, get back to work.”

McSweeney suggested yet another solution: “The old flag could be redone.” The Native American head and other elements could be replaced.

That would slightly change a flag that design experts have dubbed the worst city flag in America. And it would have to be done without the old flag’s creator, who’s long since passed from the scene.

Milwaukee’s original flag was a mish-mash created when the Common Council didn’t select a winner from a 1954 design contest, and Ald. **Fred Steffan** took elements from the entries and assembled them into a sort of super flag that the council adopted in 1955. Who would have imagined this non-designer’s work would last so long?

*If you think stories like this are important, become a member of Urban Milwaukee and help support real independent journalism. Plus you get some cool added benefits, all detailed here.*

## More about the People's Flag of Milwaukee

- City Hall: How Long Will Flag Debate Last? - Jeramey Jannene - Oct 11th, 2018
- City Hall: Will City Adopt a New Flag? - Jeramey Jannene - Oct 2nd, 2018
- City Hall: Council Delays Flag Decision - Jeramey Jannene - Jul 19th, 2018
- City Hall: All Hail The “People’s Flag” - Jeramey Jannene - Jul 19th, 2018
- City Hall: Will People’s Flag Become Official Milwaukee Flag? - Jeramey Jannene - May 31st, 2018
- All Hail Milwaukee’s New City Flag - Laura Thompson - Jun 15th, 2016
- The Worst City Flag in America? - Michael Holloway - Oct 28th, 2015

## Political Contributions Tracker

**Police Association Endorses Leah Vukmir for U.S. Senate**

ajbartelme on **Milwaukee Police Association Endorses Leah Vukmir for U.S. Senate**

mkwagner on **Op Ed: Heartbroken in Pittsburgh**

Thomas Martinsen on **Milwaukee Police Association Endorses Leah Vukmir for U.S. Senate**

Thomas Martinsen on **Sieger On Songs: Emmylou Harris’ Classic “Making Believe”**

### New Faces

**Marquette Provost Dan Myers stepping down; Dr. Kimo Ah Yun named acting provost**

**Mega agent Sara Dreyer and The Sold by Sara Team join Keller Williams Milwaukee Southwest**

**Aaron Schmanski Joins First Business Trust & Investments**

More New Faces

### You Might Also Like



The People of Walmart Never Cease To Amaze

Displaying political contributions between people mentioned in this story. [Learn more.](#)

May 11, 2017 - **Tom Barrett** received \$400 from **Sandra McSweeney**

June 20, 2016 - **Tom Barrett** received \$400 from **Sandra McSweeney**



## Recommended

2018: New Rule In Milwaukee, WI

Comparisons.org

Bitcoin Is Dead - This Will Make Investors Rich In

Bonner and Partners

Milwaukee: Cable Companies Are Furious Over This

SkyLinkTV

## City Hall

Ads by  
Revcontent

Barrett Taps

Polenske For

Public Works

Barrett Signs

Complete Streets

Policy

Health

Department

Faces Criminal

Probe



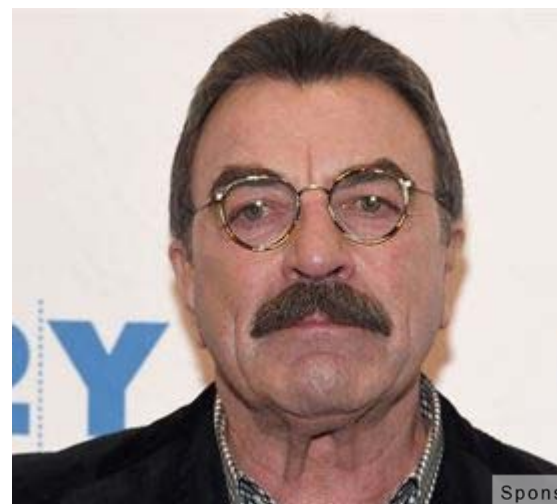
Oct 29th, 2018 by Jeramey Jannene



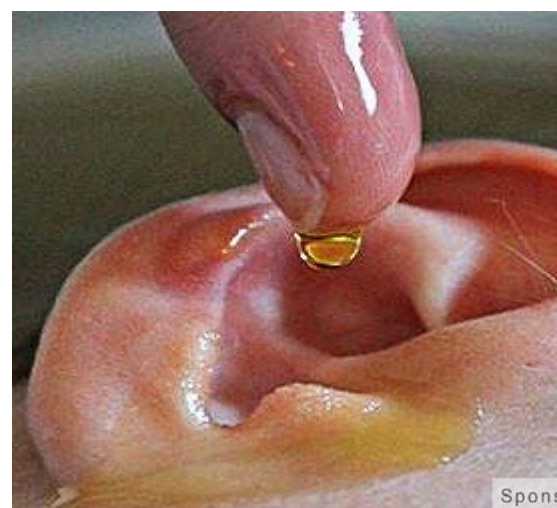
Oct 29th, 2018 by Jeramey Jannene



Oct 24th, 2018 by Jeramey Jannene



Tom Selleck Says Goodbye To Hollywood



No More Tinnitus: 1 Odd Trick Ends The Ringing Overnight

### Shen Yun 2019

Join us for an authentic cultural experience of Chinese arts, dance, music, and more. [shenyun.com](http://shenyun.com)



OPEN

Categories: City Hall, Politics



## Leave a Reply

You must be an Urban Milwaukee member to leave a comment.

Membership, which includes a host of perks, including an ad-free website, tickets to marquee events like Summerfest, the Wisconsin State Fair and the Florentine Opera, a better photo browser and access to members-only, behind-the-scenes tours, **starts at \$9/month. Learn more.**

**Join now and cancel anytime.**

If you are an existing member, **sign-in** to leave a comment.

Have questions? Need to report an error? **Contact Us**

## Information

Become a Member

About

Advertise

Calendar

Contact

Privacy Policy

The Store

Submit a Press Release

## The Store

755 N. Milwaukee St.

Milwaukee, WI 53202

414-395-0632

Website (Hours, Directions,  
Products)



## Subscribe

\* indicates required

First Name

Last Name

Email Address

Subscribe

## Follow Us

© 2018, Urban Milwaukee, Inc. All rights reserved.