

## ADOPTED 2009 BUDGET

DEPT: MILWAUKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

UNIT NO. 1908  
FUND: General - 0001

### OPERATING AUTHORITY & PURPOSE

Pursuant to Section 59.56(5) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the County Board may appropriate money to any historical society located in the County and incorporated under Section 44.03 for the purpose of collecting and preserving the records and salient historical features of the County. This unit maintains the historical exhibits of the Milwaukee County Historical Society and assists with other phases of

the program. Funds provided to subsidize the operation of the Society are used to employ a director and associate staff. The Society acts as custodian for non-current County records. The County appropriates funds for use by the Society pursuant to an agreement approved by the County Board of Supervisors on December 14, 1965 and renewed on May 16, 1988.

| BUDGET SUMMARY            |             |             |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                           | 2007 Actual | 2008 Budget | 2009 Budget |
| County Historical Society | \$ 242,550  | \$ 242,550  | \$ 242,550  |

### OVERVIEW OF OPERATION

The Historical Society's total operating budget for 2009 amounts to \$703,550 with \$461,000 coming from non-County funds. Sources include gifts, grants, membership fees (individual and corporate), bequests, investments, sales and receipts from public programs.

Following are examples of some of the Historical Society's program activities.

1. Accessibility Initiative: During 2006 and 2007, the Historical Society completed Phase II of its Capital Restoration Project with the goal of making the Historical Center more accessible to all visitors. Work included the installation of a full-service elevator, the upgrading of restrooms to meet ADA requirements, the relocation of the main staircase, the installation of a new reception desk and gift shop, and the restoration of one section of the ornamental plaster ceiling. All components of the project were completed by June 2007, well below the capital budget allocated under the public/private partnership established between the Society and Milwaukee County.
2. Outcomes: The Historical Society experienced increases in several areas of operation during 2007. Most notably, attendance during summer River Rhythms Concerts more than doubled, increasing from 1,538 in 2006 to 3,543 in 2007. Visits to the Historical Society's website also increased for the fourth consecutive year, rising from 239,335 in 2006 to 242,549 in 2007.

On the other hand, general and tour group visitation to the Historical Center declined considerably due to ongoing construction from January through May, as did in-person visits to the Research Library. Visitation to Trimborn Farm and the Society's Period Homes remained fairly stable from 2006 to 2007. Due to the impact of construction, overall participation in all public programming offered by the Historical Society decreased from 36,692 in 2006 to 32,976 in 2007.

3. Diversity: For the fourth consecutive year, the Historical Society was especially successful in bringing exhibitions and programs highlighting cultural diversity to Milwaukee County. From January 20 through April 8, 2007, the Society hosted the national traveling exhibition *100 Years of Service: The Alpha Kappa Alpha Story*, celebrating the centennial of the country's oldest African American sorority. In conjunction with the exhibition, national and regional figures associated with AKA presented a variety of lectures and programs.
4. Collections: The Historical Society acquired several significant new collections during 2007, which included portraits of Alexander Mitchell and Eliot Grant Fitch donated by Chase Bank, and several quilts created by local African American quilter Ella Brooks. The primary focus of the collections staff during 2007 was the re-shelving of artifacts and documents in storage

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and the conversion of collection records to the Past Perfect software system.

5. Publications. During 2007, the Historical Society released a new book entitled *Milwaukee at Mid-Century: The Photographs of Lyle Oberwise*. Nearly 3,200 copies were sold during the last quarter of 2007, generating total revenues of approximately \$50,000.
6. Public Programming: The Society and its Friends organization continue to sponsor public programs on a variety of topics. During 2007, the Society hosted its 54th Annual Recognition Banquet at the Wisconsin Club, drawing over 200 people and presenting awards to a record 34 individuals and groups.

The Friends of the Milwaukee County Historical Society continued their expanded programming schedule during 2007, presenting a number of special events. Among these were tours of Forest Home Cemetery and the Milwaukee Harbor, a Scottish Ethnic Dinner and Curling Demonstration at Hart Park in Wauwatosa, and a week-long tour of Ireland organized through County Clare Restaurant. For the fifth consecutive year, the Friends donated more than \$10,000 in program revenue to the Society.

7. County Landmarks: Since 1976, the Historical Society has operated, under County ordinance, a landmark recognition program for areas of Milwaukee County outside the City of Milwaukee. Nearly 100 sites have been designated as landmarks throughout the history of the program. During 2007, the Landmark Committee added three properties to its list of County Landmarks including the First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, the Milwaukee County Cemetery on the County Grounds in Wauwatosa, and the Lion Gates in Bayside.
8. Museum Houses: In addition to all three of the period homes operated by the Historical Society being open to the public during 2007, the Society offered expanded programming at Trimborn Farm in Greendale. The Society was able to attract significant numbers of school children, adults, and seniors for guided tours throughout the year. Especially successful were a series of special events hosted by the Farm,

including the Second Annual Folk Art Show and Sale which attracted over 500 visitors; the 3rd Annual Vintage Base Ball Tournament, which drew a similar crowd; the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest of Arts and Crafts, which brought in over 6,000 visitors; and the 4th Annual Civil War Encampment, which attracted roughly 125 re-enactors and an audience of over 1,000 guests, among them 200 students who attended a special Friday "School Day."

### MISSION

- The Milwaukee County Historical Society was founded in 1935 to collect, preserve and make available materials relating to the history of Milwaukee County. Through a broad program, the Society seeks to promote a greater appreciation of the community's rich heritage and a better understanding of present-day challenges and advantages. The Society's library and museum collections, exhibitions and activities serve a variety of constituencies including scholars, students, genealogists, local businesses and organizations and Milwaukee County residents and visitors.

### OBJECTIVES

- The Milwaukee County Historical Society will develop and utilize various alternative strategies in order to continue providing researchers with access to archival resources and the general public with an active program of exhibitions and special events during completion of Phase III of the Society's Building Restoration.

### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2009 contribution to the Historical Society remains at the 2008 level of \$242,550.
- In order to remain at the current level of County support, the Historical Society has balanced increases in supply and materials costs with decreases in building operation expenses. Some of the building operation cost reductions result from the anticipated closing of the building for five months during capital construction in 2009. However, some costs have been transferred to the General Fund (Private) Budget to maintain a constant level of service.

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- Funding of \$3,121,700 is budgeted in 2009 for the ongoing construction of the Historical Society's Restoration Project. This is the fourth and final phase of the project and will address both mechanical and functional issues. The County's contribution is \$1,896,060 in general obligation bonds and \$27,400 in investment earnings. The Historical Society's contribution is \$1,198,240. For further detail, refer to the 2009 Capital Improvements Budget.
- The Milwaukee County Department of Administrative Services will continue its 2005 initiative to facilitate collaboration between the Historical Society and other County cultural entities. In 2005, efficiencies were realized with some organizations negotiating shared professional service contracts and others offering joint programs and cross-promotion.

The County Historical Society spends the County's contribution as follows:

|                                    | 2007<br>Actual    | 2008<br>Budget    | 2009<br>Budget    |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Expenditures</b>                |                   |                   |                   |
| Personal Services                  | \$ 191,227        | \$ 191,227        | \$ 191,227        |
| Space and Utilities                | 48,788            | 46,288            | 44,788            |
| Office and Administrative Supplies | 2,535             | 5,035             | 6,535             |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>          | <b>\$ 242,550</b> | <b>\$ 242,550</b> | <b>\$ 242,550</b> |

| <b>ACTIVITY AND STATISTICAL SUMMARY</b> |                |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                         | 2006<br>Actual | 2007<br>Actual | 2008<br>Budget | 2009<br>Budget |
| Meetings/Public Programs                | 13             | 10             | 12             | 12             |
| Organizational Members                  | 1,337          | 1,260          | 1,700          | 1,700          |
| Research Requests:                      | 4,083          | 3,645          | 4,000          | 4,000          |
| Library - In Person                     | 1,337          | 945            | 1,333          | 1,333          |
| Telephone                               | 1,514          | 1,576          | 1,333          | 1,333          |
| Mail/E-mail                             | 1,232          | 1,124          | 1,334          | 1,334          |
| Public Attendance                       | 36,692         | 32,976         | 20,000         | 20,000         |
| Guided Tours:                           |                |                |                |                |
| Historical Center                       | 68             | 44             | 40             | 40             |
| Period Homes                            | 56             | 31             | 100            | 100            |
| Accessions:                             |                |                |                |                |
| Library                                 | 122            | 98             | 130            | 130            |
| Museum                                  | 35             | 63             | 60             | 60             |
| Pages of Publication                    | 542            | 232            | 150            | 150            |
| Staff Program Presentations             | 30             | 29             | 50             | 50             |
| Slide Shows/Media Appearances           | 12             | 11             | 15             | 15             |
| Website Visits                          | 239,335        | 242,549        | 300,000        | 350,000        |