

# The City of Cedarburg, Wisconsin

IN THE NAME AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CEDARBURG, WISCONSIN

## RESOLUTION NO. 2024-01

### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A REFERENDUM FOR THE CITY OF CEDARBURG TO ALLOW THE CITY TO EXCEED THE STATE IMPOSED LEVY LIMIT FOR HIRING & RETAINING ADDITIONAL FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL BEGINNING WITH THE 2024 LEVY (COLLECTED IN 2025) AND ON AN ONGOING BASIS.**

**WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin has imposed limits on town, village, city and county property tax levies under Wis. Stat. §66.06.02; and

**WHEREAS**, Wis. Stat. §66.06.02 limits the increase in 2024 to the local property tax levy to no more than the greater of (a) 0% of last year's actual levy or (b) a percentage equal to the percentage change in equalized value due to new construction less improvements removed plus other exceptions like new debt service; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Cedarburg provides emergency medical, fire and rescue services (collectively herein "Fire & EMS Services") to its residents and the residents of the Town of Cedarburg, pursuant to the Fire Protection/Emergency Medical Services Agreement originally dated August 3, 2003 and continued by subsequent agreement effective January 1, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the City and Town of Cedarburg seeks to continue to be able to provide effective and efficient Fire & EMS Services to those residents, businesses and institutions that it serves; including adding a Paramedic program and additional full-time staff; and

**WHEREAS**, the City and Town of Cedarburg has determined that current and future budget considerations, rising call volumes, and staffing constraints pose a challenge to providing effective and efficient Fire & EMS Services; and

**WHEREAS**, the City and Town of Cedarburg intend to move forward with a funding referendum for the establishment and funding of paid on call staff, and adding additional full-time staff to supplement the volunteer staff and provide EMS service at the Paramedic level, and

**WHEREAS**, professional services will be required to assist with the formulation and distribution of information and data pertinent to a funding referendum; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Cedarburg and Town of Cedarburg have engaged in a joint service contract with Mueller Communications for the purposes of public education and communication related to the referendum; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Cedarburg, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin, do hereby support an increase in the City tax levy for 2024 (collected in 2025) to exceed the state levy limit. The City of Cedarburg intends that the levy increase be applied on an ongoing basis thereafter by including it in the base used to calculate the limit going forward.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Cedarburg directs that the question of increasing the City tax levy limit for 2024 (to be collected in 2025) by 2.390%, which would increase the City levy by approximately \$1,292,302 over the past year's levy, for a City tax levy of \$13,263,188 shall be submitted to the electors in a referendum election to be held on April 2, 2024, in the following form:

**Referendum Question:**

**"Under state law, the increase in the levy of the City of Cedarburg for the tax to be imposed for the next fiscal year, 2025, is limited to 2.390%, which results in a levy of \$11,970,886. Shall the City of Cedarburg be allowed to exceed this limit and increase the levy for the next fiscal year, 2025, for the purposes to increase funding to hire and retain additional fire and emergency medical services personnel for the Cedarburg Fire Department, by a total of 10.795%, which results in a levy of \$13,263,188, and on an ongoing basis, include the increase of \$1,292,302 for each fiscal year going forward? As the Cedarburg Fire Department is jointly funded through a shared services agreement by the Town and City of Cedarburg, and both the Town and City are seeking to exceed the levy limit for this purpose by referendum, the results of the referendum would be binding only if both the Town and City of Cedarburg referenda questions are passed."**

In the event the referenda are passed by both the Town and City of Cedarburg, the results shall be binding upon the City of Cedarburg and certified to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, as required by Wis. Stat. §66.0602(4)(d); and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Cedarburg direct that the following Explanatory Statement of the vote be used where required:


**Explanatory Statement and Effect of Vote**

The City of Cedarburg is currently served by the Cedarburg Fire Department, with six (6) full-time fire and emergency medical services personnel and a part-time Chief. In order to maintain the existing levels of fire protection and emergency medical services and/or to add additional full-time staff and to enhance future fire protection and emergency medical services provided by the Cedarburg Fire Department, the City's costs would exceed the maximum allowable state-imposed levy.

A "yes" vote by both the Town and City of Cedarburg allows the City Council to exceed the state-imposed levy limits to provide additional funding per the Town and City of Cedarburg shared services agreement to pay for ten (10) additional fire and emergency medical service personnel, transition the Chief from part-time to full-time, and maintain two (2) existing fire and emergency medical service personnel currently funded through ARPA grants which will be exhausted in 2024. The increased levy would apply on an ongoing basis thereafter by including it in the base used to calculate the limit going forward.

A "no" vote by either the Town or City of Cedarburg does not allow the City Council to exceed the state-imposed levy limits to provide additional funding per the Town and City of Cedarburg shared services agreement to pay for ten (10) additional fire and emergency medical service personnel, transition the Chief from part-time to full-time, and maintain two (2) existing fire and emergency medical service personnel currently funded through ARPA grants which will be exhausted in 2024. The Cedarburg Fire Department would have to reduce staffing back to 2021 levels unless the City of Cedarburg funds additional positions out of the City of Cedarburg operating budget.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Clerk shall provide the County Clerk with a certified copy of this Resolution to ensure that the referendum question can be placed on the April 2, 2024, election ballot for all wards within the City of Cedarburg. Passed and adopted this 8<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024.

  
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Mayor Michael O'Keefe

Attest:   
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Clerk Tracie Sette