

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIR

- Community and Economic Development

MEMBER

- Finance and Personnel
- Zoning, Neighborhoods, and Development
- Steering and Rules



RUSSELL W. STAMPER, II
ALDERMAN, 15TH DISTRICT



RUSSELL W. STAMPER, II
ALDERMAN, 15TH DISTRICT

We've been here before

Statement of Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II April 7, 2020

How do I in good conscience urge anyone who hasn't already voted to vote today? Do I tell them we as a municipality have everything under control and we can guarantee that all precautions are being taken and that they will not put themselves in danger of contracting COVID-19? Do I stand in front of the one polling place for my district with a sign saying "It's safe you can trust your government, it will protect you?" Our community is being forced to make a decision no one should ever be forced to make, a decision that since the adoption of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 we haven't had to face. Alas, our state legislative and judicial bodies have seen fit to thrust us back 55 years and force our community to make that tough decision again. The dilemma is clear: whether to vote and face possible death via COVID-19 exposure or to not vote and allow your right as a human being and citizen of this great democracy to be suppressed.

Some will say those who have walked this path before pushed forward and stared physical harm in the eye and did not blink. Although the comparison has been made that is a loose comparison at best. It's different when you risk your own well-being and go against the grain and push forward, but now you are not only risking your own health, you are risking the health of those you love as well. That makes this dilemma much more difficult to navigate and it also makes those who have forced the dilemma upon us much more sinister.

Our community has been ravaged by the COVID -19 pandemic. We have been told to practice social distancing and to stay home if at all possible, yet the state legislature and judicial leaders have seen fit to attempt to force us to disregard all this. They have put politics over the lives of those who they have been charged with protecting. This, yet another attempt at voter suppression, is worse than what we as a community faced prior to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. There will be no dogs outside the polling places, no angry men with hoses, and no armed police blocking our path. It will be fear, a fear easily avoided if our state officials were not hell bent on voter suppression. We cannot let fear win. So with that in mind, if you vote today in-person please take all the precautions you can but also remember who put us in this dilemma.

City Hall Room 205 • 200 East Wells Street • Milwaukee, WI 53202

PHONE (414) 286-2659 **FAX** (414) 286-3456 **E-MAIL** russell.stamper@milwaukee.gov **WEBSITE** www.milwaukee.gov/district15



Remember who forced us to have to put our health at risk to perform our civic duty. Bull Conner may be dead and buried but it appears his spirit lives on. Be safe MILWAUKEE.

-30-

City Hall Room 205 • 200 East Wells Street • Milwaukee, WI 53202

PHONE (414) 286-2659 **FAX** (414) 286-3456 **E-MAIL** russell.stamper@milwaukee.gov **WEBSITE** www.milwaukee.gov/district15

