



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

October 19, 2017

The Honorable John P. Daley
Chairman, Finance Committee
Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 North Clark Street, Room 3 ½
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Chairman Daley:

Pursuant to your letter dated October 13, 2017, regarding the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court's (Clerk's Office) FY2018 10% budget reduction plan, the Clerk's Office is looking at the following plan of actions:

- *Furlough Days* – We plan to utilize mandatory furlough days for union and non-union employees.
- *Elimination of Vacant Positions* – We plan to eliminate vacant positions that would not jeopardize critical functions of the Clerk's Office.
- *Reduction in Non Personnel Items* – We plan to review our non-personnel expenses and reduce items that would have the least impact on our operations during the fiscal year. These are items that we could delay procurement to a later fiscal period, if necessary.
- *Early Retirement or Buyout* – We plan to encourage eligible employees to consider early retirement. As a result, we could reduce the retirement positions to an entry level salary position at a later time during the fiscal year and budget the positions accordingly. In addition, we would like to recommend that the County work with the Pension Board to provide an early retirement buyout program where employees are given a number of years on their age and their years of service, similar to a program that the Chicago Public Schools utilized in the nineties, where they gave five (5) years to the age and service. This buyout program would also provide payment toward the retiree's health insurance up to age 65, the age by which they would qualify for Medicare. Adding this health insurance provision would be an added incentive because many employees do not retire due to their inability to afford the health insurance.
- *Incremental Revenue* – We ask that the County Board pursue the collection of the \$13.1 million that the City of Chicago owes in outstanding debt related to the filings of Registration of Administrative Judgment cases. Our multiple attempts to collect this debt, with the help of the Cook County State's Attorney, have not been successful. Any support that the Cook County Board of Commissioners can render to collect this debt will help towards the FY2018 anticipated budget shortfall.

In addition, Commissioner Silvestri requested that I forward information concerning my recommendations for increasing revenue over the years. I have located letters with my recommendations to President Preckwinkle and Chief Judge Evans. I am having my staff to update my recommendations to indicate if they are still relevant or if they have been implemented, and the related financial impact. The previous letters and the updates will be forwarded through a memorandum to you on Monday, October 23, 2017. Also included in that memorandum will be new recommendations for increasing revenue, including the County putting forth legislation that would permit the County Board to increase fees of the various agencies as needed through its Home Rule, to adjust for inflation and special circumstance.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Chairman Daley, and the Cook County Board of Commissioners for the opportunity to present our FY2018 budget reduction plan.

If you have any questions concerning the above information provided, please let me know. I can be contacted at (312) 603-5071.

Sincerely,



Dorothy Brown
Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

DB:rk

Cc: Honorable Toni Preckwinkle, President, Cook County Board President of Commissioners
Cook County Board of Commissioners
John Keller, Chief of Staff to President Preckwinkle
Amar Ritzki, Chief Financial Officer
Wasiu Fashina, Chief of Staff, Clerk of the Circuit Court