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STATE SENATOR • 20TH DISTRICT

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The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same in Milwaukee

Madison, WI – Yesterday, the city of Milwaukee released [text message records](#) pursuant to the public records request of Representative Janel Brandtjen (R-Menominee Falls). A text chain between Mayor Cavalier Johnson and Sachin Chheda, a left-wing activist whose consulting [website](#) describes his roles in many campaigns and as Chairman Emeritus of the Democratic Party of Milwaukee County, was among the records disclosed. The records reference Melissa Baldauff, a former Gov. Evers staffer and a Principal of GPS Impact, according to her own [Linkedin page](#). Senator Stroebel (R-Cedarburg) issued the following statement:

“First, why was the group text including both Milwaukee employee Jeff Fleming and Melissa Baldauff not handed over in response to Speaker Vos’ and my September 13th [records request](#)?”

“Second, I encourage everyone to review the text messages that have now become public. The records make clear there was a meeting to coordinate Mayor Johnson’s remarks at his press conference with Sachin Chheda as some go-between. Mayor Johnson immediately turned to Chheda for a ‘suggested answer’ on explaining where the money is coming from.”

“Chheda recommends directing reporters to Melissa Baldauff as the ‘spokesperson for Milwaukee Votes 2022’, before reversing because ‘our funders do not want us to refer folks to Melissa after all.’ Chheda requested consultation before any further responses to the press or public records requests. He bemoaned that ‘When I don’t have information we can’t coordinate.’ We only have a glimpse of the whole story from this text chain.”

“Mayor Johnson has spoken with me, and many other Legislative Republicans, claiming Milwaukee wants a better relationship with the Legislature. Given public criticism, legislation and lawsuits surrounding municipalities and the use of private funds since the summer of 2020, it is difficult to fathom a less conciliatory course of action than to walk up to, or past, the legal line and coordinate with known partisans on election turnout.”

“While all of this was happening, the two Milwaukee constants continue: 1) high crime that requires leadership, and 2) requests for more money. The more things change, the more they stay the same in Milwaukee.”

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