



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

August 2, 2023

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

A session of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners was held at the Administration Building, in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, on August 2, 2023.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Comm. Hodge, Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

Members Present: Comms. Shannon Beeman, Justin Hodge, Andy LaBarre, Crystal Lyte, Jason Maciejewski, Yousef Rabhi, Caroline Sanders, Katie Scott, Annie Somerville

Members Absent: None.

Others Present Greg Dill, County Administrator; Andrew DeLeeuw, Interim Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard & Michael Auten, Corporation Counsel; Crystal Campbell, Public Information Officer; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Jason Fee, Facilities Management; Tara Cohen & Morghan Boydston, OCED; Nina Johnson, Human Resources; Alexander Waterhouse, Marie Pfeifer, Tina Gavalier & Catherine Jones-Alther, Finance; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Terrence Williams, Administration; Jeff Rose & Brian Mason, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Bryce Allmacher, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Doug Winters spoke in opposition to the Board of Commissioners' recent allocation of funding to Supreme Felons.

Shannon McFall spoke in support of Doug Winters.

Monica Prince urged the Commissioners to deliver a senior services millage.

Brenda Stumbo spoke in opposition to Supreme Felons and in support of victims of violence.

Lee Tooson spoke in support of Doug Winters.

Joe Crowell spoke in support of Doug Winters.

Tess Brauster shared about their experiences working with unhoused individuals in

Washtenaw County; said that those individuals do not express a desire for increased policing.

LaTeese Jones spoke about challenges they are experiencing with an unsafe place of work and asked the Commissioners for help and resources.

Norbert Glover spoke in support of Doug Winters.

Monica Ross Williams spoke in opposition to various actions taken by the Board.

Allison Foreman thanked the Commissioners for meeting with advocates for senior services; said that the need to fund senior services at the County level is increasingly urgent.

Harvey Somers asked when the CJCC will become active.

Amanda Carlisle said that they are concerned about the County's direction as it pertains to homelessness services; stated that funding for eviction prevention should be prioritized over funding for temporary shelter.

IV. COMMISSIONER FOLLOW-UP TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Comm. Scott thanked those individuals who spoke in advocacy for unhoused people.

Comm. Lyte said that discussions regarding the allocation of ARPA funds should continue.

Comm. Lyte said that fellow Commissioners did not intend to disparage anyone's character.

Comm. LaBarre said that the Board is not currently prepared to present a comprehensive senior services millage to the public; said that the Commissioners remain committed to provide necessary funding to senior services.

Comm. Rabhi spoke about Administrator Dill's commitment to bolstering the County's senior services.

Comm. Somerville spoke about systemic racism's impacts on Washtenaw County and the criminal justice system at large; said that allocations to Supreme Felons were made in part to undo some of those harms.

Comm. Sanders said that everyone has a right to share their opinion and that she will continue to advocate for those who need her support.

Comm. Hodge spoke about efforts to expand the work of the CJCC to include federal partners.

Comm. Hodge called a recess at 8:01pm.

Comm. Hodge called the meeting to order at 8:19pm.

V. LIAISON REPORTS

Comm. Hodge shared that the Board of Health recently had a detailed budget presentation.

VI. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Tara Cohen, Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED), gave a presentation on the proposed substantial amendment to the HOME-ARP allocation plan. Cohen said that the amendment primarily reflects a shift in strategy from funding affordable housing development to funding supportive services.

Comm. Rabhi asked about the proposed increase in allocated funds toward administrative costs under the amended plan.

Morghan Boydston, OCED, said that the back-end work on supportive services requires additional staff capacity as compared to housing development.

Comm. Rabhi asked OCED to summarize the reasoning behind the shift in strategy.

Boydston said that the data supports either strategy, but the ongoing crises relating to housing insecurity require immediate attention.

Comm. Somerville asked about combining strategies to leverage funding in a way that both supports development and bolsters services.

Cohen said that pursuing each goal is possible.

Administrator Dill said that staff will present a longer term strategy relating to supportive services and housing development to the Board.

Comm. LaBarre asked about dedicating these funds for development and using other funds to match for supportive services.

Cohen said that would be possible and would allow for the funding to remain impactful.

Comm. Sanders asked if this amendment would jeopardize any ongoing developments.

Cohen said individual service providers would be better prepared to answer Comm. Sanders' question.

Comm. Scott spoke about a need for both short-term and long-term solutions to housing insecurity.

Boydston said that recipients of housing services typically access them over extended periods of time.

Comm. Lyte said that immediate and long-term assistance is necessary. Comm. Lyte spoke about some of the innovations in housing employed by other communities.

Comm. Beeman asked about limitations on these funds.

Comm. Rabhi reiterated the need for a short and long-term strategy to address housing insecurity; spoke about the potential of a County Housing Commission.

Comm. Somerville spoke about the immediate need to provide affordable housing for families.

Comm. Hodge opened a public hearing to receive comment on the substantial amendment to the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan at 8:57pm

Michael Appel said that the shift away from providing funding for development is disappointing; said that the allocation proposed in the initial plan could provide gap funding to projects in need of capital support.

Tess Brauster said that decisions relating to housing in the County should be informed by the voices of unhoused people.

Amanda Carlisle said that at least 50% of the HOME-ARP funds should be dedicated to housing development.

Comm. Hodge closed the public hearing at 9:07pm.

VII. APPOINTMENTS

1. Comm. Rabhi, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution appointing a member to the Washtenaw County Environmental Council be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.
2. Comm. Rabhi, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution appointing a member to the Washtenaw County Commission on Aging be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.
3. Comm. Rabhi, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution appointing members to the Washtenaw County Youth Commission be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.
4. Comm. Rabhi, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution appointing a Commissioner to the Area Agency on Aging 1-B be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Somerville, moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting (July 12, 2023). Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
2. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Somerville, moved that the communications be received and dealt with as recommended. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)

R-0035 RECEIVED: July 13, 2023. Alcona County Board of Commissioners: Resolution in support of the "Revised School Code" put forth by Michigan House Bill 4672.

R-0036 RECEIVED: July 19, 2023. Ontonagon County Board of Commissioners: Resolution opposing the proposed changes to the septic provisions of the Michigan Public Health Code.

3. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Somerville, moved that the following reports be received: Report of Standing Committees: Working Session (July 12, 2023). Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
4. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Somerville, moved that the following Reports of Special Committees be received:

Washtenaw County Food Policy Council - May 10, 2023

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Social Services Board - June 13, 2023.

5. Other Reports
- A. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Somerville, moved that the following reports be received: A report on contracts in the amount of \$25,000 and under from June 1, 2023 through July 26, 2023. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
6. Report of the Treasurer - None.

IX. RESOLUTIONS

1. Single Reading
- A. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution authorizing the signature of the Chair of the Board on the 2023-24 State Child Care Fund budget summary Form 2091 to the State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Federal Compliance, Child Care Fund Monitoring Unit for the Trial Court, Children's Services, and the Washtenaw County Department of Health and Human Services in the amount of \$12,136,781 for the period of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024 be approved.

Comm. Rabhi asked about the funding allocated towards the day treatment program.

Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

- B. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution granting authorization to exceed the \$10,000 maintenance limit on the Portage and Baseline Lake Level District for repairs to the Flook Dam be approved.

Comm. Maciejewski asked about the timeline to complete these repairs.

Water Resources Commissioner Evan Pratt estimated that within the next two months the dam will be stabilized enough to conduct a more thorough inspection.

Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

- C. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution to authorize the above midpoint hire of Guillermo Hernandez as Executive Director of Human Resources be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

- D. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution setting the 2023 Washtenaw County Millage Rate for Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.
- E. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution authorizing \$700,000 in Eviction Prevention Program Funding to be eligible for use in 2023 from Administration be approved.

Comm. LaBarre said that the County will need to address eviction prevention needs in the long term.

Comm. Scott asked if the County has funds to dedicate towards eviction prevention; Scott noted that this resolution is primarily concerned with temporary shelter.

Interim Deputy County Administrator Andrew DeLeeuw said that the County funds various organizations which work to keep people in their homes.

Comm. Somerville noted that it is more expensive to support people after they've been evicted than it is to keep people housed.

Crystal Campbell, Public Information Officer, said that HAWC is still the primary entry point for individuals experiencing housing insecurity.

Comm. Somerville asked about plans to transition families being assisted by the Hotel Shelter Program into permanent housing.

Comm. Rabhi asked if the County could use these dollars to pay families' rent for permanent housing rather than hotel fees.

Campbell said that paying for rent with these funds would be possible.

Comm. Sanders noted that some Commissioners recently learned about potential solutions to housing insecurity being employed by other communities.

Comm. Lyte asked about the County's efforts to reduce intake times at HAWC.

Boydston said that intake times fluctuate greatly based on the amount of inquiries; Boydston said that she isn't entirely aware of the capacity-building required to achieve the results the Board desires.

Comm. LaBarre said that the Commissioners need to develop a more sustainable strategy for eviction prevention.

Comm. Rabhi stated that the County needs a more cost effective strategy for providing assistance to families; said that this type of funding could be used to secure more permanent solutions.

Comm. Maciejewski said that he will vote yes on this resolution and recognizes the need for a long-term solution. Comm. Maciejewski asked about the County's definition of "affordable."

Boydston said affordability is based on an index of data gathered by HUD.

Comm. Rabhi asked about the process by which the County selected families for assistance payments.

Campbell said that these families were already being supported through different County housing programs.

Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

- F. A resolution authorizing an exemption to the County's Living Wage Ordinance for certain Community Mental Health Service Providers from Administration.

Comm. Hodge exercised his authority as Chair and pulled this item from the agenda for future consideration.

- G. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution to approve the negotiation and execution of a purchase agreement contract with Ypsilanti Community Schools for the site of Cheney Elementary School at 1500 Stamford Rd be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

- H. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution honoring the Life of Victoria Swanson-James be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

2. Approval of Claims

- A. Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution authorizing the payment of claims commencing with the last previously approved claim and continuing through July 24, 2023 be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 9 NAYS 0 ABSENT 0. Motion carried.

X. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Dill introduced Guillermo Hernandez, Washtenaw County Director of Human Resources.

XI. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Comm. Hodge spoke about some of his and other Commissioners' experiences at a recent conference.

XII. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

Comm. Rabhi spoke about recent power outages in Washtenaw County and the Board's past commitment to exploring different solutions to electric utilities.

Michelle Billard, Corporation Counsel, said that outside legal counsel recently issued an opinion on the development of a public utility; the opinion was ambiguous on the legality of a public utility.

Corp. Counsel Billard reported that the Chair of the Board of Commissioners may subpoena individuals to testify before the Board on issues that are relevant to the Board. Corp. Counsel noted that the Chair has no method of enforcing subpoenas.

Commissioners discussed their desire to host representatives of DTE and Consumers Energy at an upcoming meeting.

XIII. PENDING

XIV. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

Comm. Lyte, seconded by Comm. Somerville, moved to adjourn. Voice vote - motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 PM.

Justin Hodge, Chair of
the Board of
Commissioners

Lawrence
Kestenbaum,
Clerk/Register

By: Bryce Allmacher, Deputy Clerk
Board Approved: September 6, 2023