



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

October 18, 2023

WORKING SESSION

I. ROLL CALL

A Working Session of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners was held at the Administration Building, in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, on October 18, 2023.

The meeting was called to order at 05:32 PM by Comm. Somerville, Chair of the Working Session.

Members Present:	Comms. Justin Hodge, Andy LaBarre, Crystal Lyte, Jason Maciejewski, Yousef Rabhi, Caroline Sanders, Annie Somerville.
Members Absent:	Comms. Shannon Beeman, Katie Scott.
Others Present	Greg Dill, County Administrator; Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard & Michael Auten, Corporation Counsel; Alize Asberry Payne, Racial Equity Officer; Crystal Campbell, Public Information Officer; Tina Gavalier & Catherine Jones-Alther, Finance; Camellia Khorrami, Racial Equity Office; Moonson Eninsche & Tara Cohen, OCED; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Terrence Williams, Administration; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Jason Fee, Facilities Management; Jeff Rose, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Bryce Allmacher, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members from the Jack and Jill group briefly shared about their work with the Board.

Jan Wright said that the County's housing issues need to be addressed; advocated for more robust implementation of the Washtenaw Resiliency Plan.

III. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

IV. REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LIAISON

Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager, gave a presentation on the BOC newsletter, BOC budget office hours, the budget request process, and Board IT.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Catherine Jones-Alther, Deputy Finance Officer, gave a presentation on the County's 2023 Budget Request Process.

Jones-Alther said that the Budget Review Task Force scored requests according to standardized metrics which measured alignment with Board priorities and impact on budget. 70 requests were submitted, 8 were considered minor or having a net-neutral impact on the budget, and 3 were determined outside the scope of the Budget Review process and were responded to independently. Recommended requests were more likely to have impact on multiple areas of priority than those that were not recommended.

Jones-Alther noted that the Budget Request Process is meant to be continuous and fluid according to changes in the County budget; finance plans to employ the same process to score all County programs in the future.

Comm. LaBarre thanked staff for their work on the Budget Request Process; said that he appreciated the standardization and smoothness of this evaluation.

Comm. Rabhi asked if additional recommendations from the Budget Request Process are forthcoming; asked for clarity on requests recommended as "pending."

Jones-Alther said that requests designated "pending" are primarily FTE requests and are being put on hold until a full review of countywide FTEs can be conducted.

Com. Rabhi indicated concern with deferring the majority of requests involving new FTEs.

- B. Amanda Carlisle, Washtenaw Housing Alliance, and Dan Kelly, Shelter Association of Washtenaw County, gave a presentation on the Continuum of Care's Winter Shelter Task Force.

Carlisle reported on some of the changes to the community's Winter shelter programming implemented last year. Carlisle said that the number of individuals needing shelter in the County has steadily increased in recent years; noted increased acuity in need among single adults.

Carlisle said that sheltering programs in the County have unmet staffing needs.

Kelly noted increasing homelessness rates nationally and in neighboring communities; stated that the Shelter Association plans to increase nightly bed capacity for single adults by 14-17% from last Winter to this Winter.

Kelly said that the Shelter Association is working to identify a site for weekend overnight Winter sheltering in Ypsilanti; noted the introduction of nighttime sheltering at St. Luke's Episcopal Church from Monday-Thursday last year.

Kelly and Carlisle emphasized the effectiveness of funding for diversion efforts.

Kelly gave an overview of other organizations in the County offering shelter and temporary housing.

Comm. Sanders asked about efforts to engage other municipalities throughout the County in discussions on Winter sheltering; asked for examples of eviction prevention services.

Carlisle said that eviction prevention typically comes in the form of direct payments to ensure families can stay in their current housing.

Comm. Sanders asked about education on eviction prevention for tenants.

Carlisle spoke about ongoing efforts to educate Housing Choice Voucher participants, specifically.

Carlisle spoke about staffing and volunteer needs for the Winter.

Comm. LaBarre asked about the age of the data on the County's housing stock.

Carlisle said that the data used to inform their report is from 2-3 years ago but that the last holistic evaluation took place nearly 10 years ago.

Comm. LaBarre asked about HAWC's 48-hour standard for assessments.

Carlisle and Kelly said that increased staff support could shorten the process so that assessments occur immediately after HAWC intake.

Comm. LaBarre encouraged the presenters to make a request to the County to help inform the Board's

Comm. Hodge asked for Kelly and Carlisle's opinions on the County's report on housing and homelessness strategy.

Carlisle noted the lack of funding for eviction prevention services.

Comm. Hodge asked about the County's role in providing funding to housing programs and the Winter sheltering programs discussed in this presentation.

Carlisle said that they envision a system in which costs are shared across the County; emphasized the importance of eviction prevention.

VI. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

VII. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved to adjourn. Voice vote - motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 06:51 PM.

Annie Somerville, Chair of the Working Session

Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Bryce Allmacher, Deputy Clerk
Board Approved: November 1, 2023