



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

October 18, 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 October 18, 2023.

The meeting was called to order at 07:08 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, Annie Somerville
Members Absent:	Comm. Katie Scott
Others Present	Greg Dill, County Administrator; Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard & Michael Auten, Corporation Counsel; Crystal Campbell, Public Information Officer; Tina Gavalier & Catherine Jones-Alther, Finance; Camellia Khorrami, Racial Equity Office; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Evan Pratt, Water Resources Commissioner; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Terrence Williams, Administration; Moonson Eninsche & Tara Cohen, OCED; Jason Fee, Facilities Management; Jeff Rose, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Bryce Allmacher, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Tess Brauster spoke about the housing and homelessness crisis in Washtenaw County; advocated for short and long-term strategies to alleviate the effects of the crisis.

Caleb Hoyer spoke about an individual in their personal life experiencing homelessness; advocated for assistance from faith-based groups in Ypsilanti.

Barb Fuller advocated for the renewal of the Washtenaw County Road and Non-Motorized Millage.

Anna Wisocki advocated for funding for temporary shelter in Ypsilanti.

Noah Daller advocated for the County purchase of 10 S Prospect in Ypsilanti for emergency shelter.

Zach Fosler spoke about the Ypsilanti Housing Commission's experience with developing affordable housing; encouraged partnership between the County and YHC.

Collin Spry spoke about their personal experiences with homelessness and the discrimination they have experienced as an unsheltered person.

Cynthia Price spoke about the presentation on the County's Housing strategy on tonight's agenda.

Anne Rowd spoke about the resolution recommending High Impact Grants on tonight's agenda; Rowd detailed the work of Legal Services of South Central Michigan.

Tish Lee spoke in support of the resolution recommending High Impact Grants on tonight's agenda; Lee spoke about Legal Services of South Central Michigan's plans for those funds.

Magnus the Entertainer spoke about the need for collaboration between community members and housing advocates to address housing issues in the County.

James William Willsatdt spoke about their experience as a homeless veteran in Washtenaw County.

Luna spoke about the Resolution to fund the Community Corrections Program in the Sheriff's Office passed by the Board at the September 20th, 2023 BOC meeting; advocated for emergency shelter in Ypsilanti.

John Kergestel spoke about their experience as a homeless person in Washtenaw County; advocated for increased funding to the Delonis Center in Ann Arbor.

Brian Geiringer spoke about the Resolution to fund the Community Corrections Program in the Sheriff's Office passed by the Board at the September 20th, 2023 BOC meeting; advocated for reducing the Washtenaw County Sheriff's budget and for increased funding to the community housing and homelessness systems.

Adam Keith advocated for increased funding to housing and homelessness services in Washtenaw County; spoke about their experience as a homeless and formerly incarcerated person.

Jessica D'Oconnor spoke about their experience working in homelessness services; advocated for increased funding to housing and homelessness services in the County.

Brian Coburn spoke about the need for increased funding to eviction prevention services; advocated for the County purchase of 10 S Prospect in Ypsilanti for a temporary shelter.

Shihab Jackson advocated for peace between Muslim and Jewish communities in Southeast Michigan.

Peggy spoke about the anticipated volume of homelessness this coming Winter; spoke about gaps in the community's shelter programs.

Stephanie Krause spoke about their experience with eviction proceedings; noted the geographical pervasiveness of increasing housing costs.

Madeline noted the length of the turnaround time between sheltering assessments and the actual receipt of shelter.

Colleen McGee spoke about the need for increased funding to housing and homelessness services in Washtenaw County.

Samuel Hayes shared coworkers' statements regarding challenges and hardships experienced while working at the County.

Shannon Grosshans spoke about staffing issues at the Friend of the Court.

Abigail Alman spoke about staffing issues at Community Mental Health; shared the experience of a coworker.

David Gee spoke staffing issues at Community Mental Health; advocated for increased funding to the department. Gee shared the experience of a coworker.

Nicole Dera spoke about challenges they have experienced as a CMH employee; highlighted insufficient wages for dangerous and intensive work.

Danielle Kumer spoke about challenges they have experienced as a CMH employee.

Lin Cook spoke about challenges they have experienced as a CMH employee.

Shannon Seegert spoke about the challenges experienced by CMH staff; said that County staff are experiencing unfair conditions, low wages, and poor benefits.

Mary Campbell said that poor benefits and wages make it extremely difficult to limit turnover and hire new staff in certain departments at the County.

Nancy Hine shared the words of a CMH employee.

Beth Pfoutz said that the County should be doing more to support housing and homelessness services; advocated for increased support for low-income individuals.

Anna Taylor-McCants asked the Board to make space for more organic conversations with community members; spoke about concerns with relying on the faith-based community to meet sheltering needs.

John Trimm spoke in support of underpaid County staff; shared their personal experience as a County employee.

Matt Warblow spoke in support of increased resources for housing and homelessness services; spoke about discrepancies in pay for Washtenaw County CMH workers and individuals occupying similar roles in nearby Counties.

Comm. Katie Scott, commenting virtually as a member of the public, spoke about the County's housing strategy; thanked the individuals who gave comment on housing and homelessness at tonight's meeting.

1. Written Public Comment through October 18, 2023.

IV. COMMISSIONER FOLLOW-UP TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Comm. Rabhi thanked members of the public who gave comment. Comm. Rabhi said that County staff should not fear retaliation for expressing grievances about their treatment; noted his availability for staff concerns. Comm. Rabhi said that the Board must increase wages and benefits for CMH staff and reduce the burden on individual staff members.

Comm. Rabhi indicated concern with several budget requests being recommended for approval by County finance.

Comm. Rabhi spoke about the County's responsibility as a provider of housing and homelessness services; highlighted the need for a housing commission at the County level.

Comm. LaBarre stated that each member of the Board is supportive of the requests made by members of the public at tonight's meeting. Comm. LaBarre noted the need for systemic solutions to CMH funding; said that the County may continue to supplement shortfalls as best as possible but the issue requires attention from the State and Federal Legislature.

Comm. Beeman indicated support for a County housing commission. Comm. Beeman clarified that the County does not provide funding to local police departments.

Comm. Somerville thanked Legal Services of South Central Michigan for their work. Comm. Somerville said that her decision to vote yes on a resolution to fund Community Corrections was motivated by a desire to ensure the program did not experience significant disruptions and to prevent additional individuals from being placed in jail.

Comm. Somerville declared her support for employees who fear retaliation for speaking about workplace grievances.

Comm. Somerville said that the County needs more permanent supportive housing; noted the importance of addressing housing issues as individuals nationwide move to Michigan to escape adverse climate conditions.

Comm. Rabhi said that the Board should not be obligating dollars to the Sheriff's Office in light of the department's surplus millage funds.

Comm. Hodge called a recess at 9:26pm.

The Board reconvened at 9:43pm.

V. LIAISON REPORTS

Comm. Maciejewski reported that the new home toxics center is open to the public.

VI. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. **23-171** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that a resolution to set a public hearing to receive comment on the 2024-2027 Quadrennial Budget for Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 7:00 PM in the Board Room, County Administration Building and via Zoom be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
2. **23-172** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that a resolution to set a public hearing to receive comment on the Brownfield Plan Amendment for the 303 N. Fifth Ave 312/314 Detroit St Project in the City of Ann Arbor for Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 7:00 PM in the Board Room, County Administration Building and via Zoom be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott) Motion carried.

VII. APPOINTMENTS

1. **23-173** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution appointing members to the Washtenaw County Advisory Council on Reparations be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
2. **23-174** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution appointing a member to the Washtenaw County Criminal Justice Collaborative Council be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
3. **23-175** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution amending the term of a member of the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that the minutes of the October 4, 2023 meeting of the Board of Commissioners be approved. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
2. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, 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-0052 RECEIVED: October 3, 2023. Alpena County Board of Commissioners: Resolution opposing legislation which would preempt local control over wind and solar development projects.

R-0053 RECEIVED: October 3, 2023. Alcona County Board of Commissioners: Resolution opposing legislation which would preempt local control over wind and solar development projects.

R-0054 RECEIVED: October 3, 2023. Kalkaska County Board of Commissioners: Resolution opposing legislation which would preempt local control over wind and solar development projects.

R-0055 RECEIVED: October 4, 2023. City of Saline Planning of Commission: Distribution of draft Master Plan.

R-0056 RECEIVED: October 4, 2023. City of Saline Planning Commission: Notice of distribution of updated Master Plan.

R-0057 RECEIVED: October 10, 2023. Evan N. Pratt, Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner: Memorandum describing the effects of the August 23-24, 2023 storm in Washtenaw County.

R-0058 RECEIVED: October 11, 2023. Washtenaw County Road Commission: Resolution requesting the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners place renewal and restoration of the County Road and Non-Motorized Millage before the voters at the 2024 state and local primary elections.

3. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that the following reports be received: Report of Standing Committees: Working Session (October 4, 2023). Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
4. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that the following reports be received: Report of Special Committees. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
5. Other Reports
 - A. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that the following reports be received: A report from the Washtenaw County Road Commission on the summary of service requests for the month of September, 2023. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
 - B. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that the following reports be received: A report on contracts in the amount of \$25,000 and under from September 26, 2023 through October 10, 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. First Reading
 - A. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that a resolution to approve the Office of Michigan Attorney General Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Grant Memorandum of Understanding for the period of October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024 from the Prosecuting Attorney be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.
 - B. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that a resolution to approve the State of Michigan FY24 Enhancement Grant for the East Washtenaw Community and Recreation Center from Administration be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.
 - C. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that a resolution approving the final recommendation of award recipients for RFP 8419, "Human Services Partnership 2023 High Impact Grants Program" from the Office of Community and Economic Development be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.

- D. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that a resolution to establish criteria for providing qualifying Veterans Enhanced Assistance with the payment of burial expenses be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.
2. Final Reading
- A. **23-176** Comm. LaBarre , seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution establishing a new discretionary fee for passport photos administered by the Clerk/Register of Deeds office be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
- B. **23-177** Comm. LaBarre , seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution approving acceptance of the Area Agency on Aging 1-B funding to the Senior Nutrition Program from the Office of Community and Economic Development be approved. Comm. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.
3. Single Reading
- A. **23-178** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution to ratify the signature of the Water Resources Commissioner on a revised grant award to the Department of the Environment, Great Lakes and Energy to support the removal of Tyler Dam and Beyer Dam from the Water Resources Commissioner be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
- B. **23-179** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution supporting House Bills 4382 and 4383 to amend the Michigan Drain Code from the Water Resources Commissioner be approved.

Evan Pratt, Water Resources Commissioner, said that this legislation would enable communities to collaborate to solve water infrastructure issues more easily.

Comm. Rabhi asked how the Huron River Watershed Council would interact with bodies enabled by this resolution.

Pratt said that this resolution would empower Watershed Councils with additional administrative authority.

Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.

- C. **23-180** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution supporting the Drive SAFE bills in the Michigan House and Senate be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
- D. **23-181** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that the A Resolution in Support of H.R. 15 The Equality Act be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
- E. **23-182** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution honoring the life of Bishop Roger Johnson Sr. be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.
- F. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Sanders, moved to enter a Closed Session to discuss communications from Corporation Counsel. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.

- G. **23-183** Comm. Rabhi, seconded by Comm. Beeman, moved that a resolution to retain one or more law firms to represent the County in a class action lawsuit be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Claims

- A. **23-184** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Rabhi, moved that a resolution authorizing the payment of claims commencing with the last previously approved claim and continuing through the date of October 9, 2023 be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1 (Scott). Motion carried.

X. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Administrator Dill gave a presentation on the County's proposed Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

Dill said that the County's proposed response includes considerations for impact on a short, intermediate, and long-term basis.

Short term response strategies include the development of a centralized case management program, the convening of housing summits, maintaining support for shelters and service providers, performing system wide funding and services assessments, and the stabilization and expansion of HAWC.

Intermediate term response strategies include supporting the development of an eviction court, securing master leases, exploring modular sheltering, a guaranteed basic income pilot program, and the establishment of a County land bank.

Long term response strategies include the development of a County housing commission and the direct funding of affordable housing projects by other developers.

Comm. Somerville said that she would prefer a concentrated focus on eviction prevention services; indicated concerns about the community's ability to properly staff additional shelters. Comm. Somerville indicated a desire to increase structural funding for housing and homelessness services.

Comm. Rabhi said that the County should begin the investigative process for a housing commission immediately; noted nearby communities' challenges with land banks. Comm. Rabhi indicated general concerns with master leases as a long term solution to housing challenges; said that he hopes general fund contributions to housing continue to increase in future years.

Comm. Beeman said that the United States Department of Agriculture makes funding for affordable housing available to rural communities.

Comm. LaBarre asked for additional clarity on the proposals for short-term solutions.

Administrator Dill stated that additional work is required to be able to present concrete deliverables to the Board for approval. Dill said that additional resources and capacity are needed to bolster the County's existing support systems.

Comm. Lyte said that the County should consider additional geographies outside of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti for space for shelter and services.

Comm. Somerville asked about funding which has already been obligated to housing and homelessness services and the restrictions on recent allocations to Barrier Busters.

Moonson Eninsche said that ARPA dollars from Ypsilanti Township can be used for eviction prevention.

Comm. Somerville indicated a desire for the Board to take action on housing and homelessness at the November 1, 2023 meeting.

Comm. Rabhi said that the proposal falls short of meeting the community's requests regarding the expansion of shelter services.

Administrator Dill said that the County will work to convene the appropriate stakeholders in order to bring a recommendation to the Board at the November 1, 2023 meeting.

2. Revenue Whitepaper

3. Internal Government Services ARPA Allocation

XI. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

XII. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

1. 2024-2027 Recommended Quadrennial Budget

Comm. Rabhi indicated a desire to increase the Board's time in public meetings.

XIII. PENDING

XIV. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 AM.

Justin Hodge, Chair of
the Board of
Commissioners

Lawrence
Kestenbaum,
Clerk/Register

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