



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 17, 2024

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 January 17, 2024.

The meeting was called to order at 05:31 PM by Comm. Somerville, Chair of the Working Session.

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, Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard, Corporation Counsel; Alize Asberry Payne, Racial Equity Officer; Tina Gavalier & Catherine Jones-Alther, Finance; Toni Kayumi, Executive Director OCED; Jason Fee, Facilities Management; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Terrence Williams, Equity Office; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Tara Cohen, OCED; Jeff Rose, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Bryce Allmacher, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Matt McDonnell introduced himself as Managing Director of the Washtenaw County Road Commission.

III. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

IV. REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LIAISON

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Alize Asberry Payne, Racial Equity Officer, gave an update on the Washtenaw Resuce Plan. Payne said that by the end of 2024 all of the funding appropriated to the County through ARPA will be obligated to various programs and projects.

Payne gave an overview of investments made by the County using ARPA funds. Programs and projects funded under ARPA include: increasing childcare access,

opening and funding childhood savings accounts, expanding broadband access, expanding weatherization services, building a strong and equity-driven health department, the Mobile Support Services Initiative, the Community Priority Fund, premium pay to essential workers, support for seniors, affordable homeownership development, improving stormwater infrastructure, the Small Business Equity Fund, the Financial Empowerment Center, financial services for unbaked and underbanked residents, the Fine and Fee Justice Reform Project, down payment assistance, additional Health Department funding, improving County infrastructure, improving government services, ARPA support position, Eastside Community and Recreation Center.

Payne stated that all programmatic funding must be fully expended by the end of 2024.

Payne said that infrastructure contracts must be fully executed by the end of 2024 and that infrastructure funds must be fully expended by the end of 2026.

Payne stated that the County has not identified additional funding sources to support many of the programmatic initiatives being supported by ARPA dollars.

Comm. Rabhi asked for additional detail on some of the programs being funded by ARPA, specifically, a breakdown of in-house investments versus monies which were used to support outside organizations.

Comm. Rabhi indicated a desire to work with the Board to thoughtfully transition into 2025 as many ARPA-funded positions reach their expiration both at the County and beyond.

Comm. Hodge asked about the departments and staff who have been responsible for the administration and distribution of these funds.

Payne said that Racial Equity Office is primarily responsible for the administration of ARPA funds and said that the Health Department is responsible for the money which has been allocated to it.

Comm. Sanders asked about the complexity of the Sycamore Broadband project.

Payne said that the Sycamore project is infrastructural and that building out the groundwork for something brand new is more challenging than providing programmatic support.

Comm. Sanders asked about the funding for underbanked individuals.

Payne said that the Board reprogrammed this funding towards housing and homelessness in late 2023.

Comm. Scott asked about the unspent programmatic funding for the Financial Empower Center.

Payne said that the second quarter of 2024 will provide more insight as to whether the Financial Empowerment Center could move through their currently allocated funding quickly enough to expend additional funding.

Comm. Maciejewski asked about the amount of ARPA funding that has been allocated to new programs versus existing ones.

Comm. Rabhi asked about the investments in Broadband and County infrastructure.

Administrator Dill indicated that a more detailed presentation on Broadband is forthcoming.

Payne said that County infrastructure projects primarily fall under the category of deferred maintenance to County owned facilities.

- B. Toni Kayumi, OCED Executive Director, gave an update on the County's Housing and Homelessness response.

Kayumi said that the response to recent extreme weather was coordinated by the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County and primarily took the form of various daytime warming centers opening throughout the County. Existing supports such as the HAWC Intake Center and overnight shelter at the Delonis Shelter remain active.

Kayumi stated that OCED is targeting the week of January 29th to hire the new full-time HAWC staff.

Kayumi said that implementation of the direct cash assistance program passed by the Board in late 2023 will take place at the end of the month.

Contracts for eviction prevention and diversion have been sent to various service providers countywide.

Kayumi stated that contracts for Winter sheltering services have been sent to countywide service providers.

Comm. Somerville asked about the eviction prevention funding being administered through Barrier Busters.

Kayumi said that the process for distributing funds is being designed by Human Services staff at OCED, Kayumi stated that OCED could use additional staff capacity.

Comm. Rabhi asked about Alpha House's move of its administrative offices from Jackson Road to downtown Ann Arbor. Comm. Rabhi asked whether the Board's funding to Alpha House was to support its development of additional shelter space.

Kayumi stated that County funding is being used to support staffing at Alpha House.

Comm. Scott indicated a desire for the County to include poor air quality days as a trigger for a weather response at OCED and the Continuum of Care.

Comm. Sanders asked whether temporary employees at HAWC will transition into full-time positions or whether those positions will be posted to the general public.

Administrator Dill said that those positions will be posted to the public in accordance with the County's labor contracts.

Comm. Sanders indicated concern that the County's contracted service providers are not adequately incentivized to ensure their service delivery models are as effective and respectful as possible.

Kayumi stated that OCED is currently exploring a survey system to inquire about the quality of both OCED's and external service providers' work.

Administrator Dill stated that the County is currently in similar conversations regarding the entire human services system.

Comm. LaBarre spoke about the upcoming transition away from COVID-era funding sources for housing and homelessness specifically, said that the Board now has the opportunity to engage with the community regarding structural funding for housing moving forward.

Comm. Hodge thanked Director Kayumi for her work and asked about improvements which could be made to HAWC in the future.

Kayumi mentioned the HAWC phone system and staffing capacity as posing challenges to the stabilization and improvement of HAWC.

Comm. Lyte offered her support to both HAWC and OCED as a whole.

Comm. Rabhi suggested that County investigate ways to visually indicate its role in funding certain critical services.

VI. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

VII. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

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

The meeting adjourned at 06:47 PM.

Annie Somerville, Chair of the Working Session
Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Bryce Allmacher, Deputy Clerk

Board Approved: February 7, 2024