WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 6, 2024

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 November 6, 2024.

The meeting was called to order at 7:16 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

Members Absent: Comm. Annie Somerville

Others Present: Greg Dill, County Administrator; Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard, Corporation Counsel; Tina Gavalier & Catherine Jones-Alther, Finance; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Terrence Williams, Administration; Jeff Rose, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Ashlyn Poole, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
None.

1. None.

IV. COMMISSIONER FOLLOW-UP TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
None.

V. LIAISON REPORTS
Comm. LaBarre reported on CMH and congratulated the CMH staff. He highlighted the agenda item from CMH. He also stated that at the last CMH meeting there was joy at the changing financial position with the relationship with the Board and the passing of the millage.

Comm. Hodge reported on attending the Board of Health meeting.

VI. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. None.

2. **24-202** Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. Beeman moved to approve a resolution to set a public hearing on the 2025-2028 Budget Reaffirmation.
   Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

3. **24-203** Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. LaBarre moved to approve a resolution to set a Public Hearing on the proposed 2024 Millage Rate.
   Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

VII. APPOINTMENTS

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. LaBarre moved to approve the consent agenda. Voice vote - motion carried.

1. Comm. Scott, seconded by LaBarre. None, moved that the minutes of theOctober 16, 2024 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. Lyte stated that she was able to communicate to the BOC in Livingston that Washtenaw County did not appreciate being mentioned in their communications. She stated that it was well received.

   Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, 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.)

3.

4.

5.

A. Comm.Scott, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that the following reports be received: A report on contracts in the amount of $25,000 and under from October 8, 2024, through October 29, 2024. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register’s Office.)

6. None.

7. Washtenaw County Clerk, Lawrence Kestenbaum provided a report on early voting and the election day results. There were 51,000 early votes and close to the same number of absentee ballots. He also spoke about the proposals that passed and failed in the election.

   Comm. Rabhi asked about same-day voter registration and stated that he witnessed long lines in previous years and asked if shorter lines this year was due to early voting or preparation.

   Clerk Kestenbaum stated his thoughts that it was a combination of fewer people and more preparedness. He also stated that early voting took a lot of pressure off of election day.

   Comm. Scott thanked the clerk for his earlier presentation.

Clerk Kestenbaum thanked the commissioners for agreeing in a previous meeting to reduce the length of the proposals on the ballots and highlighted some of the struggles with getting the ballots to fit on one piece of paper.

Administrator Dill thanked the team in elections and administration for their work.

IX. RESOLUTIONS

1.

A. Comm. Sanders expressed her desire that the grant addressing violence against women is dedicated specifically and only to women who have dealt with domestic violence and not co-opted by any other cause.

Administrator Dill stated that there was discussion and that the county administration would specify that in writing.

Voice vote - motion carried.

B. Voice vote - motion carried.

C. Voice vote - motion carried.

D. Comm. Rabhi asked how grant funding would work with a new administration coming in and the previous administration's names being on the applications.

Administrator Dill stated that he did not have the answer at the moment but that he would have an answer at a later date. He also stated that he believes that in years past, the transition was seamless.

Comm. Rabhi asked if the sheriff or administration oversee the process because he would like to have a plan in place.

Administrator Dill assured him that he would find an answer.

Comm. Sanders stated her understanding that the applications would be amended to include the new administrator's names.

Administrator Dill added that he did not know of many of the applications that had the Sheriff's name on it.

Voice vote - motion carried.

E. Voice vote - motion carried.

F. Comm. Rabhi asked if Brownfield was all environmental capture. Representatives confirmed. He also asked about specific language in the resolution which was clarified.

Voice vote - motion carried.

G. Voice vote - motion carried.

2.

A. **24-204** Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

B. **24-205** Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

C. **24-206** Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

3.

A. **24-207** Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

B. **24-208** Comm. Rabhi noted that in the agenda that a reduction in federal funds was expected and asked if the county budgeted for this cut.

Emergency Operations Manager, Benjamin Pinette stated that a 50% reduction in the grant was expected anodals stated that there was a lot of project activity planned in the upcoming years. Grants help to sustain some of that, but he stated that he would defer to the incoming administration to see what the funding looks like in the future. He stated that the reimbursement from the federal government would be around $15,000. Pinette added that they would be looking for additional support.

Comm. Rabhi asked for further clarification on further cost which Pinette provided.

Administrator Dill stated that they have been discussing these items with the incoming administration and that they would keep the BOC updated.

Comm. Rabhi stated that the reason for asking is that he would not like to create so many commitments for the new administration to have to sort through.

Comm. Lyte asked if this was always funded by the BOC and if it could be taken out of their reserved funds to make up the difference.

Administrator Dill stated that the administration would bring back a recommendation for the fund balance.

Comm. Rabhi asked for clarity on the existence of a fund balance after the MOU's expiration.
Administrator DIll stated that there was currently a fund balance in the Sheriff's office and when the MOU expires, the board would have to determine where the funds sit.

Comm. Sanders asked for clarification on Comm. Lyte's question and if there would still be a vote on the issue.

Comm. Hodge affirmed that the Board would have to vote to move it forward.

Comm. Scott stated that the board should be prepared to deal with the issue moving forward.

Administrator Dill stated that conversation around these items would continue.

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

C. **24-209** Comm. Scott highlighted the grant and thanked Ben Pinnette and Lee Hathaway from the Sheriff's Office for their work in receiving the grant.

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

D. **24-210** Comm. Rabhi stated that he was excited to see this resolution and stated that it was in line with what he wanted to see from CMH and encouraged them to continue.

Administrator Dill thanked the staff for allowing him to view these properties.

Comm. Sanders thanked CMH for their work and stated that she would be interested in knowing cost savings between owning and leasing a property.

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

E. **24-211** Comm. Rabhi stated that this should be national policy. He spoke about the resilient Washtenaw plan and stated that he would have preferred that this was presented to the environmental council.

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

F. **24-212** Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

4.

A. **24-213** Roll Call Vote: YEAS 8 NAYS 0 ABSENT 1. Motion carried.

X. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Lawrence Kestenbaum provided an update on the election and early voting.

Comm. Rabhi asked about

Comm. Scott thanked the clerk for his earlier presentation on voting.

1. Comm. Scott asked about the vacant positions on hold and not on hold. Director Hernandez clarified.

   Comm. Sanders asked which of the slides indicates that the positions are vacant but budgeted for which was explained.

   Comm. Scott stated that it was interesting to look at the length of time that positions have been vacant and stated that it intersects with the issues with retirees doing work.

   Executive Director of Human Resources, Guillermo Hernandez provided an update on the Employee Engagement Survey:

   Comm. Dill stated that the administration would report back to the Board and be intentional in addressing the concerns outlined in the employee survey.

   Comm. Rabhi asked about the courts.

Director Hernandez stated that more info would be provided from the meeting that they held and stated that the offer to the courts to participate in the 2025 Employee Engagement Survey.

Comm. Rabhi asked if court employees were sent the 2024 survey. Hernandez stated that they were not.

Comm. Scott asked if the courts had committed to participating in the next round of employee surveys.
Circuit and trial court? Hernandez affirmed.

Comm. Sanders stated that her understanding was that the trial court indicated that they would participate after mandated evaluations by the state.

Director Hernandez stated that the courts had stated that they would address the concerns on their own, not through the survey.

Comm. Sanders asked for clarification on participation after multiple staff complaints.

Comm. Lyte thanked Director Hernandez and requested that the staff at the Friend of the Court be given a mandatory survey that is required to be distributed.

Administrator Dill stated that he would be sure to send the communication approved by Corporation Counsel and send a draft for board review.

Comm. Rabhi expressed his frustration and stated that he would not vote on any issues involving the trial and/or circuit court until they have an answer and encouraged his fellow commissioners to do the same.

Comm. Lyte stated that she would also vote no on any issue involving the courts if the issues were not resolved.

Comm. Sanders expressed her appreciation for Administrator Dill and stated that this was an area of concern and that one of the courts has been adamant that they will not cooperate with the Board. She expressed her belief that the board has a responsibility to all the county employees, which includes the court staff. She stated that no employee should feel bullied or mistreated and that all employees should have access to human resources equally. She stated that employees should not deal like they are working for an "overseer".

Administrator Dill stated that he would communicate with the courts and also stated that he would run everything by Corporation Counsel in order to ensure that he stayed within the bounds of his authority.

Comm. LaBarre stated that administration staff may be put in a difficult situation and suggested that they be given more latitude by the Board and more backing if they were to move forward. He also stated that the Board was not set up structurally to challenge the courts, and it was likely that they would not succeed.

Comm. Rabhi stated that he spoke with Chief Judge Frushour and that they are on board to complete the 2025 survey.

Comm. Scott reiterated the fact that she wanted to ensure that all the county employees have a voice. She expressed her frustration that the judges acted as if the survey came up too fast, when she had authored the resolution to conduct a survey in 2021. She stated that she understood the separation of powers but that court employees ware still county employees and that she was only attempting to make people's lives better.

Comm. Lyte agreed with Comm. Scott and stated that it had been a year since she visited the FOC and that they are discriminating against employees and abusing and bullying employees. She stated that no policy or laws had been violated by the board. She expressed her wish for someone to take action.

Comm. Hodge asked Corp. Counsel if a motion was needed to perform this action.

Corp. Counsel clarified that a motion was not necessary, but they could do it.

Comm. Sanders stated her opinion that the court's actions looked like union busting and that the people who were being pushed out belonged to a bargaining group. She also stated that this was one of the reasons that she was interested in seeing the number of vacancies that they have.

Comm. Lyte stated that she looked forward to seeing how the motion goes.

24-214 Comm. Lyte, seconded by Comm. Rabhi moved to authorize the County Administrator to consult Corporation Counsel to explore solutions to the challenges posed by co-employer relationships with the courts.

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

XI. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

XII. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

Comm. Hodge commented on the General Election and stated the board's commitment to serving Washtenaw County residents and keep them safe.

Comm. Scott echoed the sentiments and noted that they always speak about the residents of Washtenaw County and not the citizens of Washtenaw and stated that they care about everyone, whether they are documented or not, and stated that the people at the table will do what they can to protect the residents of the county.

Comm. LaBarre stated his desire for the board to give staff license to figure out ways to approach issues in cooperation with ice and social services and immigration. He stated his desire to be proactive in providing employees with the ability and support to approach these issues.

Comm. Beeman echoed the sentiments of her colleagues and spoke about planned parenthood and spoke about title 10 services and emphasized that the board is here for all the citizens.

Comm. Rabhi spoke about his time in the state legislature and how challenging the experience was after 2016. He reassured residents of his commitment to them.

1. Catherine Jones-Alther provided an answer to the commissioners on a question that they asked about federal funding.

   Comm. Rabhi asked for further clarification which Jones-Alther provided.

XIII. PENDING

XIV. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm.

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Justin Hodge, Chair of the Board of Commissioners

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Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Ashlyn Poole, Deputy Clerk
Board Approved: November 20, 2024