

WASHTENAW URBAN COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 - 2:00pm – 3:30pm (Remote)

Members in Attendance: Katie Jones (Economic Development & Equity Coordinator, City of Ypsilanti); Council Member Chris Watson (City of Ann Arbor); Heather Jarrell Roe (Clerk, Ypsilanti Township); Trustee Linda Adams (Augusta Township); Jessica West (Director of Community Development, Pittsfield Township); Mayor Pro-Tem Janet Dillon (City of Saline); Supervisor Diane O'Connell (Ann Arbor Township); Clerk Kayleigh Zupi (York Township).

Members Absent: Mayor Shawn Keough (City of Dexter); Supervisor Duane Luick (Lima Township); Supervisor Laurie Fromhart (Bridgewater Township); Supervisor Gary Whittaker (Salem Township); Supervisor Jim Marion (Saline Township); Supervisor John Kingsley (Webster Township); Supervisor Ronald Milkey (Manchester Township); Supervisor Will Hathaway (Scio Township); Supervisor Ken Schwartz (Superior Township); Mayor Jane Pacheco (City of Chelsea); Supervisor Karen Sikkenga (Dexter Township); Supervisor Kathleen Kennedy (Sylvan Township); Supervisor Ken Dignan (Northfield Township).

Facilitator: Commissioner Justin Hodge

OCED Staff Present: Tara Cohen; Jasmyne Townsend; Karen Newman

Members of Public Present: Frances Todoro-Hargreaves (Impacting Investing Manager, Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation); Elena Ermak (Director of Lending Resources, Habitat for Humanity Huron Valley).

I. Welcome & Introductions – Roll Call

Pursuant to [MCL 15.263 Sec.3](#), Ms. Townsend took roll call during which each member stated their name and physical location (I.e. City or Township, Washtenaw County, State of Michigan).

Jones: Participating remotely from City of Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County
Watson: Participating remotely from City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County
Adams: Participating remotely from Augusta Township, Washtenaw County
West: Participating remotely from Pittsfield Township, Washtenaw County
Dillon: Participating remotely from City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County
Jarrell Roe: Participating remotely from Ypsilanti Township, Washtenaw County
O'Connell: Participating remotely from Ann Arbor Township, Washtenaw County

Zupi joined at 2:12 pm – Participating remotely from York Township, Washtenaw County

II. Public Comment

Zoom link:

<https://washtenawcounty.zoom.us/j/84540808106?pwd=dkh3QTIXVTYzcmF1anZmaW9aWXdCZz09>

Passcode: 291320

Telephone: US: +1 470 381 2552 or +1 267 831 0333 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 470 250 9358 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 206 337 9723 or +1 213 338 8477

Webinar ID: 845 4080 8106

At 2:03 Commissioner Hodge opened the meeting for public comment.

Public Comment – None

III. Announcements from Members and/or Staff –

A. Member Announcements (All) – None

B. Warming Centers

- I. OCED staff expects to have more detailed information to share to UCEC and interested parties early November; information will be shared by email.
- II. Welcome new OCED Director – Tara Cohen announced OCED has a new OCED Director, Toni Kayumi.

C. OCED Staff Updates

- I. [Job opening for Human Services Manager](#) – applications due 11/14/23. Tara Cohen thanked previous Human Services Manager, Morghan Boydston, for her tenure at OCED and wished her the best of luck on her new endeavors at United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

D. Washtenaw County Women’s Day Celebration – Washtenaw County is hosting a Women’s Day Celebration on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at the Washtenaw Community College Morris Lawrence Building from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. This event is free and open to the public. Flyer for the event is included in the November meeting packet.

E. County Health Department Updates – A few updates provided by County Health Officer, Jimena Loveluck were shared and infographics were included in the meeting packet to share out to the community.

IV. Minutes

A. 09-06-2023 Meeting Minutes – Review & Approval (ACTION)

Moved by Adams. Supported by Jarrell Roe.

ROLL CALL:

O’Connell: Yes

Jones: Yes

Watson: Yes

Adams: Yes

West: Yes

Dillon: Yes

Jarrell Roe: Yes

Ayes – 7; Nays – 0; **Motion carried.**

V. General Administration

A. Amend Urban County Executive Bylaws (Discussion with possible Action) (Tara Cohen, OCED)

The UCEC bylaws were last amended in October 2012. At the April meeting OCED staff proposed several changes to the draft UCEC bylaws for review. The proposed changes were intended to clarify certain rules, bring the membership list current for the 2023-24 Fiscal Year, and add the allowance for virtual meetings. OCED staff relayed discussion notes and changes to Corporation Counsel; as of 10/27/23, these changes were pending a final review from Corporation Counsel.

In addition to these changes, a few additional changes were incorporated into the bylaws since the April discussion, specifically:

- V. Meetings and Order of Business: Staff proposes the following changes:

Regular Meetings: Public meetings shall be held 7 times at minimum in a calendar year, and shall generally be on the first Wednesday of the months in which meetings are to be held. For in person meetings, the location of the meetings shall be at the Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center (LRC), 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107, unless otherwise noted in public notices. **Meetings and public hearings may also be held virtually, in compliance with the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners Resolution 22-007, and the Urban County's Citizen Participation Plan.** The Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development staff members will post notice of these meetings, according to the Open Meetings Act, on the Washtenaw County online Calendar of Meetings.

- VII. Allocation of Expenditures/Approval of Projects: At April meeting, members decided to remove the existing language:

Project Approvals: The Committee shall not approve any new HOME, ESG, or CDBG projects within the boundaries of jurisdiction without the affirmative vote of the Committee member or Designee representing that jurisdiction present at the meeting.

Staff has replaced with the following proposed language:

Project Approvals: Projects are approved through Annual Action Plans, which will include a comprehensive table of planned activities summarizing projects and funding amounts under CDBG, HOME, and ESG grant programs for a specific fiscal year. This approval is a two step process; UCEC votes to approve, followed by approval from the Board of Commissioners.

Watson – There is just a text edit at the start of the second page by the designee – the official term is council *member* instead of council person, so just to stay consistent.

B. UCEC 2024 Meeting Calendar – Discussion with Possible Action (Jasmyne Townsend, OCED)

Townsend shared the proposed dates and further went into detail about the proposed 2024 UCEC meeting calendar. Members of the committee shared their thoughts and concerns on the proposed calendar. The majority of the committee agreed to reduce the calendar meeting frequency from 10 months to 7 months and have quarterly in-person meetings. OCED suggested sending a poll to solicit input on different meeting options in response to the concerns shared during the discussion.

Comments from the discussion are below:

O'Connell- Great to have hybrid schedule. Three (3) is a finite number and I think leaving room and in-person and remote option is helpful to those who cannot make a monthly meeting in-person. Since I've started, we have not met in person, and I think in-person meetings will help add value to the conversation.

Dillon- I would like to echo what was said, since I've been a member of this committee we've never met in-person. I think living through years of Zoom, the conversation tends to get deeper when we have them in person. My only question or concern is if we change our meeting schedule, would we have instances where we would have emergency meetings? I like to have my schedule planned so that I block time to attend.

Would it be better to have a standing meeting so that it allows the time for things that may come up on the County's end?

Tara- Thank you, Janet for your question; it's a great question. Jasmyne and I were intentional when creating this proposed calendar. We were intentional that the business of the Urban County can still move forward without interruptions with these proposed dates according to HUD deadlines. With that being said, there may be some unforeseen funding funneling through the Urban County, but I'm not sure or anticipating any new funding sources.

Dillon – Thank you, it is fine if you do not have a definitive answer. I only asked because in the past this group has had an issue with getting quorum and I don't want something to pop up and I'm putting your backs against the wall if I or others can't attend.

Tara – Yes, thank you for your input. I completely agree and think this was a great question to ask. We also thought it would be good to get people engaged and meet quorum with some of the in-person meeting dates, which used to not be an issue when we met in-person prior to the pandemic.

Hodge – Maybe it's a time and day thing, too. Possibly changing that around may help.

Watson – I really appreciate the opportunity for hybrid meetings. I wanted to pass along some feedback I heard from non-profit service providers. They appreciate the old days, too, of the in-person meetings because for public commenters and being able to be in the same room leads to a better discussion.

Cohen asked if there were further comments from the group.

Hodge – I like the idea, I think that it would have been helpful and enriching to the conversation when we had the HOME-ARP discussion. For bigger items I think it would be great to meet in person.

Adams – I like the idea as well. I also started this after we started meeting on Zoom. My family is still one of the families that still holds out wearing mask. So as long as that is not an issue, there are still people at our board meetings who have an issue. As long as that is not an issue, I have no problem making it to in-person meetings. My husband is still at high risk, so until his doctor tells us something different, we are still going by old guidelines (wearing a mask).

Cohen- Sorry that some people are giving you a hard time with your personal decision to wear a mask. Would you want or want to request others to wear a mask for the in-person meetings?

Adams – No, I still work around people that don't wear them. I would still be comfortable with not everyone wearing them.

Jarrell-Roe – I was looking ahead taking in consideration of election season, possibly changing the November 6th date.

Hodge – Possibly changing the date again can be something to consider. Because Wednesday and BOC meetings are hectic. Is there a particular reason why those three dates are chosen to be in-person.

Townsend – For March that is when we typically have timeline items for our Annual Action Plan; people tend to talk a little bit more, and then for the other dates those are other HUD timeframe items that typically would require further discussion around funding.

Cohen – To add to what Jasmyne said, the March date is typically when we would share recommendations for the HOME funds from the annual HOME RFP – and we would share more information about the proposals. For May those proposed awards essentially will be approved along with the whole Action Plan. For September that is typically when the CAPER is due and open to discussion.

Adams – I personally like that the remote meetings are in the winter months because of the weather.

Cohen – I will say for November or December if we have them as virtual, that's how we currently have them. We would start to solicit public comment for the Needs Assessment around that time.

C. 2024 Action Plan Overview & Timeline (Jasmyne Townsend, OCED)

Next month will begin the planning process for the 2024 Annual Action Plan. This plan is Year 2 of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan covering Fiscal Years 2023-2027. Townsend noted, members should start to think about their local CDBG project needs for the 2024 project application. Additionally, Townsend shared some key milestones for the UCEC to be aware of:

- 30-day public comment period on community needs: Dec. 4, 2023 – Jan. 4, 2024
- Virtual Public hearing for community needs: Dec. 6, 2023, at UCEC meeting
- 30-day public comment period/ Public hearings on Draft Plan: April 2024
- Approval of Final Plan: May 2024 (subject to delay based on HUD timing)

D. Update: Substantial Amendment to HOME-ARP Plan (Tara Cohen, OCED)

BOC approved the Substantial Amendment to HOME-ARP approved in a single read. So, 32% of the funds will go towards supportive services and 48% of the funds will go towards affordable housing development. The amendment has been submitted to HUD for their review process for an approval. Shortly, after the approval there will be an RFP process for the supportive services, which our CoC team will lead, and a separate RFP process for the affordable housing development will follow.

E. Update: Urban County 2023 CDBG Allocation Plan (Jasmyne Townsend, OCED)

OCED staff received and executed the 2023 HUD grant agreements in July. By the beginning of October, Ms. Townsend sent an email to each member that included an allocation letter; for communities that programmed their allocations in the 2023 Action Plan, the letter references your specific project(s). Ms. Townsend noted that for all other communities, the letter was to notify them of their final 2023 CDBG allocation under the approved formula and to remind them that their funds are being directed into the Single Family Rehab Program (which serves the entire Urban County).

Tara Cohen gave a shoutout to Jasmyne and the communities who have recently completed or are in the process of completing projects using their CDBG dollars, specifically:

- Pittsfield Township – Green Corridors Project-Phase 1 (Packard Rd near the Red Cross)
- City of Ypsilanti – Parkridge Pedestrian Accessibility Pathway and Pavilion, and ADA Curb Cuts project

VI. Public Comment – See II. above for Zoom details. - None

VII. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn – Moved by Jarrell Roe. Supported by Dillon.

Adjourned at 3:00 PM

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 6, 2023, 2:00 – 3:30pm, Location: Remote (Zoom)