



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 19, 2025

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 February 19, 2025.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Comm. Scott, Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

Members Present: Comms. Justin Hodge, Andy LaBarre, Crystal Lyte, Jason Maciejewski, Yousef Rabhi, Caroline Sanders, Katie Scott

Members Absent: Comms. Shannon Beeman, 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; Jeff Rose, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Ashlyn Poole, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Comm. Somerville, stated that she was at home watching and expressed that she was glad to see that the Board was receiving another shelter update.

1. KJ Pedri, Superior Twp., Homelessness Solidarity, reminded the BOC that there were people still sleeping outside. She stated her belief that there were gaps in the system that relied on volunteer labor. She urged the board to look at cities with comprehensive homelessness plans and highlighted the need for more staff.

Comm. Somerville thanked staff from the county in the city for helping to move the Waterstreet Remediation forward. Congratulated Evan Pratt on his retirement. She also praised Ashley for her presentation.

IV. COMMISSIONER FOLLOW-UP TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Comm. Rabhi followed up about homelessness and hoteling and his belief that there could be a more cost-effective hoteling plan. He stated that the county could buy a hotel to house people as there are two hotels for sell on Carpenter near US-23. He agreed with the speaker about her belief that the shelter system is broken.

Comm. LaBarre stated his belief that there are some options to explore with purchasing new property. He expressed his appreciation for the comments Pedri made but noted that there was planning to accommodate the needs of the community. He thanked Pedri for speaking.

Administrator Dill spoke about the unprecedented need that the current system faces. He stated that he would respond to any needs that he is made aware of. He stated that Washtenaw would continue to work to act in accordance with their values.

Comm. Scott thanked Pedri for recognizing the Path team and their work. She stated that she would like to think about how all of the needs of residents in the county could be served. She stated that she would like to hear how other counties are addressing the homelessness crisis.

V. LIAISON REPORTS

Comm. Rabhi provided a report on the Statutory Drain Board approving raingardens becoming drainage in Ypsilanti Twp. He also reported on the Parks Commission and Parks approving farmland development rights. He also spoke about the retirement of the director of parks and the process of hiring a new parks commissioner which will come to the Board of Commissioners.

Comm. Scott stated that there was a more inclusive process and that the final decision would come from the Board of Commissioners. She added that there would be Ice Sculptures at the park on Saturday.

Comm. Hodge reported on Washtenaw County Food Policy Council hiring process.

VI. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

County Administrator Dill spoke about progress on the Eastside Rec Center. He noted that they were doing all that they could to preserve the Cheney School Building. He also spoke about the difficult abatement process.

Jason Fee, Director of Facilities Management, spoke about the work on the Rec Center. He spoke about additional abatement that they had to do because of some hazardous chemicals found. He shared photos and gave next milestone dates for the project. There were endangered species (Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake, and bats) on the site.

Comm. Rabhi provided some information about the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake.

Comm. Sanders asked if there had been any thoughts to paved brick entrance ways that acknowledge Cheney.

Comm. Lyte asked if people could purchase a brick where the funds go to the new rec center and scholarships.

Comm. Rabhi spoke about scholarships for people to access Mary Lou Murray. He stated that they were presented with a framework at the last meeting but noted that there is more work that needed to be done.

Comm. Scott spoke about the Border to Border trails and non-profits funding some of the scholarship money.

Comm. Sanders stated that the money is supposed to be utilized to cover membership fees for families that could not afford to be members of the center.

Comm. Rabhi thanked Comm. Sanders and Comm. Lyte for advocating for this issue. He also expressed his belief that there should be funding provided by the parks commission.

Comm. Scott added that Comm. Somerville has also advocated for funding. She spoke about Jhoney Cheney, the first black teacher in the Willow Run district, who Cheney Elementary was named after.

Comm. Rabhi spoke more about the hiring process of the parks commissioner.

Administrator Dill expressed his thanks to the Board for their work on the project.

VII. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Chair Hodge spoke about taking the Board of Commissioners meetings on the road. She stated that Ashley was already exploring where this event could be held.

VIII. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Kat Slocum, Washtenaw County Historic Preservation Specialist, spoke about the changes to the Historic District Ordinance.

IX. APPOINTMENTS

1. **25-025** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge moved to approve a resolution appointing members to the Washtenaw County Community Mental Health Board. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.

X. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that the minutes of the February 5, 2025 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. Hodge, 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-0014 RECEIVED: February 3, 2025: Ann Arbor Spark Q4 Report

R-0015 RECEIVED: February 10, 2025: Office of Community and Economic Development, Barrier Busters January 2025 BOC Winter Housing Fund Report

3. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that the following reports be received: Report of Standing Committees. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
4. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, 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.
- A. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that the following reports be received: A report on contracts in the amount of \$25,000 and under from January 30, 2025, through February 11, 2025. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)

- B. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, 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 January, 2025. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)
- 6. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that the following reports be received: Report of the Treasurer. Voice vote - motion carried. (Complete report is on file in the County Clerk/Register's Office.)

XI. RESOLUTIONS

- 1.
 - A. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that a resolution to approve the above midpoint hire of Dr. Thomas Atkins as a Psychiatrist from Community Mental Health be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.
 - B. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that a resolution to pledge full faith and credit for the Portage Base Line Lake, Lake Level District from Water Resources be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.
 - C. Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that a resolution to approve assessments for Portage Base Line Lake, Lake Level District from Water Resources be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.
 - D. Comm. Lyte asked about previous sentiments that she voiced about utilizing graduate assistants for work.

Comm. Sanders asked who requested the position and how it would be paid for.

Comm. Rabhi stated that he may have asked for the position in the last budget request along with a resiliency officer and an ID project.

Comm. Sanders asked how it related to the position that was just created and the position being a replacement. She also asked about the grade of the position being reduced. She stated that she wanted the residents to know who directly made the request for the position.

Comm. Scott stated that Comm. Rabhi asked for the position and stated that other colleagues had asked for the position. She stated that the Board sets the agenda. She stated her belief that the position helps to professionalize the role of the board and that it was necessary due to the challenges that may arise over the next 4 years. She stated that it was funded from 2 line items.

Comm. LaBarre stated that he did recall Comm. Rabhi asking for this position. He stated his belief that this was a good choice as similar organizations have 2-3 people performing constituent services.

Comm. Sanders asked for documented feedback about items that were requested by the commissioners that have not been met by the Board.

Comm. Scott noted that she had not received any of this feedback.

Comm. Sanders stated that she did not have any communication from Comm. Scott.

Comm. Scott stated that she would provide that to Comm. Sanders.

Comm. Sanders asked if commissioner requests would be taken into consideration in 2025 and noted that her ask for landlord/tenant rights education had not been addressed.

Comm. Scott said that they would continue the practice of hearing commissioner requests.

Comm. Sanders commented that she would feel more comfortable if the position was moved into a part-time position.

Comm. Lyte noted her work in college and stated other ways that students could work in government. She recommended that the opportunity be presented to the 2 nearby universities. She expressed her support for the position but requested that the Board think of more cost-effective ways to fill the position.

Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge moved that a resolution to authorize the creation of 1.0FTE for the Board of Commissioners Constituent Outreach Coordinator position from Administration be approved. Voice vote - motion carried.

2.

- A. **25-026** Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution for two group home purchases from Community Mental Health be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.
- B. **25-027** Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution authorizing a grant application to the Michigan Health Endowment Fund from the Health Department be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.
- C. **25-028** Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre moved that a resolution authorizing the Health Department's midyear budget adjustment and revised Environmental Health Fees from the Health Department be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.
- D. **25-029** Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution adopting the amended Washtenaw County Historic Preservation Ordinance and local Historic District Ordinances from the Office of Community and Economic Development be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.
- E. **25-030** Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution ratifying the signature of the Chair of the Board of Commissioners on the grant application for the continuation of the Secondary Road Patrol Program, from the Sheriff's Office be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.
- F. **25-031** Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that a resolution ratifying the signature of the Chair of the Board of Commissioners on the application of the Strategic Enforcement and Traffic Accident Prevention Program, from the Sheriff's Office be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.

3.

- A. **25-032** Comm. Lyte spoke about discussions that she had with her constituents. She asked if Livingston County provided any funds for maintaining of Whitmore Lake.

Lt. Cratsenberg stated that it was a joint effort between the two counties.

Comm. Lyte clarified her previous statements and stated that other counties could assist with the matching dollars. She asked for more information on the services provided for Whitmore Lake.

Lt. Cratsenberg stated that he would get that information and provide it to the Board.

Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge, moved that a resolution ratifying the 2025 Marine Safety Grant through the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources, from the Sheriff's Office be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.

- B. **25-033** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge moved that a resolution to approve a \$3M Community Project Fund grant with HUD to support the City of Ypsilanti Water Street Redevelopment from Administration be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.
- C. Comm. Scott pulled this item from the agenda.
- D. **25-034** Comm. Scott spoke about the robust history of African Americans in Washtenaw County. She also highlighted that 2026 was the bicentennial of Washtenaw County. She thanked the Racial Equity Office for helping to prepare the resolution.

Comm. Lyte expressed her excitement that she had created Black History in District 2.

Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge moved that a resolution celebrating Black History Month and declaring February 2025 as Black History Month in Washtenaw County be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.

4.

- A. **25-035** Comm. LaBarre, seconded by Comm. Hodge moved that a resolution authorizing the payment of claims commencing with the last previously approved claim and continuing through the date of February 10, 2025, be approved. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.

XII. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

Comm. Rabhi commented on the troubling things happening with the federal government. He stated that he was troubled by a post on the official White House Facebook page. ("Long Live the King" post) He spoke about his reasons for getting into politics. He also spoke about the divisions that are being created in the nation.

Comm. Scott echoed the sentiments of Comm. Rabhi and stated that they should continue to pay attention.

1. Comm. Hodge, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved that the board enter into a Closed Session to discuss Negotiation Strategy. Roll Call Vote: YEAS 7 NAYS 0 ABSENT 2. Motion carried.

XIII. PENDING

XIV. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 PM.

Katie Scott, Chair of
the Board of
Commissioners

Lawrence
Kestenbaum,
Clerk/Register

By: Ashlyn Poole, Deputy Clerk
Board Approved: March 5, 2025