



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 19, 2025

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 March 19, 2025.

The meeting was called to order at 05:35 PM by Comm. LaBarre, Chair of the Working Session.

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| Members Present: | Comms. Shannon Beeman, Justin Hodge, Andy LaBarre, Crystal Lyte, Jason Maciejewski, Yousef Rabhi, Caroline Sanders, Katie Scott, Annie Somerville                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| Members Absent:  | Comms.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Others Present   | Greg Dill, County Administrator; Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard, Corporation Counsel; Catherine Jones-Alther, Finance; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Jeff Rose, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Ashlyn Poole, Clerk’s Office; and members of the public. |

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

III. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

None.

IV. REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LIAISON

None.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Shonagh Taruza, Executive Director of Alpha provided a Winter Shelter Update. She shared the impacts of the \$250,000 allocated to Alpha House by the Board in 2023 and 2024.

Comm. Somerville thank Taruza for speaking and asked what Taruza thought would be more helpful for the Board to focus on.Taruza stated that it would be more helpful for the Bpard to focus on the Eastside Center.

Comm. Sanders thanked Taruza for her presentation. She thanked Alpha House for their efforts and spoke more about some of the help that Alpha House had provided to

some of her constituents. She spoke about her tour of Alpha House.

Comm. LaBarre requested a shelter update from Taruza and Dan Kelly of the Shelter Association in May or June.

- B. Lynda Horning, Promotion and Education Chair, and Valisa Bristle, Farm Bureau spoke about their role in Farm Bureau education.

Comm. Beeman thanked the speakers for coming out.

Comm. Sanders asked them to explain what the Farm Bureau does and how it benefits farmers. Horning explained the many aspects of the Farm Bureau and explained that they mostly helped farmers with the legislation of being a farmer.

Comm. Lyte stated that she was a proud member of the Farm Bureau.

Comm. LaBarre asked about feedback from Farmers on the current Federal landscape. Bristle explained how farming was risky and stated that they had not heard much from farmers.

Horning stated that 95% of farms in Washtenaw County are family owned.

Comm. Rabhi spoke about his concerns with the reduction in family farms. He asked how the Board could do to help support family farms and asked about Farm Bureaus role connection to advertising the conservation programs that that county conducts. Bristle explained farm bureau's role in preserving farms in Washtenaw.

Bristle and Horning spoke about their upcoming Project RED which educates students about farming.

Comm. Rabhi spoke about food procurement and an opportunity for the county to buy local.

Comm. Lyte asked about partnerships with local schools to learn more bout agriculture.

- C. Jae Gerhart, Food Policy Council Chair, presented the Food Policy Council's 2024 Annual Report.

Comm. Somerville asked about people on the FPC who works with Meals on Wheels. Gerhart explained the council's relationship with Meals on Wheels and FPC.

Comm. Hodge thanked Gerhart for her presentation and spoke about some of the resolutions that they passed.

Comm. Rabhi thanked Gerhart for her presentation and spoke about his work on the FPC and new interest in the council.

Comm. LaBarre asked about a constituent question about starting a Farmer's Market and asked for advocacy around the idea. Gerhart stated that they could talk more about the issue with the Board.

## VI. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

VII. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:41 PM.

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|                                               |
| Andy LaBarre, Chair of<br>the Working Session |
|                                               |
| Lawrence<br>Kestenbaum,<br>Clerk/Register     |

By: Ashlyn Poole, Deputy Clerk

Board Approved:

Draft