



# News from the Administrator

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*“Happiness comes when you believe in what you are doing, know what you are doing and love what you are doing.”*

~Unknown~

## Administrator’s Message

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Hello everyone,

Happy Holidays! I trust that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving, and an opportunity to relax throughout the long weekend, spending it with family and friends. I know I certainly did —

As I reflect back on 2016, I must admit, it began as a bit of a bumpy ride, with uncertainty surrounding who our next administrator would be, then, my interim appointment into that position in February. The Administrator search took a hiatus over the summer, resuming in October—with the Board’s confirmation that I would be your permanent County Administrator later that month. That appointment, while exciting, was immediately followed by decisions I needed to make in order to bring closure to a year plus interim director of our Office of Community and Economic Development; as well as identifying who will now lead the Office of Infrastructure Management.

Since October, I’ve also been working diligently on my First 100 Day plan, with an emphasis on filling these department head positions, first appointing Andrea Plevak to the Office of Community and Eco-

nomics Development effective November 17, then beginning the work necessary to fill the OIM position— followed by working with my team to address the concerns you brought to my attention during our summer Town Hall series of meetings. Communication, professional growth, development and advancement opportunities, and employee safety are at the top of my list.

We’ve also weathered some controversies this year. The use of our Platt Road property was a particularly sensitive, emotionally charged issue; in the wake of CMH’s budget successes, the Board of Commissioners voted to help our Public Health Department reconcile some of their budget challenges. Our Board of Commissioners honored countless citizens and businesses for their outstanding contributions, this year, but, my absolute favorite day of the year was when I was given the opportunity to honor our best and brightest in September at our annual Employee Appreciation Breakfast. I continue to be amazed at the amount of talent this organization employs, and being able to celebrate the nominees and the winners at this annual event provides me with the motivation I need

to continue to do my best, every single day.

I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention the historic presidential election this year—one that resulted in an upset that no one ever saw coming, and furthering the divide amongst the citizens of this great nation. I will tell you, I remain committed to working with whomever necessary, regardless of our political differences, to keep moving Washtenaw County forward and improving the lives of those around us. Together, we will continue to be a shining example of what can be achieved when we choose partnership over conflict, kindness over hatred and people over politics.

So, as we look forward to the exciting opportunities 2017 is sure to offer, I am confident we will all continue to work together — facing challenges with a sense of purpose, celebrating accomplishments with a sense of teamwork, and always, always maintaining our focus on the most important thing, our citizens.

Have a wonderful December, everyone, and please accept my sincere wishes for a happy holiday & safe and happy 2017!

~Greg

# United Way Update



**Reminder: Watch eCentral for some great auction items!**

## Volunteer Center goes Mobile!



United Way of Washtenaw County's online Volunteer Center can help match your interests with local agencies in need, plus, it has just been upgraded to be mobile-friendly, check it out:  
[www.VolunteerWashtenaw.org](http://www.VolunteerWashtenaw.org)



## United Way Annual Campaign

Your United Way Committee would like to THANK YOU! It is because of all your generous donations that we were able to meet our goal. The grand total of donations was \$46,998. All



of your donations will go to help right here in Washtenaw County. For all of you who donated or participated in the auction, you will be entered into a raffle where you have a chance of winning a fun prize which will be held in early December. Truly, from the bottom of hearts Washtenaw County Government Employees thank you for your generous donations!

## Washtenaw Cares



Your United Way Committee in partnership with the Sheriff's Office is collecting new coats, scarfs, gloves, pants, snow pants, boots, sweatshirts, socks, and underwear for the Ypsilanti Schools Clothes Closet. These items will go to school children who are in need of these warm clothes items. We have drop boxes at almost every County building. Please help us keep school children warm for the winter.

## 2016 United Way Campaign Calendar: Overall Goal \$65,000

2016 Events:			
EVENT	DATE	GOAL	OUTCOME
Food Drive	March 1-April 1	\$4,000	\$4,700
Day of Action	June	20 Volunteers	9
Stuff the Bus	August	\$12,500	\$30,511
Family Kickball	September 15	\$250	0
Annual Campaign	September—November	\$40,000	\$43,085
Annual Online Auction	September—November	\$4,000	\$3,913
Washtenaw Cares	November—December	\$4,000	

Click [HERE](#) to Like Your United Way Committee on Facebook!

## BOC Says Goodbye to 4 Commissioners



While we are looking forward to welcoming in the new year, I'd like to take a moment to look back and thank our outgoing board members for their service to Washtenaw County. Commissioner Dan Smith joined the board in 2011. Upon his election to the Board of Commissioners, Dan was immediately appointed by his colleagues to be the Vice-Chair of the Ways & Means Committee, serving in that capacity from 2011 until 2014. He also served as Chair of the Roads Funding Subcommittee, and was instrumental in developing a 4-year voter approved millage to fund hundreds of miles of road and non-motorized path improvements. I'd like to recognize Dan for his financial stewardship, leadership, and service to Washtenaw County. I wish him well in his future endeavors!

I'd also like to congratulate two of our commissioners on successful campaigns for the Michigan House of Representatives, Commissioner Yousef Rabhi and Commissioner Ronnie Peterson. Yousef will continue to serve Washtenaw County by representing District 53 in the state house. Elected to the Board in 2010, he was elected by his fellow commissioners to serve as Board Chair in 2013, and re-elected Board Chair in 2014, and was also elected to serve as Chair of the Board Working Sessions in 2011, and again in 2012. I know Yousef's leadership experience with the board will translate to great success at the state level. Commissioner Ronnie Peterson will serve Michigan's 54<sup>th</sup> District, covering Washtenaw County's east side. Ronnie has served as a county commissioner from 1987 until 1990, again from 1993 until 1996, and, finally, from 2001 to present, dedicating much of his life to Washtenaw County. I'd like to thank Ronnie for his contributions as a commissioner, and wish him well as he takes the next step in his public service career. I look forward to working with Yousef and Ronnie and watching them succeed as State Representatives.



Finally, I'd like to thank Commissioner Jen Eyer for answering the call to serve when a vacancy occurred on our board. Jen was unanimously appointed from a field of seven to fill the vacant seat representing District 9 on Ann Arbor's west side. While the partial term spanned just a few months, Commissioner Eyer conquered the learning curve and made a lasting impact on the board and the County. I thank Jen for her service and wish her the best as she continues her involvement and engagement with our county. I look forward to working with her in the future.



On January 4, 2017, we will be welcoming 4 new commissioners, Michelle Deatrick from District 2, Ricky Jefferson from District 6, Jason Morgan from District 8 and Conan Smith from District 9. I plan to introduce you to each of them in my January newsletter!

# Getting to Know: Lt. Richard Williams



*"You have to have good employees in order to be successful."*

*~Lt. Richard Williams*

When I introduced you to Richard Williams at our Employee Appreciation event in September, I shared some fond memories. I've known Richard for many years, and together, we've served on many committees that work to improve the lives of our young people. I've long been an admirer of Richard's passion for giving back to his community by helping our next generation to become the best they can be. His work with our Sheriff's Office is further proof of his commitment to Washtenaw County. Please read on to learn more about our 2016 Supervisor of the year, Lt. Richard Williams:

#### **Would you mind telling us a little bit about yourself?**

My name is Richard Williams, I am a lifelong resident of Washtenaw County. I grew up on the South side of Ypsilanti where a lot of our Washtenaw County Sheriff's clients are from. I have had a unique experience watching folks rebel against me because I was working for the Sheriff's Office. But later, those same individuals began to appreciate the fact that I could be of service to them under the right circumstances. I have cultivated many relationships that have allowed me to make an impact on young men from my community. I have been married for 35 years to Cheryl Ann Williams. We have three children; two daughters and a son. Two of our children live here in Washtenaw County and are employed by the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office. My oldest daughter lives in Atlanta Georgia, where she is employed as a medical technician. I chose to go into the field of Corrections after working and coaching kids at the high school level. By working with these kids; it gave me a sense of wanting to make an impact on

people's lives, especially young men who are struggling with life. I could see how being a good influence benefited young men and working in the field of Corrections seemed like a natural fit.

#### **Have you always been in this career field?**

I started my career in Corrections in 1990. I took every opportunity to develop as a Correctional Officer and was promoted to Sergeant in 1998. From 2010 through 2015 I was appointed to Director of Correctional Services. In 2015 I was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. I currently oversee the operations of the Corrections Division. I believe I really have a chance to make a difference in people's lives. I treat people with respect and I receive it in return.

#### **It certainly sounds like you have found your perfect career; can you tell us a little bit more about what you do and how you work to help others?**

The most satisfying part of my job is seeing people turn their lives around and know you had some positive influence in their process. I have been employed by the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office for 27 years. My job is to make sure Inmates are housed in a humane environment, while holding them responsible for their actions. I have respect for others regardless of their criminal background. We have a great staff here at the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office and it breeds success. One thing I have always believed is you have to have good employees in order to be successful, I don't think I can harp on that enough. You also have to have leaders that can effectively lead their staff. Sheriff Clayton has done an excellent job at surrounding himself with good leaders. I could not end this with-

out mentioning Chief Deputy Sherry Woods. Sherry Woods has been an inspiration and a great mentor. I have been asked how to be successful. I reflect on how I was raised. My father passed away and my Mother is 86 years old; she still encourages me and my siblings to be the best people that we can be and to put God first.

Thank you, Lt. Williams, for sharing your story, for your commitment to our community and for choosing to help people make better decisions that in turn, provide them opportunities for a better future. You set an outstanding example for your co-workers, but also for your fellow citizens and the individuals you serve. Your positive attitude is contagious as you quietly serve as a mentor for many of us, always doing the right thing and never seeking recognition or accolades for the work that you do. Thank you for being the role model that is so desperately needed in so many of our youth; your contributions will have a lasting affect on countless young people!

*~Greg*

