



Administrator's Message

- Verna McDaniel

I hope everyone enjoyed this holiday season with friends and family, and has had a productive New Year, so far. Being a member of a large family of siblings (12! So I make a baker's dozen) has been a true joy! We have had the best of times growing up.

I am next to the youngest, so we are getting pretty "mature." We are down to seven of us now with the recent passing of two more siblings. Okay, while I'll admit that my heart is heavy, I will also tell you that I feel so fortunate for all the great times I've had with each and every one of my sisters and brothers. I am genuinely thankful and appreciate all the time we've spent together. I can't wait until my family reunion (we have them each year) to see all my relatives. It makes me think about the times both past and present. I'd like to share with you one of my favorite quotes by Ian Hill. It talks about time and how you use it:

"What would you do if you were given \$86,000 and told that it would be placed in your bank account at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day anything left in the account would be taken away? You may get another \$86,000 tomorrow, but you know for a fact that you get \$86,000 today. What would you do? Spend it? Invest it? Whatever you did, you wouldn't leave a dime in that account. Well, check this if you don't check anything else I say: Every one of us gets something just like that \$86,000 a day. You see there are 86,400 seconds in a day given to you at the beginning of the day as a gift to spend however you will. At the end of the day anything that you haven't used wisely is gone forever. Life's most urgent question is how you are spending the 86,000 you have been given every day. Choose to take the 86,000 you have been given every day and spend it by investing in yourself, your family, your town, state, nation and globe. Invest each dollar or second like it is the last you'll ever have."

- Ian Hill



News from the _____
— Administrator

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State of the County Summary



Many of you have heard or heard about the [Preliminary Financial State of the County Report](#) presented to the Board of Commissioner during the [January 16th Ways & Means Meeting](#). The entire presentation is now [available online](#). The presentation has facts, figures, and a lot of information that may be difficult to quickly digest, so I hope you'll take the time to sift through it all and ask questions. It's critically important that you become familiar with the facts as we know them. It's your responsibility to the organization, and to your own self interest, to see where we are.

It is time to focus on the long-term view for our financial future. The County's commitment to long-term fiscal stability has been challenged over the past several years, due to the economic downturn and loss of property tax revenue, which makes up the largest percentage of the General Fund budget. The County has responded well, as reflected in the approval of a balanced budget for 2012/13, the retention of AA+ bond rating, a General Fund unreserved fund balance amount above Board of Commissioner adopted policy, and a projected year end surplus for fiscal year 2012.

Washtenaw County has done a good job of responding to these challenging times and has made difficult decisions, due to our dedicated staff. The Preliminary Financial State of the County revealed a structural deficit still exists over the next four years. I have established a target of \$6.88 million for 2014 – 2017. What does this mean? If reductions in the amount of \$6.88 million are obtained in 2014, sustained and carried forward through 2017, the structural deficit will be eliminated. While we continue to have a structural deficit that needs to be resolved, it is a significant improvement over past years. While the sacrifices made by County Departments and staff begin to pay off, we have more work ahead to balance the budget.

Externally we are facing the Governor's Reinventing Michigan agenda and the State legislature reform actions, which include revenue sharing and the personal property tax repeal & replacement. We also face an evolving economy, health care reform, and increased community need. Internally there is continued transition throughout the organization and we welcomed in a new Board of Commissioners.

The new normal of our economy has forced Washtenaw County to re-think how we conduct business. Reduced property tax revenues, changes in State funding levels, and increased demands on services caused significant and painful decisions to be made in our 2010/11 and our 2012/13 budgets. Through honest communication and hard work with our partnering departments and elected officials, we were able to reduce expenses while maintaining serviceability levels. While these challenging times remain uncertain, economic indicators are hinting that a gradual recovery may be on the horizon.

It is important to realize that the projections represent the estimated size of the budget deficit, assuming that all County services remain at their current service levels with existing staff and operating budgets. Projections include cost escalations for expenditures to accurately represent the reality the County will face if no further budget modifications are made. I plan to present my Recommended Balanced Budget to the Board in September 2013.



State of the County Summary

The Preliminary Financial State of the County is part of a larger planning process, now underway. This planning process includes meeting with our elected officials and department heads, and Board of Commissioners policy discussions on major issues at upcoming Board meetings over the next several months, among other engagement efforts. There are a series of documents available to help you better understand the County's financial situation. I encourage you to take the time to review them and plug into the engagement opportunities over the next few months. I will continue to keep you updated as new information becomes available.

Helpful County Budget Links

- ◆ The webcast of the [January 16th Ways & Means meeting](#) by selecting Financial State of the County from the dropdown menu beneath the video box.
- ◆ The [Financial State of the County PowerPoint](#) presentation from the Ways & Means meeting.
- ◆ [Financial State of the County Executive Summary](#)
- ◆ [Financial State of the County Major Assumptions](#)
- ◆ What To Expect Next – [Budget Calendar](#)

Security Update

Unacceptable Conduct procedure change around weapons

Recently Human Resources proposed an update to the "Unacceptable Conduct Procedure," ARTICLE IX. Disciplinary Action, SECTION 4, Unacceptable Conduct. The changes that were made focused on bringing unauthorized firearms or lethal weapons to work, even with the possession of a concealed weapons permit. This is item "M." in the revised procedure. The changes were prompted by one of our departments that came to understand that an employee had brought a weapon to work, but that employee possessed a concealed weapons permit. As such, we took this opportunity to review and clarify the procedure as it hadn't been done in a number of years. The procedure had listed guidelines in determining adequate grounds for unacceptable personal conduct. The new procedure includes language that specifically states:

M. Possession of unauthorized firearms or lethal weapons on the job, even with a concealed weapons permit;

The [Unacceptable Conduct](#) procedure has been updated and is currently posted under the County's Policies and Procedures.



Washtenaw County/United Way Food Drive



Through Food Gatherers of Washtenaw County

Date: Tuesday, February 19 through Monday, March 18, 2013

Our neighbors living in poverty face a much higher likelihood of having high cholesterol, diabetes or other diet related ailments. Food Gatherers is focused on distributing not just more pounds of food, but more nutritionally valuable food. In their last fiscal year, 55% of all food distributed was fresh fruits, vegetables or meat, eggs and other protein items.

In Washtenaw County, more than 43,900 people—including more than 14,000 children and 6,500 seniors—receive food through Food Gatherers' network of emergency food pantries and meal sites.

So please join your United Way Committee (l-uwcommittee@ewashtenaw.org) and help us to help those who are less fortunate as we collect necessary non-perishable food items during the months of February and March. Your United Way Coordinator will be placing a collection barrel in your building on February 19—your contribution is certain to help!

Of Particular Need:

- ◆ Tuna or other canned meat
- ◆ Beef stew, meat soups
- ◆ Hearty soups
- ◆ Canned spaghetti or pasta
- ◆ Chili
- ◆ Beans (kidney, pinto, green, yellow, refried or black)
- ◆ Baby food or formula
- ◆ Ensure or other nutritional supplement drinks
- ◆ Rice
- ◆ Dry beans
- ◆ Noodles, macaroni
- ◆ Powdered milk
- ◆ Pancake or baking mixes
- ◆ Cereal/oatmeal
- ◆ Granola bars
- ◆ Peanut butter
- ◆ Jelly in plastic jars
- ◆ Diapers
- ◆ Toothpaste/toothbrushes
- ◆ Soap
- ◆ Shampoo
- ◆ Disposable razors



Juvenile Detention Canned Food Drive

Juvenile Detention residents participated in a canned food drive to benefit Food Gatherers during December 2012. Youth Counselor and dedicated County employee, Judy Coleman (Frentner), designed the community service opportunity for youth to volunteer for extra tasks within the Youth Center facility in exchange for credits toward the purchase of canned goods. Facility staff pledged to match the youth donations and provide the actual canned goods. For every ten credits earned, one non-perishable food item was donated.

On January 29th, Mary Schlitt, Director of Development and Marketing for Food Gatherers, came to the Youth Center to accept the donation and meet with the youth donors to express thanks. Ms. Schlitt explained how Food Gatherers works, provided information about hunger in our County and let the youth know that their contribution will help feed those in need in our community.

Youth were recognized for their service and contributions with a certificate of appreciation.



1st Quarter Washtenaw County Blood Drive!

Have A Heart — Save A Life!



**American
Red Cross**

One hour of your time can save a life, the need is constant; the reward, endless!

Friday, March 1, 2013, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

200 N. Main Street, Lower Level Conference Room

Every 2 seconds, someone in the United States needs blood; in fact, 4.5 million Americans will need a blood transfusion this year. In less than one hour, your donation can help up to 3 people.

You may schedule your appointment at www.redcrossblood.org, sponsor code 'Washtenaw,' or by contacting Administration's Lisa Moutinho at 222.6731 - moutinh1@ewashtenaw.org. Scheduling ensures the process runs smoothly and quickly, but walk ins are always welcome!

The Red Cross has set a goal of 30 donors, but I know Washtenaw County employees will find a way to exceed this!

Thank you for choosing to make a difference in someone's life!



County Department Move Update

Department Moves

OCED, WCHO, Water Resources, Building Services and Environmental Health

The Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) customer service group, that was located on the second floor of the Key Bank building in Ypsilanti, has moved to 304 Harriet Street in Ypsilanti. This move was completed on January 14th and now OCED is completely out of the Key Bank building and the lease will be terminated.

Washtenaw Community Health Organization (WCHO) Administration moved from 555 Towner to the second floor of the Zeeb Road building. This move wrapped up on January 22nd. Prior to the WCHO move, some of the current occupants of Zeeb Road building (Building Services, Environmental Health, and Water Resources) moved from the second to the first floor in late 2012.



Did You Know?!!!

Treasurer, Catherine McClary, wins National Association of Counties (NACo) Award for Partnership Program with Ypsilanti City

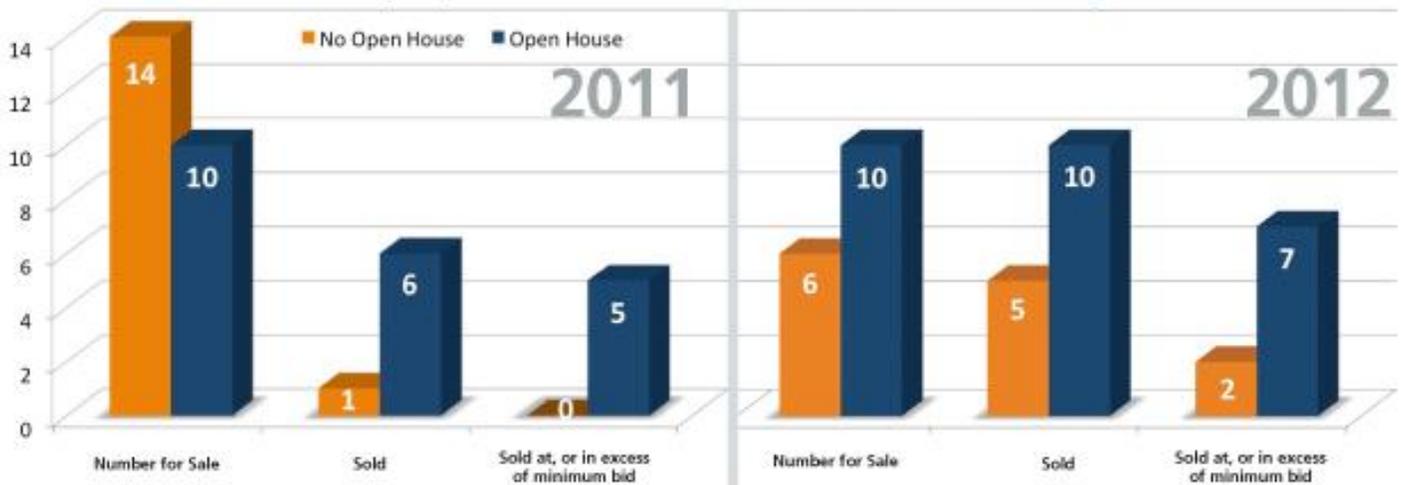


For many years the Washtenaw County Treasurer, Catherine McClary, protected Washtenaw County home owners and small businesses from tax foreclosure. However, the economic downturn, with its attendant mortgage foreclosures and decreased property values, has caused an increase in tax foreclosures despite all efforts at prevention.

When tax foreclosure occurs, the only way to recoup money already spent on prevention and notification is to auction the property and hope to sell it for enough money to reimburse all taxes plus expenses. Most foreclosed properties, especially in neighborhoods hit hard by foreclosure and/or abandonment and blight, do not garner the minimum bid necessary to cover the taxes and costs. This means the County, schools, cities, and townships lose money.

The Treasurer, in partnership with the City of Ypsilanti, a municipality hit especially hard by foreclosures, found a way to increase the sales and the prices of property at public auction. The team designed a program of Open Houses so that local residents and families could tour the homes and set their prices higher knowing the condition of the premises. The partnership with the City of Ypsilanti was unique in that it was initiated by City planning staff and City personnel were instrumental in its success.

Foreclosed properties sold at auction in Washtenaw County, Mich.



Here is a link to the full NACo County News article: <http://www.naco.org/newsroom/countynews/Current%20Issue/1-28-13/Pages/Model-Programs.aspx>

