



Administrator's Message

Verna McDaniel

Thank you all for your support during this time of loss for my family. As many of you know my brother, Don Barden, lost his battle to cancer on Thursday, May 19, 2011 at age 67. The Detroit News wrote about Don's career and how it spanned more than 40 years in casinos, real estate development and the entertainment industry. The News regarded him as one of the top African-American entrepreneurs in the nation. Naturally, I'm proud to read such wonderful words about Don, but to me he was my brother and a man that I loved dearly. The last few weeks have really been a blur and what stands out to me most is all the love and support that we have received from our friends and family. Whether you came to the funeral services, sent a kind note, picked up the phone or just kept us in your thoughts and prayers it all meant so very much to us.

I'll take the next week or so to catch up on emails and phone calls and after that begin to dig back into the budget development. Interim Deputy Administrator Kelly Belknap has been meeting with the Department Heads and I'll resume my meetings with the Elected Officials to discuss their budget targets and to identify potential solutions. The Labor Negotiations Team has also started meeting with our Labor Partners. As you can imagine, this is a busy time. The internal Budget Development and Labor Negotiations will continue throughout the summer. I will share as much information as I can, but know that quite a lot of work is happening behind the scenes to get us to a recommended budget.



News from the _____
 — Administrator

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CONSOLIDATION OF THREE DEPARTMENTS



Last summer, I asked Mary Jo Callan to convene a process to investigate ways to increase collaboration between three County departments – the Office of Community Development (OCD), Economic Development & Energy (EDE), and Employment Training & Community

Services (ETCS). Pending this investigation, those three departments will be merged into one.

By strategically combining key activities historically conducted separately, we will improve the impact that Washtenaw County government has on improving local quality of life. By eliminating fragmentation and duplication, and capitalizing on the natural synergy of these service areas, the consolidation of EDE, ETCS, and OCD has the real potential to create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Tony VanDerworp, director of Economic Development & Energy, Patricia Denig, interim director of Employment Training & Community Support and Mary Jo have worked in partnership to fully explore how best to ensure that these three departments increase collaboration so that the organization and the community get the most value from its investment.

Patricia, Tony, and Mary Jo centered their discussion and work on the following principles:

- Focus on citizens first, rather than on traditional or parochial departmental perspectives;
- Create savings and/or service improvements for the organization and citizens; and,
- Leverage the assets and strengths of each department – and mitigate the weaknesses.

The departments had overlapping and duplicative services or functions, but the creation of a more coherent model for their work was needed. They assessed the core business functions of each department, identified each department's core competencies and weaknesses, and set out to identify ways that they could leverage each others' assets to strengthen services to the community.

This process helped to identify some obvious overlaps and areas for improvement that could and should occur regardless of any deeper structural change. For example, OCD and ETCS are both integrally involved in the delivery of basic human services to the community, and even provide funding to many of the same organizations and/or constituents. Mary Jo, Patricia, and Tony determined that it makes sense to work together on these efforts to

help to improve access and impact, and understand that impact. Another example involves the delivery of home improvement and energy optimization services to area residents. OCD administers the *Housing Rehabilitation Program* and ETCS administers the *Weatherization Program*, both of which provide assistance to low-income residents who need repairs and/or energy improvements. These two programs could and should work together to make access easier for the community, and leverage and extend the resources of each program.

While these more obvious collaboration opportunities were identified, Mary Jo, Patricia, and Tony ultimately concluded that this work will be most effective with a full consolidation of EDE, ETCS, and OCD.

Economic development, workforce development, and community development must be compatible and integrated components in a vibrant community, and should thus not be artificially separate. This conclusion resulted in large part from the understanding that many communities have already consolidated some or all of these services. A more coherent, less fragmented approach to community, workforce, and economic development positions Washtenaw County government to effectively shape and foster quality of place. This comprehensive approach recognizes that employment, economic vitality, neighborhood preservation and enhancement, and equity and opportunity for all residents are inter-related, and must therefore be addressed together.

This combined department will support measurable improvements to the quality of life for low and moderate income residents, which will contribute to the overall vitality and appeal of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County. This will be accomplished by creating three areas of external focus including *Housing & Community Infrastructure*; *Economic & Workforce Development*; and *Human Services*, and as well as internally-focused *Finance & Operational Support*.

Ultimately, to maximize our competitive advantage, we must retain and attract businesses to enhance the economic vitality of our region, but we can only do this if we put forward a talented workforce to help those businesses thrive. And, we can most fully maximize the talent and strength of this workforce by ensuring that Washtenaw County has affordable housing, quality neighborhoods, and community resources to realize the quality of life workers need to be most productive.

This [proposed consolidation](#) was presented to the Board of Commissioners at their May 5 Working Session. If you missed the meeting, you can watch the [archived webcast](#). The Board will be asked to consider the formal proposal at the July 6 Ways and Means meeting and final approval at the August 3 Board meeting. If you would like to read more about the consolidation take a look at the [memorandum](#) to the Board online.

AN UPDATE ON CONTRACT POLICING



For as long as I've been with the County, the largest expenditure has been Public Safety and Justice (PS&J) –currently equating to ~62% of the County's General Fund. This area includes the majority of the criminal and civil case processing of the District and Circuit Courts, criminal prosecution and public defense, and the operation and maintenance of the jail – all of these services are mandated services to some degree through the U.S. Constitution as well as the Michigan Constitution, but the level to which the service is provide is really the question. Keeping residents safe has always been important to the Board. Earlier this year the Board named public safety as their single most important Strategic Priority. Some of these expenses fund non-mandated services as well – such as Contract Policing. Basically, townships and villages who do not have their own police force may contract with the Sheriff for provision of police services.

The county currently contracts with twelve local jurisdictions and three schools for Police Services. The contracting partners pay \$150,594 per deputy under the existing contracts which are set to expire at the end of 2011. Last November, the Board approved the **cost** of a deputy based on a recommendation from the Financial Subcommittee of the Police Services Steering Committee (PSSC), a Board designated committee. The PSSC financial subcommittee immediately began working on the **price** recommendation with the difference between price and cost being paid out of the county general fund.

At the May 19th Working Session, Sheriff Clayton presented the Board with the financial subcommittee's recommended price. During the presentation Clayton reviewed the charge and history of the committee, reviewed the approved cost model and metrics, shared the results of the analysis of the current price methodology and shared the new price recommendation. The Police Services 2012-15 Cost/Price Metrics will establish contract price through 2015 providing ample time to the contract local jurisdictions to plan for the cost of contracting for police services with the Washtenaw County Sheriff. It is recommended that in 2012 the price should remain at the 2011 level of \$150,594 per PSU, with yearly 1% increases for each subsequent year through 2015. Therefore, the 2013 price would be \$152,100, 2014 would be \$153,621 and 2015 would be \$155,157. Based on our current number of contracts, the 2013 increase in price would result in an increase in revenue by \$111,444. This will help address the \$17+M deficit that we're trying to resolve for the 2012/2013 budget. These price increases for the contracting entities

are accompanied by a commitment from the Sheriff to a shared sacrifice and partnership between the county and townships to keep costs down. The Sheriff is doing everything within in his power to minimize the costs.

The Board approved this recommendation at the June 1st Ways and Means meeting and final approval will likely occur at the July 6th Board meeting. Under the leadership of Sheriff Clayton, substantial progress has been made towards resolving Police Service cost and price issues that have created dissension and plagued the county for years. The work of the Sheriff, Administration, the Board and the PSSC financial subcommittee is not complete. Additional policy questions remain that will need to be reviewed and considered in the future, such as the appropriate length of future contracts. Four year contracts are being considered and would provide predictability for the county's 74 contract deputies and for our contracting partners. The process for adding or reducing PSUs, the process and metrics related to changes in contract costs, and the overall financial commitment by the county to support police services are just a few of the other policy questions to be considered.

If you were unable to make the May 19th Working Session I encourage you to watch the [archived webcast online](#). For a more thorough breakdown of the recommendation take a look at the [presentation, memorandum and the resolution](#), all of which are available online.

SOCIAL MEDIA & GOVERNMENT, REALLY?



I recently read that, if Facebook were a country, it would be the third largest in the world. With over 600 million active users all across the globe, it's clear that Facebook and other social networking sites like it have become more than

a phenomenon. Nearly everyone is accessible at the click of a mouse. This is an amazing new world we live in, where information spreads quickly to large audiences, but it's also a world that requires a wholly new skill set of its populace.

Bearing that in mind, Administration has established a Social Media Guidelines Project, whose goal is to develop policies, procedures and tips for the use of social media at work for work purposes and the personal use of social media at work. It is the goal of this project to appropriately encourage more utilization of the tools the Internet gives us both to help make Washtenaw County more approachable and to reach new audiences. Many counties across America, including Arlington, VA and Orange County, CA, have already implemented policies to this end.

The eRepublic Digital Counties Survey measures and ranks how technologically adept counties across America are. Washtenaw County has proudly ranked in the top ten in the 250,000-499,999 population bracket for seven out of the last eight years. One question in the survey asks how our county engages with citizens and promotes open government. The county is encouraging departments to make use of social media for this purpose. As an example, Public Health has a Facebook page where they post important stories and alerts for citizens. Public Health isn't the only organization with the county that uses social media. A complete and growing list of [Washtenaw County social media sites](#) is available on eWashtenaw.

It is also important to consider the power social media has on public perception. While appropriate use of new media tools can really show our government at work, personal use of sites like Facebook can cost valuable time and resources. Additionally, things posted during working hours are time stamped and may be visible to the general public. As a known county employee, the perception of time wasting may negatively influence public opinion of Washtenaw County.

OPEN BOOK GOV'T TRANSPARENCY UPDATE



The Open Book project was approved by the Board of Commissioners last year in response to a national trend towards publishing both high-level and detailed financial information online. Since then, Governor Snyder has

challenged local governments to provide online 'dashboards' of financial and other performance data. With our existing work, we are ahead of the curve on this challenge.

Open government is important because, in our work, we are carrying out the people's business and spending the people's money. Providing both high level and detailed financial information in an easy-to-access format gives the public (and our staff) a better sense of where the money is going.

This month the [County's Open Book site](#) will be expanded to include credit card expenditures. Next month will be a new salary report. This comes in addition to existing check register, budget and financial reports.

The credit card reports include purchases made on county-issued credit cards and p-cards. The same reports are reviewed monthly by department heads and elected officials at a department level.

The salary report will be similar to what was published in AnnArbor.com last month, but will be published without staff names. AnnArbor.com specifically requested Staff names as part of the Freedom of Information request. The salary report publishes staff base salary for the current year and will be updated annually and published online.

The open book team has worked hard to meet the goal of transparency, balanced by the legitimate need to maintain privacy and security as required by state, federal and other laws and regulations, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). All reports have been previewed to County department heads, elected officials and staff prior to publication to ensure that this privacy and security concerns have been addressed, and in some cases, information that would breach that standard of privacy or security has been removed from the reports.



It's time to say goodbye to two wonderful employees, Administration's Senior Management Analyst Joanna Bidlack and Information Technology Manager James McFarlane. Joanna left us on Friday, June 3rd and James will follow on June 10th.

Joanna has provided significant support to the Administrator, Deputy Administrator and the Board of Commissioners. On behalf of the Administrator, she has managed projects and special initiatives, managed the Board's Agenda process, and acted as the liaison between County Leadership, Administration and the Board of Commissioners as well as the entire county through her invaluable help with this newsletter.

Joanna joined Washtenaw County in 2005. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design and more recently her Masters in Human Resources and Organizational Development from Eastern Michigan University. Her professional growth since 2005 has been remarkable and the horizon is filled with possibilities for her.

James has provided the long-term strategy and operational direction for the organization's technical infrastructure. James has done a wonderful job managing the County's IT project portfolio to enhance effective management while meeting the organization's strategic business objectives.

James joined Washtenaw County in 2003, serving as Chief Deputy Clerk/Register. Prior to his work with the County, James was a Regional Account Manager for the NCR Corporation. James received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Dayton and his Masters of Public Administration from Eastern

Michigan University. As if all that wasn't enough, James has been an absolute delight to work with and has tackled every challenge and opportunity with a positive attitude.

Joanna will be going to General Electric (GE) in Van Buren Township as the Project Manager for Strategic Planning and James will be going to Lansing to work with Governor Snyder's team as the Information Officer in the Department of Technology, Management & Budget Agency Services. Please join me in wishing Joanna and James every success in their new endeavors – they will be missed.

I have posted Joanna's position and Cheryl Perry has been temporarily assigned until the position is filled. Andy Brush is assuming James' position. I have not posted the IT Manager position yet because we will take some time to evaluate it and determine the most appropriate next steps. I will keep you informed on the progress of both of these transitions.