



# NEWS FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

September, 2017

Gregory Dill, Washtenaw County Administrator

## Administrator's Message

Hello everyone, and happy September. What do you think of my new newsletter format? I made some modest changes and hope the new layout will provide you with some useful information, and in a more reader-friendly presentation.

### Employee Town Hall Meetings

Over the summer, I discontinued my newsletter so I could focus on meeting our employees face to face. I offered a total of 10 Town Hall sessions, and well over 100 employees attended and shared their thoughts and ideas with me. I am grateful to those who took the time to participate, and for those who reached out via email or telephone in lieu of attendance. The feedback I received confirmed that as an organization, we're on the right track, but, that we also have some work to do. Some common themes were services to our citizens, parking, employee safety, employee development and the upcoming mental health/public safety millage. I'm still working to prepare a summary of these themes and formulate my action plan. I'll share this at the Group of 180 Meeting on September 25.

### Group of 180 Meeting

Our annual employee appreciation event is taking place on Monday, September 25 at the Group of 180 meeting. As I've mentioned before, I look forward to this meeting every year. Being in the same room with some of the best and brightest our organization has to offer is an inspiring experience. Sharing and celebrating the successes of our co-workers reminds me that public service is an amazing career, and we are incredibly fortunate to employ so many who are so passionate about taking care of our citizens.

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*"Success usually  
comes to those who  
are too busy to be  
looking for it."*

*~John Wooden*



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A person who feels appreciated will always do more than what was expected.

It's the best time of year, where we watch our amazing talent shine!

## Employee Appreciation Event Monday, September 25

I am looking forward to our Group of 180 meeting on Monday, September 25 at the LRC. This meeting is also our annual Employee Appreciation Event and affords us the opportunity to celebrate excellence in county government. While I'm still reviewing the nomination letters, those I have seen are incredibly impressive and prove once again that Washtenaw County employees are the best and brightest out there.

In addition to celebrating you, our greatest asset, I am also taking the opportunity to provide you some cyber-security training; former Washtenaw County Commissioner and network security expert Kristin Judge will be on hand to share some helpful information that will protect you, at work and in your personal life, from the perils of internet predators with malicious intents.

Then, I plan to unveil my Leadership Development Program, designed to complement our Professional Development Academy, this is a project based program that encourages our employees to suggest opportunities that would better the organization, and/or apply to serve on a team that is convened to solve those pressing challenges. This program has many benefits, it offers our employees an opportunity to learn and grow within the organization, address some of our challenges, but most importantly, the program will help us to begin our succession planning by giving many of our staff the chance to meet others in the organization, learn more about what services our departments provide, the challenges they face, and then how to solve the problems so our customers, the citizens of Washtenaw County, are the ultimate beneficiary from our efforts. This professional growth opportunity is exciting, and I can't wait to share the details with you at the Group of 180.

I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

## Stuff the Bus Thank You!!!

Your United Way Committee wishes to thank all of our volunteers and donors who helped our 10th annual Stuff the Bus event to be a resounding success! While we're still tallying the thousands of dollars in donations, we wanted to take a moment to thank you for your generosity, your time and your continued support of this event. Because of you, the most under-served elementary kids in Washtenaw County will now have the supplies that are necessary for success, in school and in life.

Thank you!



Thank you to our volunteers!

## Contact Us

Have an idea for a story?  
Like more information?  
Tell us how we're doing!

Contact my assistant,

Lisa Moutinho at:

[moutinh1@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:moutinh1@ewashtenaw.org)

or

222-6731

## Happening in the Boardroom in September:

As the Board of Commissioners ends its once monthly summer meeting schedule, September is the kickoff to the reaffirmation of our General Fund budget. Our team in Finance is meeting with each of those departments, working cooperatively to reach reasonable expectations and identify achievable goals. When finalized, the Board will review and adopt the overall budget in November.

For now though, on our September 6 meeting agenda, the Board will be considering a Thompson Block/ Brownfield resolution, the adoption of the Urban County's 2017 Assessment of Fair Housing Plan, approving the 2017/18 CMH Budget and amending their CMH Board bylaws, reviewing our insurance renewals, honoring three of our outstanding community partners, and receiving an update on the 2nd quarter budget.

At the September 7 Working Session, the following have been invited to present information: Washtenaw County My Brother's Keeper initiative, the Expansion Plans for HighScope in Washtenaw County and Andrea Plevak will be offering a departmental update on how things are going in our Office of Community and Economic Development.

Board agendas (with corresponding materials) can be found [here](#).

A busy start to autumn, but some great things happening on September 6 and 7!

## News from the Administrator Continued.....

### Recent Events

I'd like to update you on some of the events that took place over the summer, specifically as it pertains to Platt Road, Cyber Security and Administrative Reorganization.

#### Platt Road:

In August, the Board of Commissioners voted to award the Platt Road property to Veridian, a company they feel best meets the Board's overall goal of forming an ownership structure that helps achieve affordability in a sustainable fashion through partnerships and co-operative owned structures. Veridian will be partnering with Avalon Housing, Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley and Jonna Luxury Homes to provide a minimum of 50 units of affordable housing (at or below 60% of Area Median Income), along with units that meet the needs of those within 80% of AMI, and some luxury units as well, those that are 85%-120% of AMI. Veridian plans a citizen based community, encouraging community gardens, plant native & edible landscaping, offering a pedestrian oriented design that is heavily focused on renewable energy & energy efficiency. Contract negotiations are soon to be underway, and we're excited to get started.

#### Cyber Security:

Administration continues to work on the issue of cyber security with a number of partners, both internal and external. We are leading a state-wide pilot of a 'Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) as a Service' program, which provides us some much-needed resources. With funding through the State of Michigan, over the next 18 months, we will receive some techniques, recommended processes and a business model, all of which will be incredibly helpful as we work to adapt to the ever changing cyber threats. Additionally, we have implemented Duo dual factor authentication for both Citrix and Webmail, which adds a second layer of security to our network. We have offered cyber security training to our elected officials and department heads, and we are committed to remain vigilant to strengthen and maintain the integrity of our network. Remember, if you notice or any suspect or unusual activity, please contact the help desk immediately.

#### Administrative Reorganization:

I announced last month that Diane Heidt has been appointed as our new Deputy County Administrator, and you can learn more about her on the next page! Diane's appointment nearly fulfills my administrative reorganization plan that was outlined earlier this year. We have two positions that remain, the BOC Liaison and Assistant Corporation Counsel. Both are well underway, and I anticipate making an announcement on them in my October newsletter.

#### In Closing:

As I reflect on the first eight months of 2017, I am pleased with the progress we've made. Not every day has been easy, and not every outcome happened as quickly as we'd hoped, but we all chose to come to work and do our best, each and every day. Together, we've worked to make Washtenaw County a better place to live and work, and together, we've accomplished some pretty amazing things. With just 4 short months left this year, we still have quite a bit of work to do, but given the tenacious nature of our team, nearly 1400 strong, I'm confident we can do it. I continue to be incredibly humbled by you, my fellow employees, you are the ones who motivate me to come to work, even on those days when golf is arguably the better option. Your feedback, emails and telephone calls sometime challenge me, but they also assure me that communication is the key to staying the course and achieving success, and we're doing it — together.

Have a great September everyone,

*Greg*



# Getting to Know: Diane Heidt

This month, I'm pleased to introduce you to the new Washtenaw County Deputy Administrator, Diane Heidt. Diane is not new to the Washtenaw County family, she's been here for almost 25 years, most recently serving as the Director of Human Resources. Diane's skills and experience are going to serve this office, the organization, and our citizens, incredibly well. So, while those of us who have been around for awhile already know Diane, I think it important to introduce her to everyone. Please read on to learn more about Diane and you'll quickly understand why she's been promoted to our Deputy Administrator position!

## **Would you mind sharing a little about yourself:**

I grew up in South Lyon, Michigan as the youngest of 4 children. After graduating as a proud South Lyon Lion in 1985, I attended Eastern Michigan University (and yes, I am a Huron) and graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Management, with a concentration in computer systems in April, 1990. During my college years, and immediately thereafter, I worked at the University of Michigan Medical School and Hospital designing and implementing computer software for medical students and referring physicians throughout the State of Michigan.

## **Why did you choose Washtenaw County for your career?**

In the early 1990's there were not many Human Resource related jobs available in the area. My mother worked for Washtenaw County Corporation Counsel at the time and noticed a posting in the Human Resources Department for a Human Resource Generalist position. She encouraged me to apply given her very positive work experience with the County (20+ years). So I did. However, a funny thing happened in that my application was lost and was forwarded to the Circuit Court. After tracking down of my application, Verna McDaniel contacted me for an interview. And the rest they say, is history.

## **Have you always worked in government?**

I have worked the majority of my adult life in government. I began my employment with Washtenaw County 24+ years ago and have had the good fortune to work for, and with, many amazing public servants throughout the years. Having moved to Washtenaw County with my family in 1986, I have a deep love and appreciation for the community and the citizens that are very much in need of local governmental resources. County government is in most cases the "invisible" government, yet also the safety net for those in need. I have also been fortunate to have been promoted to various positions since my start in 1993, first as Classification & Compensation Manager, to Human Resources Manager, to Labor Relations Director, Human Resources / Labor Relations Director, and now Deputy County Administrator. In June, 2015, with the retirement of former Administrator Verna McDaniel, I further had the opportunity to be temporarily assigned as an Interim Deputy County Administrator. During my time with Washtenaw County I have been involved with numerous aspects of the organization including labor relations, human resources planning and implementation, departmental over-

sight as part of the Senior Leadership Team, and as a member of the budget planning process to name a few. Each of these areas has provided me with more and more insight into the demands and needs of government and resources for the citizens we serve.

## **What is your vision for your new role?**

As the Deputy County Administrator, my role will be to support the County Administrator, the Board of Commissioners and work with all departments to develop policies and programs to further the goals and priorities established throughout the organization. I will work to provide leadership, support and advocacy to all departments that provide such critical services to the citizens of Washtenaw County.

## **You are highly regarded by your co-workers and those you serve, what would you say is the secret to your success?**

Chocolate certainly helps. Seriously though, I have always prided myself on strong communication skills, relationship building and working as a member of the team. My focus throughout my career with Washtenaw County has been to focus on where I can best provide value to the organization and the citizens that we serve.

## **As with any job, I'm sure there are challenges and rewards. What would you say is the most difficult and most satisfying part of your job?**

The most satisfying part is an easy, quick answer...I absolutely love the people that I work with each and every day. Over the course of the last 2 years while, I've been in the Interim Deputy Administrator role, I have had the opportunity to really see the value of the services that we provide. Always keeping my "eyes on the prize" (customer service and meeting consumer needs) has been very rewarding. Finally, working collaboratively and strategically to meet consumer needs is very gratifying.

Probably the most difficult part of the position is having to make difficult decisions due to funding constraints and competing needs. Bottom line is that there just isn't enough money for everything we would like to do for the citizens of Washtenaw County. I've tried growing a money tree, however it didn't produce the results I was hoping for.

## **If you could share just one bit of advice to help others be successful in their role at any job, what would that be?**

Do what you love and are committed to. Never lose sight of WHY you are doing something. And most importantly, take pride in what you do and it will show.

As you can see, Diane is the perfect fit for this role. She's going to provide incredible value to our office, the organization and our citizens. We've already started working to make a difference, and you'll soon see the results!

*Greg*