



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

April 4, 2012

Comm. Sizemore called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Administration Building, 220 North Main Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comms. Bergman, Brabec, Gunn, Peterson, Ping, Prater, Rabhi, Sizemore, Conan Smith and Dan Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Comm. Turner

OTHERS PRESENT: County Administrator, Verna McDaniel; Interim Corporation Counsel Stefani Carter; Andy Brush, ITS; Diane Heidt, HR; Greg Dill, Facilities; Bob Tetens, Parks and Recreation; Ken Schrader, ITS; Jason Brooks, County Administration; Peter Simms, Clerk's Office; various citizens; and members of the press.

Roll Call

Citizen Participation

Thomas Partridge, resident of Washtenaw County and the City of Ann Arbor, asked the board to make reasonable accommodations for senior citizens who wish to address the board of commissioners. He stated that the citizens of Washtenaw County needed the board to recognize the full range of problems that senior citizens face. He called upon the board to adopt a progressive, democratic agenda on the eve of Easter. He reported that in an address to the Ann Arbor City Council he had asked council members to consider what policies Jesus would have advocated.

Kurt Gleichman, Saline, stated that a growing number of citizens are concerned about hydraulic fracturing in their communities. He reported that in the past year communities in New York and Pennsylvania have had success in warding off fracturing by having their local governments pass ordinances against the practice. He mentioned that there are groups in Washtenaw County working to prevent fracking. He noted that a successful ban ordinance contains three things; an assertion of rights, a ban on fracking, and a ban on fracking waste disposal. He stated that he would leave the board with a packet of information on fracking.

Victoria Powell stated that she was there to address the impact of oil and gas drilling on the water supply. She reported that no one is addressing the impact of drilling on the water supply. She showed the board a map of actively leaking underground oil storage tanks in the State of Michigan. She noted that last year Jackson County was the top oil producing county in the State of Michigan. She added that Jackson County had produced a million barrels of oil in the last year. She stated that there are now 42 oil wells in that county. She reported that in the State of Ohio there had been a publication on the practice of energy companies signing contracts with communities for the right to drill for oil.

Brent Bartsman, Lodi Township, stated that the drilling of wells posed a health risk to the residents of Washtenaw County. He reported that the four wells in Saline Township had been developed using the process of acidization, which is not technically fracking but has many of the same risks. He asked the board to adopt an anti-fracking resolution similar to the one passed by Wayne County. He continued saying that the County should begin to look into rights based ordinances as these had proven to be effective tools to prevent fracking in a community.

Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizens' Participation

Comm. Prater stated that there would be another citizen participation time towards the end of that meeting. He was corrected by his fellow commissioners who noted that board rules have been changed and there are no longer two slots for citizen participation during Ways and Means meeting.

Comm. Rabhi stated that the community needs to be cognizant that fracking represents a threat to public health, drinking water and that the contaminants released by fracking are a serious matter. He thanked everyone who spoke for coming to the meeting to share their voices. He mentioned that many of the board members shared their concern about fracking. He added that it was important to remember that the State does not exist to protect the county from this issue. He noted that communities in Colorado had set up very prohibitive regulations in order to prevent drilling. He reported that he would be willing to think creatively in order to stop fracking in Washtenaw County. He stated that there would be a Working Session on fracking.

Comm. Bergman thanked the audience for coming to this meeting. She stated that she was concerned for her grandchildren and the children of the community. She added that she was concerned about the approach that the nation was taking to oil drilling.

Comm. Conan Smith stated that Comm. Prater has prepared a resolution in opposition to fracking which is similar to the one passed by Wayne County. He noted that Comm. Rabhi would be hosting a working session on the issue. He stated that after the working session Comm. Prater's resolution would be passed by the board.

Comm. Gunn thanked Victoria Powell of Lenawee County for speaking before the board. She stated that the most precious natural resource in the State of Michigan is fresh water. She thanked the audience for coming and assured them that the board takes the issue of fracking seriously.

Comm. Brabec thanked everyone who had spoken that night. She stated that she would be interested in talking to those people who spoke that night because of their on-the-ground understanding of the issue.

Comm. Ping thanked the citizens who spoke at that meeting. She noted that many of them were from her district. She stated that the board has been working to see what sort of impact they can have on fracking from the County level. She noted that their conclusion had been that the municipalities could have more impact on the issue. She reminded the audience that Comm. Rabhi would be having a working session on the issue where there would be a more robust discussion on the issue.

Comm. Sizemore commended Comm. Prater for his hard work on the issue. He asked the clerk to contact all of the elected officials and let them know about the upcoming working session on fracking.

Comm. Prater stated that the DEQ had a set of rules and regulations on fracking that was only three pages long. He stated that the board could help to put pressure on Lansing so that the wells were installed properly. He added that the EPA was working on regulations to be passed in 2014 but that this county cannot afford to wait till 2014. He reported that when the Dundee Cement Plant had started operations it had created jobs but caused the water in the area to contain high levels of both sulphur and iron.

Special Order of Business

Marc Breckenridge stated that the recovery effort in Dexter is looking a lot better. He stated that the tornado touched down on N. Territorial road and continued south down into a subdivision. He reported that there are still a lot of clean up crews, insurance adjusters and road commission employees working on that site. He stated that the fire service has really come together during this disaster running rescue operations. He noted that everyone was accounted for very quickly. He reported that the outdoor warning siren worked very well in Dexter Village. He stated that long term recovery options were now being examined. He noted that people who experienced the most violent parts of the tornado may need counseling. He added that they were also doing assessments about how much the clean up effort had cost which he estimated at 2 million dollars. He stated that the tornado had done approximately 5 million dollars worth of damage.

Comm. Rabhi stated that \$2,000,000 is a lot of money. He noted that the county had put forward \$500,000 and the road commission had put forward approximately \$250,000. He asked where the rest of the money was coming from. Marc Breckenridge stated that originally there were no section 19 dollars available for the clean up effort but now money had been made available for them. He said that section 19 dollars are generally capped at 30,000 per local unit of government. He noted that \$350,000 or more was submitted from the metro parks because of the golf course damage. He stated that the road commission had put in a request for \$300,000 – 400,000 for their costs. Verna McDaniel stated that less than \$78,000 had been spent so far which included overtime. She added that administration was being very careful to track every dollar spent.

Comm. Bergman asked if insurance companies were being good about providing the full extent of coverage residents had paid for. Marc Breckenridge stated that generally the insurance companies were good about having crews on the ground. Comm. Bergman asked how money from Lansing would be secured. Marc Breckenridge stated that an emergency situation had not been declared because the State had made it clear that there would not be much money coming for disaster relief. He added that the county had done a phenomenal job of responding to this disaster and so the only assistance they really needed from the state was financial. Comm. Bergman encouraged people who were reluctant to pay taxes to consider that the disaster relief effort had been funded by taxes.

Comm. Brabec asked if Dexter-Pinckney road was open. Marc Breckenridge responded that he did not believe it was completely open.

Comm. Sizemore thanked Marc Breckenridge for his work.

Marc Breckenridge introduced his emergency dispatch staff.

Comm. Conan Smith read a resolution proclaiming the week of April 8, 2012 through April 14, 2012 as National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week in Washtenaw County.

Marc Breckenridge stated that the county had issued a letter of gratitude to the 14 dispatchers who had been working on March 15, the day of the tornado.

Verna McDaniel read a resolution proclaiming April 15, 2012 through April 21, 2012 as National Volunteer Week.

New Business:

A. Economic Development

1. Office of Community and Economic Development:

a. Weatherization:

Comm. Rabhi seconded by Comm. Gunn moved that the Board of Commissioners ratify the County Administrator's signature on the Fiscal Year 2012 Department of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Program Agreement to the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) for a total budget of \$185,326 for the program period of April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013.

Roll call vote: YEAS: 10 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1 (Comm. Turner) Motion carried.

b. Weatherization Assistance – ARRA Redistribution:

Comm. Rabhi seconded by Comm. Gunn moved that the Board of Commissioners ratify the County Administrator's signature on the Program Year 2012 ARRA Weatherization Program Redistribution Agreement to the Michigan Department of Human Services for a total budget of \$103,600 for the program period of April 1, 2012 to September 30, 2012.

Roll call vote: YEAS: 10 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1 (Comm. Turner) Motion carried.

B. Public Safety & Justice:

1. 14A District Court:

a. Appointing a Magistrate:

Comm. Rabhi seconded by Comm. Gunn moved that the Board of Commissioners approve the appointment of Elisha Voorhies Fink as Magistrate of the 14A District Court.

Roll call vote: YEAS: 10 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1 (Comm. Turner) Motion carried.

2. Prosecuting Attorney:

a. Hiring an Assistant Prosecutor III above Midpoint:

Comm. Rabhi seconded by Comm. Gunn moved that the Board of Commissioners authorize the Prosecuting Attorney to hire the position of Assistant Prosecutor III in the Prosecuting Attorney's Office at a salary of \$81,690, which is above midpoint for the grade.

Roll call vote: YEAS: 9 NAYS: 1 (Comm. Prater) ABSENT: 1 (Comm. Turner) Motion carried.

Report of the Administrator:

None

Report of the Chair of the Board

Comm. Conan Smith stated that the Board would reconvene ten minutes after the adjournment of the Ways and Means meeting.

Items for Current/Future Discussion

None

Pending

None

Adjournment

Comm. Brabec seconded by Comm. Rabhi moved that the meeting be adjourned until April 18th, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.
Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Rolland Sizemore, Chair

Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register
By: Peter Simms, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: April 18, 2012