



## WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

September 5, 2007

Chair Bergman 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, Grewal, Gunn, Irwin, Ping Mills, Ouimet, Peterson, Lovejoy Roe, Schwartz, and Sizemore

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Comm. Smith

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Deputy County Administrators David Behen and Verna McDaniel, Corporation Counsel Curt Hedger; Peter Ballios, Finance; Adrian Whitfield, Dale Vanderford, Information Technology; Diane Heidt, Human Resources; Patricia Denig, Planning and Environment; Gordon Burger, Jim Zwolensky, Support Services; Kerry Sheldon, Scott Patton, Joanna Bidlack, Administration; Jason Brooks, Clerk's Office; various citizens; and members of the press.

#### Roll Call

##### Citizen Participation

Tom Partridge addressed the issue of transportation for handicapped residents. He stated that he called for a County wide transportation services. He requested that the Board pass a resolution in support of existing AATA Para-transit transportation service.

Fred Roperti, Salem Township Supervisor stated that he is very pleased about services provided by the Road Commission. He added that the working relationship with the Road Commission is very important.

Paul Heinrich, 958 Wiltshire Dr., Saline, stated that all who have come to speak to the elected officials is a demonstration of the Democratic process. Heinrich stated that many people are here to find out where the process is going next. He added that he hopes for a resolution to problems that have been mentioned in previous meetings.

Angela Tabor, 1795 S. Grove Road, Ypsilanti Township, stated that she is a union representative for employees at the Road Commission. She stated that action is needed on this issue. She added that employers throwing money away on management/negotiation teams is uncommon, and that she is displeased as a taxpayer.

Bill Lindivar, Ypsilanti Township, stated that he took a pay cut to work for the Road Commission, and that he retired from the Road Commission for the benefits.

Stephanie Davis, 1540 Outer Lane Dr., Ypsilanti, stated that she is speaking with regards to the Sheriff's Department entering her premises. Davis stated that people in the Sheriff's Department cannot make their own laws. She added that the police did not take care of the matter that needed attention.

Bruce Hammond 5500 Willis Road, Augusta Township, stated that there is a problem with deductibles rising. He added that wages have increased since he retired. He asked that the current retirees be respected.

##### Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizens' Participation

Comm. Lovejoy Roe stated that she asked Bob Guenzel to follow up on AATA. She added that she heard there was a law clarifying the issue. David Behen stated that he would follow up. Comm. Lovejoy Roe thanked Road Commission employees for standing up for their issues. She stated that she would be willing to have Commissioners engage with the Road Commission on the issue of labor negotiations.

Comm. Gunn thanked all Road Commission employees. She added that she has been coming to meetings since January, and that she is appalled at the treatment of employees. Comm. Gunn discussed her experience of preventative maintenance. She stated that the Road Commission needs to look at existing structures and maintain them.

Comm. Ouimet stated that it is important that people are aware that issues have been raised out of sincerity. He stated that employees have handled these issues with respect.

Comm. Irwin thanked employees and retirees of the Road Commission. He thanked Puuri and the Road Commissioners for attending tonight's meeting. Comm. Irwin stated that he feels that tonight the resolution expanding the Road Commission can improve the situation, and that driving these issues into transparent situations will be beneficial. He added that he would welcome back members of the Road Commission to discuss some of the current issues.

Comm. Peterson thanked members of the Road Commission staff. He stated that members that serve as Road Commissioners deserve a fair discussion.

Comm. Peterson stated that there have been some fair questions regarding the Sheriff's Department. He added that there is an obligation to citizens to respond to concerns. Comm. Peterson stated that he would like to know the process of handling these complaints. Comm. Peterson also discussed the transportation issue. He stated that he is going to support the "triangle." Comm. Peterson stated that there needs to be regional busing to get back and forth to work. He stated that the AATA has done an excellent job setting up a mass transit system. He added that a fair discussion is deserved.

Comm. Sizemore stated that he is irritated by the Teamster contract not being settled in a year and a half. He added that he would like to sit down and get these issues settled.

Comm. Bergman stated that she is concerned about transportation, but that other political entities need to contribute.

Comm. Grewal thanked all who have come to the meeting. She stated that there is something not working at the Road Commission that is not working. She stated that the burden is being placed on the County to solve these problems.

Comm. Lovejoy Roe stated that in her experience, there is not one time that the Road Commission has not given her a response. She added that morale is going to carry out as time passes.

#### **New Business:**

##### **Presentations**

##### **Tina Abbate Marzolf gave a presentation on the Area Agency on Aging.**

Marzolf discussed coverage and services provided by the Area Agency on Aging. She discussed the plan that has been put forward by the Area Agency on Aging (On file in County Clerk's Office). Marzolf discussed respite care, and the savvy caregiver program. She stated that the grant will allow the use of respite systems in the County. She stated that a response will come in the next few months from the State on whether the County will be a pilot program. Comm. Bergman added that there are no state licensures in this area, and that it needs to be monitored.

##### **Steve Purri and Wes Prater gave a presentation on the Road Commission (On file in County Clerk's Office).**

The presentation on the Road Commission was given by Wes Prater, Road Commissioner and Steve Puuri (On file in County Clerk's Office).

Wes Prater stated that he agrees with most of what has been said tonight. Comm. Prater reported that MERS and health care are the two unfunded liabilities that concern him the most. He discussed the Pension plan, and health care of Road Commission retirees. He stated that cost issues will continue to be addressed in a responsible way. He added that he would also like the entire process to be transparent.

Steve Puuri presented the Power Point on the Road Commission (On file in County Clerk's Office).

Comm. Ouimet stated that communication back to the retirees is important. He added that he has a concern about the execution of information. Comm. Ouimet stated that the challenge is dealing with escalating costs. He stated that the lesson here is that communication is paramount. Comm. Ouimet stated that more can be done to look toward cost savings. He offered assistance from the County to work through some of these issues.

Comm. Irwin stated that two things made him feel good about the direction. He stated that one exposed some weaknesses in the communications plan, and that improvements would be made. He stated that the second is taking a look at individuals in the plan, and addressing individuals that will be the hardest hit by individuals. Comm. Irwin asked how the \$300,000 fits into cost savings. Puuri stated that this is the anticipated annual savings. Comm. Irwin asked how this fits into healthcare overall. Puuri stated that retiree healthcare is over \$800,000. Comm. Irwin thanked the presenters.

Comm. Gunn commended the Road Commissioners for their recent action on the G-rider prescription cost. Prater discussed the reimbursement plan for retirees.

Comm. Peterson asked about the post October period. Puuri stated that Blue Cross would be taking over the program. Puuri stated that this is the third change this year. Comm. Peterson stated that he is concerned about the inflated increase. Rutledge stated that he will introduce a resolution at the next meeting that retirees will be held harmless in further cost cutting measures. He stated that the communication was messed up on this issue, and that it is their responsibility to ensure that this does not happen again. Comm. Peterson stated that the process should be put into the system and become a part of the deliberation takes place, and that the discussion takes place in the appropriate session. Comm Prater stated that there is a retirement committee, and meetings have taken place.

Comm. Grewal stated that she appreciates comments that have been made. She stated that she encourages the rebuilding or bridges, and create a long term communication plan. She added that she feels that the County would be happy to share processes.

Comm. Ping Mills asked about the reimbursement process for prescription drugs over the last few months. Prater reported that information for obtaining reimbursements is contained in the letter that was sent to all retirees.

Comm. Sizemore stated that a date will be set to come back to a Working Session meeting.

Comm. Schwartz thanked all employees and retirees for coming out for the last six meetings. He also thanked the Director and Road Commissioners. He stated that this issue has come to a head, and things will be turned around. He stated that communication is very important. He complimented the Road Commission on the 7 Mile Road repair.

Comm. Bergman thanked all for coming, and added that budgets would soon be under consideration.

Comm. Lovejoy Roe stated that she appreciates the change. She stated that involving people in the discussion may not be enough. She stated that if a person is being affected by a decision, they should be in on making the decision. She stated that workers should push for work teams in collective bargaining to address these issues. She provided past examples of how savings were achieved on health care and prescriptions. She urged the Road Commission to use County resources.

#### **Board of Commissioners:**

##### **Developmental Disabilities Council Continuation Grant**

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Schwartz moved to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution authorizing the Administrator to sign the contract with Governmental Consultant Services, Inc (GCSI), for the period of November 1, 2007 through October 31, 2009, for an annual amount of \$60,000 be adopted.

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

#### **Support Services Community of Interest:**

##### **Finance:**

##### **Insurance Renewals**

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Schwartz moved to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution accepting quotes for insurance coverages with Arthur J. Gallagher as the insurance provider for Washtenaw County, for the period of October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008, in the amount of \$982,040, an increase of \$7,805 versus 2006-07 be adopted.

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

#### **Land Use & Environment Community of Interest:**

##### **Planning & Environment:**

##### **North Lake Improvement Project**

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Schwartz moved to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution directing the Board of Public Works to undertake a Lake Improvement Project for North Lake in the Townships of Lyndon and Dexter, Pursuant to Public Act 185, in accordance with the County Master Plan and the Planning Advisory Board, in the amount of \$291,000 over a five-year period be adopted.

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

**Amendments to the Washtenaw County Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance**

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Schwartz moved to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution to revise the Washtenaw County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) ordinance to incorporate feedback from townships and the City of Ann Arbor in our efforts to establish an Urban Cooperation Act Agreement between Washtenaw County and townships with already adopted PDR ordinances so that applications to the Michigan Agricultural preservation Fund through the County's purchase of Development Rights Program be adopted.

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

**Northfield Township Bon Refunding – Continuing Disclosure**

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Schwartz moved to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution approving the Undertaking to provide Continuing Disclosure related to the Northfield Township Refunding Bonds as required by the Securities and Exchange Commission to assure that all owners of the refunding bonds are kept informed of certain financial information and operating data of the county be adopted.

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

**Civic Infrastructure Community of Interest:**

**Clerk/Register of Deeds:**

**Passport-Quality Photo Fee**

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Schwartz moved to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution adopting a fee of \$10 on photos taken for CCW applicants in the Clerk's Office be adopted.

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

**Public Safety and Justice Community of Interest:**

**Prosecuting Attorney:**

**Annual Crime Victim Rights Program**

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Schwartz moved to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution ratifying the Administrator's signature on the application to the Michigan Department of Community Health, for the period of October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008 for funding the Victim/Witness Unit of the Prosecuting Attorney's office, in the amount of \$159,100, authorizing the Administrator to sign the Notice of Grant Award; authorizing the Administrator to sign delegate contracts be adopted.

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

**Report of the Administrator**

None

**Report of the Chair of the Board**

Comm. Irwin discussed the resolution calling for evaluation and assurances of long term passenger rail preservation and enhancement in the context of formation of Michigan Central Railroad and acquisition of former Norfolk Southern Track from Kalamazoo to Ypsilanti. He added that there would be a ten minute break between the Ways and Means and the Board of Commissioners meeting.

**Items for Current/Future Discussion**

None

**Citizen Participation**

Angela Tabor 1795 S. Grove Road, Ypsilanti Township, stated that she is bamboozled, but that doing business in the future was not addressed. She stated that she wanted to know who is going to be accountable. She discussed miscommunications in the collective bargaining process. Tabor also discussed the costs of the process, and that added that no one has stated how the problem will be fixed.

Tom Partridge discussed the need for extending Para-transit transportation throughout all areas of Washtenaw County. He stated that the Board has the ability to set up this system.

Bill McAfee, 9080 Dorado Court, York Township, thanked Comm. Peterson for his insight, and added that this is not the forum many of these issues should be reporting at. He discussed health care coverage for groups based on when they retire. He stated that he felt adding two Road Commissioners would be a mistake.

Irvin Knickerbocker, 9485 Schill Road, Saline Township, stated that he worked at the Road Commission for years. He added that he was happy with the change because of advancement. He stated that the two sides in negotiations are not working together. Danny Rash stated that he thanked the Board of Commissioners. He added that he is encouraged by comments made by the Board. Knickerbocker reported that Local 214 is committed to solving issues at the bargaining table.

Danny Rash, Business Representative for Local 214, stated that adding Road Commissioners will not solve the current problem. He stated that the current problems will not be addressed through negotiations. He stated that he is here to work with management.

Robert Brabbs, 8770 Maute Road, Grass Lake, stated that problems facing AFSCME and the Teamsters were not addressed. He added that management at the Road Commission has not attempted to buy into interest based bargaining. He also discussed the current labor situation at the Road Commission.

Bill Stein, 1413 S. Zeeb, Scio Township, discussed the current prescription plan, and the G rider. He added that retirees for the most part do not get dental care or eye care. He stated that he hopes things stay as they are and added that a lot of trust has been lost.

Gary Lobdell, 9558 Portage Lake Ave., Dexter Township, stated that there has been a lot of cooperation with the Board recently. He stated that the first meeting went well. He added that the second meeting was a disaster. He discussed health insurance and compared retirees to active employees. He also discussed merit raises and changes in contracts.

Mike Pace, 6655 Jackson Road, Scio Township, stated that he has been with the Road Commission for 34 years. He stated that there are some real problems for active employees, and added that they need some help. He added that Comm. Prater has been an open ear. He stated that current employees will pay for retirees seeing improvements. He added that he has never seen worse morale.

Stephanie Davis, 1540 Outer Lane, Ypsilanti, stated that she thanked the Board for their time. She added that trust, communication and reciprocation is important. She discussed processing information for handling issues within the County. She discussed issues that happened with her dog. She stated that no one should be above the law. She added that she does not know where to go.

Melinda Davis, 11959 Swan View Drive, Brooklyn, stated that she worked for the Road Commission for years, and added that the Road Commission is more interested in how much money they can make. Davis added that 30 plus people were hired since 2002. She stated that what is happening at the Road Commission is bad. She commented that the Road Commission should get back to basics. She stated that retirees only want what they retired on.

Dan Heath, 2118 Charlton, Ann Arbor stated that he has worked for the Road Commission for 20 years. He stated that conditions have deteriorated over time. He discussed figures related to the federal government.

Steven Gibbon, 3530 Edison St., Dexter, stated that he would like to discuss retirees. He stated that they have many dedicated years under their belt. He discussed eliminations that have been done up to this point. He discussed the rising cost of retiree health coverage compared to active employees. He also discussed personnel levels at the Road Commission. Gibbon stated that the morale is gone. He stated that he would like to see the Board bring the hammer down.

#### **Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation**

Comm. Gunn stated that the Plante Moran study shows the Road Commission in the bottom 1% of organizations. She stated that two more Commissioners are needed to help Commissioner Prater.

Comm. Peterson stated that he did not know how the meeting was going to flow. He added that considerations need to be taken in how to engage in this discussion. Comm. Peterson stated that there was no one there with research information. He stated that the issue needs to be addressed internally at some point. He stated that he would like to have a healthy discussion. He added that he was surprised about how this meeting flowed. Comm. Peterson stated that it is not about issues, it is about process. He stated that he is proud to be a part of Washtenaw County.

Comm. Lovejoy Roe stated that the response has been positive at the Road Commission. She stated that the answer is the Commissioners pushing the management team to improve the situation.

**Pending**

None

**Adjournment**

Comm. Peterson seconded by Comm. Lovejoy Roe moved that the meeting be adjourned until September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

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Barbara Levin Bergman, Chair

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Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Jason Brooks, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: