

# WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### **WORKING SESSION**

# January 18, 2001

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bergman at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Administration Building, 220 North Main Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comms. Armentrout, Bergman, Craiger, DeLong, Gunn, Irwin, Kern, Peterson,

Prater, Shaw, Sizemore, Solowczuk, Yekulis.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Comms. Kestenbaum, Montague.

OTHERS PRESENT: Robert Guenzel, County Administrator; Frank Cambria, Deputy Administrator, Ed

Luchi, ITS; Bob Hubbard, Retirement; David Behen, Administration; Denise Dalrymple, Children's Services; Charlie Wolfe, Library; Lovida Roach, Friend of the Court; Colleen Mallory, 14A District Court; Fran Alexander, Consultant; Barbara King,

Clerk/Register Office.

### Roll Call

### **Citizen Participation**

None.

#### **Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizen Participation**

None.

#### **Strategic Communication Plan**

Mr. Guenzel began the presentation by talking about the Organizational Capability Survey and the resulting opportunities. He described the Leadership Academy and the Business Planning process improvements.

David Behen how the plan was developed. He said the Steering Committee refined the scope of the effort, helped gather data, nominated a Design Team, and was responsible for reviewing the work done. The Design Team was a cross functional, cross level diverse group that gathered data, analyzed data, and drafted the core plan.

Lovida Roach talked about the key strengths and opportunities. She said the top priority improvements were identified and aligned with the Guiding Principles. Strengths included:

- There is a strong desire to communicate.
- Technology and tools are available.
- Communications choices are available.
- Key messages are understood and acted upon.

#### Opportunities included:

- Interdepartmental information is not readily available.
- Opportunities or 2-way communication, feedback, and early participation in decisions are low.
- Knowledge and skill levels are very inconsistent. Training in communication skills and tools is needed for all levels.
- Phone system needs improvement.
- There are significant gaps in access to helpful tools.
- Human contact is decreasing and credibility is negatively affected.

Colleen Mallory talked about the Communication Plan and Key Messages. She said:

- Easy access to information is vital to the ability of the County to provide quality service.
- Everyone is responsible to seek out information, to share information, and to make information meaningful.
- Speak the truth share good news and bad news.
- All communication will offer avenues for feedback and further communication.
- Business knowledge is needed by everyone.
- Effective communications use multiple approaches.

Charlie Wolfe, talked about the primary strategies:

Enhance interdepartmental information and understanding.

Have feedback and 2-way communication become the norm.

Provide needed knowledge, skills, and tools for support of excellent communication.

Ensure access to needed tools.

Share strategic, countywide financial information in multiple mediums (in English).

Ensure proper staffing to help with centralized communication and to support departmental communicatio9n.

Among the tactics currently underway, Mr. Wolfe talked about establishing new meeting structures, enhancing "The County Line", providing tailored communication skills courses in the professional development program, engaging staff in the business planning process, updating web sites, assessing tool and technology needs for an informed Technology Plan and Budget planning; developing a County Resource Guide, and identifying and instituting multiple options for receiving and using client feedback.

A period of time was allowed for questions and answers, with Fran Alexander, Charlie Wolfe, and Bob Guenzel answering.

#### **Commissioners Items**

None

#### **County Administrator Report**

None.

### **Items for Current/Future Discussion**

Comm. Prater said there are some serious problems with storm drains and asked what role the County can play in correcting the problems. Chair Bergman asked Administration to find out some information and maybe in the fall it could be put on a Working Session agenda.

### **Pending**

None.

## Status of Annual Activities/Goals

No report.

### **Citizen Participation**

None.

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

None

#### <u>Adjournment</u>

Comm. Shaw supported by Comm. Kern moved that the meeting be adjourned until February 8, 2001, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Washtenaw County Administration Building. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Barbara Levin Bergman, Chair

Peggy M. Haines, Clerk/Register
By: Barbara L. King, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: February 8, 2001