



## WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### WORKING SESSION

April 19, 2001

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Kestenbaum at 6:34 p.m. in the Board Room, Administration Building, 220 North Main Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Comms. .Armentrout, Craiger, DeLong, Irwin, Kern, Kestenbaum, Prater, Shaw, Solowczuk, Yekulis.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Comms. Bergman, Gunn, Montague, Peterson, Sizemore.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Bob Guenzel, County Administrator, Gordon Burger, Jennifer Watson, Finance; David Behen, Amy Klinke, Administration; Trena Rusher, Jennie Bivens, ETCS; Rebecca Head, Dick Fleece, Randy Gregory, DEIS; Ellen Clement, Health; Lloyd Powell, Prosecuting Attorney; Curtis Hedger, Corporation Counsel; Barbara King, Clerk/Register Office.

#### Roll Call

#### Citizen Participation

Ron Schairer, Scio Township, told the Board they recently sold their home to move into a retirement home, but the County has blocked the title transfer, saying the septic field is too close to their well.

Annette Zsenyuk told the Board she is an environmentalist and understands the reason for the regulation, but feels it is not based on scientific evidence. She said she has experienced a similar problem as Mr. Schairer.

Paul Frisinger, realtor in Lima Township, expressed his concern for the inspection of wells and septic systems.

Ron Nitchie, of Freedom Township, told the Board they have run into a similar problem as the County has blocked the sale of their house because they say their septic field is too close to the edge of Pleasant Lake.

Robert Little, Supervisor of Freedom Township, expressed his concern for the people trying to sell their homes and running into problems.

Peter Cornell, Ann Arbor Board of Realtors, said many realtors are complaining about delayed or blocked house sales. He said when the program was adopted, their support was based on the protection and safety of the community. The working principle is that they will be required to have a safe septic field and a safe well. We understood that as long as it is working, then the house could be sold.

Scott Cooper, Sylvan Township, said the Board should take a closer look at what the purpose of the program is. He said the County should be assisting people and not putting up roadblocks.

David Lang, Ellsworth Lake, said he hopes the Board realizes that there are a lot of people out there who don't want to subject themselves to the problems. The inspectors can make it extremely difficult.

Frank Rosenthal said that if fields are functioning, they shouldn't be held up from selling their property.

J.D. Lindeberg, member of the Health Code Board of Appeals told the Board he has seen only one appeal in the last 13 months.

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

Comms. DeLong, Armentrout, Yekulis, Show, Prater, Irwin, and Solowczuk responded.

#### **On-Site Sewer & Septic Inspection Report**

Rebecca Head, DEIS Director, talked about why the program was originally proposed and introduced Dick Fleece.

Mr. Fleece provided a presentation for the Board that included the following:

- History
- Why the program was developed
- Program Successes
- National Acclaim
- Regulation Review
- Advisory Committee
- The Regulation
- Time of Sale Numbers during 2000 for sewage systems and wells

Time was provided for questions and answers.

Vice Chair Kestenbaum, after talking with the Board, said we would have the Public Defender Information Session and the Employment Training & Community Services Information Session at a later date.

#### **Commissioners Items**

None

#### **County Administrator Report**

Mr. Guenzel reported that he has been contacted by the City of Ann Arbor for representation on an e-government committee to determine what citizens and elected officials want to be on line. The meeting is scheduled for April 26 at 4:00. He also reported that he received a telephone call from the United States Environmental Protection Agency that we will be receiving a \$200,000 grant for a Brownfield Assessment pilot.

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

Comm. Irwin said he is concerned that we are pushing back departments. He indicated that we may have to have some late meetings in order to get them all in.

Comm. Prater requested that the County Clerk talk about standards for the election process for Washtenaw County.

#### **Status of Annual Activities/Goals**

No report.

#### **Citizen Participation**

Annette Zsenyuk said she feels better after listening to Commissioners listening. She told Commissioners that when the Health Department gives them data, they should ask for the scientific information to support it.

Mike Rohde said he is on the Citizens Advisory Group representing realty. He said for the most part, the system works. He said the bottom line is that we want to catch the polluters.

**Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation**

Comms. Prater, Craiger, and Yekulis responded.

**Adjournment**

Comm. Prater supported by Comm. Shaw moved that the meeting be adjourned until May 3, 2001, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Washtenaw County Administration Building. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

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Lawrence Kestenbaum, Vice-Chair

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

APPROVED: May 3, 2001