



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKING SESSION

June 8, 2006

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comms. Grewal, Gunn, Irwin, Kern, Ouimet, Peterson, Smith, Solowczuk

MEMBERS ABSENT: Comms. Bergman, Prater, Sizemore

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Guenzel, County Administrator; Frank Cambria, Deputy County Administrator; David Behen, Ken Schrader, Information Technology; Gordon Burger, Budget; Ellen Clement, Public Health; Mary O'Hare, Organizational Development; Donna Sabourin, CSTS; Kathy Reynolds, WCHO; Kerry Sheldon, Administration, Stephen Kirschner, Clerk's Office; various citizens; and members of the press.

Roll Call

Citizen Participation

None.

Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizen Participation

None.

Discussion Items

Comm. Solowczuk thanked Comm. Kern for chairing during his absence and wished her a happy birthday.

Health Community of Interest: ETCS Space Needs

Frank Cambria and Kathy Reynolds presented on ETCS Space Needs. Report on File with County Clerk.

- Goals for Towner Campus
- Planning Process
- Planning Process and Tools
 - Information Matrix
 - Bubble Diagram
 - Zone Diagram
- 555 Towner Design Strengths
- ETCS Relocation Options
 - Option 1
 - Option 2

Frank Cambria, Kathy Reynolds, Donna Sabourin and Ellen Clement responded to Commissioners questions.

Comm. Gunn stated that having a connection between the Towner Campus buildings is important. She stated that it is good that they talked to all of the employees during the planning process.

Comm. Kern asked if this will present an opportunity to implement energy savings devices. Jason Fee stated that this is a great opportunity to do this. Comm. Kern asked for some examples of the updates they have made on the building. Jason Fee responded. Comm. Kern asked if there is opportunity to put up solar panels. Jason Fee replied that they look into this.

Comm. Ouimet asked about feedback from customers. Kathy Reynolds responded. Comm. Ouimet stated that there is value in getting customer feedback on space planning.

Comm. Irwin stated that at 2.5 million dollars, this update is a much smaller project than the jail. Comm. Irwin asked how the Chevron contract has affected the Towner building. Gordon Burger responded that some items were not addressed by the Chevron contract. Comm. Irwin asked how the supervision will function with the new space design. Kathy Reynolds stated that they are currently using the matrix model of organizational development, which works well with their design. Ellen Clement stated that there are compatible supervisor units throughout the organization.

Comm. Smith stated he is concerned about the cost of the changes. He asked for a description of how the service to customers would be improved. Kathleen stated that there are proven advantages to co-locating services and warm handoffs (walking customers to next location). Ellen Clement stated that their current services have been limited by a lack of space. Donna Sabourin explained that there are not enough rooms available to service clinical groups. Ellen Clement stated that language services would be available to multiple departments if the plan is implemented. Comm. Smith asked how the improvements would be tracked for effectiveness. Kathy Reynolds responded that they have tracking systems in place.

Comm. Grewal stated that she would like a plan B in the space plan to adapt for potential changes.

Comm. Gunn asked what buildings are being given up. Ellen Clement stated that there are not any more employees in this building plan, just added working space. Donna Sabourin stated that they have vacated the varsity drive building and moved them to Ellsworth.

Comm. Irwin asked what portion of the 2.5 million is the bridge between the buildings. Jason Fee stated that the bridge would be a minor cost.

Comm. Solowczuk asked if this has been done in other counties. Kathy Reynolds stated that there are models for this organization. Comm. Solowczuk asked if there are grant funds that might be at risk through this change. Kathy Reynolds stated that there are no grant funds at risk.

Comm. Gunn asked how many people are in ETCS administration. Jason Fee stated there are 24. Comm. Gunn asked if they are all at Towner. Frank Cambria replied affirmatively.

Comm. Kern asked if they can be housed in the ECGC. Frank Cambria said yes. Comm. Kern stated that she would like to maintain the commitment to downtown Ypsilanti. She stated that she wants to abandon option 3.

Comm. Peterson stated that he is committed to human services and human services funding. Comm. Peterson asked if the funding is coming out of the building reserves. Bob Guenzel responded that the board will be able to determine where the funding comes from in the fall. Comm. Peterson asked if this counts as a capital improvement or falls under the 1/8th mill allocation. Bob Guenzel stated that it would be done as maintenance, falling under the 1/8th mill. Comm. Peterson stated that he is committed to human services, but he is concerned that these issues have been addressed poorly. He said that the county has spent millions on this campus, and these issues should have been addressed. He added that he is concerned about the county's credibility in the financing of this issue. He stated that he wants the focus to be on human service delivery.

Comm. Smith stated that he appreciates Comm. Peterson's comments.

He stated that by moving the ETCS department out of the Towner campus, there may be a concern in the community that the county is orphaning one of the only African American led agencies at the county, and this issue has to be discussed. Bob Guenzel replied that the commitment to Harriet street leads to the current separation. He stated that the community engagement process will be very important. Comm. Smith stated that they would need to work closely with Trenda Rusher to avoid perceptions of racial segregation. Comm. Smith asked if they are tracking use of human services. Frank Cambria responded. Comm. Smith stated that if there is a loss of effective customer service due to this transition that there should be strategies to address it.

Comm. Ouimet stated that he agrees with Comm. Smith that integration is an important. Comm. Ouimet commented that it is important to listen to Comm. Peterson's input on the human services aspect of this issue. He asked about the costs of the changes being proposed. He stated that the cost benefit should be an important deciding factor.

Comm. Gunn stated that tonight's presentation is one of many that have occurred at working sessions. She explained that having the first floor of Towner devoted human services is important.

Comm. Peterson stated that it is important to always be outreaching to the community. He said that human services need to be examined as a whole. He explained that this issue is about how they deliver services to people.

Community Engagement Process

Mary O'Hare introduced Joseph Ohren. Joseph Ohren stated that it is essential to deal with long run decisions. He stated that community engagement is an important part of this process. Mr. Ohren spoke to the board about what the board needs to be successful and asked for suggestions for community interactions on the space plan.

Martha Kern asked to add the ministerial alliance, the farm bureau, the Michigan Township Association, Northfield Township Human Services Agency and County Executives.

Comm. Gun added the Washtenaw Metro Alliance, Community Action Board, all regions faith based organizations, Chambers of Commerce, Universities, Health Organizations and the Corporation of Skilled Workforce.

Comm. Kern recommended PTA's, which draws in a different constituency.

Comm. Grewal recommended adding Safe House.

Comm. Smith stated he wants to look at land use, community development and transportation agencies. He recommended the Ecology Center, Homebuilders Association, Washtenaw Development Council, Planning Advisory Board, Board of AATA and WATS. He stated that gentrification, race and poverty impacts should be looked at. He recommended NAACP, Black elected officials, ministerial alliance or (Avalon) Affordable Housing Alliance.

Comm. Solowczuk stated that they should be looking for alternative funding ideas. Joe Ohren stated that they should be informing the groups they go to what other groups are involved.

Comm. Kern recommended the major labor unions and the Huron Valley Labor Council.

Comm. Grewal suggested starting with the large groups, with broader perspectives, to use as sounding boards.

Comm. Solowczuk suggested identifying cross over involvement.

Comm. Kern stated that the average person in the street should be included.

Comm. Solowczuk stated that southwest Washtenaw often asks why they need these services. He stated that they question effectiveness. He recommended asking and addressing the 'what the citizens expect to gain from the space plan' questions.

Comm. Kern suggested asking about services that cannot be accessed because of distance, and asking about satellite visits.

Comm. Smith stated he hopes that they will prioritize groups. Joseph Ohren stated that once they prioritize, they will bring the list back to the commissioners.

Comm. Solowczuk stated that it may be necessary to share with citizens why these services are needed.

County Administrator Report

None.

Items for Current/Future Discussion

None.

Pending

- TBD Space Plan Goals Establishment
- Summer Community Engagement and Space Plan Development
- Sept. 7 Present Report on Recommendations
- Nov. 2 Review Potential funding Sources
- Dec. 3 Adopt Funding Mechanism for Next Phase of Plan

Status of Annual Activities/Goals

No report.

Citizen Participation

None.

Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation

None.

Adjournment

Comm. Gunn seconded by Comm. Solowczuk moved that the meeting be adjourned until July 6, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Washtenaw County Administration Building. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Stephen Solowczuk, Chair

Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Stephen Kirschner, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: