



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKING SESSION

MAY 3, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Ouimet 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, Schwartz, and Smith.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Comms. Peterson, Lovejoy Roe, and Sizemore

OTHERS PRESENT: Robert Guenzel, County Administrator; David Behen, Verna McDaniel, Deputy County Administrators; Anthony VanDerworp, Dick Fleece, Planning and Environment; Mark Breckenridge, David Halteman; Gregory Williams, Emergency Management; Peter Ballios, Finance; Cindra James, Public Health; Diane Heidt, Monica Boote, Human Resources; Mary Udoji, Margaret Wolfe, Library; Dale Vanderford James McFarlane, Information Technology; Megan Wolfe, Scott Patton, Gordon Burger, Jennifer Watson, Jim Zwolensky, Support Services; Kerry Sheldon, Joanna Bidlack, Administration; Jason Brooks, Clerk's Office; various citizens; and members of the press.

Roll Call

Citizen Participation

None

Commissioner Follow-Up to Citizen Participation

None

Discussion Items:

Planning Process: Emergency Preparedness & Response/800 MHz

Mark Breckenridge gave the Emergency Preparedness Community of Interest Presentation (On file on County Clerk's Office).

Cindra James discussed the health network, and added that the program has many partners. She added that the health plan was completed, and that the plan contained preparedness and communication measures. James added that the plan is in several languages. James stated that emergency preparedness food brochures were also distributed to members of the community. She stated that there are prescription drug drop off points. She stated that many exercises also take place to ensure that people know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Breckenridge stated that one goal is to secure funding to implement one or more programs in the Hazardous Mitigation Plan. He added that Emergency Response plans will be updated for EHS's, and start new exercises. He stated that for response goals, they are in the process of updating the mutual aid agreement. He stated that Recovery goals are increasing situational awareness. This can be done through tracking infrastructure, and monitor the resources of organizations and companies, and better damage assessment. He stated that this will help better prepare for emergencies.

James stated that she would like to see the community containment plan updated under Mitigation & Prevention. She stated that under prevention, they would like to work more with regional programs. She stated that annual fit testing will continue for staff. James reported that making processes operational will be a focus. She added that under recovery, she hopes that the health organizations would like to bring costs under control.

Breckenridge stated that we should be the leader in all areas. He added that the County is currently in the position for influencing force for external stakeholder. Breckenridge and James discussed their departmental infrastructure.

Comm. Grewal thanked the presenters. She asked for information on the mutual aid agreement, and the collaboration involved. Breckenridge stated that logistics will be a challenge when dealing with the local government. He stated that participants must be agreeable to the terms, and added that he does not anticipate all to sign on to the agreement. Breckenridge stated that there are many resources in local units of government. Comm. Grewal asked about the Homeland Security Grants fund and if it is a steady stream of funds each year. Breckenridge responded that Congress passes the bill, and the DHS takes 4-6 months to get through requirements, they then roll it out to the State, and finally it gets rolled out to local government. He stated that this grant was established right after 9/11. Breckenridge added that the money has increased annually, but that the program is administered on a regional basis. He stated that as far as future funding levels, the next two grants will be as high as they have ever been. Comm. Grewal asked if our region is considered Southeast Michigan. Breckenridge responded that it is.

Comm. Grewal asked about work with LAWNET. Breckenridge stated that they are occasionally worked with LAWNET. Comm. Grewal asked about the experience with chemical thefts leading to methamphetamine production. Breckenridge stated that the trend is clear in this area, and that this theft is on the rise. Breckenridge stated that HazMat planning is his side of Emergency Management, he added that tougher enforcement is being looked at closely.

Comm. Irwin thanked Breckenridge for the presentation. He asked how the County could work to consolidate service delivery, and find ways to spread services in this field and what the number one opportunity is to share services. Breckenridge stated that if services were currently shared, they would lose half of their funding. He stated that outside of his office there may be opportunities in regional dispatch, fire service. He added that he would like to think about the topic to give a more detailed answer in the future. Comm. Irwin stated that the County is looking for this opportunity.

Comm. Smith thanked the presenters. He stated that he always reads the County weather alerts on the website. He stated that there may be potential for collaboration between Wireless Washtenaw and severe weather alerts. Comm. Smith asked if this could be an area for an instantaneous warning in emergency situations. Breckenridge stated that the program needs to be expanded to reach such a wide amount of users. He stated that user permission was in place he is in favor of the idea.

Comm. Smith asked about the emergency management assistance compact, and what would qualify. Breckenridge stated that it could be activated in any event that mutual aid is deemed necessary, and if an emergency is declared resources will be available. Comm. Smith asked how many counties are a part of this network. Breckenridge stated that Oakland County is a member, and that many other communities are investigating. Comm. Smith stated that it may be helpful to take a look at what other communities are doing. Breckenridge stated that technically 75% of money spent is reimbursable through FEMA. Comm. Smith stated that often agreements like this are often abused, and are used to remove responsibility. He stated that he would like the County to be well aware of this risk. Breckenridge stated that the County has the right not to respond to mutual aid requests. He added that this is something that should be evaluated. Comm. Smith stated that the Michigan Suburbs Alliance has a manual on Fire Service consolidation, and what the options are. He stated that some support could be lent in this area.

Comm. Bergman stated that she sits on the Homeland Security Task Force. She stated that much of the action in this taskforce is directed at finding ways to share services, and that this group is always pleasant and well directed. Breckenridge stated that sharing resources a standard operation in this community of interest.

Comm. Smith asked about the Hazardous substance facilities, and whether the County is the soul provider of these facilities. Breckenridge stated that the County does not own these facilities, but does oversee them. He stated that tasks such as chemical identification are undertaken. Breckenridge stated that there needs to be a certain quantity of substance for this process to be triggered.

Larry Morabito gave the 800 MHz presentation (on file in County Clerk's Office).

Comm. Gunn thanked Morabito for the hard work at getting this millage passed quickly. She also thanked Paul Bunten for his hard work at getting this millage passed.

Planning Process: Support Services

The Support Services Presentation was given by Burger, Heidt, and Ballios (On file in County Clerk's Office).

Comm. Gunn stated that that everyone she has talked to that has received service says that it is great. She added that she would like to be a part of the paperless pilot program.

Comm. Irwin stated that he would like the Board to work with agencies to ensure accessibility to buildings. He stated that one of the most important ideas dealing with document management. He stated that the process of writing tickets electronically would save time for citizens and employees.

Comm. Ping Mills thanked the presenters. She asked about reducing cost by combining partnerships, and about sharing benefit costs and whether this is being investigated. Heidt stated that this had not been looked at, but that study on which tasks fit best with certain people has been underway.

Comm. Smith asked how big the IT staff is. Burger responded that there were 32 people on the staff. Comm. Smith asked if there is a need for increase in that staff, and asked how to maximize effectiveness. Burger stated that the need is not seen to increase staff. He stated that a lot of the intensity is getting documents into the system. Comm. Smith asked what documents are still on physical paper, and stated that he would like most of the documents to be electronic, with storage documents being printed. Burger stated that the most progress has been made at Zeeb Road. Comm. Smith stated that he would like to see more examination of the scanning process, and would like to have a discussion about some of these benefits.

Comm. Ping Mills asked about services that have documents already in place, that may be able to interface. Ballios pointed out the payroll benefits that are available online. Heidt stated that the entire enrollment process is now electronic. Comm. Ping Mills asked if changes can be made in pensions. Heidt responded that they could.

Planning Process: Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled

Mary Udoji and Margaret Wolfe gave the presentation on that Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled (On file in County Clerk's Office).

County Administrator Report

None

Space Plan Update

Jim Zwolensky reported that next Monday engineers will be coming in to tour the jail and have an in depth walk through, followed by an in depth planning session on Tuesday.

He reported that on the Saline District Court, a meeting took place last week with Judge Simpson. He added that around Labor Day, the County would be going out for bids for contractors.

Comm. Irwin stated that he had the opportunity to be introduced to Darrell Weinard, University of Michigan who stated that many engineering students may be interested in getting involved in the process. He added that this may be an aspect to the project, who may have access to new information. He stated that as the process moves along, there is an opportunity to get the whole Board involved in the process.

Comm. Smith asked if Zwolensky has had the chance to talk to Wayne County on their super jails, and whether there is an opportunity for advancement of shared services in this area. Zwolensky reported that he is aware of the project, but has not yet spoken to Wayne County.

Items for Current/Future Discussion

Comm. Ouimet thanked Heidt for allowing Monica Boote and Nicole Capstack to go out and give a presentation in Chelsea and to be a part of the Seniors Fair at the old High School. He stated that it was important for people in outlying areas of the County to see what the County is doing.

Pending

- May 17 Planning Process: Children’s Services; Housing & Homelessness Community of Interest
- June 21 Planning Process: Global Summarization

Citizen Participation

None

Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation

None

Adjournment

Comm. Irwin seconded by Comm. Gunn moved to adjourn until Thursday, May 17th, 2007, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Washtenaw County Administration Building. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Rolland Sizemore, Chair

Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register
By: Jason Brooks, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: