



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKING SESSION

February 19, 2009

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comms. Gunn, Irwin, Judge, Ouimet, Ping, Prater, Schwartz, Sizemore, and Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Comms. Bergman and Peterson

OTHERS PRESENT:: Verna McDaniel, Deputy County Administrator; Curt Hedger, Corporation Counsel; Jim Zwolensky, Support Services; Ken Schrader, ITS; 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

Space Plan Update:

Jim Zwolensky presented the Budget Summary for the 14A-4 District Court and the Jail and 14A-1 District Court (on file in County Clerk's office).

Comm. Sizemore asked if room sizes are being changed. Zwolensky reported that no changes are being made yet. He reported that he has asked for a list of possible cost savings.

Comm. Irwin stated that he feels that the fence itself will not have as big of a security impact as the Washtenaw entrance. Comm. Irwin stated that he feels that it is worthwhile to pick investments that will give the most for the money.

Comm. Prater asked about the Owner Advisor fee. Zwolensky reported that each package was bid individually with each trade. He reported that Clark is serving as the advisor on site and taking care of the contracts. Zwolensky reported that some of the fund has been spent but that they would not be requesting any changeovers. Comm. Prater asked about the construction cost. Zwolensky reported on the total cost as presented.

Comm. Bergman asked about whether the previous Sheriff or the current Sheriff wanted the fence. She stated that fencing County property sends the wrong message. Comm. Bergman stated that a chain link fence is a waste of money.

Comm. Schwartz stated that he feels that it was the prior Sheriff's staff that suggested the fence. He added that the County's risk analyst felt that a fence was needed. He stated that the Washtenaw entrance would be a good way of separating them out.

Comm. Gunn asked about the dollar difference between fences. Zwolensky stated that he believes it is around \$70,000. She added that she does not feel that they need the security that they think they need.

Comm. Sizemore asked if there would be security cameras in the parking lot. Zwolensky stated that there would. Comm. Sizemore asked if there will be some kind of program to maintain the area. Zwolensky stated that the facilities manager is involved in all of the conversations.

Comm. Prater stated that there is no need for a fence. He added that the jail should be secure but that it is public space. He stated that he would like to see the Board put the dollars where they are needed. Zwolensky stated that the groups need to get together and come up with a final discussion.

Comm. Smith stated that he is in line with the consensus with the fence being inappropriate. He added that authority may not be delegated in the future if the PS&J acts outside of the interest of the Board.

Comm. Ping asked about stimulus package funding for the Washtenaw entrance. Zwolensky reported that this was a part of the package submitted. Comm. Ping stated that she agrees with the consensus on the fence. Comm. Smith stated that data of incidents could be benchmarked and compared with other County facilities.

Discussion Items:

Road Commission Expansion Discussion

Curt Hedger presented "Road Commission Issues" (on file in County Clerk's office).

Comm. Gunn stated that Comm. Prater is the person at the table with the most insight. She stated that the most important point is the function of the Road Commission. Comm. Prater stated that the Road Commission holds two meetings per month along with working sessions and additional meetings. He reported that they have almost as many meetings per year that the County Board of Commissioners. He added that the Road Commissioners go on site with staff many times.

Comm. Gunn stated that the County has now taken over Human Resources. She stated that she feels they are spread thin. Comm. Gunn stated that adding two Road Commissioners would add points of view.

Comm. Judge stated that she appreciates the work of the Road Commissioners. She stated that she felt disrespect when attending a public meeting in the past. She stated that the Road Commission was a public service body. Comm. Judge stated that she would like to see a woman on the Board. She stated that more minds are not a bad thing. She added that there needs to be more focus on respect and customer service. Comm. Judge stated that she does not have any personal vendettas. Comm. Judge asked if other counties have been looked at and suggested that comparables be looked at. Comm. Judge stated that she is concerned about Road Commissioners not getting the same salary. She added that adding \$20,000 in salaries may add customer services.

Comm. Prater stated that there is a wide range of salaries for Road Commissions in the state. He reported that Jackson County went from three to five Commissioners.

Comm. Bergman stated that it may be necessary to pulling the Road Commission in as a department. Comm. Smith stated that it may be worthwhile for the Board to pass a resolution urging the Transportation Committee to take this up.

Comm. Schwartz asked if there is only one opportunity to vote on this per term. He stated that if it is shown that more Commissioners will make a difference than it may pay for itself.

Comm. Judge stated that she wants to ensure that apples are compared to apples when looking at other counties.

Comm. Prater stated that Wayne County is the only county in the state that has its own department. Hedger stated that the law does state that no more than two positions can come up in any one year.

Comm. Irwin stated that he is in favor of expanding the Road Commission. He stated that he feels that the compensation is fair. Comm. Irwin stated that paying a fair salary will bring in higher quality candidates. He added that he would like to see someone on the Commission who is a strong advocate for non motorized transit.

Comm. Ping stated that this is a political process internally. She stated that if looking to see if making Road Commissioners elected versus appointed. She added that it would allow the people to choose. Comm. Ping stated that turning around and throwing in two Road Commissioners may be looked at poorly after 11 layoffs at the Road Commission this year. She added that it will be important to look at all of these issues.

Local Vendor Preference Discussion

Curt Hedger reported on Local Vendor Preferences (on file in County Clerk's office).

Comm. Gunn stated that the CUB agreement came under Comm. Prater's leadership. She stated that CUB agreements are absolutely important. She stated that she feels that this smacks of micromanagement. She added that more regulations will mean that the County will be sued and stated that she is tired of lawsuits.

Comm. Prater asked if there is any statute stating that a governmental entity has to take the low bid. Hedger reported that the policy does not say to automatically take the low bidder. He added that the County reserves the right to reject bids and select the bidder that is best for the County. Comm. Prater stated that the CUB is made up of local contractors and trades people. Comm. Prater stated that there ought to be a way to give local contractors and trades people a benefit.

Comm. Judge stated that she appreciates the work of Curt Hedger work on this presentation. She stated that she agrees with Comm. Gunn and does not want to be opened up to a lawsuit. Comm. Judge added that people are getting desperate and that people may begin getting territorial. She asked about what is taking place in the state with regards to local vendor preference. Comm. Judge asked if staff can just be given a suggestion to staff. Hedger stated that he feels that the procurement language would have to be tweaked.

Comm. Irwin stated that he feels that the County is more or less in the spot he would like to see them in. He added that he would like to see local entities supported where they can be. Comm. Irwin stated that he would feel comfortable with language in the procurement policy being added that if all things being equal you go with the local vendor. Hedger stated that he would suggest giving more flexibility if language is pulled from the state statute.

Comm. Bergman stated that she does not want to add anything to the policy. She added that she does not want to get into a reciprocity issue.

Comm. Schwartz asked if this could be done through resolution or ordinance. Hedger reported that he could look into how other entities have done it.

Comm. Ping stated that her biggest concern is that all are trying to focus on economic development within the County. She stated that her stance is that this is another chance at economic development within the County. Comm. Ping stated that many businesses come to the Board that can do the same business.

Comm. Prater stated that the language needs to be loose. He stated that guiding staff on looking at local vendors if things are equal.

Comm. Sizemore asked about other counties have done this. Hedger stated that he could get the information.

Comm. Schwartz asked if the state just passed a state vendor preference or guideline. Hedger stated that he would check.

Comm. Judge stated that she would be willing to look into the language but does not want it to be too tight.

Comm. Bergman asked about federal funding. Hedger reported that some federal funding does have anti local vendor preference built in. He stated that he needs to flesh out the federal funding tied in. McDaniel asked if this should be placed in policies or procedures. Comm. Ping stated that she would like to see it addressed in procedures.

Revenue Projection and Reform Presentation

None

County Administrator's Report

None

Items for Current/Future Discussion

Comm. Prater stated that a Cruise '09 is being done on May 16 in Scio Township. He added that organizers would like to use Road Commission parking and County parking at the County facilities.

Pending

None

Citizen Participation

None

Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation

None

Adjournment

Comm. Irwin seconded by Comm. Sizemore moved to adjourn until Thursday, March 5th, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, Washtenaw County Administration Building. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Jessica Ping, Chair

Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Jason Brooks, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: