



## WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### WORKING SESSION

April 21, 2011

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Comms. Bergman, Gunn, Judge, Ping, Prater, Rabhi, Sizemore, Conan Smith, Dan Smith, and Turner

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Comm. Peterson

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Verna McDaniel, County Administrator; Kelly Belknap, Interim Deputy County Administrator; Dick Fleece, Jennifer Brassow, Public Health; Ken Schrader, ITS; Joanna Bidlack, County 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:

##### **Update on Act 196 authorities in the State – AATA**

**(Supplemental Documents are on file in the County Clerk's office.)**

Comm. Prater reported that there is information getting out into communities. He added that there is talk of a countywide millage and stated that he has not yet heard from a reliable source. Comm. Prater stated that he would like to get more information out to local communities. He added that he does not support a countywide millage.

Comm. Conan Smith stated that there are two different ways to fund a more robust transit system. He added that moving through the Act 196 process is the first way. He stated that the second way is for the Board to put a millage on the ballot. Comm. Conan Smith reported that there are communities that may not have the wherewithal to fund badly needed services. He added that this board is the only entity to put something on the countywide ballot. Comm. Conan Smith stated that he does not believe there is a fulsome model at this point. He added that Act 196 is about governance. He stated that these are rarely set up on a population basis. Comm. Conan Smith stated that the AATA is not asking for a majority of the Board but for a large enough minority to feel protected.

Comm. Turner stated that taking three areas would equal the population of Ann Arbor. He added that it is based on population and funding. Comm. Turner stated that the plan is for the governance board to come forward with a millage. He added that he was told that a local government does have the opportunity to opt out.

Comm. Bergman stated that methods of funding are a part of any fulsome discussion. She added that she would like Comm. Conan Smith to have an opportunity to present the funding opportunities.

Comm. Rabhi stated that this could perhaps be done at the Working Session on June 2nd.

### **County Health Ranking – Public Health Director Dick Fleece**

The County Health Rankings were presented by Dick Fleece (on file in County Clerk's office).

Comm. Bergman stated that effective public health does take a village. She stated that connectivity must be looked at. She added that public transit is a public health and jobs issue. Comm. Bergman stated that local foods need to be pushed. She added that public health should also work to federalize all that they can. She stated that the community needs to come together for a human services millage. Fleece reported that a grant has been secured to perform a study on Latinos who reported that transportation was the number one limitation to jobs.

Comm. Conan Smith stated that he takes issue with some of the measures. He asked what the Public Health department is trying to attack and asked what strategies and methodologies need investment. Fleece reported that the focus needs to be on the entire population. He added that it is difficult to keep the priority of population health when focusing on core services. He stated that focus does need to be on preventative services. Fleece reported that healthy living and education also needs to be evaluated. Comm. Conan Smith stated that there are a number of other agencies that are having an effect on the quality of public health. He added that the integration of other activities needs to be evaluated. Comm. Smith stated that there may be opportunities for integration between Public Health and Parks and Recreation for example. Fleece stated that this work is being done in many ways. He added that Public Health is all about partnering. Comm. Conan Smith asked if there are programmatic opportunities. Fleece reported that the basic start is understanding the services that exist and at what level they are being done. Comm. Conan Smith asked if there are any priorities that will rise to priority in the strategic plan. Fleece reported that a lot of the focus would be on grant opportunities and on prevention measures such as healthy eating. Comm. Conan Smith stated that the County is in maintenance mode for many of these factors. He asked if there is any divestment that worries Fleece more than others. Fleece reported that any cuts in planning and prevention worry him.

Comm. Prater stated that the challenge is the 56,000 people in Washtenaw County that do not have health insurance. He added that the discount drug program was helpful but added that there must be other ways that some assistance can be done. Fleece reported that some of the work being done is social connectivity to reach out to people. Comm. Prater stated that up until a few years ago Michigan was in the top 15 in per capita income and has since dropped to 37 or 38.

### **County Administrator's Report**

Verna McDaniel reported that she will be putting a message on eCentral on the Equalization Report. Comm. Conan Smith stated that the hole is still \$18 million.

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

Comm. Prater stated that the AATA is putting out a lot of information. He stated that Michael Ford should talk about revenues with local communities. Comm. Prater stated that there will be an entire group complaining that they did not know about it.

Comm. Conan Smith stated that he agrees with the lack of information. He added that typically the federal government picks up 80% of new construction projects and infrastructure and stated that there are operating funds that come directly from the State of Michigan. He reported that there is just not enough information to make a decision at this time. Comm. Conan Smith added that the AATA report was probably a bit premature. He stated that the AATA should come back on June 2 and talk about the financial need data.

Comm. Turner stated that commissioners have been invited to several of these meetings. He added that no figure is yet written in stone. He added that this is a 30 year plan. Comm. Turner reported that the preliminary information is out there. Comm. Bergman stated that she agrees with Comm. Turner and added that everyone has been invited to these meetings. Comm. Prater stated that he has been to three or four of these meetings and met with Michael Ford twice. He added that he was told that no revenue plan was discussed. Comm. Rabhi stated that the Board would be voting on the governance structure and that the governing body would discuss costs.

Comm. Ping stated that her understanding is that once the board is established than they would leverage the millage. She added that she would be opposed to establishing this governmental entity as presented. Comm. Ping added that asking Manchester for example to pay for transportation in addition to their police millage would be difficult. She stated that having the conversation with the Cadillac plan is premature.

Comm. Rabhi stated that costs are associated with the different plans. Comm. Ping stated that she feels that the chart is weighed toward the City of Ann Arbor and added that people have brought this issue to her. Comm. Prater stated that he is opposed to having a countywide millage and levying taxes on someone that will get very little service.

Comm. Dan Smith reported that he attended one of the meetings. He added that he is concerned that he has been getting feedback from people in his district who feel that this is a done deal and that the next step is a countywide millage. Comm. Bergman stated that millages are levied with a vote of the people. Comm. Turner stated that the created board would be able to put a millage proposal on the ballot but could not levy directly. He added that cities and townships do have the option to opt out. Comm. Rabhi stated that AATA could be called for a subsidized ride if there is not regular bus service.

Comm. Conan Smith stated that the Act 196 agency is an intergovernmental authority and is comprised of governments wishing to participate. He added that a countywide millage is one potential funding stream. He added that if the Board would not like to do this than it would have nothing to do with this plan. Comm. Prater stated that he would like to know how a community could opt out of the County Board of Commissioners puts a proposal on the ballot. Comm. Conan Smith stated that a countywide millage is a completely different approach. Comm. Turner stated that there are two different things being discussed.

Comm. Rabhi stated that he has never heard anything about a countywide levy. Comm. Conan Smith stated that the County has no role in approving the Act 196 authority or the governance structure. He added that if there is no interest in funding as a countywide entity than the Board of Commissioners discussion is over. Comm. Prater stated that the group in the northeast part of the County is setting up an authority under Public Act 7.

**Pending**

None

**Citizen Participation**

None

**Commissioners Follow-up to Citizen Participation**

None

**Adjournment**

Comm. Conan Smith seconded by Comm. Bergman moved that the meeting be adjourned until May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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Yousef Rabhi, Chair

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Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Jason Brooks, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: May 4, 2011