

Summary DRAFT

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The following is a summary of the WC Board of Commissioner’s budget planning retreat on March 7, 2013. All nine Commissioners participated in the retreat along with five of the Elected Officials. *Please see the minutes of the March 7th Working Session for a full roster of attendees.* The Retreat launched with introductions and an opportunity to declare expected outcomes for the retreat session. One of the central themes that surfaced as part of this opening was a desire for actionable results directly related to the budget process.

Retreat agenda

- Agenda Review – Commissioner Rabhi
- Expectations for Retreat Outcomes - Commissioners

- Review of the Budget Process and How information will be used in the Process – Kelly Belknap, Finance Director

Small Group Discussion (see list of focus areas below)
Full Group Report Out and Discussion

- Areas requiring informational sessions to the Board
- Priorities for resource allocation in 2014/15 budget
- Citizen Engagement and Community Education

Retreat Summary and wrap-up

The small group table discussions were focused on areas of interest that were generated at the February 7th Working Session. Each participant was given a list of the areas and potential topics included in that area of interest. The list below indicates the concerns/interests that were used in the small group discussions.

Small Group Discussion

<p>Labor Force sustainability/ Internal Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent attraction and retention • Workforce Development • Use of part-time, contractual, retirees and other employee situations 	<p>Environmental Impact and Mobility in Washtenaw County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition of roads and infrastructure • Relationships/responsibilities: Road Commission • Transportation, motorized and non-motorized • Parks and open spaces • Relationships/responsibilities: Parks Commission 	<p>Economic Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments in Community and Economic Development • Collaboration/Coordinated Funding
<p>Human Services/Safety Net</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying need • Maximizing health services/addressing health disparities • Addressing factors that contribute to poverty • Vulnerable populations/youth • Sequester issues/concerns 	<p>Mandated Service Provision/ Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serviceability levels • BOC responsibility for provision of mandated services 	<p>Long Term Fiscal Stability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfunded mandates • Reducing liabilities • Collaborations/ Coordinated funding

During the small group discussions the participants were asked to make lists of concerns that could either be addressed starting in the upcoming budget or were larger or less defined issues that should be part of long term planning. *See the complete list of notes taken by the Commissioners in Attachment A.*

The following Guiding themes were expressed in the large group report out. These do not represent any method of prioritizing but reflect the highlights of the small group discussions. Most of the items need more information and or further exploration in order to be represented in terms of the 2014/15 budget.

Guiding Themes

Human Services

- Access (capacity and availability) to mental and public health programs
- Mobile services: single point of service that moves to help people without transportation
- Innovative financial tools to provide services: Human Service millage and bonds (social impact bond), TIFF
- Focus on front end investment, root causes, welfare of children
- Importance of responding to external impacts and our ability to provide services that meet the needs of the community

Environmental Impact and Mobility

- Better roads
- Think in terms of mobility, not just roads include the entire transit system (may need regional approach)
- Alternatives to current funding mechanism (County wide road Tax)
- Continue to expand non-motorized connections, bike lanes and pedestrian access
- Plan for 2014 capital renewal for Parks and Recreation, succession planning for Parks Commissioners
- Consideration of Road Commission dissolution and assumption of responsibilities will require public engagement

Citizen Engagement

- Structure for County Boards and Commissions (appointments, structure funding for implementation and support)
- Committees/boards need to be open to the public as part of citizen engagement and make readily available the work of the committee (via internet or other)
- This should not be something new but integrated into current structures

Economic Development

- Job creation **and** creating an environment that creates jobs: stable schools, adequate infrastructure, workforce education, incentives to bring people in
- East Side investment: Systemic employment issues on the eastern side of the county. Increasing challenge to governments to provide adequate public services with declining tax base. There needs to be a compelling reason to compete for housing on the eastern side of the county.
- Package Loan products and other business development incentives

Mandated Services

- Serviceability levels: determining this level will need to take into account impact on other services
- Collaboration with other units of government is important in meeting mandates
- This is another area requiring public engagement in order to better determine the level to which the public can tolerate reduction in services

Labor Force Sustainability

- Compensation study (not just for dollar expectations but motivations to work in public sector and with Washtenaw County)
- Part-time/contractual solutions
- Succession planning
- Nepotism policy
- Professional Development/Education support
- Maintain staff size/maintain capacity to provide services

Long Term Fiscal Stability

- Commissioners want more information (Data and Assumptions, expert opinion about bonding or contracting)
- Different budget scenarios with projections and different assumptions

In addition to the Guiding Themes outlined above several overarching principles surfaced during the discussion.

- Purposeful and comprehensive investment in vulnerable communities; using multiple approaches to secure the welfare of citizens while investing in the environment that supports economic growth.

This could include:

- Ensuring cuts due to sequestration do not further impair already struggling populations from receiving services
 - Making an investment into addressing root causes of a communities vulnerability
 - Expecting coordinated efforts with partners and between departments to provide a multi-service better outcome than each agency could achieve alone
 - Start up funding for alternative or enhanced access methods for services provided
- Alternative or supplemental funding mechanisms to address growing infrastructure needs and shrinking capacity

This could include:

- Millages or bonds to restore service capacity where traditional funding is not meeting the need
- County appointed Boards and Committees that are structured and funded to provide leadership for locally driven priorities

This could include:

- Structure of boards and committees
- Appropriate support and funding
- Succession planning for sustainable commissions
- Efficient governance of county responsibilities

The Commissioners completed this retreat with an expectation to further explore the options discussed in the retreat and to continue to refine the ideas into meaningful direction for the Budget Task Force. A commitment was made to address individual topics at either Working Sessions and or other arranged retreats.

Attachment A

Intended for 2014/15 Budget

**indicates more than one commissioner expressed interest in this item*

Long Term Fiscal Stability

- Sequestration- we need to wait to see what the impacts will be in the public sector before we invest.
- Data & Assumptions – Commissioners should be involved in this, ask for data get trends, get expert information on issues such as Bonding vs. contracts
- Budgeting Process – Commissioners receive both a Version A and Version B projected budget with different assumptions in order to weigh the various impacts

Labor Force Sustainability/Internal Equity

- Salary/Compensation study *
 - Results should provide a sense of fairness
 - Use MML for the study as a less expensive alternative to private firm
 - What are the criteria of the study?
 - How can we attract people moving forward or retain good employees?
- Part-time and contractual should be an option but not a solution
 - Too much training cost/turnover
 - Can't fully meet demand with temporary employees
 - Overall employment costs increase when we consider the effort it takes to bring someone in
 - If we can reduce long-term liabilities there would be no point in using temporary staffing
- Train leaders of tomorrow, some departments may want to focus on giving experience not just hiring temps to cover the work. People that are seeking employment vs. seeking experience
- QUESTION: has the Nepotism policy been updated?
- Restore strong commitment to professional development and education support
- Maintain the size of staff – maintain our capacity to provide services

Mandated Service Provision/Resources

- Police Contracts/Revenue* Treasurer/Clerk
- Furlough Days may save \$ but reduce level of service. Should assume no furlough days
- QUESTION: How do you define serviceability?
- Start with the budget – services are impacted based on that
- Reducing level of service increases fraud and causes a lag in services. Critical thing is to keep up on how reductions in service will impact on other departments/offices

- The services are more efficient now but the volume is still increasing – how to address this issue? Barely enough staff to keep the office open. Working people may not be able to access services. Temps? If we are using nontraditional staffing we need to make better arrangements for parking.
- Collaboration between offices /departments
- Update software system - general ledger - upfront cost but saved over time*
- Minimal mandated services will maximize strategic services and investments

Environmental Impact and Mobility in WC

- Better Roads (Mobility) and how to fund locally **how to finance, consider environmental impacts especially water
- Plan for 2014 Parks and Recreation Capital Renewal
- Work with Road Commission on Future Structure
- Continue to expand non-motorized connections, especially in road work & connecting parks
- QUESTION: Can we better meet “connecting communities” requests, where locals match grant money for non-motorized
- Road Commission consolidation into County Commission responsibilities

Human Services/Safety Net

- Impact of sequestration on citizens and some of our most vulnerable citizens
- Need for access for health, mental health and dental care
- Public Health dental on the East side
- Social Impact Bond to support investments in root cause solutions* Human service millage*
- Early childhood education focus as a root cause strategy...invest in the program to build the strategy...contractual TIF in target areas
- Overburdened case workers seeing Medicaid patients
- Land Bank

Economic Development

- Human Services – economic development relationship - need education to reduce needs in human services
- Mechanism for getting directly to new/expanding businesses when they are first active/hiring (grant for a program...staff priority)
- Water Street*
 - Package Loan Products (low interest loans, TIF \$, revolving loans)
 - Site prep dollars, holistic development strategy/marketing strategy (roads/sewers)
 - Commissioner leadership (SPARK to convene other water street leaders)
 - Pre-zone water street
- Ypsilanti Community Schools*
 - Guaranteed pre-K and WCC/EMU/UM post K-12 education (leverage Perry School program more)
 - Reduce barriers to employment and provide hope of local employment

- Economic Development Bond *
 - Government’s Role is to Create the Environment for Job Development
 - Stable schools, adequate infrastructure (but beware of speculative housing –let that be private)
- Government investment in people or environment for business vs individual projects** (infrastructure, education/certificate programs)
- East side investment (funds provided in targeted communities)
 - Transportation for workers and youth
 - Marketing eastside assets – way finding, youth recreation, education, unique stores
 - Take advantage of EMU (college town) to drive the economy, 2 way streets, N. Congress area development, river park improvement
 - Affordable and desirable work force housing

For Long Term Planning

Human Services/Safety Net

- Being proactive rather than reactive
- Medicare impact
- “To try and continue to work on quantifying the economic benefits of some of the things we work on”
- Root causes versus immediate needs - change the investment pattern*
- Revamp HSCC to ensure strategic cooperative investment
- Look at the Board of Public Health Recreation
- Focus on the welfare of children first
- Advocate against prison privatization which results in a reduction of services to prevent recidivism

Environmental Impact/Mobility in Washtenaw County

- Continue to seek “stalwarts” for long term Parks Commission service
- Continue Open Space preservation

Economic Development

- Improve Leadership Advocacy for Economic Development – Localized marketing during events
- Early College Alliance
- Address strategic Weaknesses in hard hit communities
- Strengthen relationship with City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township Leaders – develop the partnerships
- Retain and Attract Young Talent

Mandated Services

- County Sheriff Serviceability