

WASHTENAW URBAN COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, January 9, 2019 - 2:00pm - 3:30pm
Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center (LRC), Michigan Room

I. Members in Attendance: Supervisor Brenda Stumbo (Ypsilanti Township); Trustee Christine Green (Scio Township); Councilperson Elizabeth Nelson (City of Ann Arbor); Joe Meyers (City of Ypsilanti); Clerk Karen Lovejoy-Roe (Ypsilanti Township); Councilperson Linda TerHaar, (City of Saline); Supervisor Marlene Chockley (Northfield Township); Michelle Aniol (City of Dexter); Supervisor Mike Moran (Ann Arbor Township); Supervisor Ken Schwartz (Superior Township)

Communities Absent: Augusta Township Bridgewater Township; Dexter Township; Lima Township; Manchester Township; Pittsfield Township; Salem Township; Saline Township; Sylvan Township; Webster Township; York Township

Facilitator: Andy LaBarre (Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners)

OCED Staff Present: Mirada Jenkins, Tara Cohen

Guests: Angela Verges (Ypsilanti Township Community Center staff); Chris Brown (Habitat for Humanity Huron Valley); Elena Ermak (Habitat for Humanity Huron Valley); Marta Larson (Whitmore Lake resident); Wendy Carty-Saxon (Avalon Housing)

Meeting called to order: 2:05pm

I. Public Comment - Marta Larson of Northfield Township commented that Northfield's residents made up a large percentage of the total respondents to the Community Needs Assessment online survey, requesting for the disaggregated Northfield Township data to be made available by OCED.

II. Announcements

- Commissioner LaBarre announced that this would be his last meeting as UCEC Chair, noting that that evening at the Board of Commissioners meeting, the Commission was to appoint a new Chair (per UCEC bylaws, the Chair of the Board of Commissioners is to serve the role of Chair to the UCEC). Chairperson LaBarre proposed moving agenda item *IV-C. Priority Project Update* to be the first item under General Administration, given the level of engagement noted on the topic and the fact that he would be needing to leave the meeting early for a previous commitment.
- The group welcomed Ann Arbor's newly elected Ward 4 Councilperson Elizabeth Nelson as Mayor Taylor's new designee to UCEC. Round robin introductions were made.

III. Minutes - Approval of 12-5-18 Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

*Moved by Supervisor Schwartz. Supported by Michelle Aniol.
Minutes approved unanimously.*



IV. General Administration

A. Priority Project update (ACTION)

Ms. Cohen referred to her email from that morning to UCEC members, which had been sent out in response to the email previously sent by Clerk Lovejoy Roe to the whole UCEC and interested parties listserv regarding Ypsilanti Township/Superior Township's priority project proposal requesting \$80,455.50 for floor tile replacement for the Ypsilanti Township Community Center. Ms. Cohen reiterated that staff were recommending that the estimated 2019 priority project funds be added back to the overall 2019 CDBG allocation, which would in turn increase each jurisdiction's estimated 2019 CDBG allocation available for local projects, but underscored that today's meeting is a forum for members to discuss and for UCEC to make the ultimate decision on how to proceed. She noted that staff see the Community Center as a valuable regional resource but did not view the project itself as having regional impact (no new services or programs were expected as a result of new flooring; proposal stated that current services would be maintained).

Members engaged in lengthy discussion, including many questions asked to the group and directed toward the representatives from Ypsilanti and Superior Townships:

Supervisor Chockley asked how much CDBG funding was available for 2019 priority projects, and how the estimated allocations for local units would change if the 10% set aside were to be put back into the regular CDBG allocation fund. Ms. Cohen said that, based on the estimated 2019 CDBG allocation, the 10% set-aside was approximately \$140,000, and that she would need to re-calculate the local allocations to provide a comparison for local units with the additional 10% in the regular fund.

Michelle Aniol asked why the floor tiles need replacing – is it partly a safety issue (i.e. trip hazards). Additionally, Ms. Aniol asked why, if the proposal was a joint project for Ypsilanti and Superior Township, Superior Township was not providing any match dollars to support the project. Supervisor Schwartz addressed this question saying that he had thought Superior was going to provide a match, and that he was expecting to contribute several thousand dollars, based proportionately on the Community Center usage by Superior Township residents. Supervisor Schwartz also noted that the facility is in fact located closer to many Superior Township residents than to many who live in Ypsilanti Township.

Joe Meyers said that as a recipient of priority funds -- for the City of Ypsilanti's Riverside Park playground project – he knows firsthand the value of this funding source. He supports the proposal, partly because no one else applied for the funding, but also due to the fact that even if the proposal request were met, there would still be additional funds leftover that would go back into the regular allocation for each local unit.

A discussion ensued on the distinction between a facility repair/maintenance project versus a facility improvement project. Ms. Cohen noted that in the past, no priority project proposals had been funded for facility maintenance (for example – the Ypsilanti Township Community Center ceiling tile replacement) whereas the projects funded previously had all been for innovative or otherwise new facilities or expansion of services that went beyond what was already provided (for example: Washtenaw Ave sidewalk gap filling- as part of the Reimagine Washtenaw initiative, Riverside Park accessible playground).

Chairperson LaBarre asked if, since it was floor *replacement* rather than repair of existing materials, whether the project could be considered a modernization improvement, and if that would provide staff any wiggle room to change their recommendation to lean in favor of the proposal.



Supervisor Mike Moran stated that he did not hear disagreement from members that this project was a regional one, and that it sounded like the floor is in really bad shape, giving the disclaimer that he has not seen it himself and so cannot confirm. That being said, Supervisor Moran emphasized that there only being a single proposal should not factor into the approval process, adding that a proposal needs to be able to stand up on its own as a priority project regardless of how many other proposals are received. Supervisor Moran went on to say that he might support this project because in the case of flooring, he feels it affects people's experience using the facility, as compared to ceiling tiles not seeming critical in the same way.

Supervisor Chockley stated that she had considered two projects for a (Northfield Township) proposal (1- demolition of their old firehouse to expand downtown parking, or 2-rehab/expansion of their Community/Senior Center) but was told by staff that neither would be appropriate for priority project funding. She said that based on the discussion today, she would plan to apply for the next round of priority funding, and she suggests that staff develop a list of projects that would be eligible.

Mirada Jenkins expressed agreement that some kind of comprehensive list of project types, while not exhaustive, would help with staff and UCEC's shared goal of transparency.

Supervisor Moran stated that he is inclined to get rid of the priority project process altogether given the (negative) nature of the dialogue that results at Urban County, where members are asking each other to show just how bad something really is to justify funding.

Trustee Chris Green noted that she finds safety issues compelling, and asked if safety is a factor in this proposal.

Councilperson Linda Terhaar said she supports the need for clarifying what the UCEC is trying to do with priority project funding, for example clarifying if "maintenance" projects are permitted or not. She shared that several years ago, the City of Saline had submitted a request for priority funding for a new facility to house Saline Area Social Services (a non-profit), but staff recommended they piece together multiple years of their regular CDBG allocations instead. Councilperson Terhaar added that, while this was not a problem and they were happy they'd be able to fund the project, they were not clear on staff's rationale at the time.

Michelle Aniol pointed to the #1 scoring criteria – *Demonstrated Community/Regional Impact* - on the priority project score card, asking to clarify what is meant by the word "activity" under this section. Ms. Aniol said that if the activity in this proposal is purely "maintenance," she would support staff's recommendation (not to fund) 100%. She then asked if Ypsilanti or Superior Township could share anything about how the project will make a regional impact.

Angela Verges from the Community Center responded that perhaps more people would use the Center for walking or would increase the walking they already do there, including those who use canes or walkers.

Chairperson Andy LaBarre stated that he would need to leave for his appointment in a few minutes, and asked if anyone wanted to make a motion.

Clerk Lovejoy Roe made a motion to: 1) approve the Ypsilanti/Superior Townships' proposal in its current form, and; 2) convene a subcommittee to work on improving the process and forms related to the priority projects.



Ms. Jenkins suggested that the members may want to table a motion to approve the proposal until after clearer outcomes can be shared as part of the proposal. Supervisor Moran said he was leaning toward Ms. Jenkins' suggestion to table a vote on the proposal. Supervisor Schwartz said that he agrees the vote should probably be tabled but that he would support the project when the time comes to vote. Chairperson LaBarre reminded the committee that there is still no support of the motion from Clerk Lovejoy Roe.

Joe Meyers voiced **support for the motion on the floor.** This was followed by more discussion around the table prior to a vote being taken.

Supervisor Chockley said she would like to see Superior Township contribute funding to the proposal; Supervisor Schwartz responded that he will go to his Board and match with an amount proportionate to usage of the Community Center.

Councilperson Terhaar asked if Ypsilanti Township has ever attempted to obtain funding from the other jurisdictions that utilize the facility. Supervisor Stumbo responded that the Township had always subsidized the services offered by the Community Center facility, adding that the building is very old (she thinks from the 1940's) and is therefore not in good physical shape.

Michelle Aniol commented that members are looking for ways to be consistent in evaluating proposals, asking what specific outcomes would be tied to replacing the facility's flooring.

Supervisor Stumbo said that she would be interested in seeing the outcomes from all approved priority projects since the beginning.

Councilperson Elizabeth Nelson asked whether the facility has asbestos. Supervisor Stumbo said it does not, also noting that after a certain point, regular maintenance still leads to the need for materials to be replaced.

Supervisor Moran shared that after this discussion, he is changing his mind and will support funding this project.

There was further discussion among members about what criteria may have been applied to priority project proposals in past years. Clerk Lovejoy Roe expressed that she did not believe proposals in the past had been evaluated against criteria being used now. Councilperson Terhaar voiced disagreement, emphasizing that the Committee members do not know the specific criteria used in the past to recommend such proposals, and there were conversations that had taken place directly between OCED and jurisdictions.

Ms. Cohen reminded members of the motion on the table, as put forward by Clerk Lovejoy Roe.

Councilperson Nelson made a motion to table the previous motion to approve proposal and form subcommittee. Trustee Green supported. A voice vote revealed multiple votes against, so a roll call vote was then taken by staff:

Green – AYE
Chockley – AYE
Aniol – AYE
Meyers – AYE
Terhaar – AYE



Nelson - AYE
Schwartz- AYE
Lovejoy Roe - NO
Moran - NO

The motion passed.

B. Update: Needs Assessment for the 2019 Annual Action Plan

- 1) Non-Housing Community Development Needs Form – deadline extended to Jan. 11

Staff noted that only 1 jurisdiction had submitted their form thus far, so the deadline would be extended until end of the week.

- 2) Online survey - preliminary results – High level data was briefly reviewed, and staff noted that they plan to make the disaggregated data available for the 3 jurisdictions with the highest response rates (Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, and Northfield Township). For more on results, please refer to the [Jan. 9th agenda summary](#), *2019 Non-Housing Community Needs Assessment Survey-Preliminary Data Summary*.

C. Updates to the Housing Program Guidelines (ACTION)

Ms. Cohen referred the group to the overview of proposed edits to the Housing Program Guidelines that govern eligibility and operations for all of OCED’s housing programs. There was some discussion about the changes under Eligibility Requirements – staff clarified that “roommates who pay rent” had been added to the list of those who should not be counted toward household size, and that the roommate’s income does not get counted in the household’s annual income. In addition, rental income from a roommate was added to the list of income that does count toward household income.

Supervisor Stumbo asked why air conditioning is not included under “Energy Efficient Home Improvements” determined by the Weatherization Assistance Program energy audit. Ms. Jenkins stated that there are some exceptions to this rule for reasonable accommodations, but in general, air conditioning is not eligible under this program.

MOTION: The Urban County Executive Committee approves the edits to the *Housing Program Guidelines for the Washtenaw Urban County* as included in the line-edited draft emailed by OCED to UCEC members on December 28, 2018, with changes effective immediately - after ensuring that the added language regarding roommates and rental income is clear.

Moved by Joe Meyers. Supported by Michelle Aniol.

Motion passed unanimously.

D. Project planning for 2019 - Ms. Cohen reminded members of the following deadlines:

- 1) 2019 CDBG Project Applications – due Feb. 22
- 2) Affordable Housing Request for Proposals – Proposals due Feb. 7

It was noted that the mandatory Pre-bid meeting had already occurred on Monday, Jan. 7th.

Action Plan timing overview – Ms. Cohen reviewed key dates for the 2019 Action planning process, as outlined in the meeting packet and previously mentioned.



E. General Updates

3) Local Project updates – Ms. Cohen noted the recent completion of the Bryant Community Center rehab project in the City of Ann Arbor; Ms. Jenkins announced the upcoming Open House on Friday, Jan. 11th to celebrate the new space. Refer to the [Jan. 9th agenda summary](#) for more details on other projects underway and upcoming.

4) Community Announcements/Updates

- Ms. Cohen announced United Way of Washtenaw County’s VITA program providing free tax assistance, and the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County’s Winter Warming Centers – noting there are informational flyers available on side table for both programs.
- Michelle Aniol announced that the City of Dexter had recently kicked off a Housing Task Force created by City Council, and with objectives to inventory existing housing stock, identify housing needs and strategies for addressing housing gaps, and to make recommendations to City Council for next steps.

V. Adjournment

Trustee Green moved to adjourn, Supervisor Chockley supported.

Motion to adjourn approved unanimously.

Adjourned: 3:30pm

