

OAKLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS MINUTES

August 8, 2022

Meeting called to order by Caucus Chairperson Kristen Nelson at 5:37 p.m. in the Courthouse Committee Room A, 1200 N. Telegraph Road, Pontiac, Michigan.

Roll called.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Charles Cavell attending virtually from Ferndale in Oakland County, Yolanda Charles attending virtually from Southfield in Oakland County, Marcia Gershenson, Janet Jackson attending virtually from Southfield in Oakland County, Penny Luebs, Gwen Markham from Novi in Oakland County, Gary McGillivray from Madison Heights in Oakland County, Kristen Nelson, Angela Powell from Pontiac in Oakland County, David Woodward. (10)
EXCUSED ABSENCE WITH NOTICE: William Miller. (1)

Quorum present.

The following people address the Caucus during Public Comment #1: Sandra Rahman.

Moved by Luebs seconded by Gershenson the minutes of the August 4, 2022 Caucus be approved.

A sufficient majority having voted in favor, the minutes were approved.

The members of the Caucus discussed the Board Agenda.

Commissioner David Woodward addressed the Caucus regarding Legislative Affairs and Government Operations Committee resolution entitled: Board of Commissioners – Resolution Approving Language for an Oakland County Public Transportation Millage to Appear on the November 8, 2022, Ballot.

Discussion followed.

Commissioner David Woodward addressed the Caucus and stated that the Public Transportation Millage will be used to expand existing transit routes and improve the current infrastructure in Oakland County.

Commissioner David Woodward addressed the Caucus to introduce Neil Greenberg, Transit Advisor, Oakland County.

Democratic Caucus Minutes Continued. August 8, 2022

Neil Greenberg, Transit Advisor, Oakland County addressed the Caucus to inform the Commissioners of the current transit system available in Oakland County:

1. North Oakland Transit Authority (NOTA), serving the Township of Oxford, Township of Orion, Township of Addison, Village of Oxford, Village of Orion and Village of Leonard.
2. West Oakland Transit Authority (WOTA), serving the Township of Highland, City of Walled Lake, Township of Waterford and Township of White Lake.
3. Older Persons Commission (OPC), serving the City of Rochester, City of Rochester Hills and Township of Oakland.
4. Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), serving the regional areas of Oakland County

Discussion followed.

Commissioner David Woodward addressed the Caucus to inform the Commissioners the current cost of transportation in Oakland County is \$39,700,000.00.

Neil Greenberg addressed the Caucus to inform the Commissioners the 00.95 millage rate for the planned Public Transportation Millage would generate approximately \$66,000,00.00, in the first year and he also stated the funds generated through SMART can be distributed to the local community transportation services.

Neil Greenberg, Transit Advisor, Oakland County addressed the Caucus to discuss the following transit mobility options:

1. Paratransit: transit services for senior citizens and persons with disabilities to connect within a local destination.
2. Microtransit: communities in dense populations that can connect with a bus route in areas serviced by fixed routes.
3. Fixed Route: communities that have current transportation services with connecting routes.

Discussion followed.

Chairperson Kristen Nelson addressed the Caucus on the future of communication services for senior citizens to access transportation services.

Commissioner Marcia Gershenson addressed the Caucus to clarify that the communities currently serviced by NOTA, WOTA and the OPC transit services would not additionally be taxed under the new Transportation Millage proposal.

Discussion followed.

Rich Hamill, Supervisor, Township of Highland addressed the Caucus regarding the requirements to maintain the West Oakland County Transit Authority.

Democratic Caucus Minutes Continued. August 8, 2022

Commissioner Gwen Markham addressed the Caucus to discuss the increased need for transportation in the City of Novi.

Neil Greenberg, Transit Advisor, Oakland County addressed the Caucus and stated that the current millage to support transportation needs to be renewed every 4 years. The new proposed millage rate would last for 10 years.

Kim Veiner, Executive Director, West Oakland Transportation Authority addressed the Caucus to announce transportation funding is not directly accessible from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Commissioner David Woodward addressed the Caucus to inform the Commissioners that Federal Infrastructure Programs will be used to help fund the expansion of public transportation. He also stated that local communities will not have to match grants for transportation funding. The mileage will be used to cover the matching grants.

Commissioner Gwen Markham addressed the Caucus to ask Rick Hamill, Supervisor, Township of Highland to help spread the word on the Oakland County transportation proposal.

Discussion followed.

Commissioner David Woodward addressed the Caucus to announce there will be 10 new fixed routes to start in the proposed transportation expansion.

Neil Greenberg, Transit Advisor, Oakland County addressed the Caucus to announce there are currently 21 fixed routes being utilized in Oakland County.

Chairperson Kristen Nelson addressed the Caucus regarding the efficiency between fuel and electric operated vehicles.

Kim Viener, Executive Director, West Oakland Transportation Authority addressed the Caucus to announce that current electric buses are not providing the required mileage to operate current routes. SMART services is currently researching the efficiency for future electric vehicles.

Chairperson Kristen Nelson addressed the Caucus to announce an additional Caucus will be scheduled for budget discussions.

Discussion followed.

Commissioner Charles Cavell addressed the Caucus regarding budgeting to expand Co-responders within the Sheriff's Department.

Democratic Caucus Minutes Continued. August 8, 2022

Commissioner Gwen Markham addressed the Caucus regarding continuing to use \$1,000,000.00, for supporting local partnerships for FY 2022-2023.

Commissioner Janet Jackson addressed the Caucus regarding the need for an artist support program for the local communities.

Commissioner Marcia Gershenson addressed the Caucus regarding the need for budgeting for mental health programs, the Pontiac Transportation Museum and the Kids First Initiative.

Commissioner David Woodward addressed the Caucus to announce the need to increase funding for mental health services, create department grant writers and to reduce the carbon emissions for Oakland County.

Commissioner Charles Cavell addressed the Caucus regarding increasing awareness on District Court records and bail proceedings.

Chairperson Kristen Nelson addressed the Caucus regarding transportation services for the Oakland County Jail.

Discussion followed.

The following people addressed the Caucus during Public Comment #2: Sandra Rahman and Connie Johnson

The Caucus adjourned at 7:16 p.m. until August 10, 2022, at 4:30 p.m.

FRED MILLER
Clerk

KRISTEN NELSON
Caucus Chairperson