

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners met in regular session with the following members present: Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Parker – 7. Absent: None. Also present were Pat O'Connor, Interim County Manager, and Darwin Lookingbill, Director, Civil Division, County Attorney's Office.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

Commissioner McDonough moved approval of the Agenda of the December 2, 2008 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0.

MINUTES

Commissioner Bennett moved approval of the Minutes of the November 25, 2008 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Carter. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0.

COUNTY MANAGER – Ramsey County Comprehensive Plan Extension

Commissioner Ortega introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner McDonough. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2008-355)

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes section 473.864 requires local governmental units to review and, if necessary, amend or update their entire comprehensive plans and their fiscal devices and official controls at least once every ten years to ensure comprehensive plans conform with metropolitan system plans and ensure fiscal devices and official controls do not conflict with comprehensive plans or permit activities that conflict with metropolitan system plans; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes sections 473.858 and 473.864 require local governmental units to complete their "decennial" reviews by December 31, 2008; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes section 473.864 authorizes the Metropolitan Council to grant extensions to local governmental units to allow local governmental units additional time within which to complete the "decennial" review and amendments; and

WHEREAS, Any extensions granted by the Metropolitan Council must include a timetable for completing the review and amendment; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County will not be able to complete its "decennial" review by December 31, 2008, due to the request by local jurisdictions for an extension beyond 45 days to review and comment on Ramsey County's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute requires government units to allow a six-month period for review and comment period by local jurisdictions; and

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WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners finds it is appropriate to request from the Metropolitan Council an extension for the County to complete its comprehensive plan update; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Manager to request an extension from the Metropolitan Council to May 15, 2009, for completing the Ramsey County Comprehensive Plan.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS – Contract with Mounds View Public Schools, Independent School District 621, for Adult Basic Education Services

Commissioner Ortega introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner McDonough. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2008-356)

WHEREAS, Workforce Solutions is the administrative department for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I Programs in Service Area 15 (Ramsey County); and

WHEREAS, Each year, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) issues a master contract for the allocation of federal and state funds that cover dislocated worker, adult and youth employment and training services; and

WHEREAS, From time to time, DEED may allocate additional funds for the purpose of implementing special projects; these projects are not part of the original master contract but are amendments to the master contract via a notice of funds available; and

WHEREAS, By Resolution 2008-202, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners authorized the County Manager to negotiate and execute the master contract with DEED and amendments to the WIA master contract; and

WHEREAS, DEED has provided \$30,000 for a demonstration project using WorkKeys assessments with universal customers and program clients; and

WHEREAS, Among the services to be made available with the demonstration project funding allocation from DEED are Adult Basic Education (ABE) services that are aimed at helping universal customers and program clients improve their assessment scores; and

WHEREAS, The Metro East Adult Basic Education Consortium (“Consortium”) is comprised of school districts in the Northern Ramsey County suburbs and the Ramsey County Correctional Facility, and the Mounds View Public Schools, Independent School District 621, is the fiscal administrator for the Consortium; and

WHEREAS, The Consortium is a partner under WIA in the Workforce Center System and is currently delivering basic education services at the North St. Paul Workforce Center; and

WHEREAS, Workforce Solutions wishes to purchase additional instructional time from the Consortium; Now, Therefore, Be It

(Continued)

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approves an agreement with the Mounds View Public Schools, Independent School District 621, 2101 14th Street NW, New Brighton MN 55112, as fiscal administrator for the Metro East Adult Basic Education Consortium, for Adult Basic Education Services, in a contract sum of \$11,600; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Manager to execute the agreement with the Mounds View Public Schools, Independent School District 621, execute any amendments in a form approved by the County Attorney, and make any budget adjustments subject to approval by Budgeting and Accounting.

BOARD OF RAMSEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS – Appointments to the Veterans Rest Camp Board

Commissioner Ortega introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner McDonough. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2008-357)

WHEREAS, In accordance with the Ramsey County Open Appointment Policy, a press release was distributed soliciting applicants for two positions on the Veterans Rest Camp Board due to term expiration and a resignation; and

WHEREAS, Two applications were received; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby ratifies the appointment of Ken Larson and John Hintzen to the Veterans Rest Camp Board for terms beginning with the date of appointment and ending August 1, 2010.

COUNTY MANAGER – Ramsey County's 2008 State Legislative Package

Commissioner McDonough introduced the following revised resolution, and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Roll Call on amended resolution: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2008-358)

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners has reviewed a number of proposals for possible inclusion in their 2009 state legislative package; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, based on their review of these items, makes a finding that the following should be included in their 2009 state legislative proposals:

Initiatives of Critical Importance to Ramsey County, Counties Statewide, and Our Property Taxpayers:

1. Preserve the Safety Net
 - Prioritize Core Human Services Programs that Serve Children, Vulnerable Adults and Those Experiencing Poverty
2. Empower Positive Parental Involvement and Support of Children
 - Replace Lost Federal Funding for the Child Support Collection System
 - Clarify Responsibility for Providing Legal Representation for All Parties Involved in CHIPS Hearings
 - Provide Base Funding for Public Health Nurse-Provided Targeted Home Visiting

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3. Address Correctional Costs of Concern to Counties and the State
 - Authorize Medicaid Reimbursement for MA-Eligible Inmates When They are Hospitalized
 - Reimburse Counties for Short-Term Offender Costs
 - Reimburse Counties for Sex Offender Civil Commitment Hold Costs
4. Protect and Invest in the Environment
 - Develop Equitable Distribution of Funds Generated from the Constitutional Amendment for the Environment and the Arts
 - Fund Operations and Maintenance of Parks
5. Continue to Reform Health Care
 - Provide Ongoing Funding for the State Health Improvement Plan Grants
 - Support Health Insurance Continuation for Dislocated Workers

and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approves the submission of state bonding requests and state funding requests relating to:

1. Union Depot Multi-modal Transit Hub for \$9 million to match federal funding available for environmental, engineering rehabilitation, property acquisition and construction work;
2. Rush Line Corridor for \$1 million for infrastructure improvement;
3. I-94 East Corridor for \$1 million for a feasibility study and improvements;
4. High Speed Rail from Chicago to the Union Depot Multi-modal Transit Hub for \$10 million for design and improvement; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners supports state bonding requests from others for the following project:

5. Central Corridor design and construction for \$8.5 million;

and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes its representatives to work with the Legislature and other interested parties to seek the necessary legislation for these proposals.

COUNTY MANAGER – Ramsey County’s 2008 State Legislative Package

Commissioner Reinhardt introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Carter. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 6. Nays – Rettman - 1. (2008-359)

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners has reviewed a number of proposals for possible inclusion in their 2009 state legislative package; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, based on their review of these items, makes a finding that the following should be included in their 2009 state legislative proposals:

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Ramsey County Initiated Proposals:

Prevention Initiatives

1. Fund the Building Lives program – a holistic, early intervention program for teen offenders and other at-risk youths
2. Fund JDAI – alternatives for young offenders
3. Fund ACE – early intervention program for high-risk children under age
4. Fund Parents' Fair Share program – Supporting parental involvement and payment of child support

and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes its representatives to work with the Legislature and other interested parties to seek the necessary legislation for these proposals.

COUNTY MANAGER – Ramsey County's 2008 State Legislative Package

Commissioner Carter introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2008-360)

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners has reviewed a number of proposals for possible inclusion in their 2009 state legislative package; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, based on their review of these items, makes a finding that the following should be included in their 2009 state legislative proposals:

Partnership and Performance Initiatives:

1. Retire Payback of State Bonds When the Life of Improvements or Bonds Has Expired
2. Prioritize County Debt Claims in the Revenue Recapture Program
3. Refine Definition of Dependent
4. Simplify Regulations Associated with Rehiring of Retired Employees and with Phased-In Retirement
5. Allow Enhanced 911 Fee Revenue to Be Used for Training New Employees and for Continuing Education
6. Classify as Private Certain Data Collected by Counties as Part of Contracts with Businesses
7. Reimburse Counties for TB Investigations and Treatment Costs
8. Carry Forward Unspent MFIP Consolidated Funds
9. Expand Early Voting Opportunities

and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes its representatives to work with the Legislature and other interested parties to seek the necessary legislation for these proposals.

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PARKS AND RECREATION – Design Development for Tamarack Nature Center – Amendment No. 2 (Construction Documents) to Agreement for Professional Services

Greg Mack, Director, Parks and Recreation, said the representatives present today are from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Those present are: Maddie Kelly, committee chair, Oaklawn Park District, Illinois; Bert Neal, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Will McNeer, Olive Branch, Mississippi. They are all members of the NRPA, and represent the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation agencies.

In 2004, Ramsey County became an accredited agency under the national program sponsored by the NRPA. Every five years an accredited agency must go through a re-accreditation process, basically to see how it stands under a number of standards. There are 155 standards to attest to, how Ramsey County complies, with backup documentation, much of it relating to what happens when the County Board meets and the policies that govern the County.

Mr. Mack said the representatives are appointed by the Commission to look at Ramsey County's books, to do an audit, to verify the contents. Chair Parker said Ramsey County was the first county in Minnesota to receive this accreditation following a rigorous process. The County is very proud of the work done in this area.

Mr. Mack said Ramsey County is the first, and at this point, the only accredited county in the State of Minnesota. There are approximately 80 agencies nationally that have been accredited; Ramsey County was 49. It is a rigorous process. It takes good government business practices, and the policies have to be in place to make it work. Staff have been very involved in preparing self-assessments, and may find it acceptable as we move over to the next level. An official re-accreditation statement would come from the commission in March. The City of St. Paul and Roseville are also accredited. Bob Bierscheid is retiring from the City of St. Paul, and has offered to volunteer his services to help other agencies move forward.

Chair Parker welcomed the representatives and said the County appreciates the time they will put into this important process.

Mr. Mack said approval of Amendment No. 2 is a continuation of the process for the Tamarack Nature Center Destination for Discovery Project. The Board had previously approved the master plan and contracts to move forward with design development documents. The County received a State grant for \$745,000 to do some of the initial elements – the nature play area and the children's garden. This contract would allow the Department to have the construction documents for that prepared to move into a future construction contract, which would come before the Board once the bid packet is put together.

Commissioner McDonough introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2008-361)

WHEREAS, Ramsey County ("County") and Partners & Sirny, L.L.P., 121 West Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404 ("Architect") entered into an Agreement ("Agreement") dated January 17, 2008, for professional services to provide design development of key destinations identified in the Tamarack Nature Center Destination For Discovery Master Plan ("Plan"), including the Nature Play Area and Children's Garden; and

WHEREAS, By Resolution 2008-173, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement to prepare an Eco-Arts assessment for Tamarack Nature Center, increasing the contract amount from \$145,000 to \$156,000; and

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WHEREAS, The Architect has satisfactory completed professional services under the Agreement and Amendment No. 1; and

WHEREAS, It is in the County's best interests based on design continuity and project economies, to continue the services of the Architect to prepare full Construction Documents for the Nature Play Area and the Children's Garden and to provide bid support and contract administration for a Phase I Construction project; and

WHEREAS, The professional consulting services for preparation of project construction documents, bid support and construction contract administration by the Architect are not included in the scope of services of the Agreement and the additional cost for these services is \$105,856, increasing the contract amount from \$156,000 to \$261,856; and

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department has received, and by Resolution 2008-303, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners has approved a \$745,000 State grant, administered by the Metropolitan Council, for additional design and Phase I construction of the Nature Play Area and Children's Garden at Tamarack Nature Center; and

WHEREAS, By Resolution 2006-383, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved a grant proposal to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for Tamarack Nature Center, of which a balance of \$16,790 remains from the subsequent grant; and

WHEREAS, The additional professional services will be funded through the remaining balance of the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant and the State grant; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the Amendment No. 2 to the Agreement for Professional Design Services with Partners and Sirny L.L.P.; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Chair and Chief Clerk to sign the Amendment No. 2.

COMMUNITY HUMAN SERVICES – Emergency Shelter – Response to Increase in Need

Commissioner Reinhardt introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Carter.

Commissioner Rettman said she would not support this, and had conveyed some of her concerns to Monty Martin, Director, Community Human Services. Approval of the draft resolution would use contingency dollars for 2008 to purchase something in 2009 for a housing coordinator capacity increase at the YWCA. Depending on the degree of success at the YWCA, the YWCA could apply for possible continued support in 2009. She is concerned with using levy dollars from 2008 for this capacity. About six months ago Community Human Services had come to the Board requesting use of some of the dollars from the Housing Endowment Fund. She had asked why they weren't using the December dollars from Housing Endowment making this a part of their 2009 budget. The response was that this was a contract. Otherwise, if this had to come out of the Department's budget, a layoff might be possible.

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Commissioner Rettman said her second concern is for a pilot use of emergency assistance. The responsible party for rent assistance has been the federal and State governments for housing subsidies, Section VIII, etc. This pilot infers that this could become an ongoing element. Even though this uses Emergency Assistance (EA) dollars, which would be returned to the State, it does not identify where this would be. Right now, the County's EA dollars go for the first month's rent, or utility payments, or damage deposits. If the County begins doing rent assistance, there is not going to be enough money, and other people would not be served that one month of rent assistance, damage deposit, or utility payment. The County Board has not had that discussion. Mr. Martin had not suggested this was intended for long term. However, she is concerned that this is being billed as a pilot, and rent subsidies up to four months becomes a huge issue. One of her neighborhoods had been consulted about this and said the most they could do in going through the neighborhood process, would be in 2009, and this action would begin right now. This would set in motion something that the County Board should have a discussion on because rent assistance is a very slippery slope, and is something the State and federal governments should not step away from being responsible for. This is a national issue of paramount importance.

Commissioner Rettman said the shelter diversion already has money that goes through June 30, 2009. A shortfall is anticipated so it is being proposed to use \$5000 from 2008 levy dollars out of the contingency. She is concerned with that. There will be a boatload of problems to be addressed. The budget deficit forecast will come out this week, and if we pull pieces out of there without that major discussion on how we make the determination, that is of concern to her.

Chair Parker asked Mr. Martin to respond to the concern about the use of funds, therefore not being able to meet the needs.

Mr. Martin said this item is before the County Board because of the unprecedented shelter demand from families. He is not aware that the County has ever been in the situation where we have turned away as many families as we have had to. The Department was looking for some short-term responses that could be put in place relatively quickly that did not commit the Board policy- or money-wise to any long-term direction, realizing that the Board has not had an opportunity for a lengthy discussion about how to address emergency shelter issues and the broader issues of homelessness. The Department put together a plan that did involve some additional assistance. They have been very successful with that in the past through the YWCA with moving families out of shelter more quickly. Rather than to try to create any additional shelter in the short-term because: 1) it can't be done very quickly, 2) it is quite expensive, and 3) it could lead to long-term financial trails for the County, instead, a strategy was adopted to try to move families out of shelter more quickly to create more capacity in that way for the families that are not able to get in now. The combination of items before the Board is a way to move families out of shelter more quickly. It won't make a huge difference in terms of the number of families, but for those families assisted, there would be room for additional families unable to get into shelter. For the most recent numbers subsequent to the preparation of the documentation in the second week of November, they turned away 26 families looking for shelter. This doesn't necessarily mean they would be able to house 26 families, but some portion of them.

Commissioner McDonough asked Mr. Martin to address Commissioner Rettman's point about moving into rent subsidies where in the past we looked at damage deposit, first month's rent, etc. That is a big policy issue – how do we deal with that in the future if that is a major change.

Mr. Martin appreciated that the issue was raised. It is a very legitimate issue for Board discussion. The request before the Board today is not in any way any long-term commitment to the idea, and it also uses State funds – there are no levy dollars involved in terms of any subsidy for shelter. They tried to avoid an approach that committed levy dollars in any new way. They have not

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used levy dollars for any long-term subsidy. He agreed with Commissioner Rettman that the County would not ever be able to afford abilities for the County itself to get involved in rent subsidies – that is a bigger issue than the County could ever afford to tackle. The Department is looking for a short-term response that didn't use County dollars that might help with a few families this winter.

Commissioner Rettman said her concern is on the EA. She has gotten numerous calls or emails about EA appointments scheduled out 3-6 weeks. Her concern is for the people on a waiting list now needing EA for the once-a-year use for a damage deposit or other use. Is this because there is not enough staffing in Human Services that we are not getting to them, and we are using this for EA money instead of figuring out a way to get EA appointments done faster?

Mr. Martin said they do have problems getting to all the work they have, including applications for EA. Whenever an EA request is made, it gets triaged to determine whether this is an emergency - does someone have an eviction notice in hand, are they on the street, what is the date of their eviction notice. If the issues are immediate – if they already homeless, or will they be evicted this week – they would get an EA appointment more quickly. If the issue is not immediate, EA appointments, as all their appointments, are several weeks out. Staffing is such that it is probably about 3-5 weeks depending on when the call comes in before they are able to see staff for either food support or medical coverage, cash assistance, including EA. They try to triage, and for those families that are homeless, get to them as soon as possible. Staff do not believe that the shelter backlog and overuse of the shelter and people unable to get into the shelter is related to how quickly they turn an EA around, though that is a difficult issue for them.

Commissioner Ortega asked if this targeted to a certain area, or if would it address the backlog.

Mr. Martin said it would be targeted to either people in the County's shelters, or waiting to get into shelters, or unable to get into shelters, but only to a relatively narrow group of them. The key criteria to get this assistance would be to show that they could sustain housing. To receive an EA grant of any sort, a family has to show they are going to be able to stay in housing. Most families who are homeless are on public assistance. Public assistance alone is not enough to sustain housing. Public assistance grants were last raised in 1986. A grant for a family of three, the average size of a family in housing, 1.9 children, one parent, is \$532 per month. Average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is probably \$700-800 per month. In order to qualify, families have to be able to show that they have an additional source of income they are bridging to – for example a job that is starting or someone they will move in with that will share rent – unless they can do that, they won't be able to get this assistance. That takes the number of families in shelter and narrows it significantly in terms of who would be eligible for this assistance.

Commissioner Ortega said everybody currently in the pipeline would be eligible for this kind of help if they meet the criteria.

Mr. Martin responded affirmatively.

Commissioner Carter said in the last Human Services/Workforce Solutions Committee meeting, people were heard from who are working to resolve these concerns, as well as stories about the dramatic nature of this unprecedented demand for housing, for shelter we are speaking of. She understands the concerns for the unusual use of dollars, but we are in a very unusual circumstance. She asked Mr. Martin to share thoughts for 2009 and opportunities we are working on so that they may not become a long-term use of these types of dollars. The Department is working to make certain these families get out of shelters and into housing and can maintain that housing because we have large demands for that shelter. Longer-term, what is the Department looking at to forestall the use of these dollars in this way?

Mr. Martin said the Department is looking at a variety of things, but don't have all the answers at this point. This housing problem goes way beyond what the County is capable of addressing. The

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fundamental problem is that people don't have enough money to afford housing, be it either through public assistance grants or from low income wages. Until that fundamental problem is addressed, the County will continue dealing with the after-effects of that. Where they are exploring strategies, the idea of moving families through emergency shelter more quickly, has great promise. The YWCA has had great success working with families. They work with families that have had at least two incidences of homelessness, and have been very successful. Almost all their families stay out of shelters for at least six months, most for at least one year. The strategy of moving families more quickly through housing is one the Department would like to continue to examine, to look at the experience in the next seven months, and learn from that. Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP), the State dollars for housing assistance funding cycle, runs on a July through June basis. There is a community committee that decides and recommends to the County Board how that money is spent. They will be looking again over the next year about how we deal even more with prevention strategies to prevent homelessness in the first place.

The potential for additional emergency shelter is not the Department's first choice. The first choice would be to prevent homelessness to begin with, secondly, to move families out of homelessness more quickly, and the third choice, if the first two fail, to talk about whether additional shelter capacity is needed. Staff have spoken with the St. Paul Area of Churches about a third back-up church shelter. There are two churches that operate each month with 20 beds. In many months, the second church was not ever used. That started to change a year and a half ago, and now both churches are near capacity almost every night. They are beginning to explore whether there are some options for creation of additional shelter at capacity at a system that works but not at tremendous additional costs.

Commissioner Ortega said Mr. Martin is aware that the Board needs a full policy discussion, but he is comfortable with this. For the amount of money proposed, this is a creative solution. How much is from 2008 and how much 2009 – for him, it is about the big picture - this doesn't rise to the level of a critical analysis. We are facing a national trend economically that doesn't sound good, a State trend that doesn't sound good for the coming year, and unless we have national help, it will be tough. He would like to talk about what we could do because the problem might become too big even for County government. At what level are we talking about? That will be an important discussion. We need to be advocates at the national and State level to provide that input. While it is important to increase 20 beds here and there, he fears we are nickel and diming this rather than focusing on the big picture. Staff need to come back to the County Board. He is not concerned about the homeless plan because we don't have money for the Statewide plan put together by this Governor. Where do we need to push with our Congressional delegation in terms of help that might come forward because this is going to be a national issue?

Mr. Martin concurred.

Pat O'Connor, Interim County Manager, said the Board has asked the County Manager's Office to put together some ideas on this very topic and to schedule Workshops. Beginning in January, work is being done to schedule Workshops to deal with the following topics: foreclosure trends and community stabilization initiatives; homeless youth and initiatives to address their needs; updated information on shelter usage, and proposals regarding shelter; update on Heading Home Ramsey County, including an update on proposals and initiatives that serve frequent shelter users or clients of the system serving homeless single adults; and homeless veterans and community responses. Staff will try to schedule those in a way to have the topics before the Board at the same time as we may expect some initiatives out of the federal government on this topic.

Chair Parker said it is very appropriate that we are heading into those discussions. The metro area is in a unique position. Hennepin County and Ramsey County bear the brunt of it. As people lose

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their jobs throughout the State, they tend to gravitate to the metro area. It is reasonable for the County to think about State and federal assistance. We are not alone in the country; this is much bigger than Ramsey County.

Mr. Martin said while here representing the Human Services Department on this, the Department has had broad ranging discussions with a variety of partners in looking at options, with assistance from Carol Zierman and Terry Speiker, from the County Manager's Office, and others, for how to put forward a strategy that the Board can support in the short run, and getting us to the broader discussion that the Commissioners are asking for.

Commissioner Reinhardt said we are talking about a one-time transfer, and there will be a larger discussion on this. She suggested insertion of the words "one-time transfer of \$37,000" on line 43 of the draft resolution. That would reinforce the fact that this is what we are doing now, and that there would be a larger discussion.

Chair Parker didn't know that it was necessary; it is implied that this is a one-time transfer.

Commissioner Reinhardt said she is trying to be responsive to Commissioner Rettman's concern.

The amendment was accepted as friendly.

Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Reinhardt, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Parker – 6. Nays – Rettman - 1. (2008-362)

WHEREAS, In a County Board workshop on March 11, the Community Human Services Department provided information that indicated that Ramsey County's emergency shelter system was "on the edge" financially; and

WHEREAS, Since that time, the Department experienced its normal summer bulge of families requesting shelter; and

WHEREAS, Shelter need has not decreased as it usually does in the fall; and

WHEREAS, As a result, families have been turned away from the shelter system this fall far in excess of previous years. For example, from October 4-14, 64 families were turned away; and

WHEREAS, On October 23, 26 families with 80 children were turned away; and

WHEREAS, Increased and continuing high demand is not unique to Ramsey County; and

WHEREAS, The Community Human Services Department has focused its efforts on strategies to move families through shelters and into housing more quickly, thereby opening up space in the shelters for additional families; and

WHEREAS, In exploring options with our community partners, the United Way and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, the following are the options the Community Human Services Department believes offer the most promise:

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Funding and Source</u>	<u>Number of Families Served</u>
Expand contract with YWCA for housing coordinator	\$32,000 from contingent fund	15-20

(Continued)

Rent Subsidy for up to 4 months	\$20,000 from MFIP Consolidated Fund	6-8
CHS Shelter Prevention – finding	\$5,000 from contingent fund	10-12

Alternatives for homeless families;

and

WHEREAS, The Community Human Services Departments believes that the direction proposed above will assist in the short-term with our shelter crisis; and

WHEREAS, The Community Human Services Department will watch the results to see how effective the combination of shelter coordination and short-term subsidies will be; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Manager to make a one-time transfer of \$37,000 from the 2008 General Contingent Account to the Community Human Services Department's operating budget for Emergency Shelter – Response to Increase in Need; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Board authorizes the County Manager to amend the contract with the YWCA and make necessary budget adjustments.

BOARD CHAIR UPDATE

Chair Parker reported:

- Mexico now has a country-wide smoking ban in all bars and restaurants except for outdoor areas. The dollar in Mexico is about 30% up from where it had been, though the economy there is also struggling.

COUNTY MANAGER UPDATE

Pat O'Connor, Interim County Manager, reported:

- The recount project in Ramsey County should be complete around noon today. The Ramsey County recount site on Plato Boulevard is the largest in the State. They will have examined 278,000 ballots. Staff has done an outstanding job under the direction of Mark Oswald, Director, Property Records and Revenue, and Joe Mansky, Elections Manager.


OUTSIDE BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Carter reported:

- On the National Workforce Association Conference over the Thanksgiving weekend attended by people from all over the country to understand the impact of the new administration on workforce. A telephone conference will be held December 16 to discuss workforce solutions to the housing crisis, and ways to take advantage of existing funding and opportunities for funding. Patricia Brady, Director, Workforce Solutions, also attended the conference.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Parker declared the meeting adjourned.


Bonnie C. Jackelen, Chief Clerk – County Board