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## **PROCESS AND TIMING RECOMMENDATION**

### **I recommend separating our work into two phases: 1) adopting simple ballot language, and 2) adopting more complex implementation policy.**

State law establishes a strict timeline for placing a question on the ballot. There is likely general agreement on the Board about the need for funding and its general purpose. In this case our timing is such that robust debate about the details and nuances of how that funding is distributed and deployed would be artificially constrained. Moreover, simpler ballot language is easier for members of the public to understand, and it maintains flexibility for the County to adjust to emerging circumstances. The language must articulate the purpose of the funds and the amount we intend to raise. Generally, the policy that implements that overall purpose is more detailed and nuanced than would fit on a ballot.

By separating the general question from the specific details of policy, we allow ourselves time to meet the requirements of state law and have an appropriate public discourse about the details of how the ballot language will be implemented.

1. Adopt simple, flexible ballot language in a timely-enough way (no later than our July meeting) to allow citizens to evaluate the general purpose and impact of the proposal.
2. Before the public vote on the ballot question (no later than our second meeting in September), adopt a comprehensive policy implementing the ballot language (if approved) so that members of the public who are curious can understand our specific intent.

## **BALLOT LANGUAGE**

### **I recommend we adopt simpler ballot language that articulates 1) the general purpose of the request and 2) the specific tax to be applied.**

In order to support mental health crisis, stabilization and prevention efforts and to prevent unnecessary incarcerations of individuals with mental health needs; and to insure continued operations the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office and enable greater cooperation with the mental health community, shall the limitations on the total amount of taxes which may be levied against taxable property within Washtenaw County, Michigan, as provided for by Section 6 of Article IX of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, be increased up to the amount of \$1.00 per thousand dollars of taxable valuation (1.0 mills) for a period of ten years, 2018 through 2027 inclusive, which shall raise in the first year an estimated \$15,433,608.00?

1. **Reorganize the question to place its purpose first and the amount of the ask second.**

The County Clerk has recommended that this structure is clearer for citizens.

2. **Eliminate the general and specific distributions.**

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We well understand the current challenges with mental health and public safety, but we also understand the volatile state and federal funding environment we are currently working within. The circumstances that could arise as early as October of this year might drive this board or future boards to allocate these funds differently (albeit to the same overarching purposes as determined by the ballot language). Preserving this flexibility in uncertain times would be good public service.

We have not yet finalized our community mental health model and questions remain as the extent of autonomy the mental health board and agency/authority may exercise. We should not want to lose control over the funding by dedicating to an entity that we may not have governing authority over.

Naming the specific communities that receive the distribution may cause conflict if one of those communities changes their public safety model or if a new community creates a police force as Chelsea did when it became a city.

Finally, these details can and should be included in the governing policy. This will set strong expectations for partners while still allowing future boards discretion around priorities and implementation specifics.

## **IMPLEMENTATION POLICY**

I recommend that the Board debate and adopt implementation policy for the ballot proposal over the coming three months. Some specific components that I would like to see are described below.

### **General Distribution**

I believe the distribution should be articulated by policy so that agencies and partners have a reasonable expectation about funding and the Board of Commissioners maintains control of the funds. My preference is that this be described in broad strokes as follows:

- 37% to the Washtenaw County Community Health
- 40% to the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office
- 23% to Community Safety Net Grants

### **Mental Health Funding Policies**

I'd like to see a policy that dedicates funds from the millage to the following mental health system supports:

- **Medicaid Matching:** clarifying that the first priority of these funds is to allow our community mental health system to meet its Medicaid match requirements to maximize funding for local services.
- **County Cost Allocation:** freezing the community mental health cost allocation requirement at \$2.3M annually.
- **Jail Services:** providing a minimum of \$500,000 to provide mental health services at the jail.
- **Crisis Services To The Uninsured And Under-Insured**

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- **Provider Minimum Wage:** requiring that providers pay employees at least \$10.50 per hour unless they have received an affirmative annual waiver from the Board of Commissioners.

### **Public Safety Funding Policies**

- **Local Road Patrol**

The County shall not reduce its total financial commitment to contract local road patrol from General Fund and Special Revenue sources not including contract revenue below the appropriation for Fiscal Year 2017 (~\$6M) unless the total number of Police Service Units contracted for by local units is fewer than 79.

The County-supported percent of a Police Services Unit shall not exceed the percent allocated in Fiscal Year 2017.

- **Public Safety Officer Training and Diversity Fund**

2% of millage revenues to be dedicated to a fund for local law enforcement agencies in the County (including the WCSO) to support research into enforcement activities that may call for additional training, actual specialized training dealing with special populations, and scholarships or sponsorships for programs to help diversify law enforcement personnel.

### **Community Safety Net Grants**

- Annually available by formula to communities that currently provide their own police subject to the objectives and criteria established by the Board of Commissioners (similar to JAG program funding)
- Restricted to public safety and mental health activities
- Requiring a “maintenance of effort” from local units to ensure our funds are enhancing, not replacing, locally generated revenue.