

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners met with the following members present: Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Rettman and Chair Parker – 7. Absent: - None. Also present were Julie Kleinschmidt, County Manager, and Gary Davis, Assistant County Attorney.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

Commissioner Carter moved approval of the Agenda of the February 10, 2009, Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Roll Call: Ayes – Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Parker – 7. Nays – 0.

MINUTES

Commissioner Reinhardt moved approval of the Minutes of the February 3, 2009 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner McDonough. Roll Call: Ayes — Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Parker – 7. Nays – 0.

COMMUNITY HUMAN SERVICES CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL – CHSCAC member appointments

Commissioner Rettman introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Roll Call: Ayes – Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2009-062)

WHEREAS, Several committees of the Community Human Services Citizens Advisory Council have membership vacancies; and

WHEREAS, The County’s open appointment process was followed to obtain applications; and

WHEREAS, The Citizens Advisory Council recommends applicants listed in the attached Membership Appointment Recommendations be appointed to serve on the committees identified for the terms noted; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, That the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby ratifies the appointment of the following individuals to serve on the committees of the Community Human Services Citizens Advisory Council, with terms specified.

<u>Adult Services Committee</u>	<u>Term Expiration Date</u>
Emily Christensen	12/31/10
Bryan Shirley	12/31/10
<u>Chemical Health Committee</u>	
Farris Glover	12/31/10
Heidi Heinzl	12/31/10
Connie Bingel Bombenger	12/31/10
Amy L. Christensen	12/31/10
Kelby Grovender	12/31/10
Matthew Jon Thorson	12/31/10

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Michael Blair 12/31/10

Children’s Mental Health Committee

Constance Bennett 12/31/10
Alesia Grace Thompson 12/31/10
Matthea Little Smith 12/31/10
Kent Mueller 12/31/10
Christina Hughes 12/31/10

Children’s Services Review Panel

Roxanna Foster 12/31/10
Keith Brooks 12/31/10
JoAnn Enos 12/31/10

Developmental Disabilities Committee

Scott Schifsky 12/31/10

Low Income Committee

Sina Black 12/31/10
Arbadella Williams 12/31/10
Ericka Minus 12/31/10

Adult Mental Health Committee

Rhonda Martin 12/31/10
Brandi Coady 12/31/10
Cindy St. George 12/31/10

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS – Agreement for regular maintenance, inspection and emergency services to the security software system at the Juvenile Detention Center.

Commissioner Rettman introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Roll Call: Ayes – Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2009-063)

WHEREAS, The Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) is a secure, 24-hour facility that houses youth ages 10 - 22; and

WHEREAS, Both staff and resident safety are a critical component to the successful operation of the JDC; and

WHEREAS, Security is primarily operated through software that is provided by Montgomery Technologies Incorporated (MTI), a national company located in Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Given the Electronic Design Company (EDC) is the only local provider of service for the MTI software, it is essential that the JDC continue to contract with this vendor to ensure prompt and uninterrupted service for the general maintenance and inspection needs of the security system; Now, Therefore, Be It

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RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby approves an Agreement with the Electronic Design Company, 4650 Churchill Street, Shoreview, MN 55126-5829, in an amount not to exceed \$40,000 for the 23-month period February 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010, for regular maintenance, inspection and emergency services to the security software system at the JDC; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the County Manager to execute the Agreement and any necessary amendments to the Agreement, in a form to be approved by the County Attorney; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the County Manager to make any necessary budget adjustments.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS – Agreement for Mental Health Services at the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC)

Commissioner Rettman introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Roll Call: Ayes – Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Parker – 7. Nays – 0. (2009-064)

WHEREAS, State law requires specific programming and mental health services be provided to children in a detention facility; and

WHEREAS, Over 50% of youth in the Juvenile Detention Center currently suffer from pre-existing mental health issues; and

WHEREAS, JDC staff is concerned about being able to sufficiently meet the needs of youth experiencing severe depression, suicide and other mental health related issues on a day to day level; and

WHEREAS, There is a strong and demonstrated need for a person to provide treatment for this targeted population at the JDC and to assist JDC staff in providing appropriate care and supervision; and

WHEREAS, As Treatment Director, Dr. Neerja Singh would create the capacity to address the mental health needs of youth at the JDC before things escalate to a crisis; and

WHEREAS, This contracted position will develop the programming, oversee its implementation and compliance with state law and ensure that it meets the evidence based standards for programming and mental health services; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby approves an Agreement with Dr. Neerja Singh, 13046 Euclid Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124, in an amount not to exceed \$124,800, for the 2-year period January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010, for mental health services; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the County Manager to execute the Agreement and any necessary amendments to the Agreement, in a form to be approved by the County Attorney; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the County Manager to make any necessary budget adjustments.

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BOARD OF RAMSEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS – Cancellation of Board Meetings

Commissioner Reinhardt introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Carter. Roll Call: Ayes – Bennett, Carter, McDonough, Ortega, Reinhardt, Parker – 6. Nays – Rettman - 1. (2009-065)

WHEREAS, On Tuesday, February 24, 2009, it is requested that the Ramsey County Board meet as the Budget Committee of the Whole; and

WHEREAS, On Tuesday, March 10, 2009, a majority of Ramsey County Commissioners will be in Washington, D.C. for the annual National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference; and

WHEREAS, The Chair has also recommended that the Board cancel the April 7, 2009 meeting; and

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Home Rule Charter states that the Ramsey County Board must meet at least two times per month, and Board Meetings are scheduled for February 3, 10, and 17; March 3, March 17, and March 24; and April 14, 21, and 28, 2009; and

WHEREAS, It is therefore requested that the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners cancel the Board Meetings of February 24, March 10, and April 7, 2009; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby cancels the February 24, 2009, March 10, 2009 and April 7, 2009 Ramsey County Board Meetings.

OUTSIDE BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Rettman:

- Reported on the Radio Talking Book for individuals with sight and hearing impairments, and other disabilities.

Commissioner Reinhardt:

- Reported that the Fly-In to Washington DC was filled with meetings to visit with the Minnesota federal legislative delegation and staff. They met with Congressman Oberstar's office primarily on transit and transportation issues; Senator Klobuchar's office, Congresswoman McCollum's office, Congressman Tim Walz, and with Amtrak. The stimulus package and appropriations and strategies were discussed. They discussed an extension of the moratorium on the Deficit Reduction Act and the targeted case management. If we don't get the extension on the moratorium, it means an additional loss of \$8-12 M to Ramsey County. The targeted case management and other funds within the moratorium are for the most vulnerable: children in need of protection, mentally ill, developmentally delayed, and senior citizens. Those people are at-risk if these services are not continued. All the meetings went well. The timing going to Washington DC with Lockridge Grindal and Nauen was good.

Commissioner McDonough:

- Reported that the meeting with Amtrak went very well. In 2001, Amtrak made a commitment that as the development on the Union Depot moves forward, that they would consider moving their operations from Midway into the Union Depot. In going through the process working with the Post Office to relocate them and to take possession of the Concourse, with Ramsey County to take

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possession of the Union Depot in December 2010, conversations have begun with Amtrak to position Ramsey County to get Amtrak operating out of the Union Depot as quickly as possible. Amtrak recommitted in a letter with the intent to move their operations to Union Depot, assuming Ramsey County can get all the issues worked out. Staff have been working with Amtrak and beginning with the freights to ensure all things work so that by the time Ramsey County takes possession of the Concourse, Amtrak can begin operating out of the Union Depot.

Commissioner Bennett:

- Reported on a LOCATE meeting. Information had been reported by Amtrak's representative that they are looking to expand the Empire Builder by putting on an additional car or two to haul another 150-300 passengers.

Commissioner Carter:

- Adding to the previous comments regarding the visit to Washington DC, said we are going to continue our work to outline from the various streams the methods in which we can work on getting the support we need for critical areas this year, and will continue working with Congresswoman McCollum's office to take advantage of all this work. Results of the designs for how to go about that will be communicated to all the Commissioners. It will be important to prioritize our requests and do so within the categories to take advantage of the streams that will hopefully begin to flow.

Commissioner Ortega:

- Suggested that Chair Parker send a letter on behalf of the Board to Congresswoman Betty McCollum thanking her for being such a great champion on all our issues. Congresswoman McCollum is now on the budget committee, involved in appropriations and budget, and is becoming one of the strongest Congresspersons in the entire country.

BOARD OF RAMSEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS – Presentation by Paul Mattessich, Executive Director, Wilder Research

Paul Mattessich, Executive Director, Wilder Research, thanked the County Board for the opportunity to provide an update on the Twin Cities Compass project. He appeared before the Board on September 18, 2007, as the project was being developed. Input received from the Commissioners at that time was helpful in shaping the Compass project, which was launched in February 2008. He provided an update on the project itself and showed some of the trend and regional data, specifically the data comparing Ramsey County to the region and the nation. He introduced the website www.tccompass.org and the value of having the information.

Twin Cities Compass talks about the "Know", and the "Do". "Know" means to understand trends; the "Do" means to support action on trends, with the ultimate result that we have a better quality of life in the region. Currently, there are nine foundations who fund this work and who serve on the governance committee, setting the general policy and direction: Bush, United Way, McKnight, Minneapolis/St. Paul, 3M, Travelers, Wells Fargo, and the Wilder Foundations all make financial contributions and contributions of time.

Twin Cities Compass is focusing now on the seven-county metropolitan area. With funding from Blandin, McKnight and the initiative foundations around Minnesota, expansion will be made into a Minnesota Compass by the fall of 2009. This takes a regional perspective, seeing the Twin Cities region as a socially and economically inter-dependent entity within the global marketplace of regions, with which we have to be strong and competitive.

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We are moving from the “old math to the new math” – people have good intentions, but there was no common base of information, which resulted in inefficient decisions. Those same good intentions are being capitalized on, adding in with this project some sound credible information, some common sense of purpose, hopefully with the result that there will be productive decisions for a strong Twin Cities region. The website, which is the “Know” part where the information can be found, can be a reference point and a sound base of information. Pages from the site were shown with “Know” and “Do”, and leads for people to find information on seminars or getting involved and “New” information.

The nine topic areas focused on the top of the website are: Civic Engagement, Early Childhood, Economy and Workforce, Education, Environment, Health, Housing, Public Safety and Transportation. Key measures are identified for each of those topic areas -- tip of the iceberg indicators that show what the major trends are with respect to that topic. More information is needed than just a few indicators. This site for every one of those topics has something called “More Measures”, which would include any and every indicator that meets the standard for quality to enable people to get more depth. For example, in Health, there are four key measures – diabetes rates, obesity rates, health care coverage and mental health admissions. Each of those would have more features in graphs with trends in the region and the trend as a nation as a whole, giving a way to compare – are we doing better or worse. The site also gives opportunities to break down the information in different ways by county, gender or age. The actual data can be obtained from the website. The obesity graph can be broken out by race and ethnic groups (just for Hennepin County). For all the key measures where the data are available, it can show how we relate to other major metropolitan areas in the United States.

“More Measures” would have a variety of different types of measures related to Health, for example. There is a section called Ideas At Work, which people have found very helpful. They have identified initiatives being attempted by communities in other cities, counties, regions, who are trying to address a particular topic. When there is actually some research evidence about whether these things work, they are noted, too.

There is a section called “Get Involved”, listing volunteer opportunities and other ways people can get involved in trying to act on the trends. There is also a Library section, which is other references, links and to other reports and websites with information.

Mr. Mattessich said three or four key measures have been identified for each of the nine topics, and within that more depth with more measures are provided.

Three major demographic changes were mentioned that would strike anyone about the change in the region over the past 20-30 years. For total population in this region, we’ve grown steadily since 1950. Projections for growing over the next 20 years show the population increasing. Ramsey County’s growth rate is generally the smallest for every one of the periods examined. The share of population by county also shows Ramsey County’s share has declined.

There are three major changes that have occurred in this region over the last 20-30 years, one is suburbanization. It doesn’t necessarily mean flight to the suburban area, but rapid growth of suburban communities during that time. The cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul are expected to remain relatively flat in terms of their population.

Commissioner Bennett said that did not hold true on the last census. Population growth was more in the lower East Side. Was the growth in immigrants with large families taken into consideration in this project?

Mr. Mattessich responded affirmatively; they would all be factored in and may not show in the total because there may be other things that net-out in the other direction, but if going to other areas, that may be true. There may be smaller sub-areas where there is growth as opposed to it being flat or declining. That is monitored yearly, looking both at the total population as well as looking specifically at immigrants.

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Commissioner Bennett said when this was looked at eight years ago, it took the Board by surprise to see the growth was not in the areas they thought it would be. It was not in the suburban area, it was in the city area.

Mr. Mattessich said he could show the total data in which the growth has been. Updates of the numbers are done on a yearly basis, and could be looked at deeper than that.

The second major trend in this area has been the increasing diversity, portrayed in one of the tables. In 1950, the number of persons of color in this region was close to zero. It has grown steadily over the past decades. The seven-county metro population grew about 5% in the last seven years; about 1% in the white population; 28% among populations of color.

Commissioner McDonough, referring to growth in the suburbs, asked if there is a breakdown on the diversity between the suburbs and the core city. He suspects that the diversity growth is all occurring in the urban core.

Mr. Mattessich said that is not completely true. There are some suburbs that are not as diverse as the city, but there has been a great diversification in many of the suburban communities as well. That data is available on the website broken down by individual counties.

Another graph was shown for individual counties the percent of the population that is of color by county. It doesn't show that within certain counties down to the level of municipalities. For example, there are differences among different municipalities. Ramsey County is the top line, indicating that among counties, it is the county with the largest percentage of residents of color.

The third demographic phenomenon, true not just here, but world-wide, is the aging of the population. This is a dramatic change. The lines on the graph that were relatively flat for close to 50 years are now starting to trend upward. The line showing people over age 65 has become much greater in the past 20 years.

Commissioner Ortega asked if there is data showing the age of people/communities of color versus the age of the white population.

Mr. Mattessich indicated the white population in a graph - for each 5-year age group, how many people there are in the region in that age group. The baby-boom age group appeared as a bulge on the graph, which has been moving through the age cycle. Populations of color were shown on another graph, with a different shape than the white population. The points are lower among some of the lower age groups, but the numbers are becoming substantial. Mixing the two in a graph shows some prominence of the baby-boom, but what is striking is that in the younger age groups, children and young adults up to the mid-30s, it is found that a significant portion of people are people of color. This is the group who will constitute the future leaders, business owners, employees, community members, and parents of our County and of our region, and it is very important to look at that population, especially with respect to some of the disparities seen in other parts of the data.

At the first annual meeting related to Twin Cities Compass, ratings were given on the key measures on each topic area, with some national comparisons and disparities that could be identified in the data. The handout prior to today's meeting contains that information. One page has all the key measures listed. If the arrows go up, it means we are doing better; if they go down, it means we are getting worse; if they point in both directions, it means that effectively, we are staying the same; that there's been no substantial change. The website would provide the numbers. One column on the key measures indicates no major change over the past few years, but several are noticeably worse. Those include the economic output of our region, green house gas emissions, obesity, and cost burdened households.

Chair Parker asked if the measures listed are those of the region relative to the rest of the country.

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Mr. Mattessich responded that these are just our region. Transportation shows some improvement. Another column compares our region to the nation on each of those topics: Civic Engagement, Early Childhood, Economy and Workforce, Education, Environment, Health, Housing, Public Safety and Transportation. Three compass symbols indicate we are doing better, two means we are doing the same, and one means we are doing worse. The good news is that often, we do better than the nation when we can do a comparison. But, there are three of the key measures from Compass where we are doing worse: economic output, green house gas emissions, and the home ownership gap. Home ownership gap refers to the disparity between whites and persons of color in the proportion who own their own home.

The last column, entitled Disparities, has an indication where disparities can be calculated. The most disparity is in the area of education followed by housing, public safety, health, economy and the workforce.

Commissioner Rettman said the last page of the handout in the Board documentation under Disparities, sources and notes, indicated that Twin Cities Compass contacted the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) in Hennepin County. If only looking at the CDCP for Hennepin County, does it skew the factors? Mr. Mattessich said in certain places where there is only data from a county, a lot of generalizing could not be done beyond that county.

Commissioner Rettman said it gives a misnomer; there should be an asterisk when talking about region, and about one county. Mr. Mattessich agreed.

Commissioner Ortega asked if the data could be accessed through the website. Mr. Mattessich responded affirmatively. Every instance where it is cited “we have the data” could be accessed through the website.

Commissioner Reinhardt said the website is very impressive. In going through some of the different areas, there is a lot going on locally that would be beneficial to have on this website. The Truancy Intervention Program, JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative) efforts, ACE, Mothers First, are all things that are happening locally and are promising. This is a great resource for the region, the state and nationally. Celebrating here what works, and being able to share that information, would be helpful.

Mr. Mattessich agreed. If something is not there, it is likely that they just didn’t get to it. He would find out more about the examples given.

Commissioner Reinhardt said it may be that the Commissioners need to be more proactive about making sure Twin Cities Compass knows about these things.

Mr. Mattessich said Twin Cities Compass was surprised in the annual review of trends. On the positive side, civic engagement remains high in this region, but may not surprise the Board, but it remains high relative to the United States. There are also minimum disparities in volunteering in voter participation and other things; there are minimal disparities among groups, and people of all types in cities and suburbs feel they can improve their community. On the positive side, there is something to build on in this region that the rest of the nation does not have. Transportation surprised them, the reasons related to their key measures is that there are fewer injuries and deaths in recent years because there are fewer young drivers, and also, as a proportion of income, transportation expenses have actually have gone down a little.

Commissioner McDonough said on the transportation piece, one of the key measures typically used when comparing regions is congestion and travel time, and that is not addressed. For those two indicators, when comparing nationally, we don’t do so well, and that is typically where the focus is to improve what is going on in our community. When putting those in, it changes the data. Those are important indicators to the region.

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Mr. Mattessich said those might be found in “More Measures”. Even if they are not, the reason they didn’t make it to “Key Measures” is for two reasons. The University of Minnesota has been developing a new accessibility measure, which was put in as being tentatively to be included this year or next when they get it completed. There were some people who didn’t think transportation should be included as a topic; the reason being that it is difficult to know exactly what to say is a good situation. It would be nice to have people travel easily and not have tie-ups, etc., but there was a feeling that if people choose consciously to live far from work and it takes them a long time to get there during rush hour when the roads are crowded, that is their voluntary choice. He doesn’t agree or disagree with that, but there was enough dissension about the whole thing that it seemed wiser to go with the measures selected, especially since the University of Minnesota is developing this accessibility measure that will get at a notion of how well we are located in proximity to important things in the community.

Commissioner Ortega agreed with Commissioner McDonough that we tend to focus on the congestion and travel time that tends to be a negative factor it just tells us how bad things are going. Even if a lot of transit and transportation were included, access is the correct measurement. There could still be huge disparity. The issue of access and mobility is what is critical for the region economically, and in terms of all the other factors.

Mr. Mattessich said that is why they are hopeful that the University of Minnesota will get that access measure developed soon so that can be included.

Commissioner Carter said incarceration rates and rates of juvenile detention are being viewed more and more as factors in public safety, particularly where recidivism is concerned. She did not believe that even in the other measures that is there at this point in time. She asked if consideration is being made about using that sort of information, particularly where income and race is concerned – there are stark disparities there for Minnesota.

Mr. Mattessich said he did not remember specifically the advisory group talking about that, but that will be checked and added in.

At the first annual look at trends they were concerned about three topic areas, one of which is the disparities in 11th grade math scores. The key issue is that for all children in 11th grade, math scores are low; only about one-third of students are proficient. When showing these data to business groups or corporate funders, they are very concerned about the status of our future workforce and the ability to remain competitive given these scores. Even though some of this is a disparity between different populations based on income or race, everybody is doing poorly across the board.

Disparity rates in general in terms of poverty, education and housing were concerning, and the need for more data. For some basic measures, like some of the school readiness data, no direct indicator could be given for how many kids are ready for school, and they used some indirect ways to get that. It is really important. They are trying to mobilize people to get the right data gathered for a stronger way to describe some of these trends.

Chair Parker asked how finely the information is broken down; some is by county, but is it also by school district? Mr. Mattessich said some of the school data is by school district. The goal is that anything that is school-based data is to put it up by school district. If it is not there yet, it is just because of time constraints.

Mr. Mattessich said going to the county level on those 11th grade math scores, Ramsey County is the second lowest of the counties; Anoka came out at 31%; Ramsey came out overall at 32%; the other counties are slightly higher. The highest in this case is Dakota County at 42%. The key message is to not get hung up on the differences among counties – even 42% in Dakota is bad. This is a serious and concerning thing for the future.

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Commissioner Reinhardt said the comparisons on the website are incredible. It shows central cities and suburbs by county, race, racial and ethnic group, income, gender, district, special population, and by same school versus different school, which would be interesting on the issue of disparities.

Mr. Mattessich said many of those things are related. There are kids who change schools and who do more poorly; that is not just an education issue, but also a housing issue, an employment issue, and so all those have to be addressed in common.

Commissioner Rettman referred to the page with the arrows. Under Education, 11th grade math, is there a national comparison? Mr. Mattessich said if it is not indicated, then there isn't a comparison. The reason might be that not enough states are using tests that are comparable.

Commissioner Rettman said there are two arrows, meaning it is about the same for all the regions. Mr. Mattessich said for the region it has been steady for the time period covered.

Chair Parker asked about the time period covered. Mr. Mattessich said the left-hand page defines the trend period.

Obesity is another concerning trend. There is data only on three of the larger counties, and they are all about the same at 20-24% of the population. Ramsey County is the worst at 24%, meaning that about one of every four adults in the county would be defined this way. The troubling part is that we know that this is the development of other chronic diseases; obesity results in higher health care costs; financial and psychological costs for families; and it is largely preventable. Diet and exercise, which are not very costly, can largely prevent obesity.

Commissioner Rettman said on the national comparison, we are three stars above. Mr. Mattessich said we are better than the nation.

Commissioner Ortega said that is scary. From a national perspective, it would be better if we were the worst. To say we are better than the nation with that kind of data – this is serious.

Mr. Mattessich concurred and that is why people are urged to look at this in context. Being the best in the country is not necessarily something to be satisfied with.

Commissioner Ortega said this is a wonderful instrument and tool. Recently, he took a tour of the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program. The push there is nutrition, the kinds of issues to deal with obesity. He highlighted that to keep it in perspective. Some of the programs we need to support or enhance in talking about the stimulus package and other things are the kind of programs that are going to make an impact on the issues discussed here on obesity, diabetes, and other health issues, especially in the poorer communities, regardless of race. The issues are chronic.

Mr. Mattessich said somewhat concerning are the poverty rates by county. Ramsey County is higher than any of the other counties at about 13%; Hennepin was second at 10%; and the remaining counties were around 6% or lower.

Reading scores show the number of 3rd graders proficient in reading by county show Ramsey County as the worst at 68%. The best county is at 88%, with other counties between the two.

Cost burdened households defines the proportion of people who are paying 30% or more of their income for housing, most being renters. Ramsey County is at about 36%; Hennepin at 37%.

Mr. Mattessich said he is glad this information stimulated some thinking and hopes it can be a valuable resource.

Commissioner McDonough asked how much conversation is going on with Twin Cities Compass about poverty. Clearly a lot of the disparities and lowest and highest scores are connected to poverty. To him the concentration of that poverty and the policies that continue to concentrate poverty in the metropolitan area is of more concern.

Mr. Mattessich said as far as he knows, it is identified; it is at the conversation level. He doesn't know anybody who is moving ahead to act on it. Twin Cities Compass could participate in something

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like that to look at it more, and if that would be helpful in terms of some kind of an initiative, they would be happy to work on that.

Commissioner Rettman said the concentration of poverty has been an issue that has come up over the years. In the analysis of the 11th grade math and 3rd grade reading issues, are charter schools, alternative education programs, private schools, and those who go to workforce centers for a GED, included? Mr. Mattessich said the answer is generally, yes, but he would have to read the fine print for every specific measure to see if there is any exclusion.

Commissioner Rettman said sometimes data for school systems look at a specific school district that is publicly funded, not necessarily inclusive of the charters or private schools. There are on-line classes available for students and other programs.

Chair Parker said what Wilder Foundation has done in terms of stimulating this kind of information is helpful to the County, to the region. Last night, she attended her first meeting serving as a member of the Roseville School Strategic Planning 60-member community involvement process. The meeting started with people asking what kind of information is needed to get started. Much of what Wilder Foundation has generated is the kind of things people are asking for so this will be very helpful.

Commissioner Reinhardt said she remembered when this was just an idea. During one of the Inter City Leadership Conferences this was discussed; how Wilder picked this up and moved forward with it. It is an incredible resource, a tool that can be used by counties and school districts in the State of Minnesota, as well as nationally and internationally. It is rich with data, helpful on how to make informed decisions, on what is evidence based. Twin Cities Compass is about making sure we get viable solutions to the solutions facing us.

Commissioner McDonough said clearly this is great information for us. The goal is for this group to pull this type of information together to highlight where we are doing poorly, highlight where the disparities are, to help policymakers make decisions that have an effect in our community. He said he would argue that there are also policy decisions that have been made within our community that have led to creating some of these disparities. Does this group see themselves becoming an advocate for policy for a region? When there are communities that don't allow affordable housing, or when there are communities that zone-out particular things that forces concentrations of some things, there are some deliberate policies that have been implemented that have led to some of these discouraging results. Does this group see itself becoming more active and engaged about addressing the region as a whole in helping develop the policy so the whole region rises or falls together and not have the disparities within their region?

Mr. Mattessich said there is a governing board that consists of the presidents of the foundations, plus a few other people, and is now considering the issue and trying to decide to what extent we provide "just the facts", and to what extent we try to take a more active stand and recommend things. They don't ever want to become partisan, defined as advocates at one end of the spectrum. They want to the reasonable middle that people will trust and know. They will never satisfy the far extremes at either end. The question for them is to what extent they should try to "nudge" a little bit on issues to get something to happen. If the County Board has a thought on that for some other day, it would be valuable feedback for him to bring to the governing board for their policy decision for how they should get involved.

Chair Parker said what has been identified as data and trends has been the first step. All elected officials, as policymakers, whether it be on the school boards, county boards or city councils throughout the whole region have a real interest in what to do with the data, what can be learned from it, what are some of the best practices that have been identified, what are some of the things that have worked. Mr. Mattessich presented today how to use the tool, now it is up to elected officials to use it. It

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might be helpful to have a facilitated discussion with other policy leaders, digging into some of the best practices just identified, and help us learn what is there that could be helpful to identify what the next steps would be. She would welcome a forum, possibly a whole day to dig into some of these troubling things and figure out if anybody has been successful in solving those issues.

Commissioner Rettman said a lot of this has to do with policy. One of the things the JPTAC (Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee) was to have looked at, in her vision, is some of the things just mentioned. The JPTAC includes a school district. Some of the suburban collaboratives are looking at some of these same issues, and they encompass more than one school district, as well as the city and county. It is also something that the Ramsey County League of Local Governments could be involved with.

Chair Parker surmised that there would be a lot of interest in the metro region to dig into this information and try to figure out what could be done.

Mr. Mattessich said he would follow up with that suggestion.

Chair Parker thanked Mr. Mattessich for presenting the information.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Nick Riley, Intergovernmental Relations, provided an update on proceedings at the State level. There have been a lot of hearings on the Governor's budget. A new budget will come out shortly after the February forecast, scheduled to come out on March 3. Another billion dollars are expected to be added to the current \$4.8 B, adding up to close to \$7.5 B when considering the rainy day fund (reserves) that has to be replenished. If the Governor's proposal to cut corporate taxes goes through, that is another \$.5 billion. Adding inflation, it is another \$1 B, bringing the total to about \$7.5 B. Ramsey County is getting hearings on some of its bills. A hearing will be held today on High Speed Rail in the House; Thursday, Central Corridor in the House; next Tuesday, Union Depot in the House; 12:30 p.m., Thursday in the Senate, Rush Line; 12:30 p.m., Thursday in the Senate, Central Corridor; and there may be one more bonding request up before the Transit Sub-Committee in the Senate. He continues to contact everyone who should attend these hearings, as well as Met Council to see if they would be lead testimony on the Central Corridor.

Claudia Brewington, Intergovernmental Relations, reported that there continues to be a lot of review of the Governor's budget presentation by the various departments about the conditions of the budget and programs they provide. A number of County staff will testify this week in Health and Human Services, Jobs and Training. There is a hearing tomorrow evening of several joint committees talking about the sex offender costs that the counties have to shoulder, which is in the House.

Commissioner Ortega asked about the major bills in Health and Human Services that are moving forward. Are there any major initiatives?

Ms. Brewington said Senator Berglund has made it very clear that the Health Care Access Fund and protecting that and keeping it intact and available for health care programs is one of her priorities. We should continue to see various discussions on health care reforms shift as part of that. The State Health Improvement Program grants, which go out to counties to the public health departments to address a number of factors in chronic conditions that contribute to our high costs of health care in the State, the Governor proposes to cutting that in half and spreading it over four years. Many of the public health folks are still feeling encouraged that the money would stay in place, giving them more than they have now, to address that into some programmatic changes. It would be better to get the full amount, but given the current deficit, some cuts have been expected, but if we could keep half of it, it would be a positive.

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Health care should remain in the forefront in that budget since it is such a huge portion of that budget. The fight over the Health Care Access Fund, whether it is dumped into the general fund and used to address the deficit, or whether it is kept and retained for health care, is going to be a major area of contention. There are a number of areas for long-term health care for the disabled and elderly, another cost-driver. In trying to contain those costs, the Governor's proposal would cap the waived slots, which addresses the need in the community, but also adds cost to the State. It does draw down some federal matching dollars, but if those are capped, it saves money but makes it harder to deliver services.

There are a number of changes in MFIP that are possible to see although there is not much savings so the Senate and House may not be moved to go along with the Governor on those changes. There are a lot of bills. Beyond health care, she did not know where the changes are likely to happen.

Mr. Riley said the first bill deadline is March 27.

Commissioner Bennett said this morning there was a news discussion that the next two-year biennium, beginning in July 2009 running through July 2011, has an increase in the Governor's budget in spending over 2007-2009. The Governor had not projected the income right over the next two years because of this unexpected downturn. There is a shortage of income to pay off this budget, and it is the second two-year budget biennium.

Mr. Riley said the Governor is proposing a slight increase in K-12 funding.

Commissioner Bennett wondered if that is the inflation factor left out last time. Mr. Riley said it is.

Terry Speiker, Director, Intergovernmental Relations, said this is a part of the debate going on about what the budget looks like right now, and what it will look like the next two years. If the budget goes forward, even with the reductions the Governor has proposed, the next two-year budget will be an increase, and we will continue to be in "structural deficit". That is what the whole debate is about. If no changes and corrections are made, or depending on what happens at the federal level with what kind of revenue you might get, then the budget is on. Julie Kleinschmidt, County Manager, has been looking at that. It is on this continuing increase, even with the reductions that are being made.

Commissioner Bennett said it is really a guesstimate of how much income is taken in. The government has always been good at projecting how much they would spend; it is not that they overspent, they undertook income. There was some overspending.

Ms. Speiker said, especially in the health care area.

Commissioner Bennett said this is a confusing discussion about several different topics. This is dealing with the shortfall for this year up to July 1. Then it is dealing with the next two-year biennium, the guesstimates for how much money is going to come in and where the economy is going to be at. Then there is where the government is going to set spending at, and it has to balance out. It is going to be an increase over what was spent in the past.

Ms. Brewington added that some of the drivers are some of the forecasted programs, especially in health care where there is a growing elderly population and a growing disabled population. We are getting more successful at keeping people alive and helping people with disabilities, but it costs money to do that, and that population is growing. Those forecasted programs continue to expand, even if you don't increase eligibility parameters, you add people.

Commissioner Bennett concurred. Listening to the speaker on the news program on the large increase in the elderly, had him thinking how much of the County's budget for the Human Services and Public Health Departments' budgets alone go to seniors.

Commissioner Ortega said our Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee (JPTAC) makes a good attempt at dealing with legislative actions. Given the fact that education does have money in the Governor's budget, how does that work out for holding the coalition together?

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Ms. Speiker said that is a good issue to discuss. On the next JPTAC meeting agenda, which Commissioner Rettman will chair, is a discussion about the respective budgets and plans for what might happen in these units of government, based on some of what the Governor is proposing. As a group, the Board might get a better sense for how that might all hold together. Schools have the big initiative this year that Representative Greiling put forward. She sees that as a long-term strategic funding plan, not for this year, as a way to begin to remove more of the school costs from property taxes and replace it with more State funding and more commitment to State funding. In addition to the Governor's proposal to add some money around performance indicators there is this long-term strategic planning focus and strategic funding focus may come forward.

Commissioner Ortega said the Governor has put in about a 30% increase for education. Ms. Speiker said the Governor is putting in money for a couple things, all related to performance outcomes.

Mr. Riley said the increase that the schools need is probably the amount of growth that would have come into the budget without inflation, and it looks like it is a huge increase when you look at millions, but when it is based on billions it is not big enough to sustain what they need to do. Schools, even under the Governor's proposal, would have to make huge cuts.

Commissioner Ortega understands that, but said that in light of a \$7 billion deficit and the national recession, and you are getting the only increase in the State budget, we could argue what it is not. The issue is what it is. How do we hold that coalition together?

Mr. Riley said they are hearing from legislators that everything is on the table; this is just the Governor's proposal. The legislature wants everyone to understand the magnitude of the cuts. That is why everything will be on their table so that everyone says that revenue needs to be raised instead of the State's continual structural deficit.

Commissioner Ortega said that if the legislators hope that there needs to be more advocacy, then the school districts are there with the counties.

Ms. Speiker said that to date, the only entities protesting have been the cities. Counties and school districts have been talking about it, but the cities are the entities that receive local government aid.

Commissioner Reinhardt said that when the Governor made cuts this time and last, the spending at the State actually went up. Because he shifted many of the things onto the local property tax payers, it made it look like it was less State spending, when in fact, it was more. It is easy to make it look like something that it is not when you are able to pass your bills onto another entity. Property taxes are the most regressive taxes. When looking at the whole picture, all of the budgets are looked at in isolation, when they are part of government services. The counties are the implementation arm of the State, and the federal government when it comes to human services. When looking at outcome based budgeting, we need to get that way of thinking into the other levels of government as well. She believes that even now, with the cuts coming down that are disproportionately hitting local government, we need to look for relief in how services are provided. With whom can we collaborate? What are we allowed to do? There are many things the state and federal government won't allow counties to do, even if it is the best idea. We need to be able to bring those forward. The Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), led by Commissioner McDonough, has been doing a lot with that their platform – consistency in needed services but flexibility to meet the performance based outcomes that are necessary. It is not looking only at Ramsey County in isolation from Hennepin County, or the City of St. Paul in isolation from the suburbs, but it needs to be looked at holistically, and to look at performance standards, outcome based budgeting and need to try to get the message out that we are not isolated from the state nor federal government as far as this budgeting goes. We have all heard that the State is looking to the federal government with the stimulus package; the federal government is looking to the

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state and county governments to work in partnership. The counties are looking to the state for some relief. Perhaps if everyone sat at the same table we could come up with decent solutions. She believes the counties are being compartmentalized by the state; the voice of the counties, cities, townships, school districts and other entities is not being heard at the State level.

Commissioner Carter said analysts are trying to understand what the Governor's proposal means so that we can all respond. In the areas of health and human services, our policy analysts at the AMC have been working and engaging counties to feed back some of the impacts perceived from the Governor's budget. This week she will be working with that staff, as chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, to understand how our response will be delivered to the Governor. In concert with the redesign, which is all about governance, flexibility and transparency, we will be able to take all of that and move an agenda forward that will help us to manage these impacts. Perhaps a workshop will be scheduled to look at those expected impacts and how Ramsey County will respond.

Commissioner Bennett said he is not looking for more money; he would like the State to pay for what they are asking the counties to do now. The State needs to pay more than \$9/day for prisoners that cost the County \$80-90/day to house. The counties only source of revenue to pay for that is property taxes. Counties are created by the legislature; cities and townships are different. Counties deliver many services on behalf the State. Counties do not receive sales tax money, income taxes, or other fees, which are nothing more than taxes. Ramsey County had to cut \$4.3 million in late December when the services had already been delivered. We now have to rebuild our reserves. It is likely that counties are not screaming this year because we are looking at new proposals from AMC to work together. Basically what AMC is doing is what the metropolitan area has done for years; we have the Mosquito Control, the MESB, and other joint powers agreements whereby the counties work together to solve problems. He recalls that Rep. Krinke wanted to turn back Mn/DOT to the counties. He is beginning to believe that was right, especially when looking at the metro area. The stimulus package may provide \$290+ million to the metro area; but the east metro and west metro are not being treated the same. The east metro would receive \$59 million; the west metro would receive \$239 million. I-35E is a traffic hazard since the "unweave the weave" has been done. Westbound I-694 is backing up past Highway 36, blocking the ramps, because Mn/DOT would not listen to us and the cities. The backup on I-694 is between I35E and I35W, which has not been increased. We were promised a new bridge at I-694 ten years ago; today it is not even on the 2030 plan.

Commissioner Reinhardt agrees with Commissioner Bennett that shifting is not the answer. It is not sustainable. We need to figure out how to resolve the issues long term, together.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Bonnie C. Jackelen, Chief Clerk – County Board