Dear District 7 resident:

I was deeply honored to have been unanimously selected by my fellow commissioners in January to serve as Chair of the Wayne County Commission for the 2019-20 legislative session, and I am pleased to tell you that many important and exciting things are taking place on the commission and around the county.

The commission recently adopted a transparency measure that, for the first time, will become part of its Rules of Procedure, the official guidelines that govern all commission operations.

Transparency is essential to building public trust, and the measure formally states that: The commission will conduct its business in a manner that promotes an environment of transparency and openness.

In addition, the commission has expanded its ability to communicate directly with the public through its new Facebook page. I encourage all of you to visit, follow and like our new page.

My agenda in this first term as Chair includes building closer ties with leaders from Oakland and Macomb counties, as well as Detroit, in tackling such critical issues as regional transit, road infrastructure and human trafficking.

Another of my key priorities involves reforming our county’s bail bond system, which too often penalizes lower-income residents, keeping them incarcerated far longer than necessary simply because they cannot raise sufficient bail money.

In addition, I pledge to continue working closely with my fellow commissioners and County Executive Warren Evans to continue the financial progress that has helped the county eliminate $82 million in accumulated deficits and deliver four straight general fund budget surpluses, including the one we will see under the current budget.

I have discussed my priorities, as well as other important issues, on such local television programs as “Spotlight on the News,” airing on WXYZ-TV, Channel 7, “Michigan Matters,” airing on WJBK-TV, Channel 62, and “Detroit Wants 2 Know,” airing on WKBD-TV, Channel 50. Links to all three are available by scrolling through the commission Facebook page.
Chair Bell at NACo meeting

Commission Chair Alisha Bell appears with members of the National Association of Counties at a meeting held recently in Washington, D.C. With its mission of strengthening America’s counties, NACo continues to hold a vision to build healthy, safe and vibrant counties throughout the country. Chair Bell, who has been a member since 2006, serves as Chair of the organization’s Justice and Public Safety Committee.

Chair Bell takes over leadership role of Commission

BELL, from Page One

This year will see construction work continue on our county’s new Criminal Justice Complex that will include a new county jail, juvenile detention center, courthouse and offices for the county sheriff’s and prosecutor’s departments.

With that in mind, I have created a special Wayne County Commission committee to provide oversight on all aspects related to the complex.

On a personal note, I am pleased to announce that I will be holding my 12th annual Belle of the Ball prom dress distribution event 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 13, at the Boys and Girls Club, 16500 Tireman, in Detroit.

It is great to once again be able to help so many young ladies make their prom dreams come true.

I am also pleased to announce that the National Organization of Black County Officials will hold its 2019 Economic Development Conference right here in Detroit May 1-4, and I am looking forward to showing our newly revitalized city to those who attend.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you. Please feel free to contact me with your questions, comments and concerns at (313) 224-0936 or abell3@waynecounty.com.

Programs help property owners pay taxes

Several programs are in place to help Wayne County homeowners having trouble paying their property taxes and at risk of losing their homes to tax foreclosure.

Financial help is available from the following sources:

- **Michigan Department of Human Services**
  Homeowners can visit their local DHS office to apply for help under the State Emergency Relief program. Contact information for all offices is available by calling the DHS main line at (313) 456-1000.

- **Step Forward Michigan**
  Step Forward is a state program that provides free, forgivable loans to help with overdue tax or mortgage payments. Information is available by calling (866) 946-7432 or visiting www.stepforwardmichigan.org.

Financial help is also available to military veterans through the following programs:

- **Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, Wayne County Office**
  Veterans with at least six months of wartime duty may qualify for financial assistance. To see if you qualify, call (313) 224-5045.

- **Wayne County Veterans Affairs (Soldiers and Sailors Relief Fund)**
  Veterans with any wartime service and an honorable discharge may qualify. To see if you qualify, call (313) 224-5045.

All financial help is contingent upon qualifications and available funding.
Motorists wishing to report the location of potholes or other problems on local roads can do any of these three things:

• Call 1-888-ROAD-CREW (762-3273) 24 hours a day.
• Use a smartphone to visit compass.waynecounty.com and click on the “hazard” triangle on the lower right corner. If you are near the pothole, Compass can capture the location via GPS coordinates.

If the problem is on a road not maintained by the county, the appropriate agency will be contacted.

For those who wish to follow up on the progress of a concern on a county road, be sure to have the incident number that was issued. That makes it much easier for DPS employees to track the issue.

The Wayne County Roads Division maintains about 1,440 county primary and local roads, and 462 miles of state trunklines and freeways. It has nine yards throughout the county and uses 144 trucks and pieces of equipment to maintain roads.

It’s happy 100th anniversary for Wayne County Parks

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Wayne County Parks, the first county park system in Michigan.

Wayne County Parks traces its history to a 1919 land donation for what is now Elizabeth Park in Trenton. The parks system steadily expanded since then with the development of Hines Park, the Holliday Nature Center, the Wayne County Family Aquatic Center at Chandler Park and Inkster Valley Golf Course. Wayne County Parks receives funding through the county parks millage.

That millage not only supports the county parks system but also allows county commissioners to direct money to local park improvement projects within their districts.

Wayne County Parks information is available by calling (734) 261-1990.
The Belle Of The Ball
12th Annual
Prom Dress Giveaway

Prom Dress distributions will be from
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 13, 2019

Boys & Girls Club of Southeastern MI
16500 Tireman St.
Detroit, MI 48228

For more information, call (313) 224-0936

Presented by Commission Chair Alisha Bell