

April 23, 2024

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Catherine McClary Retires as County Treasurer

“It’s time to turn the job over to another generation,” said Catherine McClary today in support of Latitia Lamelle Sharp, who is a candidate for Washtenaw County Treasurer.

“This is somewhat sad for me as I’ve been honored and humbled to serve the people of this county for so long. I thoroughly enjoy my work as County Treasurer. I began with the county 50 years ago when I won election to the Board of Commissioners as a student at the University of Michigan.”

“But there is also joy in knowing that a younger person, a person of integrity, a woman of color who loves the county as much as I do, is running for election as County Treasurer – Latitia Lamelle Sharp.”

McClary explains that she has been fortunate to serve as Treasurer, “I’ve had the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of Washtenaw County residents. I’ve been able to work with an incredibly skilled, professional, and compassionate staff. And I’ve created connections with so many people from all walks of life who’ve become friends.”

A county treasurer’s primary responsibility is to safeguard public funds and manage the county’s investment portfolio. McClary established enhanced safety features and internal controls to protect county money. She manages investments of approximately \$375 million and a cash flow of nearly one billion dollars. She developed a special fund for the Parks Commission to endow parks and the border-to-border trail with maintenance funding in perpetuity.

As Treasurer, McClary created unique programs to prevent foreclosure, many of which have been replicated across Michigan, adopted throughout the United States, and won international awards. She saves thousands of homes from tax foreclosure each year and led the state in mortgage foreclosure prevention during the Great Recession. Her leadership in helping homeowners establish ownership in once-segregated neighborhoods has resulted in more than \$3.3 million in property wealth returned to families in Washtenaw County.

In retirement, McClary says that she plans to write more and, hopefully, publish more of her work. Experienced in community service and governance, she says she is seeking public board service.

Sharp says, “I’m standing on solid ground. I’m passionate about the work Catherine’s done for our residents. She’s created and managed two successful equity programs to prevent foreclosure and her office is considered the best in our state in terms of cash management and investments. It will be an honor to be able to work with such a solid, superb, and knowledgeable staff.”

Sharp started her career at the Washtenaw County library as a student intern and worked for the Parks Department. As a long-time county employee, Sharp has worked in Human Resources, as a policy analyst in Administration, and currently with the Office of Public Defender managing special project funding. Her degree is from Eastern Michigan University in public policy.

“I believe that treating our residents with dignity and respect is the ultimate public service,” says Sharp.

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