

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA**

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

1:00 P.M. Virtual Budget Work Session

MINUTES

Place: Commissioners' Chambers, second floor, Durham County Government
Administrative Complex, 200 E. Main Street, Durham, North Carolina

Present: Chair Brenda Howerton, Vice-Chair Wendy Jacobs and Commissioners Nida
Allam, Nimasheena Burns, and Heidi Carter

Presider: Chair Brenda Howerton

Budget Overview

Claudia Hager, Interim General Manager discussed the projected Budget timeline and what would be discussed during future meetings.

Keith Lane, Budget Manager discussed the Local Request and County Manager's recommended budget for Durham Public Schools and Charter Schools. He stated Durham County funded approximately \$8.2 million dollars out of the requested \$18 million, but funding could be added, if needed. Mr. Lane suggested that due to Durham County being limited to growth of finding dollars to support DPS, an ongoing revenue source should be used for any long-term funds, i.e.: property tax revenue, and a tax increase on top of the 1 percent. He added DPS requested 20 additional social workers and school nurses in the amount of \$1,790,100.00 and should the Board support the decision, he recommended the nurse positions be listed as County positions.

Claudia Hager added the County slowed the pace of adding nurse positions due to vacancy issues but would give the Board information about nurses that had been funded.

Commissioner Burns stated funding for adding additional school nurses and social workers would not be a problem, but rather not having enough staff on the initial start date. She discussed adding additional positions should be a phased approach through Public Health to ensure that DPS has qualified workers. Commissioners Burns also added that the County had dollars to fund additional annual IT costs and additional custodial work.

Chair Howerton asked how custodial services would be funded. Claudia Hager responded those expenses were funded through ARPA dollars but there was a plan in place to incorporate using permanent dollars to fund custodial services.

Commissioner Jacobs asked if staff could find out how many schools had school nurses and social workers and how the County and DPS could work together to get them into every school. She also asked could ARPA funds be used county wide for broadband internet services as well as

academic needs supporting English language learners due to the state formula being insufficient and not meeting current needs.

Commissioner Allam asked could ARPA fund custodial services to be in-housed under General Services instead of contractual. Ms. Hager responded having in-house custodial services would be insufficient for the county due to the turnover rate. She added DPS had in-house custodial services and if contractual services were needed, DPS had funds to cover those expenses.

Commissioner Carter asked could information be found on the square footage per expenditure on capital needs. David Ades, Assistant Budget Manager responded that conversation was brought to their attention between DPS and the County General Services department.

Keith Lane, Budget Manager stated the staff would talk with DPS to receive a broader overview on school nurses being at full capacity and the struggle for the County to hire nurses. He also added that staff would get clarification on custodial services with DPS.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Carter discussed community outreach and the need to increase funding for upstream safety and wellness fostering services, positions, and initiatives. She also inquired about getting more information on Pre-K investment, the Early Childhood Action Plan, and asked if there were implementation costs associated with the Sustainability Plan.

Chair Howerton stated the Safety and Wellness Task Force previously discussed mapping what services were in place to bridge the gap between the different needs of Durham County residents. She stated that continuous discussions with the Safety and Wellness Task Force as well as the Racial Equity Commission Task Force were ongoing and would lead to Board participation in the future.

Commissioner Jacobs asked could a study be done to determine the gap on existing resources and the current crisis response system. She stated that she would like additional information pertaining to the Early Childhood Plan, implementation of the Aging Plan, where the Broadband Program was headed, and to hear more about the Language Equity Plan.

Chair Howerton inquired about maternal health and what steps should be taken to get started. She also expressed a citizen's concern on the transit commuter rail budget.

David Ades, Assistant Budget Manager informed the Board that the budget office accepted citizen comments through the portal on the budget website <https://bit.ly/DCoBudgetPortal21-22> and would send emails out to Commissioners on a regular basis.

Chair Howerton asked were funds available for enhancements to the Durham County studio. Deborah Craig-Ray, General Manager responded they were working with vendors to enhance the studio as well as working with the City to utilize the studio as needed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shaunecie Wardrick'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'S' and 'W'.

Shaunecie Wardrick
Administrative Assistant