

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

Monday, August 2, 2021

9:00 A.M. Virtual Work Session

MINUTES

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

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

Presiders: Chair Brenda Howerton

Citizen Comments

Monica Toomer, Clerk to the Board, read the following Citizen Comments submitted via email:

Kimberly Israel

“Dear local government officials,

The covid restrictions during 2020 and early 2021 nearly killed me. I talked to my therapist twice a week and still kept having to choose over and over not to kill myself because the terrible isolated life was not worth living. Now I'm hearing things about putting restrictions back in place. It bothers me enormously that vaccination is being framed as a personal choice when masking and distancing, which caused me far more suffering, were not. I'm not willing to go back to masking and missing out on time with my friends because people refuse to get vaccinated. Those who are medically eligible need to be vaccinated or be placed under house arrest, period. I was finally starting to make plans again, and now I'm having to consider going through another period of loss. I need you to promise that you'll make vaccination mandatory rather than put me through that again. It's completely unfair that people should have to suffer more when mass vaccination is a simple solution.”

Consent Agenda

The Board was requested to review the following Consent Agenda items for the August Regular Sessions.

21-0453 Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 22BCC00007 Library to Recognize Durham County Grant Revenue: LSTA EZ Grant for the Digital Navigators Project to Expand the Library's Appointment Reservation System

Claudia Aleman, Library Adult Services Manager, informed the Board the Digital Navigators Project would connect library staff to patrons by increased access and low-cost resources to close the digital divide.

21-0454 Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 22BCC00005 to Recognize \$3,311,290 from the NC DHHS Division of Public Health Epidemiology/ Communicable Disease Branch

Rod Jenkins, Public Health Director, stated funds were an addition to continue surveillance on

vaccination efforts. Claudia Hager, Interim County Manager, added the timing of the funds received would reduce the pressure of using ARPA funding.

21-0455 Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 22BCC00006 to Recognize \$75,000 from the NC DHHS Division of Public Health Women's and Children's Health Section/Immunization Branch

Rod Jenkins, Public Health Director, clarified the funds received were used to purchase supplies i.e., coolers and additional items to insure proper care of vaccines. He added ARPA funds were allocated to ensure Durham Public Schools Health Clinics were able to provide vaccinations and care to the children.

21-0456 Approve Public Health's Receipt of Vaccine Gift Card Incentives from the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS)

Rod Jenkins, Public Health Director, informed the Board Durham was a pilot County to present individuals who were transporting residents and for residents who received a first dose vaccine with a \$25 gift card. Residents were able to go to any event that Durham County facilitated to receive a gift card.

21-0462 EMS/MC Contract Amendments with OES's EMS Division

Jim Groves, OES Director, provided the Board with insight on two amendments and what they covered. Amendment one (1) covered DSO - the system used to capture patient care reports and provided the billing department access; Amendment two (2) covered the transfer fee.

21-0469 Approve Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Contract with Downtown Durham, Inc. for Identified Downtown Economic Development and Business Support Services

Andy Miracle, Economic Development Officer, confirmed that quarterly reports would be maintained, and annual reports would be sent out.

21-0474 BOCC Approval of the FY 2022 Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) Grant Application for the Durham County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Birkhead, Durham County Sheriff's Office, clarified the grant would be funded through the state and federal level to provide additional staff to fill 25 vacancies throughout the County. Additionally, the grant would provide updated safety protocols on highways in collaboration with State Troopers and to reduce inflated gun violence which occurred on highways.

There were no questions regarding the items below:

21-0449 HVAC Quarterly Service at Various Durham County Facilities RFP 21-041

21-0458 Board of Elections Robert Half Amendment Contract

21-0459 Board of Elections Rush Computer Rental Contract Amendment

21-0460 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Durham Public Schools (DPS) for Shelter Sites

21-0461 Contract Amendment between Evergreen Linen Services and Durham County

21-0463 Reclaimed Water Supply Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with the Town of Cary

21-0468 Approve Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Contract with Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce for Services Related to Industrial Recruitment and Economic Development

21-0470 Approve Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Contract with Made in Durham for Identified Workforce Development Support Services

21-0475 Capital Project Amendment No. 22CPA000001 - FY 2021-22 Appropriation of Approved County Contribution (PAYGO) Funds (\$4,191,336) for Multiple Capital Projects

21-0476 Capital Project Amendment No. 22CPA000005 - Closing Multiple Completed Capital Projects and Reducing Multiple Completed Capital Projects Budgets to \$0 in Preparation for Closure, and Budget Amendment 22BCC00008 Transferring \$971,918.45 in Unspent Project Funds to the Debt Service Fund.

21-0477 BOCC Review of 2021 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Application

21-0478 Approving an increase of \$250,000.00 in the maximum construction budget for Resolute Building Company for the Administration Building Refurbishment Project (4730DC137)

21-0450 Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Durham, Orange County, and Durham County Regarding Cost Sharing for the Transit Plan Governance Study

Discussion Items

21-0467 500 E. Main St. Redevelopment (Structured Parking) Programming/Parking Needs Analysis Update and Discussion

The Board was requested to receive an update on the programming phase/parking needs analysis for 500 E. Main Street Structured Parking projects. On March 8, 2021, the Board of County Commissioners authorized the execution of an architectural service agreement with Little Diversified Architectural Consulting for the programming phase of the 500 E. Main St. Structured Parking Deck. Since then, Little and their consultants have worked with County staff, ZOM Living, and Laurel St. Residential to determine the parking space requirements needed to support County employees, citizens using County facilities and provided support for the mixed used development project(s).

Eric Schoenagel, AIA, Project Manager informed the Board that parking would see a 40 percent reduction for Durham County staff, mainly in DSS with the Board's support for enhanced remote work as well, public transit options and ride sharing. He added this was leveraged to address the growth in staff and visitor demand.

Jeshua Pringle, CAPP, stated the goal for the parking deck was to reduce the parking demand by sharing parking spaces and acknowledging the parking demand by usage and time of day. He

added the parking spaces would fluctuate during times, but the deck would accommodate 876 parking spaces total – breakout of spaces listed below:

- 336 spaces for county employees
- 138 for market rate housing
- 110 for affordable housing and,
- 292 for retail and visitors
- 47 of the 878 parking spaces were ADA approved

The Board questioned the overall cost of the parking deck and whether it would be beneficial to reduce parking spaces for businesses afterhours. Peri Manns, ASLA, LEED GA, AGM/Deputy Director of Engineering and Environmental Services, stated the parking space reductions would stay in the allotted budget previously given and the parking deck would be accessible to the public after hours to give businesses assistance to grow.

Mr. Manns continued to say Durham had an abundance of parking Downtown, the problem was the public weren't sure of where to park. He added an app would be launched in conjunction with the City of Durham to better assist the public.

The Board inquired about the possibility of changing a deck into housing in the future; they also asked if the spaces would accommodate seniors and disabled persons. Mr. Schoenagel stated the parking deck would not be able to transition into a housing development in the future due to infrastructure. He added each level of the parking deck would have adequate ADA spaces, with majority being placed on the ground level for easier access.

The Board expressed their support in parking spaces being reduced from 1,047 to 878 and saving around \$9M in taxpayers dollars.

21-0457 City-County Strategic Youth Initiatives Update on Key Activities

The Board was requested to receive an update regarding the City-County Strategic Youth Initiative, based in the City of Durham Office on Youth (OOY), and ask any questions they wish. In 2017, Durham County entered into a five-year interlocal agreement with the City of Durham to offer partial funding support for a joint position, the Director of the Office on Youth (OOY), which was housed at the City and leading the work of the Strategic Youth Initiative.

Jaylen Segers, Office on Youth Assistant, shared a presentation which highlighted the following: *Youth Engagement Sessions on transit plans survey in August 2021, Durham Youth Listening Project launched in February 2021, Launched Durham Youth Leadership Fund to advance priorities in Spring 2021, Restructure of Youth Commission supporting authentic civic engagement launched Fall 2021.*

Lara Khalil, Director (City of Durham Office on Youth), stated the Durham Youth Leadership Fund was created using recommendations from the Durham Youth Listening Project. She added it was compiled of a 12-person youth-adult team (City/County staff & community members) with background identities centered from the listening project, youth with disabilities and youth who've aged out of foster care. Ms. Khalil stated the focus of the project was to welcome and provide supportive spaces for young people and their families, COVID emergency funds and

provided new opportunities for youth leadership and engagement.

Ms. Khalil stated the Youth Leadership Fund received a multitude of applications totaling \$707,000 in requests and of the applications submitted, only ten (10) grantees were chosen. She added any youth serving in a leadership capacity with the projects would be compensated for their time and the OOO would promote, share resources and amplify the work and findings for all grantees.

Alice Frasier, Youth Engagement Manager, presented the Board with upcoming changes made to the Durham Youth Commission, which included: *Name changed to Durham Changed by Youth (DCBY) Ambassador Program, Smaller cohort from 15 to ten (10), Ages 16-24 vs only high schoolers, Ambassadors would commit to 17 hours per month vs 4-6 hours per month, Applications launched August 2021, Inaugural Cohort launched October 2021, Update 2003 City's resolution.*

Ms. Frasier stated the DCBY would launch applications for the program in August 2021 and the Inaugural Cohort would launch in October 2021. She also added once a new cohort was established, the City's 2003 resolution to create a Youth Commission would be updated.

The Board inquired about transportation for younger adults. Mr. Segers stated that a vast majority of younger adults expressed their concerns on safety with buses – i.e., sidewalks, bus structures accessibility, and lack of times for bus arrivals. He also spoke briefly about the youth engagement session on transit plans survey for August 2021.

The Board questioned young adults obtaining apprenticeships versus jobs. Nori McDuffie, Office on Youth Project Assistant, stated conversations were held on how to achieve additional young adults in apprenticeships role and numbers would grow in the future with the help of the older adults.

The Board inquired about ways to achieve outreach in the rural communities of Durham, specifically Bahama and Rougemont areas and how to make people with disabilities feel safe. Ms. Frasier responded the spaces offered by the OOO were created to make young adults feel welcomed. She added this plan was crafted by UNC students and the programs OOO offered were available to all young adults in Durham County.

The Board expressed gratitude to the Office of Youth for the abundant programs offered to the youth of Durham and for the successful grant program for nonprofits.

21-0485 Durham Master Aging Plan (MAP) Budget Update

The Board was requested to receive an update on the budget allocation to support the Durham Master Aging Plan. The Durham Master Aging Plan community planning meetings occurred from March 2019 - December 2019 and followed the AARP/World Health Organization Network of Age-Friendly Communities format and their Eight Domains of Livability. A Durham Master Aging Plan Celebration occurred in a virtual format on Thursday, May 28, 2020 in which the completed plan was formally shared with the community. The plan was presented to the Board of Commissioners in March 2021 and the FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget included \$112,500

to support the Master Aging Plan implementation. The City of Durham would also consider funding to support plan implementation during the FY 2021-22 fiscal year.

Melissa Black, Coordinator, Durham Partnership for Seniors, updated the Board on the following: *Durham Partnership for Seniors and More, Academic Partners and Aging Well Durham.*

Shelisa Howard-Martinez, Consultant and Health Equity Technical Assistance Coordinator, NC DPH Chronic Disease and Injury Section, stated the purpose of this project was to mitigate harms due to COVID-19 by identifying, deploying and providing continuous support to the 25 Community Health Promoters (CHP). The CHP cohort was a diverse, multi-generational and ethnical group, which included older adults in subsidized housing and head of household living in public housing.

Janet Prvu Bettger, Director, Duke Royal Center for Translational Research in the Behavioral and Social Sciences of Aging, they were committed to make our communities age-free friendly communities. She added, out of 573 age-free friendly communities in the US, only 11 reside within NC with two (2) being located within Durham County. Ms. Bettger continued to say in order for the age-free friendly communities to be met, each academic partner would bring in resources to help build up the project.

Gina Upchurch, Executive Director for PharmAssist, stated in order to become an age-free friendly community, a broad base intersectional collaboration would need to be developed. She added to achieve this, Durham Partnership for Seniors and Durham Partnership for Seniors and More would need to merge together to create a new nonprofit project: Aging Well Durham. Aging Well Durham would help organize and formalize coalition work to make Durham an enjoyable place for all ages but specifically aging adults and adults with disabilities.

She added with the support of the Board

The Board questioned fraud which appeared to happen more often with the older population. Ms. Howard-Martinez stated there were programs available to assist with combating fraud and stolen check reports from seniors in the Durham community.

There was additional Board discussion on CHPs working to provide seniors with transportation to food agencies throughout the City and County.

The Board expressed their support for funding to implement the Master Aging Plan and recognized the importance of this plan. Ms. Upchurch added with the support of the Board, the next step would be to bring this to the City Council for their funding approval and deep participation.

21-0479 Discussion of Proposed Language Equity Program and Funding of \$50,000

The Board was requested to receive a presentation on a proposed Language Equity Program to improve Durham County's ability to enhance communications with its citizens. Over the past year, a work group researched and created a proposal to help improve our service delivery across

the enterprise. This item included a proposed policy to guide the provision of written and broadcast services for residents who are non-English speakers and residents who may have disabilities requiring improved communications. The presentation would review results of a survey, propose a policy and related resolution, and included a phased action plan and budget to move forward.

Deborah Craig-Ray, General Manager, informed the Board the Ideasphere Project Workgroup was created in 2019 to translate documents and news releases into Spanish and a pilot test was launched in January 2021 to translate Commissioner meeting agendas and Board highlights. She added the goal of this policy was to provide clear goals to help departments understand the commitment to bridge the gap in language barriers. The proposed action plan was broken into three (3) phases:

- Phase 1 - Short-term, needed survey
- Phase 2 - Add closed captioning to meetings/improve services for the hard of hearing population
- Phase 3 - Develop and implement ADA compliance, monitor workflow, prepare and deliver annual report to Commissioners

Ms. Craig-Ray added a resource guide was created for the most needed translations – noting that sign language and an updated survey showed the greatest need for translated documents were Spanish, French and Arabic.

There was Board discussion about supporting the adopted resolution, policy and funding request. The Board also requested a timeline for the three (3) phases of the program for the FY22-23 budget year.

Directive:

- **Staff to provide timeline for three (3) phases for FY22-23 budget.**

21-0472 Report on Digital Durham Initiative

The Board was requested to receive the report on Digital Durham to bridge the divide for all citizens in the City and County of Durham.

Laura B. Fogle, Founder of Digital Durham, discussed how Digital Durham provided a platform for equitable work. She stated compared to their white and younger counterparts, informational technology was significantly lower for people of color and the elderly. Ms. Fogle expressed digital equity was necessary for all citizens to have full participation in the economy; adding with Digital Durham, broadband access would widen, it would increase the number of citizens with access to internet devices, there would be an increase in digital skills and knowledge and there would be an overall increase in the Digital Equity Plan.

She added Digital Equity Plan could receive funds through ARPA and would be jointly funded through the City and County of Durham with an allocation of approximately \$215,000 per year for three (3) years.

The Board asked about low-income residents and those residing outside of the City limits who could not receive high-speed broadband services. They also recommended Ms. Fogle contact the Durham Public School Board Chair about potential partnership.

Directive:

- **Staff to contact school board chair about partnership**

21-0481 American Rescue Plan Act Update

The Board was requested to receive an update on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The American Rescue Plan would deliver \$350 billion for state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments to respond to the COVID-19 emergency. Funding would also focus on infrastructure issues that face communities including efforts to bring back jobs.

Jodi Miller, General Manager, stated Durham County received \$62,445,275 in ARPA funds which would need to be expended by December 31, 2026. She added five (5) primary ways counties may invest ARPA funds were to support public health response, address negative economic impacts, replace public sector revenue loss, premium pay for essential workers and, water, sewer and broadband infrastructure.

Claudia Hager, Interim County Manager, updated the Board on the progress of community engagement regarding how ARPA funds should be utilized. She added staff would vet proposals and provide feedback to Commissioners and City Council beginning September 2021. Durham County would create an ARPA website and rubric for evaluating and ranking ARPA proposals.

The Board questioned the different rubric models and the emergency broadband infrastructure. They requested staff present a draft rubric at the September 9th Work Session and evaluate/rank projects. The Board also requested a follow-up on the broadband infrastructure.

Directive:

- **Staff to present draft rubric for Board discussion to evaluate and rank projects at the September 9th Work Session.**
- **Staff to follow up on broadband infrastructure**

21-0488 Appoint Voting Delegate -North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) 114th Annual Conference

The Board was requested to suspend the rules and vote to appoint the following Commissioners for the 2021 NCACC 114th Annual Conference held on August 12-14, 2021.

Commissioner Burns moved, seconded by Commissioner Allam to suspend the rules.

The motion carried unanimously.

The Board was requested to appoint Chair Brenda Howerton as the voting delegate and Commissioner Nida Allam as the voting alternate for the NCACC Annual Conference.

Commissioner Burns moved, seconded by Commissioner Carter, to approve the voting delegates.

The motion carried unanimously.

21-0483 Commissioner Comments

The Board was requested to allow each Commissioner three minutes to report on conferences or make comments regarding issues that may be of interest or concern to the Board.

Commissioner Burns shared her experience as voting delegate at the 2021 National Association of Counties (NACo) conference. She highlighted the breakout session; noting the Public Safety Subcommittee Breakout which approved an amendment to make gun violence a public health and national crisis.

Commissioner Carter uplifted the work being led by Janel Ohletz, Agriculture Agent, and Mary Oxendine, Food Security Coordinator, in partnership with the Farmland Advisory Board to explore the idea of a Farm Campus. The Farm Campus would improve access to farmland, support resources to farmers, protect farmland and increase food security. Commissioner Carter stated the group applied for a grant with USDA to conduct a feasibility study.

Vice-Chair Jacobs raised the topic on the DELTA variant of COVID-19 and expressed the support of the requirement of masks to be worn indoors regardless of vaccination status and having staff vaccinated. She added the Eviction Moratorium ended on August 1, 2021 and shared ways to spread the word to landlords about the funds available to citizens. Commissioner Jacobs also encouraged the Board to coordinate a time to go meet for the 2021 National Night Out event.

Chair Howerton stated a meeting would be held with Rodney Jenkins, Public Health Director on the DELTA variant. She shared details from the NACo Conference which included the amount of NC Counties present and also highlighted breakout sessions – particularly the Diversity Equity session. She stated that she would share information to the community and Board from the national perceptives.

21-0465 Review of Commissioner Directives

The Board was requested to review staff follow-up regarding previously issued directives.

Board directives from previous meetings and staff follow-up were reviewed at Work Sessions. Staff strived to submit all directives into the system as accurately as possible soon after they were issued and to follow-up with the Board and/or with other relevant parties in an appropriate time frame.

Commissioners did not have anything to report at this time.

Closed Session

20-0687 Closed Session

The Board is requested to adjourn into Closed Session to:

- The Board is requested to adjourn into Closed Session to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

Commissioner Allam moved, seconded by Commissioner Burns, to adjourn to Closed Session.

The motion carried unanimously.

Reconvene from Closed Session

Chair Howerton announced that direction was given to staff.

Adjournment

Commissioner Allam moved, seconded by Commissioner Carter to adjourn the meeting.

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shaunecie Wardrick
Administrative Assistant