

**Public Comments Received for the May 23, 2022
Regular Session Meeting
(The Deadline for Comments was Sunday, May 22 at 2pm)**

Comment 1: Ronnie and Alicia Harvey – 605 Peyton Ave, Durham Item 22-0291

My husband and I are retired and reside in the Bethesda area of Durham County. We have lived in this area since 1999. Our family had in house cats during the 1980's and 90's which also were seen by our Vet regularly and kept in home. We had two dogs between 1999 and 2017 which were housed in our large fenced in yard and our home and county taxes paid on them. Both spayed females that were again regularly seen by their Vet. Both lived to be in their teens and when they became deceased with age and cancer were put to sleep and our request at the Durham County Animal Shelter a service we are extremely thankful for the county providing since the price of their Vet to do was extremely expensive. Instead we donated animal bedding, clothing and food to the shelter.

After the dogs left us we begin to notice a rash of feral cats coming into the yard spraying the plants, leaving tracks all over the cars and trucks, leaving cat hair all over the outdoor furniture cushions. They continued to breed and breed. Thankfully we were able to contact the Durham County Sheriff's department and have them set out cat traps. This was successful and we continued to use this service over the years to keep our neighborhood and yard clear. These were very feral cats and with continued cat trap services over the years they were kept at a minimum where we did not see, hear or smell them.

During the COVID we were not able to use the services. It was almost 2 years before we were able to call and have the traps brought back out. Since April 20th of this year to date May 20 we have been relieved of 11 adult feral cats. We are very grateful now our low nesting birds do not have their eggs destroyed and their babies eaten. There is no trash torn and dragged through the street, no odd cat hair on our outdoor furniture cushions and best of all no paw prints all over our 4 vehicles.

We need to continue the ordinance as it is even if you trap, spay/neuter/give shots but then release back to our woods the only problem we have faced from the feral cats will be no more babies. The ones you release may continue to live another 5 to 10 years with no future medical care or updated rabies shots. (needed every 3 years). So please listen to the citizens who use this service and allow the Animal Control Ordinance #22-0291 remain as it stands. Thank you for allowing us to speak through this e-mail

Comment 2: Dan Day – 833 Gaston Manor Dr., Durham Budget Public Comment

I spent a most uncomfortable afternoon last December standing in a Durham alley-way listening to the stories of renters who were to be evicted by Christmas because their landlord had sold their apartments. Apart from the intervention of others, most of those longtime and faithful rent-paying residents would soon have been homeless.

I cannot 'solve' the problem of homelessness any more than you can. But you can allocate more of my tax dollars and additional ARPA funds to relieve the horror of it for Durham's people. Please vote to do this! With appreciation for your labors

Comment 3: Jan Williams, Durham CAN Housing Team Budget Public Comment

As a member of the Housing Team of Durham CAN, I've seen how powerless families feel when they receive an eviction notice. Many families are trapped because they have become so behind in their rent during the pandemic. I would like to ask you to use some of the Additional ARPA funds to provide rental assistance to some of the 1,500 families currently on the waiting list for rental relief. This is even more needed with the downturn in the economy when family budgets are even tighter! Empower families to get back on their feet!

Comment 4: Letter for Sheriff Andrews – See Attachment

Comment 5: Jenny Jones Coldren – Durham Resident – 919-438-1110 Budget Public Comment

I spent 7 years teaching for DPS and then quit a job that I loved. Let me explain why: After I paid for childcare for 1 in daycare and afterschool for 2 more, I wasn't making any money. This is the situation so many of our teachers are finding themselves in, and with an unprecedented teacher shortage, DPS cannot afford to lose any more. We will lose good teachers if we cannot compete with Chapel Hill and Wake County.

One of my children has pronounced special needs. I understand that spending caps on the number of EC children from the state level has severely harmed all NC students, but my daughter's school struggles to provide the service time she needs due to inadequate teacher positions. Additionally, so many teachers are working second jobs and working on IEP paperwork well into the night that when they arrive at school in the morning, they are not going to perform at their best. This might work for a "normal" child like my son, but it doesn't work for my daughter who requires a teacher to provide incredibly specific directions due to her language disability, needs a teacher who can notice subtle cues that she is becoming dysregulated to help her cope with her PTSD, and demands so much patience from her teacher due to her extreme ADHD. None of those are possible for a teacher who is stressed about money, tired from being overworked, and frustrated that they have been so consistently underappreciated in our society.

My daughter and other children like her need the very best teachers and they cannot get that without us fully funding the DPS budget. As a taxpayer and a parent, I am urging you to find a way in the same way that our teachers found a way to support our children through a pandemic.

Comment 6: Thibault Worth – Durham Resident Budget Public Comment

I am submitting this comment ahead of the budget meeting on May 23. I understand that the county is not including the solarize program and it's budget. I would like to see the program included. Durham offers support to homeowners for rain gardens, cisterns and for a number of other environmentally friendly initiatives. Why not solar panels as well? Given that the climate crisis is one of the biggest threats to humanity in our time and given that the county is supporting these other environmentally friendly initiatives it seems to make sense.

Comments Received AFTER the 2pm Deadline

Comment 1: Dena Verdesca – Durham Resident – Received via email at 3:29pm

Duplicate Comment: Pam Morrison – Member of Durham CAN – received at 4:23pm

Duplicate Comment: Edythe Thompson – ReBuild Durham CEO – received at 7:33pm

Rental Assistance funds are urgently needed for 1,500 households on the waiting list for the City's Durham Rent Relief. Legal Aid of North Carolina has spent nearly all of the \$6 Million in the City's Durham Rent Relief program to pay rent for 1,200 households at risk of Eviction. But City funds ran out with 1,500 applications on the waiting list. County Eviction Diversion funds are limited too.

We ask the County and City to fund a total of \$6 Million for Rental Assistance to help at least 1,500 households on the waiting list and other low-income families at risk of Eviction now.

Comment 2: Russell Pierce – Durham Resident – Received via email at 4:19pm

Rental Assistance funds are urgently needed for 1,500 households on the waiting list for the City's Durham Rent Relief. Legal Aid of North Carolina has spent nearly all of the \$6 Million in the City's Durham Rent Relief program to pay rent for 1,200 households at risk of Eviction. But City funds ran out with 1,500 applications on the waiting list. County Eviction Diversion funds are limited too.

I join with The Coalition for Affordable Housing and Transit, Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, People's Alliance and others in asking the City and County to fund a total of \$6 Million for more Rental Assistance to help 1,500 households on the waiting list and help other low-income families at risk of Eviction.

As one of the community's lead agencies providing both affordable housing and homeless services, we are seeing the impact of on our most vulnerable neighbors each day. As an agency that is itself a landlord but also works with a network of more than 30 local landlords, we know the favorable impact this investment can also have for those who provide housing to these vulnerable populations.

Comment 3: Robert and Jeanne Kruhm – 8001 Mackenzie Ct., Durham – Received at 8:08pm

Our family supports the use of County ARPA funds to provide Rental Assistance for the 1,500 households currently on the waiting list for Durham Rent Relief and other low-income families at risk of eviction. As a member of Watts Street Baptist Church and Walltown Food Pantry volunteer, we are seeing undeserved County citizens adversely affected by the pandemic who are at risk of becoming homeless. Also, ARPA funds could be used to provide homeowner repair and accessibility grants to help long-time residents stay in their homes.

Comment 4: Evelyn Machtinger – Durham Resident – Received via email at 8:52pm

Durham has 1,500 households at risk of Eviction now. Most are families with children, who are on the City's Durham Rent Relief waiting list. These families urgently need help before they lose their homes. Children who are displaced from their homes may not finish the school year. We ask the County and City to work together to fund \$6 Million to help these 1,500 households on the City's waiting list and families with children at risk of Eviction now.

As a retired social worker, I worked with too many families struggling with the threat of eviction. As a school social worker, I witnessed directly the impact on children living in homeless shelters or sleeping in their family car. They suffered tremendously, emotionally, behaviorally, and with declines in academic progress. Every family should have a safe, affordable place they can call home.