

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

Monday, August 4, 2025

9:00 A.M. Work Session

MINUTES

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

Present: Chair Nida Allam, Vice Chair Dr. Mike Lee, and Commissioners Michelle Burton,
Wendy Jacobs and Stephen Valentine

Presider: Chair Nida Allam

Zoom Hybrid

Participants: 2

Citizen Comments

The Board of County Commissioners provided a 30-minute comment period to allow Durham County citizens an opportunity to speak. Citizens were given the option to deliver their Citizen Comments in-person or virtually via email to the Clerk no later than Sunday, August 3rd at 12 noon.

There were no citizen comments.

Consent Agenda

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

25-0377 Approval of Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 26BCC007 Appropriating \$1,500,000 of General Fund Fund Balance to support the Durham Affordable Housing Loan Fund

County Manager Claudia Hager clarified that for every dollar entered in the fund, four (4) dollars were returned.

25-0390 Approval of Purchase of Goods Contract with Batteries in NC & S.W.S. LLC in the Amount of \$656,331.78 for the Sheriff's Office FY26 Vehicle Equipment

County Manager Hager stated the vehicle supply had shifted and from a procurement standpoint, it was best to keep the fleet current and managed. She continued to say there was a supply chain issue with vehicles across the country.

25-0391 Approval of FY 2025-26 Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) Grant Funding Resolution

County Manager Hager stated accidents and fatalities were a part of the report, and the recordings could be shared with the Board. She added quarterly reports from the Sheriff's Office could also be shared with the Board.

The Board suggested inviting the Sheriff to attend a Board meeting to share the recordings in person.

Keith Webster, Captain of Patrol Division, explained the North Carolina Highway Patrol responded to all accidents outside of City limits per the General Statute; however, the Sheriff's Office did write reports if the accident was in a parking lot or public vehicle area.

Directive:

- **Staff to provide reports and recordings reflecting accidents and fatalities.**
- **Staff to provide quarterly reports from the Sheriff's Office.**
- **Sheriff's Office to attend a Board meeting to share the recordings in person.**

25-0408 Approval of the FY26 Durham Annual Transit Work Program Global Operating and Capital Agreements

The Board requested an updated presentation for the community explaining the County Transit tax dollars and how projects were decided for funding.

Directive:

- **Staff to provide an updated presentation for the community explaining the County Transit tax dollars and how projects were decided for funding.**

25-0428 Adopt the Emergency Services Resolution for the 2025 Eno-Haw Hazard Mitigation Plan

Dwane Brinson, Assistant County Manager, stated a link to the resolution could be shared with the Board.

Elizabeth Schroder, Office of Emergency Services – Emergency Management, Chief Emergency Manager, shared the plan was completed in May 2025 and anticipated the plan would be reviewed after the recovery phase. She added the plan did cover flooding, but not recent flooding due to Hurricane Chantal. Ms. Schroder continued to say the plan was reviewed on an annual basis and updated every five (5) years.

The Board requested a list of individuals involved in the creation of the plan.

Directive:

- **Staff to provide link for resolution.**
- **Staff to provide a list of individuals involved in the creation of the plan.**

25-0430 Request Approval of \$127,050.00 Contract with Student U to Administer the Durham Community Schools Program

County Manager Hager stated the same amount of funds were given and a contract would be written for Student U and would be used for the Community Schools Program.

Commissioner Burton requested a yearly report to see the progress of the program.

Commissioner Jacobs requested the language of the scope of work be clarified to include annual reports to the Commissioners and for staff to provide the annual report for FY24-25.

Directive:

- **Staff to provide a yearly report to see the progress of the program.**
- **Staff to change the language of the scope of work to be clarified to include annual reports to the Commissioners.**
- **Staff to provide the annual report for FY24-25.**

There were no questions regarding the items below:

25-0193 Award on Contract for Bliss Products and Services, Inc. in the amount of \$246,815.70, to replace three (3) sections of bleacher seating at Durham County Memorial Stadium (RFP 25-023)

25-0402 Approve Contract Award to Froehling and Robertson, Inc., for Professional Engineering Services for Materials Testing for Chin Page, Page Park, Slater Lift Stations and Pipeline Construction for the Utilities Division in the Amount of \$124,913.00 with a Not to Exceed Amount of \$138,000.00

25-0426 Approval of Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 26BCC008 Cooperative Extension to Recognize \$66,364 from Welcome Baby Smart Start Grant Program

Discussion Items

25-0422 Alliance Health Update on FY 2025-26 Budget

The Board was requested to receive an FY 2025-26 budget update from Alliance Health.

Alliance Health provided a comprehensive update on the administration and programming with particular focus on recent federal policy shifts that could impact program funding and service delivery. Discussions also shared context on historical funding patterns.

Kelly Goodfellow, Executive Vice President, confirmed the ability to utilize other funds was related to additional members being covered by Medicaid Expansion. She continued to say should changes occur to Medicaid, members would return to uninsured needs, and the use of county and state funds would increase. Rob Robinson, Chief Executive Officer, added that Alliance Health upped their benefit package to ensure uninsured and Medicaid members received the same service.

Questions were raised regarding which schools had licensed clinicians, and which children would be targeted. Sean Schreiber, Chief Operating Officer, stated he would provide a list of schools who offered licensed clinicians and a full range of children with intellectual development disabilities would be targeted. Those service systems and funding were different from the typical behavior services being offered; however, the school-based care team could refer any child who needed extra support to those services.

Mr. Schreiber answered questions regarding how often Alliance met with Durham Public Schools (DPS) administration and the number of children served in and out of DPS. He shared the *Durham School-Based Team* (SBT) was not functioning at schools yet; however, planning for SBT started in early 2025. Mr. Schreiber continued to say treatment services were for children who met the

plan eligibility or managed care. Foster kids were not a part of the tailored plan, as the tailored plan focused on the population of children who were school based. He added that the data of school-based children who were funded by Alliance Health could be provided to the Board.

Mr. Schreiber clarified the position of the *SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery* (SOAR) workers were located at the Durham Crisis Response Center and those positions were embedded in multiple outside communities.

Ms. Goodfellow suggested providing a forecast to show how many future fiscal years it would be before funds were exhausted.

Mr. Schreiber stated a list of schools could be provided to show how many PreK schools were involved with Alliance Health.

Rob Robinson, Chief Executive Officer, shared that Wake and Mecklenburg expressed interest in what programs Durham County offered and Alliance was happy to duplicate their programs. Such programs included the Peer Run Respite Program – a program designed to offer home-like settings that were among the least restrictive options for behavioral health treatment, offering 24-hour access to peer support specialists who provided support from the perspective of lived experience. He added members were aware of the behavioral health crisis line number and Alliance Health received thousands of calls every month.

Sean Schreiber, Chief Operating Officer, informed the Board there was no formal relationship between 911 call centers and Alliance Health.

Mr. Robinson highlighted that a quarterly dashboard included a data summary of the Recovery Response Center, Mobile Crisis Unit, and the Behavioral Health Walk-in.

The Board requested data pertaining to the number of individuals being sent to the Recovery Response Center due to the decline in the drop off from law enforcement. Mr. Schreiber shared there was a similar issue at the Durham Regional drop off space for the *Integrated Veteran Care* (IVC) – which offered long-term stay programs for up to 10 participants by setting up apartment living for up to two (2) years and participants would receive wraparound services.

The Board suggested integrating the Behavioral Crisis Line information into communication outlets due to the potential cuts of SNAP and Medicaid.

Directive:

- **Staff to provide the data on school-based children who were funded by Alliance Health.**
- **Staff to provide a forecast to show how many future fiscal years it would be before funds were exhausted.**
- **Staff to provide a list of schools to show how many PreK schools were involved with Alliance Health.**
- **Staff to provide data pertaining to the number of individuals being sent to the Recovery Response Center due to the decline in the drop off from law enforcement.**

- **Staff to integrate Behavioral Crisis Line information into communication outlets due to the potential cuts of SNAP and Medicaid.**

25-0241 County Grant Landscape – The Department of Social Services and Public Health Department Update on Federal and State Policy Changes and Funding Implications

The Board was requested to receive the presentation on the County Grant Landscape.

The Department of Social Services and the Public Health Department provided a comprehensive update on the administration and performance of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid programs in Durham County, with particular focus on recent federal policy shifts that could impact program funding and service delivery.

Staff presented current program statistics, recent federal policy changes, operational challenges, and community impact data for both SNAP and Medicaid services. The presentation emphasized potential funding reductions which resulted from federal policy modifications and the anticipated effects on Durham County residents and county operations.

The Board inquired about the demographic breakdown of age group for Medicaid Expansion. Maggie Clapp, Social Services Director, stated she was unsure if the State had any findings but would investigate those numbers. The Board also requested the range of best- and worst-case scenarios should funding end, as well as strategies around communication to federal and state representatives on what should be advocated.

Discussion was held regarding residents recertifying Medicaid services and creating an internal infrastructure. Ms. Clapp shared the Department of Social Services (DSS) were training staff to be universal – staff would be cross-trained on processing applications and recertifications. Regarding creating an internal infrastructure, Ms. Clapp stated work was being done with the Public Information Office (PIO) to determine what exactly was needed and how to get the information to the public. She added staff were readily available on site at Lincoln Community Health Center, Duke Health, and the Homeless Shelter to assist residents.

Chair Allam stated a Durham Benefits Working Group was created to provide access to residents and integrate systems for better access due to residents not taking advantage of over \$80 million in resources. County Manager Hager added the working group partnered with over 136 entities, and would plan discussions for joint meetings.

Ms. Clapp stated data could be provided to the Board to reflect how businesses were impacted by SNAP and Medicaid benefits being cut, as well as data reflecting the number of residents who received Medicaid.

Commissioner Jacobs suggested inviting the Delegation to a legislative breakfast for a direct briefing on SNAP and Medicaid cuts.

Discussion was held regarding the amount of funding needed to continue *Durham's Innovative Nutrition Education (DINE)* Program through 2026 and if there were organizations who focused on nutrition. Dr. Rodney Jenkins, Public Health Director, stated at least \$1.2 million was needed to continue the DINE Program. Elizabeth Stevens, Assistant Director of Public Health, added there

were some national organizations who focused on nutrition, i.e., Kellogg; however, it was noted that Durham was not a part of their geographic focus area. She continued to say state level organizations were more suitable to look at; however, many foundations were facing challenges, i.e., NC State and the University of Chapel Hill who had a big SNAP-ed program, as well as other jurisdictions.

Rachel Elledge, Public Health Nutrition Administrator, stated should funds be located, the program could continue through the fiscal year, leaving staff more time to find additional funding through other organizations.

Directive:

- **Staff to provide demographic breakdown of age groups for Medicaid Expansion.**
- **Staff to provide the range of best- and worst-case scenarios should funding end.**
- **Staff provide strategies around communication to federal and state representatives on what should be advocated.**
- **Staff to provide data to reflect on how businesses were impacted by SNAP and Medicaid benefits being cut.**
- **Staff to provide data reflecting the number of residents who received Medicaid.**
- **Staff to invite the Delegation to a legislative breakfast for a direct briefing on SNAP and Medicaid cuts.**

25-0423 Golden LEAF Foundation Community-Based Grants Initiative County Manager Endorsement Process

The Board was requested to receive an informational briefing on the process for the County Manager to endorse projects for the Golden LEAF Foundation's Community-Based Grants Initiative. Founded by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1999 to receive and manage a portion of the State of North Carolina's disbursement under the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement of 1998, the Golden LEAF Foundation was created to provide economic impact assistance to economically affected or tobacco-dependent regions of North Carolina in the form of grantmaking, collaboration, innovation, and other activities.

Of its grantmaking efforts, one of Golden LEAF's most important grant programs was its Community-Based Grants Initiative (CBGI), through which the organization annually made \$11 million available for grants to public sector organizations (501(c)(3) nonprofits, local governmental entities, and institutes of higher education) within one of the North Carolina Department of Commerce Prosperity Zones. For Fiscal Year 2026, local governments and other eligible organizations located within Prosperity Zone 11 - which included Durham County - would be eligible to apply for funding. Under the program, Golden LEAF would award up to three projects in any one County, with total funding allocated per County not exceeding \$1.5 million. Generally, grants were awarded for projects that addressed one or more of the three Golden LEAF priority areas - Job Creation and Economic Investment, Workforce Preparedness, and Agriculture.

County Manager Hager informed the Board, Golden LEAF began advertising for the award months prior, so Durham County had a significantly shorter review process. John Keefer, Grants Administrator, added that the grant would rotate between prosperity zones and Durham County would have the opportunity in future years.

Mr. Keefer explained Durham County departments could apply for the grant by submitting a proposal; adding, they would not participate in the evaluation process to ensure there were no conflicts of interest.

Adjournment

Commissioner Jacobs moved, seconded by Commissioner Burton, to adjourn the meeting.

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sk. Wardrick', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shaunecie Wardrick
Administrative Assistant