

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

Monday, March 25, 2019

7:00 P.M. Regular Session

MINUTES

Place: Commissioners' Chambers, Second Floor, Durham County Government Administrative Complex, 200 East Main Street, Durham, North Carolina

Present: Chair Wendy Jacobs, Vice-Chair James Hill and Commissioners Heidi Carter, Brenda Howerton and Ellen Reckhow

Presider: Chair Wendy Jacobs

Opening of Regular Session - Pledge of Allegiance

Other Business

State of the County Address

Delivered by Chair Wendy Jacobs

“Welcome everyone to the 2019 Durham State of the County Address.

It is my honor to stand before you today as Chair of the Durham County Board of Commissioners to bring you this message. Other than being the mother of my three wonderful children, it is the highlight of my life, to represent the people of Durham every day and put my heart and soul into doing my best for the people of our community.

I am grateful to the people of Durham for this privilege of serving as your county commissioner and I am grateful to our board for the privilege of serving in this leadership role. I want to recognize my esteemed fellow board members, Vice Chair James Hill and Commissioners Heidi Carter, Ellen Reckhow and Brenda Howerton. I value the unique perspective, skills and knowledge that you each bring to the work we do every day for the community we all love so passionately.

I want to acknowledge our County Canager, County Attorney, General Managers, Chief of Staff, Clerk to our Board and all our department heads and Durham County staff for the incredible work you do to serve the people of our community. You are Durham County Government.

The State of the County is an opportunity to reflect on where we are in our mission for Durham County to be a place where all people can Live, Work and THRIVE. This is a chance to reflect on our achievements, our challenges and where we need to remain focused in the years ahead.

Events of the past several months and weeks around the Durham Orange Light Rail Project have been challenging for our community. This project has been a focal point for the future of Durham and our region for many years and for many reasons. It is the heart of our strategy to provide an alternate type of highway- a high capacity, accessible, reliable, environmentally friendly mode of public transit as traffic congestion increases every day on our roads. It has been the centerpiece of our strategy to address the reality that 20 people move here every day and

over the next 30 years we will need to figure out where 160,000 more people will live and how they too will get around. This project also has been the focus of our land use planning for the past 15 years. We have smartly funneled almost half of our new residential, commercial and office development into the light rail corridor. We have spent years creating detailed land use plans around the station areas to prioritize affordable housing and create walkable, high density, mixed use neighborhoods people like to live in.

We have also looked to light rail as a tool to help us address underlying structural racial inequities. Many people and neighborhoods continue to suffer from the historic remnants of redlining and disinvestment as well as the dislocation, destruction and disconnection caused by I-405. The light rail has been seen as a way to physically bridge this divide and create connectivity - bringing a major infrastructure investment to the doorstep of North Carolina Central University and the Alston Ave and Fayetteville Street corridors.

We are seeing that gentrification and rising housing costs linked to the revitalization of downtown Durham and new economic opportunities are exacerbating inequities. When we think about the State of the County today and the great things happening in Durham, we must also face the harsh reality that 26% of our children are now living in poverty- 37% of black children and 36% of Hispanic children compared to 8% of white children. The child poverty rate is actually increasing in Durham, during this period of overall economic growth! And while our overall poverty rate is decreasing, it is still above neighboring county, state and national averages and disproportionately higher for people of color. White Durham residents are more likely than black residents to own their own home and get a mortgage and almost a third of black and Hispanic households have zero or negative net worth.

The reason the light rail project has been seen as a way to address poverty in Durham is because of the critical nexus between housing, jobs and transportation. Two out of every three permanent affordable Durham Housing Authority units will be footsteps from a light rail stop, a gateway to 90,000 good jobs within a 50-minute, traffic free commute. And why does this matter? Because 60% of these residents, mostly people of color, are currently unemployed. Plans for job training programs for the 20,000 construction, operations and maintenance light rail jobs were underway. Affordable housing. Affordable transportation. Good paying jobs. We need all three to create conditions for Shared Prosperity.

Studies show that Durham and Wake Counties rank among the lowest 6% of counties in the United States for upward economic and social mobility and that access to transportation to good jobs is the factor mostly highly correlated with a person's ability to move out of poverty.

Transportation is Freedom. Freedom to wake up every day and know you can go wherever you want to go. Durham must be a place where everyone has this freedom that many of us take for granted. Durham County's ability to be the best place to do business, raise a family or attend school will be determined by our ability to create Shared Prosperity.

Racial Equity Trainings are an important first step that must be followed by structural, systemic change related to access to capital, education and job training, affordable housing and transportation and good paying jobs for ALL people in Durham. This is why so much has been at stake with the Durham Orange Light Rail Project.

This brings me to another reason the past few weeks have been so challenging for Durham County. Duke University is Durham's largest employer- with more than 35,000 jobs. Many Durham residents work at the university or medical center. Duke was founded on and continues to benefit from the hard work and talent of Durham residents just as Durham benefits in many ways from the university and medical center. Many people in our community are strongly connected to both Durham and Duke, people like me who is a Duke alum, mother of a Duke grad and married to a Duke employee. The fates of Duke and Durham are inextricably intertwined. This is one of the reasons why the decision of Duke leadership to not be a partner in the light rail project has been so devastating.

Indeed, in recent years, Duke's priorities have been aligned with Durham as a stakeholder in the revitalization of downtown, community health and Durham Public Schools. In the coming weeks and months ahead, we will need

to have community conversations about the relationship between Duke and Durham and how we will forge a new path forward.

At this moment, the future of the Durham Orange Light Rail project is uncertain. But what is certain is that the need to manage our growth, sustain our economic development, and combat poverty and racial inequities must be our collective community focus and the foundation for any future plans.

I am proud of the work that Durham County Government is doing to create equity and shared prosperity in Durham.

Our number one priority is our children. The most strategic investment we can make to combat intergenerational poverty is ensure all our children are ready to learn by the time they start kindergarten at age 5. Research has shown that by this time, most of the critical pathways for learning in the brain have been set. That is why the hall mark of Durham County's work over the past year is our first steps to create our ground-breaking Durham Pre-K Program. Our board could not be prouder of this effort which is like no other early childhood education program in the United States.

This past year we delivered on our promise of One Penny for Pre-K and invested more than \$3.5 million in our Durham Pre-K Program. With the leadership and expertise of **Linda Chappel, staff of Child Care Services Association** and the **Durham Pre-K Governance Committee**, we are creating a program that will leverage the potential and build the capacity of existing Durham Pre-K programs, increase the salaries of our severely underpaid Pre-K and assistant teachers, invest in their professional development and create a high quality Pre-K curriculum that exceeds the standards of five star Pre-K classrooms.

To date we have 18 provider sites who have entered the technical phase of our expansion, 13 Pre-K classrooms that are in our pipeline to open as Durham Pre-K sites in August 2019 and five classrooms officially opening as Durham Pre-K programs this month! We will also be providing subsidized or sliding scale fees to support the goal of universal access to high-quality Pre-K education.

This is a long term, systemic investment that will help us change the fact that only 38% of children in Durham, predominately white children, begin kindergarten ready to learn. High-quality Pre-K education is the first step of a successful Cradle to Career continuum that begins with an equitable foundation for life-long learning and ends with a pathway to a self-sustaining job.

The price tag is high. It will eventually cost \$15 million per year to fully implement the Durham Pre-K Program. Durham County cannot do this alone. We invite community stakeholders and partners to share in this vision and help us ensure all of our children can thrive.

Other highlights of our *Strategic Plan Goal Area 1 Community Prosperity and Empowerment* are also tied to our board's focus on Cradle to Career. Another important priority is making sure we have a diversity of good paying jobs with different skill levels for people in our community.

In the past year, our economic development investments have resulted in 1,440 new jobs and \$338 million of new investment in Durham County. We have seen expansions of Research Triangle Park (RTP) companies such as Biogen, Sensus and LabCorp. AveXis, also in RTP, will invest more than \$100 million in Durham County and create 400 new jobs, many of these, manufacturing and warehousing jobs that do not require advanced degrees but pay average annual wages of more than \$70,000. And in Treyburn Industrial Park, Corning will invest more than \$189 million to expand their campus and create 317 more jobs of which 259 will be manufacturing jobs that also pay about \$70,000 per year.

We are very fortunate in Durham. We have lots of jobs, nearly 200,000. And our county has the highest average wage jobs in the state. But many of our residents who need them the most, are still not benefiting from these great jobs.

We call on our partners –our manufacturing employers in RTP and Treyburn, Durham Tech, Durham Public Schools (DPS), the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), NC Works Career Center, the Durham Housing Authority, the Chamber of Commerce, Made In Durham, our Workforce Development Board and our employment non -profits- to create the pathway of internships, apprenticeship, certifications and trainings necessary to put Durham youth and adults in line for the good jobs Durham County is supporting with economic incentives.

At last week’s Durham CAN meeting attended by 650 people we also heard this call. I applaud Durham CAN for helping to lead the way. We have all of the ingredients. The time is now! Let’s make this pipeline happen!

Supporting another ingredient of the Cradle to Career continuum- Durham County is proud to fund Durham Tech’s rebranded College Promise program that offers every Durham high school graduate a \$2,000 scholarship which covers most of the cost of attending two full years at Durham Tech. The Durham Tech College Promise can propel every Durham youth into a post certificate job or continued studies at a four-year university. Every high school student and parent in Durham needs to know about this College Promise. Money should not stand in the way of any high school graduate in Durham County pursuing a trade, career or college.

Nothing is more important than investing in the education of our children, our most precious resource. Over one third of Durham County’s budget, more than \$150 million is allocated for education. We continue to provide strong support for DPS with some of the highest school funding levels in the state. We rank third in per pupil spending, and fourth in teacher salary supplements. DPS is also impacted by the challenges of our children living in poverty as 59% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

One of the solutions to this challenge is the Community Schools model. Durham County is directly funding two pilot Community Schools programs- at Lakewood and Southwest Elementary Schools. The role of the Community Schools coordinator is to help empower and engage parents, teachers and students to come up with school-based solutions and provide better connections to community resources to support student achievement. We look forward to seeing the progress with this school community-based approach in the years ahead.

We must face the challenge of increased charter school enrollments, declining DPS school populations, and the need for redistricting to make best use of existing capacity and associated efficiencies in school operations. In our upcoming Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and budget process, Durham County will look at strategies to address additional funding needed for a new or renovated Northern High School and a new elementary school in South Durham where residential and school age population is growing.

Our demographics show that we have the highest population of 24-34-year olds in the Triangle region. We encourage young families to choose to send their kids to DPS. There are great things happening in so many of our schools and we know that our public schools, our community and our society is strongest when children of all backgrounds, income levels and races go to school and learn together. Our public schools can create a community of Shared Prosperity!

In ***Strategic Plan Goal Area 2 Health and Well Being for All***, Durham County continues to implement programs to address health disparities, so everyone can be healthy. This past year, The Board of County Commissioners, adopted an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Resolution. We now understand that when children, especially young children, are exposed to toxic stress, biochemical and structural changes in the developing brain lead to adverse effects on overall health and wellness. But we also know that with the right interventions these negative impacts can be reduced. Out of the top 10 large counties in North Carolina, Durham has the highest percentage of our population, 25.9%, considered to be at risk from ACES.

The Aces Task Force, with leadership from Commissioners Carter, Reckhow and Howerton, envisions Durham as a Trauma informed Community. Work is underway to build a Community Resilience Model. 15 staff members are now trained to teach others about the impact of trauma and chronic stress. This coming Thursday is a county wide convening for a trauma informed community training. County supported programs such as Reach out and Read provides ACES screening for mothers, babies and children with connections to support services.

Similar to state and national trends, Durham’s rising foster care population seems to be an alarming symptom of issues like ACES, poverty, substance use, and mental illness.

We currently have 309 children in foster care with 61 of these children eligible for legal adoption. Durham residents have opened their hearts and we now have a record number of 108 licensed foster homes, but this is still not enough to meet the urgent need. In fact, we spent more than \$3.8 million on our foster care population last year, more than our Durham Pre-K program. A special appreciation to our Department of Social Services Director **Ben Rose** and **DSS staff** who are on the front lines helping people in crisis every day. This year we celebrate DSS proud legacy: *100 years of Providing Compassionate Care to Durham Citizens Since 1919.*

In our 2017 Community Health Assessment, published in 2018, we see the interrelationship between health and poverty. The county wide health survey identified the community’s top five priorities for good health: 1) Affordable Housing, 2) Access to Healthcare, 3) Poverty, 4) Mental Health, 5) Obesity, Diabetes, Food Access. These priorities underscore the importance of the social determinants of health. Research shows that environmental factors are more impactful on health outcomes than biological or genetic factors and we see that play out in Durham where your life expectancy is tied to your zip code.

Durham County continues to take the lead in addressing medication misuse and substance use. Since our Leadership Forum last February, representatives from sectors across Durham have formed Durham Joins Together to Save Lives, a county wide task force chaired by **Dr. Wanda Boone, Director of Durham TRY – Together for Resilient Youth** and myself.

Three task forces, 1) Prevention and Education, led by Dr. Angeloe Burch and Dr. Wanda Boone, 2) Mental Health and Treatment, led by Cindy Haynes and Dr. Ashwin Patkar, and 3) Data, led by Ryan Bell and Michelle Easter, have been hard at work on cross system collective impact strategies. I am so proud of the collaborative and innovative work of these committees that had already resulted in several grants and pilot programs to offer follow up treatment and peer support for people at their point of contact and plans for a MAT- Medically Assisted Treatment -program for people in our Detention Center. Durham County Public Health Department continues to lead the way promoting our free Naloxone kits to reverse overdoses, and our free needle exchange program. The great news is that occurrences of overdoses are declining in Durham. But we are seeing a disturbing sign of racial disparities with higher per capita overdoses, especially with heroin and cocaine, within our black population.

Looking at crime data, we see the positive trend of continuing decrease in property crimes. But violence plagues our community. Durham County ranks fourth highest in the state for violent crime with 613 incidents per 100,000 people. We consider violence to be a public health crisis because of its detrimental impact on the health and well-being of individuals, families and neighborhoods. We recognize the urgent need to stop violence as it can spread like an epidemic in real time and across generations.

We see our investment in Bull City United, our violence interruption program, paying off dividends. Over the past year violent incidents have declined in both the McDougald Terrace and Southside neighborhoods where **BCU staff** were involved in 157 successful mediations, an increase of 104% over last year. BCU workers also connected 44 people to jobs with more than half of these people gaining employment. Thank you to our BCU staff! As noted by a Department of Justice violent crime expert speaking in Durham several years ago, the best way to stop a bullet is a job.

Our children and our elderly are our most vulnerable populations. Like the rest of our state, nation and world, Durham’s senior population is growing. This is a demographic trend we must plan for and address right now. I am proud to report that we have made great progress over the past year.

Last spring, Durham city and county partnered in a Livability Index Self -Assessment to see just how Age Friendly we are. We did well on 79 out of 121 factors covering areas such as housing, transportation, health care, and supportive services. But with an overall score of 65%, we know we have a lot of work to do. We have taken the next steps to pursue official designation by AARP and the World Health Organization as an Age Friendly

Community. Our first requirement is to create a Durham County Master Aging Plan. We hope you will get involved. Just today a public convening was held to get community input and engagement. A community advisory committee is being formed. Please stay tuned on how you can participate in this exciting and important plan.

Our Public Health Department is almost synonymous with one person and that is our director, **Gayle Harris**. Gayle has been a part of the Durham County Health Department for 47 years. She will be retiring this year after literally devoting her life to improving the health of people in our community. Gayle – We Thank You!!!

There is a lot of progress to share around our *Strategic Plan Goal Area 3, Safe Community*. We recognize the vital importance of our first responders. To address gaps identified in our 2018 Classification and Compensation Study, we have invested more than \$1.4 million in first responder salaries, benefiting 534 employees.

We have welcomed a new Sheriff, **Clarence Birkhead**, who is partnering with others to reduce our overall jail population and focus on those charged with violent crimes who are considered risks to the safety of our community. I am proud to report the current population of our Detention Center at a record low of 384 detainees compared to 535 in 2016.

Over the past year the Durham County Board of Commissioners has invested more than \$946,000 to ensure that all necessary safeguards to prevent suicide risks for detainees are installed by October 2019. To improve staff safety, \$850,000 has been allocated to raise pod stations. This past year we have also seen the opening of a mental health pod for male detainees so that people can get the specialized care and services they need. This coming year we look forward to the opening of a mental health pod for women.

Durham County has also expanded funding for the Durham Literacy Center's High School Equivalency and job skills programs. We are excited that the Detention Center recently received official designation as a GED testing site and was able to host the first high school graduation! Our board hopes to see more of these celebrations and this type of programming in the years ahead so that even when residents are in our Detention Center they have opportunities for education and job training.

Durham County is preparing for the implementation of Raise the Age and the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act. Significant investments need to be made in the Durham County Youth Home. We are looking to partner with the state on this project as Durham County provides one of only two such existing regional facilities in North Carolina. Staff is also evaluating ways to keep our youth separate and create a youth pod at the Detention Center. Our priority is doing what is best for all of our youth.

Our Board supports Sheriff Birkhead and his policy regarding ICE detainer requests. We strongly condemn recent ICE activity in Durham which has terrorized children, families and neighborhoods. These actions do not make Durham safer and in fact have the opposite effect as people who are witnesses to or victims of crime may not come forward out of fear of law enforcement. We also see consequences in Durham County Government as people cancel appointments to sign eligible children up for Pre-K programs. But this has only motivated our staff to work even harder to reach these parents.

We are investing in the people of our community by trying to keep people out of our criminal justice system in the first place and helping justice involved residents transition successfully back into our community. Our model Misdemeanor Diversion Program (MDP) has been expanded to 16-21-year olds and efforts are underway to further expand this program which has a 99% completion rate and a 9% recidivism rate. Misdemeanor Diversion works.

Our award-winning Court Reminder texting service, an innovative collaboration between our **IT Department** and **Criminal Justice Resource Center (CJRC)**, helps keep people from being arrested for failure to appear in court by sending participants court appearance reminders 72 and 24 hours in advance of court dates. Enrollment in this program has increased by 15% and arrests for failure to appear continue to decline.

CJRC is expanding mental health and substance use re- entry support services thanks to a more than \$749,000 three-year federal grant. Our growing **Re-entry Council** has developed a network of 62 partner agencies to support the 700 annually returning justice involved residents. In the past year, housing was provided to 40 people, vocational training for 6 and transportation assistance for 203 clients.

CJRC is also the recipient of grant funded work with the Pretrial Institute to determine how we can improve and expand our pretrial release program. Pretrial Release saves Durham taxpayers nearly \$ 2 million each year in per person daily detention costs and the cost of the collateral consequences of job loss, negative impacts to families and increased rates of recidivism associated with even just a few days in detention.

We have seen lots of changes over the past year in how our residents are getting the most effective and efficient delivery of first responder services. Durham County Fire and Rescue Services merged and consolidated with Durham City Fire Department. We celebrated this model of collaboration with the opening of the co-located Station 17 Fire and EMS facility on Leesville Road, better serving our growing residential development in this part of the county.

Our Community Paramedicine Director **Helen Tripp** and Paramedics **Phillip Keene** and **Michael Galie** are doing a great job of helping people who need wrap around support and connection to resources. Thanks to their efforts, we are seeing the number of program participants increase and associated 911 calls per participant decrease.

Almost daily we learn about events linked to natural disasters, climate change, gun violence or terrorism that devastates communities. **Jim Groves** and Durham County **Emergency Management staff** are helping us prepare for and recover from potential future events with a \$932,000 grant funded Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack Regional Plan and as well as a grant funded cross agency Durham County Emergency Plan. The staff of our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) did an incredible job responding to Hurricanes Florence and Michael this past year. Kudos to all Durham residents who signed up for Alert Durham, and DSS staff who did an amazing job operating our emergency shelters.

Another shout out to DSS for administering 13,077 D SNAP applications and issuing \$4.2 million worth of benefits to Durham residents during a marathon eight-day effort in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence.

Reflecting on *Strategic Plan Goal 4 Environmental Stewardship and Community Prosperity*, Durham County has had a record setting number of ribbon cuttings this year. From Station 17, newly renovated Admin 11, the state of the art joint 911 Center to the renovated historic WG Pearson Center, home of Student U and other youth centered non- profits, we continue to make long-term investments in our community.

The Main Library renovation is taking shape and will be the centerpiece of downtown Durham. We are moving ahead with improvements to the Durham County Annex, EMS facility 1, Durham County Memorial Stadium, a new convenience site in Northern Durham and upgrades to our other convenience centers.

We have also made significant investments in our award-winning Triangle Waste Water Treatment Plant that supplied 110.7 million gallons of reused water to companies in RTP and turned 600 million wet pounds of biosolids into usable compost. Another milestone this past year- our Board revised our contract with the RTP foundation for our \$20 million investment in public amenities and infrastructure in the redevelopment and re-envisioning of the 100-acre Park Center Project at 54 and Davis Drive. This project will transform Park Center into a work, live, play environment and bring more than \$1 billion of investment into Durham County and create more than 5,900 jobs.

The Durham County Board of Commissioners made a historic decision this past year with our commitment to create affordable and workforce housing in downtown Durham. Community engagement and input plus expertise from the Development Finance Institute (DFI) helped us assess how to maximize the 300 and 500 East Main Street county parking lots for community benefits. The result is a plan for mixed use development projects that will include a minimum of 277 affordable housing units. The RFQ process for a public private partnership is

currently underway. A special Thank You to **Peri Manns** for providing leadership over these and many other projects.

Finding ways, we can address the urgent need for affordable housing is a priority of our board. I am proud to also highlight our newly adopted Affordable Housing Surplus Policy which ensures that any surplus properties not eligible for county functions will be made available to the city for affordable housing purposes. Thank you to **Jane Korest** and her staff who worked to make this happen.

We can all see and feel the impacts of climate change around us. This past year our board took the bold step of passing a Climate Change Resolution that challenges Durham County Government to transition to 100% renewable energy operations by 2050. Thank you to our Environmental Affairs Board (EAB) for your work on this important resolution.

Our first ever Sustainability Report shows that since 2009 we have reduced greenhouse gas emissions from our buildings by 22% and our utility operations by 15%. Next steps are a Sustainability Plan that will guide the actions we need to take to meet this aspirational 2050 goal. Thank you to **Tobin Fried** for your help and your work with the Triangle Regional Resiliency Plan that can prepare us for the increased flooding, extreme heat and cold, drought and wildfires associated with climate change.

In *Strategic Plan Goal Area 5, Accountable, Efficient and Visionary Government*, Durham County staff are rolling out on line Quarterly Reports and Data-DCoNC an interactive dashboard portal that will make Durham County performance data more visual, accessible and user friendly.

We hope that everyone will check out the on line departmental, strategic plan and budget data to better understand what is happening in Durham and see how your tax dollars are being put to work.

Thanks to the leadership of recently retired Tax Administrator **Kim Simpson** and our interim director **Teresa Hairston**, Durham County posted the highest ever overall collection rate of 99.82%!

As everyone surely knows we have just completed a revaluation of all 116,000 properties located in Durham County as we move to a four-year cycle to better address the large swings that can happen with the longer span of an eight-year cycle. As expected the highest increase in market values appear to be in downtown Durham and adjoining neighborhoods. Outside of these areas, there seems to be mostly moderate changes. Our Tax Administration staff has worked hard to provide information to residents and make the appeals process as user friendly as possible. Property owners can still file an appeal of their property value through May 3, 2019.

Our Board will set the new tax rate as part of the budget process in June. The recently released 2018 Customer Satisfaction Survey is one of our report cards. We are happy to see improvement in all areas of resident satisfaction interacting with Durham County Government. Congratulations to our more than 2,000 employees for this achievement!

Durham County out ranks other large counties we are benchmarked with in the US as a great place to live, work, visit, raise children, and retire. The survey identifies Public Education, DSS and Public Safety as the areas that need our greatest improvement.

Of note is the growing resident dissatisfaction related to how people get around. Whether it is the condition of our roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, our public transit system, or general ease of travel, the survey indicates declining citizen satisfaction or low ratings in comparison with similar sized communities. Improved mobility is a clearly a growing need in Durham County we must address.

I am incredibly proud of the work of our City County Confederate Monuments Commission. Thank you, co-chairs **Robin Kirk** and **Charmaine McKissick Melton**, and all the commission members. You devoted countless volunteer hours to thoughtfully guide our community through an inclusive and transparent process of engagement, education and dialogue. Thank you to all of the Durham residents who participated in this process.

Thank you to **Donna Rewalt** and all the volunteer facilitators, many who are Durham County staff, for your role in supporting difficult conversations about the legacies of slavery, racism and white supremacy that continue to impact us all today.

I believe that the challenges we face today can strengthen our community and our resolve for Durham to be a beacon in the South, the beloved community and a place where shared prosperity and racial equity are not just tag lines but guide policy making and strategic investments. The words emblazoned on the Durham County Health and Human Services Building are our Challenge and our Truth:

Durham’s Vitality Is Built Upon the Health of Our Residents and the Capacity of our Community to Foster and Enhance the Well Being of Every Citizen.

Durham has tremendous strength. As we are reminded in the film the “The Best of Enemies”, Durham’s legacy is the grit, determination and resilience of our people who will be an unrelenting force for positive change. **Thank you.**”

Advance Public Comments on the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget

Michael Harris stated the County should use tax payer’s money wisely and be frugal with growth and building.

Chair Jacobs thanked the citizen for speaking and for his involvement in the community.

Agenda Adjustments

Chair Jacobs announced that there were no agenda adjustments.

Announcements

Chair Jacobs read the following announcements:

1. **Champs Grant Presents: Spring Break Lunch** - During the upcoming Spring Break (3/25 – 3/29), FREE lunch will be offered for children ages 1-18 and to adults for \$2.

Meals will be provided at the following locations:

- Oxford Manor – 3633 Keystone Place
- North Regional Library – 221 Milton Road

For more details, please call 919-560-2370 ext. 26287.

2. **17th Annual Women’s Forum** – Visionary Women: Champions of Peace and Nonviolence will be held on Thursday, March 28th from 6-8 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers on 101 City Hall Plaza. This year’s event will feature Santana Deberry, Durham District Attorney; T. Diane Jones, Chapter Leader of Parents of Murdered Children and Grace Marsh, Director of Women in Action and Executive Director of the Elna B. Spaulding Conflict Resolution Center.

Those interested in attending can RSVP at www.durhamhumanrelations.com

3. **Durham 4-H Club Open House** – Please join the Extension Center on April 5th from 6-8 p.m. at Durham Cooperative Extension on 721 Foster St. for an evening of fun, games and light refreshments while getting to know the Durham County 4-H Teen Council. Registration is required for this event. Please call 919-560-8295 for more information.
4. **My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) Durham Mini Grant Program Accepting Applications** - The MBK Durham Mini Grant Program awards grants to local groups to provide support for youth focused grassroots initiatives to impact community change and is intended to provide support and engagement for boys and young men of color in Durham County. The goal is to support mentorship, creative discussion and activities by nonprofits and other community driven initiatives who will use their efforts toward helping our boys and young men of color many other milestones.

More information and the mini grant application can be found at: <http://www.mbkdurham.info>

Please note the application deadline date is April 12th at midnight.

5. **2019-2020 Durham Pre-Kindergarten Programs Now Enrolling** – Your 4-year old child may be eligible to attend Durham County’s NCPRE-K Program, Durham PreK and/or Durham Public Schools’ Pre-Kindergarten.

For more information or to apply please do one of the following:

- a. Call 919-314-6813 to set an appointment time starting now through May 16th
- b. Visit www.dpfc.net/our-work/ncpk/ or www.dpsnc.net
- c. Walk in at East Durham Children’s Initiative (EDCI) at 2101 Angier Ave between 11am – 2pm on April 1st, 15th or 29th or 4pm – 6pm on April 2nd, 16, or 30th.

6. **Boys of Color Conference** – My Brother’s Keeper Durham and North Carolina Central University Male Achievement Center (M.A.C) will kick-off their inaugural conference on April 13, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Miller Morgan Auditorium located at 1801 Fayetteville St (NCCU Campus).

This year’s theme is Be the Change: The Re-Dedication to Black Male Achievement. This event is free and is aimed for males ages 14 and up. Pre-registration is suggested. Volunteers and sponsors are also needed. Please contact mybrotherskeeper@dconc.gov if you are interested.

7. **Alert Durham** - Sign Up Today: Durham County wants to keep its citizens informed and safe in the case of an emergency. Sign up for Alert Durham to receive notifications about severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons, and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. To sign up for Alert Durham, visit www.AlertDurham.com
8. **Get Involved!** It’s your County. Durham County Government has approximately 43 active advisory boards referred to as Boards and Commissions. Citizens of Durham County may volunteer to participate by applying for a vacancy.

Interested citizens should fill out an application and send it to the Clerk to the Board’s Office. A description of the boards as well as a list of vacancies can be found on the County’s website at <http://www.dconc.gov/government/departments-a-e/board-of-commissioners/boards-and->

[commissions](#). If you need additional information, please contact the Clerk's Office at 919-560-0025 or email to: BoardsandCommissions@dconc.gov

Minutes

Commissioner Reckhow moved, seconded by Commissioner Carter to approve the February 25, 2019 Regular Session minutes.

The motion carried unanimously.

Directive

- **Commissioner Carter requested Lowell Siler, County Attorney and the Clerk's Office work on an amendment regarding Commissioner voting to the Procedures for Citizen Appointments and share at a Work Session meeting.**

Ceremonial Items

Proclamation – National Professional Social Work Month

Chair Jacobs read the following proclamation:

NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH | 2019

- WHEREAS,** the Social Work Profession is dedicated to enhancing well-being and helping meet the basic needs of all people, especially those who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty; and
- WHEREAS,** this year's Social Work Month theme, "Elevate Social Work" embodies the need to recognize the extraordinary contributions of the profession to our society; and
- WHEREAS,** the Social Work profession is expected to grow faster than average over the next seven years, with more than 682,000 people expected to be employed as social workers by 2026; and
- WHEREAS,** Social Workers elevate and empower people, giving them the ability to solve problems, cope with personal roadblocks and get the resources they need to succeed; and
- WHEREAS,** the Social Work profession is deeply woven into our society with social workers active in government, schools, universities, social service agencies, communities, corporations, the military and in health care and mental health care settings; and
- WHEREAS,** Social Workers are the largest group of providers of mental health services in the United States and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is one of the largest employers of social workers holding advanced degrees; and
- WHEREAS,** Social Workers travel across the nation and world to help people in crisis, helping them overcome issues such as death and grief, epidemics, environmental pollution and natural disasters such as wildfires, hurricanes and floods; and
- WHEREAS,** Social Workers for decades have been in the forefront on social justice, pushing for equal rights for women, African Americans, Latinos, people who are disabled, people who are LGBTQ and various ethnic, cultural and religious groups; and
- WHEREAS,** the Social Work Profession for more than a century has been on the cutting edge of helping create changes to make our society a better place to live, including voting rights, improved workplace safety, a minimum wage and social safety net programs that ameliorate poverty and hunger; and
- WHEREAS,** Social Workers stand ready to help our society overcome current pressing issues, including equal rights for all, the need for improved availability of health care and mental health services; immigration reform; voting rights and the environmental impact of global warming.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, I, Wendy Jacobs, Chair of the Durham Board of County Commissioners and on behalf of the Durham Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim March 2019 as

“NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH”

in Durham County, North Carolina and call upon all citizens to join the National Association of Social Workers and Durham County Department of Social Services in celebration and support of the Social Work Profession.

This 25th day of March 2019.

Wendy Jacobs, Chair
Durham Board of County Commissioners

Jovetta Whitfield, Assistant Director, Child and Family Services thanked the Board for proclamation and the opportunity to acknowledge social workers. The Board thanked Ms. Whitfield and all social services workers.

Proclamation – CROP Hunger Walk 2019

Commissioner Carter read the following proclamation:

CROP HUNGER WALK| 2019

- WHEREAS,** 50 years ago, at the end of World War II, American citizens wanted to share our country’s abundance with European war victims; and CROP’s first purpose was to gather wheat and other crops donated by U.S. farmers and send to Europe on “Friendships”; and
- WHEREAS,** today, the Durham CROP Hunger Walk has become an important part of community life, bringing together people of different faiths, socioeconomic levels, cultures, and ages to provide local and international hunger aid; and
- WHEREAS,** in the last 44 years, the Durham CROP Hunger Walks have raised over \$4.4M that helped and brought hope to people in need here in Durham and around the world; and
- WHEREAS,** the Durham CROP Hunger Walk has awarded more than \$1M to local hunger fighting agencies that include the 2018 recipient agencies: Meals on Wheels, Urban Ministries, Housing for New Hope, Double Bucks for SNAP, Threshold Clubhouse, Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina, Families Moving Forward, Open Table Ministries, Partners for Youth Opportunity, St. Andrew’s Society, Antioch Builds Community and Mt. Calvary UCC Food Pantry; and
- WHEREAS,** the Durham CROP Hunger Walk raised \$158,800 in 2018; and
- WHEREAS,** the Durham CROP Hunger Walk is the oldest fund-raising walk in NC, and will hold its 45th Annual CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, April 7th; and
- WHEREAS,** the Durham CROP Hunger Walk helps the community become aware of hunger issues and gives community members the opportunity to be part of the solution; and
- WHEREAS,** the Durham CROP Hunger Walk is the largest CROP Walk in the nation, out of more than 800 walks; demonstrating the tremendous compassion and dedication of Durham’s citizens; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham CROP Hunger Walk continues to successfully raise funds to “End Hunger One Step a Time”.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, I, Wendy Jacobs, Chair of the Durham Board of County

Commissioners and on behalf of the Durham Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim Sunday, April 7, 2019 as

“DURHAM CROP HUNGER WALK DAY”

in Durham County, North Carolina.

This the 25th day of March 2019.

Wendy Jacobs, Chair
Durham Board of County Commissioners

Kaaren Johannson, CROP Walk Coordinator, introduced her staff and stated the theme for this year was “More than a Meal.” She stated the walk was scheduled for April 7, 2019, beginning and ending at the Duke Chapel and it was free and open to the public. Ms. Johannson asked all interested citizens to register online at www.crophungerwalk.org/durhamnc. She then presented the Board with shirts created by Isaiah D. Leeper, student at North Carolina Central University.

Proclamation – National Service Recognition Day 2019

Vice Chair Hill read the following proclamation:

NATIONAL SERVICE RECOGNITION DAY| 2019

- WHEREAS,** service to others is a hallmark of the American character, and central to how we meet our challenges; and
- WHEREAS,** the nation’s elected leaders are increasingly turning to national service and volunteerism as a cost-effective strategy to meet their needs; and
- WHEREAS,** AmeriCorps and Senior Corps participants address the most pressing challenges facing our communities; and
- WHEREAS,** national service expands economic opportunity by creating more sustainable, resilient communities and providing education, career skills, and leadership abilities for those who serve; and
- WHEREAS,** national service programs continue to improve lives and communities in Durham County, North Carolina, with 93 AmeriCorps members and 120 Senior Corps volunteers currently serving; and
- WHEREAS,** national service participants increase the impact of the organizations they serve, both through their direct service and by managing millions of additional volunteers; and
- WHEREAS,** national service represents a unique public-private partnership that invests in community solutions and leverages non-federal resources to strengthen community impact and increase the return on taxpayer dollars; and
- WHEREAS,** national service participants demonstrate commitment, dedication, and patriotism by making an intensive commitment to service, a commitment that remains with them in their future endeavors; and
- WHEREAS,** the Corporation for National and Community Service shares a priority with local leaders nationwide to engage citizens, improve lives, and strengthen communities; and is joining with the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, Cities of Service, and local leaders across the country for National Service Recognition Day on April 2, 2019.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED I, Wendy Jacobs, Chair of the Durham Board of County Commissioners and on behalf of the Durham Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim the 2nd day of April 2019 as

“NATIONAL SERVICE RECOGNITION DAY”

in Durham County, and encourage residents to recognize the positive impact of national service in our community, to thank those who serve; and to find ways to give back to their communities.

This the 25th day of March 2019.

Wendy Jacobs, Chair
Durham Board of County Commissioners

Paula Raye, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Coordinator, thanked the Board for the support of the project and she looked forward to working with the community more in the future.

Nick DiColandrea, AmeriCorps Program Director at Conservation Trust for North Carolina, stated AmeriCorps funded over 170 positions in Durham County. He and two (2) graduates were teachers in Durham Public Schools and two (2) graduates were employed with Durham County.

Proclamation – National County Government Month 2019

Commissioner Reckhow read the following proclamation:

NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT MONTH | 2019

WHEREAS, the nation’s 3,069 counties serving more than 300 million Americans provide essential services to create healthy, safe and vibrant communities; and

WHEREAS, counties provide health services, administer justice, keep communities safe, foster economic opportunities and much more; and

WHEREAS, Durham County Government and all counties take pride in our responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of our residents in efficient and cost-effective ways; and

WHEREAS, through National Association of Counties President Greg Cox’s “Connecting the Unconnected,” initiative, NACo is demonstrating how counties deliver “people-centered” services to our residents nationwide; and

WHEREAS, each year since 1991 the National Association of Counties has encouraged counties across the country to elevate awareness of county responsibilities, programs and services; and

WHEREAS, this year’s celebration hosted by Durham County Government in collaboration with community partners will include both inward and outward facing activities. The month kick off with volunteer opportunities with Durham Public Schools and the Durham Center for Senior Life; include the County opening its doors to residents that desire to tour our facilities, and end with educational opportunities for employees based on the 2019 NCGM theme; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED I, Wendy Jacobs, Chair of the Durham Board of County Commissioners and on behalf of the Durham Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2019 as

“NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT MONTH”

in Durham County, and encourage all county officials, employees, schools and residents to participate in county government celebration activities.

This the 25th day of March 2019.

Wendy Jacobs, Chair
Durham Board of County Commissioners

Dawn Dudley, Senior Public Information Specialist, stated the theme for this year was “*Connecting the Unconnected.*” She added there were both internal and external programs occurring with partnerships from various departments. Ms. Dudley stated Public Information was working with Tax Administration and the Durham Senior Life Center to do a presentation on property related to seniors. She also added the Manager’s Office partnered with Durham Public Schools to have County employees volunteer to read to Pre-K students.

Commissioner Reckhow thanked Teresa Hairston, Interim Tax Administrator and staff for helping citizens with the reappraisal process and questions.

Commissioner Howerton thanked Ms. Dudley for the proclamation and the theme for this year.

Proclamation – Women in Public Office Day

Commissioner Howerton read the following proclamation:

WOMEN IN PUBLIC OFFICE DAY | 2019

WHEREAS, the month of March is Women’s History Month and celebrates the significant contributions women of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds have made to the world; and

WHEREAS, women play a critical role in the vitality and diversity of our communities, and are essential to ensuring Durham County is well-represented; and

WHEREAS, while the twentieth century was a pivotal time of growth for women entering politics, women remain underrepresented in male-dominated fields, and thus, providing opportunities to support women in public office is imperative; and

WHEREAS, recognizing women in public office will bring awareness to the fundamental necessity of their work and will inspire other young people to serve their communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, I, Wendy Jacobs, Chair of the Durham Board of County Commissioners and on behalf of the Durham Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim March 19, 2019 as

“WOMEN IN PUBLIC OFFICE DAY”

in Durham County, North Carolina and call upon the citizens to unite as we support the success of women in public office and observe every 19th day of March with appropriate activities, events, and programs.

This 25th day of March 2019.

Wendy Jacobs, Chair

James Hill, Jr., Vice-Chair

Heidi Carter

Brenda A. Howerton

Ellen Reckhow

Commissioner Howerton stated the proclamation came about after a visit to Washington, D.C. to attend a meeting with Congresswomen to look at policies and different initiatives.

Vice Chair Hill thanked Commissioner Howerton for the awareness of the proclamation.

Consent Agenda

Chair Jacobs asked the Board if they requested to pull or comment on the item on the Consent Agenda. Hearing none, Chair Jacobs entertained a motion for approval.

Commissioner Reckhow moved, seconded by Commissioner Howerton to approve the following item on the Consent Agenda

*19-0113 Property Tax Releases and Refunds for February 2019

The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda Item #19-0113

Due to property valuation adjustments for over assessments, listing discrepancies, duplicate listings and clerical errors, etc. The attached report details releases and refunds for the month of January 2019.

Releases and Refunds – 2019

Personal Property	\$	494.69
Real Property	\$	<u>0.00</u>
Total	\$	494.69

Releases and Refunds for 2018 Taxes

Real Property	\$	1,673.09
Personal Property	\$	770.33
Motor Vehicle	\$	0.00
Solid Waste Fees	\$	0.00
VTS Refunds	\$	<u>19,439.84</u>
Total	\$	21,883.26

Releases & Refunds for Prior Years

Personal Property	\$	235.02
Solid Waste	\$	<u>0.00</u>
Total	\$	235.02

Grand Total	\$	22,612.97
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Other Business

My Brother's Keeper (MBK)-Durham Mini Grant Program: Approval to Utilize \$50,000.00 and Summary of Program

Edmund Lewis, Jr., My Brother's Keeper Manager, provided the Board with an overview of how MBK planned to utilize the grant. Mr. Lewis stated the grant provided various opportunities to support boys and young men of color in Durham and MBK had developed inventive ways to quantify the financial implementations. He added MBK was looking at existing programs that needed support to sustain work and programs dealing with innovation.

The Board commended Mr. Lewis for the materials submitted, applications and background information. The Board asked why the funds are being transferred from the non-departmental fund if the grant was from Aetna. County Manager Wendell Davis responded the check from Aetna was deposited in the non-departmental fund. The Board asked if the recipients would have one (1) year to complete a project. Mr. Lewis responded yes, and many recipients were seeking multi-year support. The Board asked about what was being done to prevent young men from getting into trouble. Mr. Lewis responded MBK supported preventive programs that continue to promote progress.

Commissioner Reckhow moved, seconded by Commissioner Howerton to approve transferring the \$50,00 in non-departmental funds to the MBK Durham Mini Grant Program.

The motion carried unanimously.

Board and Commission Appointments

Monica Toomer, Interim Clerk to the Board distributed ballots to the Board to make appointments to the boards and commissions.

The Board made the following appointments (incumbents are identified with an (i). Individuals who are recommended by a Board are underlined.) Individuals listed in bold print were appointed.

Alliance Board of Directors

(i)Cynthia Binanay (Carter, Hill, Howerton, Jacobs, Reckhow)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Edward Rizzuto (Carter, Hill, Howerton, Jacobs, Reckhow)

Library Board of Trustees

Camilla Meek (Hill, Howerton, Jacobs, Reckhow)

Mitch Tuchman (Carter)

Memorial Stadium Authority

Edwin Bryson, Jr. (Carter, Hill, Howerton, Jacobs, Reckhow)

Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority

(i)Patrick Hannan (Carter, Hill, Howerton, Jacobs, Reckhow)

(i)David Morgan (Carter, Hill, Howerton, Jacobs, Reckhow)

Adjournment

Commissioner Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Reckhow to adjourn the Regular Session meeting at 9:18 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Macio Carlton
Senior Administrative Assistant