

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

Wednesday, May 29, 2019

1:00 P.M. Budget Work Session

**MINUTES**

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

**Goal 3: Safe Community**

**Sheriff Office Budget Presentation**

Sheriff Clarence Birkhead opened with an overview of the Sheriff Office and shared a presentation titled "*Budget Focus Areas and Priorities*".

Chair Jacobs questioned local funding for the Triangle Strike Force. Assistant US Attorney Martin responded it would come from the Drug Enforced Task Force, Congress and the Asset Forfeiture Program. Commissioner Howerton questioned the new officer request in the Sheriff budget. Assistant US Attorney Martin stated the additional agents needed did not include the request made by the Sheriff department.

Chair Jacobs thanked staff for the data and background information shared. Staff was asked to provide an overview of the recommended items. Jodi Miller, General Manager stated there was a request to replace 35 vehicles (\$1.2 million – cars and equipment); five (5) padded cells (\$193,000 – this would complete all safety projects); technology/software needs and the reallocation of four (4) existing positions.

Commissioner Howerton asked for clarification on the map of the patrol district. David Labarre, Operations and Development Manager stated the map displayed travel time and distance of patrol officers if they received priority calls. He added two (2) officers were assigned to patrol divisions North of I-85. Chair Jacobs suggested conducting a study with the Durham Police Department to provide better coverage to those areas. Sheriff Birkhead responded his staff had not given that strategy much thought because the City also requested additional resources to address response and call needs. Chair Jacobs suggested the County Manager have a discussion with the City Manager on cost and response time effectiveness. Commissioner Howerton also questioned staffing issues and animal control positions. Sheriff Birkhead referred to the County Manager with regards to discussing the study with the City Manager. He agreed with sharing resources however, the response time was based on staffing and both jurisdictions needed

additional staff. With regards to the animal control positions, Captain Anthony Prignano responded the Sheriff's department assumed that area in 2012 from General Services.

Commissioner Reckhow asked if technology systems were brought in from the federal systems that could help staff instead of requesting additional positions. She suggested the Sheriff's department also add/update data measures that the public would be interested in reviewing.

Commissioner Carter thanked staff for the information presented and stated she was in favor of an animal control officer increase. She asked if a phase-in approach was considered for staffing. Sheriff Birkhead responded yes; however, with that approach the staff would not be at the staffing levels needed.

Vice Chair Hill inquired about the number of officers who retired, transferred to other agencies or left law enforcement altogether. He also questioned the length of time to process a DWI. Mr. Labarre discussed the citizen survey and responded officers completed paperwork instead of the magistrates which involved more time.

Chair Jacobs expressed her appreciation for all the data and innovative approaches used. She stated the Board was committed but felt prioritizing would be helpful. Chair Jacobs requested more information on the Triangle Strike Force and how local partners were funding the program. She questioned conversations held with the RTP Foundation about providing financial support for public safety. Sheriff Birkhead responded conversations were held and the feedback was favorable. Chair Jacobs also reviewed strategies for property crime, neighborhood crime and stressed the importance of education.

Commissioner Howerton inquired about the number of officers in other counties with a similar population of Durham. Sheriff Birkhead stated he would provide that information to the Board.

Commissioner Reckhow requested data on the number of calls/staff trends for the animal shelter.

**Directives:**

- **Chair Jacobs requested more information on the Triangle Strike Force and how local partners were funding the program.**
- **Commissioner Reckhow requested data on the number of calls/staff trends for the animal shelter.**

**Criminal Justice Resource Center**

Guhrun Palmer, Director of the Criminal Justice Resource Center (CJRC) and Rashonna Parker, Assistant Director of CJRC shared a presentation titled "Criminal Justice Resource Center – Recommended Budget".

Commissioner Carter questioned prison/detention reentry and the County's collaboration with the City of Durham's Welcome Home Program. Ms. Parker responded the Local Reentry Council assisted with both the prison and detention reentry. She added the County worked closely with the City's innovation team.

Commissioner Reckhow stated regarding the Mental Health Court, where were we with utilization. Ms. Parmer responded there were 38 cases with 11 graduates. Commissioner Reckhow responded she was happy to hear the numbers were increasing and asked if court funding was provided from CJRC. Ms. Parmer responded yes. Commissioner Reckhow stated given local dollars were being used, she asked to see measures in the budget book on the two (2) courts to keep the Board informed.

Commissioner Howerton asked if the numbers increased for misdemeanor diversion court. Ms. Parmer responded those numbers were steady, adding they would have to wait and see what would happen with the Raise the Age legislature next year. Commissioner Howerton asked if the County funded dollars towards domestic violence. Chair Jacobs stated the County funded two (2) domestic violence programs – one through the Sheriff Office and the other was non-profit funding through the shelter.

Chair Jacobs discussed the breakout on dollars spent on drug court and appreciated staff for reviewing and tracking numbers for programs. In the future, she asked budget staff to note CJRC on the Office of the Sheriff page because they also provided funding for programs in that area. Chair Jacobs asked for clarification on request not being funded in the County Manager's recommended budget. Ms. Parmer responded the only item not included was another vehicle for transporting; however, she was comfortable with the budget recommended by the Manager.

**Directives:**

- **Commissioner Reckhow stated given local dollars were being used, she asked to see measures in the budget book on the two (2) courts to keep the Board apprised.**
- **Chair Jacobs asked budget staff to note CJRC on the Office of the Sheriff page because they also provide funding for programs in that area.**

**Tour of the Freudenberg Facility**

The Board left the building to attend a tour of the Freudenberg Facility located at 3500 Industrial Drive, Durham, NC. This was a location currently used for storage (free of charge) for larger vehicles and equipment used by the Sheriff Office and Emergency Management Services (EMS).

Commissioner Reckhow questioned the additional ambulances. Kevin Underhill, Interim Director of EMS responded they were used during special events, inclement weather and natural disasters.

Captain Prignano explained the purpose of the gear stored in the Sheriff storage area.

Mark Schell, Division Chief of Fire Prevention and Education discussed the equipment used during continuous trainings for the Sheriff Office. He explained the requirements issued by FEMA and shared how this space met those requirements.

Captain Prignano highlighted the response vehicles and asked staff present to share with the Board the use of the robot and bomb equipment. Jim Groves, Fire Marshal/Emergency Management Director explained the collaboration between all safety divisions within the County.

Sheriff staff discussed the motorcycles used and shared pricing information with the Board. Mr. Underhill also discussed the MIRV units, bicycles and pricing.

Chair Jacobs thanked everyone for providing a detailed tour of the facility.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Monica Toomer".

Monica W. Toomer  
Clerk to the Board