



Wake County

301 South McDowell Street
Raleigh, NC

Meeting Minutes Board of Commissioners

Monday, March 11, 2024

2:00 PM

Wake County Justice Center

Work Session

Motion to Bring Meeting to Order

Present: 7 - Chair Shinica Thomas, Vice-Chair Susan Evans, Commissioner Vickie Adamson, Commissioner Matt Calabria, Commissioner Don Mial, Commissioner Cheryl Stallings, and Commissioner Tara Waters

Staff present: David Ellis, County Manager; Scott Warren, Attorney; Duane Holder, Deputy County Manager; Ashley Jacobs, Deputy County Manager; Michael James, Assistant County Manager; Jose Cabanas, Chief Medical Officer; Dara Demi, Chief Communications Officer; Denise Foreman, Assistant County Manager; Yvonne Gilyard, Clerk to the Board; Ben Canada, Chief of Staff; Ellen Meder, Communications Consultant; and Michelle Venditto, Director of Budget and Management Services.

Others present: Michael Davis, Innovation Strategist; Molly Gaskin, Budget and Management Analyst; Todd Taylor, Debt Manager; Mark Forestieri, Director, FD&C; Matt Roylance, Deputy Director, Community Services; Chris Snow, Parks, Recreation and Open Space Director; Frank Cope, Director of Community Services; Pat Flanary, Chief Financial Officer; Eric Stahle, Senior Facilities Project Manager; Jonathan Feldman, Chief Information Officer; and Representatives from B.W. Wells.

1. Agenda

Attachments: [Agenda 03.11.2024.docx](#)

2. **Community Outreach and Engagement: Inventory Project Report**

Attachments: [Community Engagement 03.11.2024.pdf](#)

Mr. Michael Davis, Information Services, shared today's objectives.

Today's Objectives

- Share intent and methodology for community outreach and engagement inventory project
- Communicate results of inventory project

He shared Outreach and Engagement: Context and Framework. He shared a chart showing IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation.

He shared IAP's Public Participation Core Values.

IAP2's Public Participation Core Values

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

He shared a chart showing the Community Survey Data.

He shared the Project Intent and Methodology.

He shared Community Outreach and Engagement.

Community Outreach and Engagement

- Goal GG 1: Engage our community to envision the County's future.
 - GG 1.1: Develop and implement strategies to improve community engagement.

He shared the Project Assignment.

Project Assignment

- Develop an inventory of Wake County community outreach and

engagement methods *(In other words, how are we talking and engaging with the public?)*

He shared the Project Methodology.

Project Methodology

- Community is defined broadly as the general public and stakeholder groups
- Sought to capture outreach and engagement work for last five years (2019 through 2023)
- Used IAP2 and Tamarack Institute tools and frameworks for project foundation
- Worked with departments in Fall 2023 to explain project, establish topics, and set deadlines.
- For each topic, a department submitted a unique inventory entry.
- Entries included: topic point of contact, purpose statement, methods used, reflection on successes and opportunities for improvement, and collaborating departments.

He shared a chart with examples of outreach, engagement methods, and countywide findings.

He shared Top 10 Most-Used methods.

Top 10 Most-Used Methods

1. Website (in 158 topics)
2. Social media (in 117 topics)
3. General information channels (phone lines, email, etc.) (in 109 topics)
4. Presentations / live-streaming (in 105 topics)
5. Printed collateral (fact sheets, newsletters, etc.) (in 97 topics)
6. Surveys (in 81 topics)
7. Media Coverage (earned media via radio, TV, newspaper, etc.) (in 76 topics)
8. Public Meetings (in 76 topics)
9. Large Group Meetings (in 62 topics)
10. Videos (in 56 topics)

He shared Most-Used Method by IAP2 Category.

Most-Used Method By IAP2 Category

- Inform: Website (in 158 topics)
- Consult: Surveys (in 81 topics)

- Involve: Community mapping (in 41 topics)
- Collaborate: Large group meetings (in 62 topics)
- Empower: Citizen committees (in 46 topics)

He shared charts on: Sample Inventory Topics Generally Aligned with Community Health & Vitality Board Goal, Sample Inventory Topics Generally Aligned with Growth & Sustainability Board Goal.

Commissioner Waters shared thoughts on ability for surveys to capture vulnerable community residents.

Mr. Davis shared the scope is an environmental scan.

Mr. Davis shared Departmental Snapshots.

He shared Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization.

Housing Affordability & Community Revitalization

Eight topics, including:

- Housing Affordability Education for Nonprofits and Advocacy Groups
- Rental and Homeowner Housing Opportunities
- Housing Municipal Engagement
- Housing Community Agency Funding
- Housing Navigation
- Housing Rehab & Anti-Displacement
- Veteran Services
- Housing Consolidated Planning Process

He shared the Sample Topic: Housing Affordability Education for Nonprofits and Advocacy Groups.

Sample Topic: Housing Affordability Education for Nonprofits and Advocacy Groups

Purpose

Ensure consistent messaging about housing affordability. We are trying to maintain consistency regarding the needs of our community, how Wake defines affordability, Wake's housing priorities, and information about new policies re: affordability.

What Went Well

Not only are we sharing from Wake's perspective, but it has helped the housing department to build relationships and trust, which enables nonprofit and advocacy stakeholders to share their perspective with us.

What Could Improve

Not only are we sharing from Wake's perspective, but it has helped the housing department to build relationships and trust, which enables nonprofit and advocacy stakeholders to share their perspective with us.

He shared the Sample Topic: Housing rehab and Anti-Displacement.

Sample Topic: Housing Rehab & Anti-Displacement**Purpose**

Help residents, particularly lower-income homeowners, understand their options / resources available to help them keep their homes.

What Went Well

This engagement has helped residents not only stay in their homes, but through major repairs they're able to thrive in their homes.

It is leading to higher quality of life as residents take advantage of our programming.

What Could Improve

Unless someone is seeking this specific assistance, it is difficult to let residents know about this program.

We are looking to expand our communications reach and outlets for this specific area so that it's more inclusive to a broader continuum of residents.

He shared Fire Services and Emergency Management.

Fire Services & Emergency Management**Nine topics, including:**

- Fire Safety
- Fire Tax District
- Logistical Support for Various Departments and Organizations
- Emergency Planning Outreach to Community Partners
- Fire Department Recruitment and Diversity
- Harris Nuclear Power Plant Preparedness
- Ready Wake Program
- Chemical Reporting and Preparedness
- Firefighter Wellness - Cancer and Mental Health

He shared the Sample Topic: Fire Department Recruitment and Diversity.

Sample Topic: Fire Department Recruitment and Diversity**Purpose**

Promote Fire Department recruitment, including increasing diversity and the awareness of diversity in the fire tax district.

What Went Well

We received over 1,000 applications during each of our "Career in a Year" campaigns.

We have seen positive progress in all demographic areas for the fire tax district, with a 1.7 percent increase in overall diversity.

What Could Improve

We will need to find another funding source once ARPA funds are unavailable.

We could enhance our outreach efforts by utilizing more social media and working with our local fire departments to do the same

He shared the Sample Topic: ready Wake Program.

Sample Topic: Ready Wake Program**Purpose**

Empower stakeholders and residents to take proactive steps to ensure the safety and security of themselves and their loved ones in the event of a large-scale incident.

What Went Well

Forged a lot of positive relationships in the community and have many organizations that serve as force multipliers for our messages.

Seen increases in sign-ups for Ready Wake Alerts and increased social media followers.

What Could Improve

Securing more partner organizations to help us share our messages so that we can expand outreach efforts.

Opportunity to grow social media outreach.

He shared Facilities Design and Construction.

Facilities Design & Construction**Six topics, including:**

- Library Capital Improvement Program Projects
- County Parks, Preserves, and Greenways Capital Improvement Program Projects
- Public Art Procurement for County Capital Improvement Program Projects
- Health & Human Services Capital Improvement Program Projects
- Public Safety Facilities Capital Improvement Program Projects
- HUB and MBE Professional Services Outreach

He shared the Sample Topic: Public Safety Facilities CIP Projects.

Sample Topic: Public Safety Facilities CIP Projects**Purpose**

Inform the public about our upcoming facilities projects supporting safety in the community and to help communicate construction, infrastructure, and operational impacts to local residents.

What Went Well

Public gets accurate and updated information about project plans and timeline at various phases in the project.

Impacted residents can voice concerns and ask questions.

What Could Improve

Can be difficult to incorporate public feedback or find ways to engage beyond informing.

Design and location is driven by unique requirements of public safety operations and adherence to local municipal guidelines.

He shared the Sample Topic: County Parks, Preserves, and Greenways CIP Projects.

Sample Topic: County Parks, Preserves, and Greenways CIP Projects**Purpose**

Receive public input on the desired amenities at the park so that we can incorporate that feedback into the park design.

What Went Well

The community gets excited about upcoming projects and feels a sense of ownership in the result. Historically, there has been large turnout at outreach events for these projects.

What Could Improve

Opportunity to engage a diverse group of the public and not just those who have the time and resources to seek out involvement.

Not all requests can be accommodated, which can be frustrating for those who provide input.

He invited feedback.

Commissioner Calabria thanked them for the presentation. He commented that it was a lot of work and asked now that we've got a good bit of intelligence how do we turn it into actionable intelligence. How can we sow our findings into our burgeoning strategic plan on the theory that the things that we're focusing on as a county over the long run might well align with what the community considers the important topics whether it is housing affordability, education, or other items. He asked if the strategic plan might be used to fuel or to target community input efforts going forward

or if consideration has been paid to that at all.

Mr. Davis shared this is an option.

Manager Ellis shared that it is the exact opposite. Information is gathered to develop the strategic plan.

Commissioner Stallings shared comments on community survey and asked how to prioritize the perception.

Ms Ashley Jacobs, Deputy County Manager, shared that the County can do more. She asked what do the commissioners want and to share their thoughts on what is most effective.

Commissioner Adamson shared comments on engaging citizens. She shared that it is really hard to engage and we should do it even with five citizens.

Commissioner Waters commented that the IAP spectrum is a great framework and asked can staff get more opportunities to engage.

Ms. Jacobs shared that they can do some training.

Commissioner Calabria shared comments on the web map and how do we move boundaries outward. Would like to see analysis of how county interacts and create something perhaps modeled off of the mayors academies that towns do, you end up having hundreds of people who really get how the County works and what the different considerations are and are better able and more likely to weigh in on different issues

Ms. Jacobs shared that she will follow up with Mr. Jason Horton, Strategic Initiatives Director, on geography and are we reaching vulnerable communities. She asked are they surprised at the number of activities taking place.

There was open conversation of the web and describing the web to even it out. To include involving and empowering. Do we need more mechanisms. There are things that are already being done and should expound on them. Is there specific data for residents.

Ms. Jacobs shared that this was not a part of the inventory, it was just for the Wake County departments. She shared that perhaps we are not giving people information they want to speak about. Maybe give them digestive pieces of the of budget that they feel comfortable in speaking about. We need to empower residents. She suggested to look at Mayor's Academy, look at geography, improve community engagement and published events.

Manager Ellis shared that the County is going to always have to be more informed. The majority of the services that the County provides are mandated, this doesn't necessarily allow for a lot of flexibility and feedback. Post COVID we have had to adjust and we have seen a dramatic rise in emails about the budget since then so that shows that we are engaging more of our citizens. He shared there is value in looking at how we can increase our presence.

Ms. Jacobs reviewed the comments sharing that she heard the commissioners want to continue to grow bridges in all directions, list serves, citizens Academy, putting staff in front of people so that they can know about programs, more empowerment, and then also she shared that the BOC need some additional information from the community survey. That you're looking for who responded, who was saying that they are not happy and as you know are we reaching the most vulnerable parts of our population so you need more detail about the survey responses. She shared she does not know if that's available but she will follow up with Mr. Horton.

3. Capital and Debt Considerations

Attachments: [Capital and Debt Considerations 03.11.2024.pdf](#)

Ms. Emily Lucas, Deputy County Manager, shared information on debt management. She shared comments on capacity. She shared an update on capacity building.

Ms. Molly Gaskin, Budget and Management Services, shared the agenda.

Agenda

- Capital overview
- Bond Process: Steps and Considerations
- Design and Construction: Implementing Projects
- Long-term Costs: Opening the Facility
- Next Steps

She shared County is responsible for multiple capital programs across multiple funds.

County responsible for multiple capital programs across multiple funds

- **County Capital Program**
 - Automation
 - Criminal Justice

- Community Capital
- Economic Development
- Public Safety
- County Buildings
- PROS
- Libraries
- **Other Programs**
 - Housing
 - Fire Tax District
 - Solid Waste
 - Major Facilities
- **Education Programs**
 - Wake Tech
 - Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

She shared a chart showing the County Capital Process Cycle.

She shared the Preview: Take aways for today.

Preview: Take aways for today

- County has an ambitious capital plan addressing needs across several sectors
- Cost escalations are up in projects under construction and expected to go up further for planned projects
- Internal capacity influences the number of projects that can be completed
- Market capacity influences number of projects that can be completed
- Every new facility has ongoing operating and maintenance costs

She shared Preview: Takeaways in advance of Capital and Debt budget work session.

Preview: Takeaways in advance of Capital & Debt budget work session

- Debt funding is a limited resource
 - April 8 Special Budget Work Session will cover debt metrics and Wake's AAA debt rating
- Maintenance is an ever-growing portion of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- With service growth new facilities are coming forward; prioritization is necessary and will need to consider:
 - Maintenance of existing facilities vs new facilities

- Mandated facilities vs community amenities

She shared the Bond Process: Steps and Considerations.

She shared a chart showing Steps leading to bond referendum.

Ms. Gaskins shared in order to place a bond question on the ballot in the Fall staff will need Board direction by the end of April on specific bond questions and amounts to appear on the fall ballot. This shows the timeline for the general obligation bond referendum in parallel to what the county is building and the FY25 through 31 debt and capital plan for the May 6th recommended budget following a successful bond referendum. We issued debt in tranches sufficient to provide timely funding for projects.

Chair Thomas asked about steps after successful bond referendum and that statutory relief is available for the seven-year statute under extenuating circumstances she asked for an example of the extenuating circumstances.

Todd Taylor, Debt Manager shared a project listed here from the 2007 library bond. The 07 occurrence we had the successful bond question for libraries and then had the economic disruption. It affected lot of things and made it very difficult for projects to continue. It's a perfect example of situation where it would be reasonable for us to go back to the LGC and say we need to extend the seven-year period to 10. It would also be a reasonable explanation to taxpayers rating it seems as to why we need to do that.

Chair Thomas commented that was about 17 years ago and asked if there are any other examples.

Mr. Taylor shared that there were no others he could think of and that speaks to what Molly mentioned, we need to be thoughtful and deliberate when we go to the voters we have a high level of confidence and expectation and that these are high priority projects, necessary projects and we are ready to proceed.

Chair Thomas commented even for that one we had no idea that we were going to be in a recession necessarily right at that time so we could not have predicted that that would have been an issue. She shared that similarly currently we have an issue with staffing projects or even folks that we're getting to bid on capital projects and we're looking at employers and employees in the marketplace so that it could be a little bit more predictable which is why she asked about extenuating circumstances things like a recession you can't predict but are there extenuating

circumstances that might be predictable, other than economic volatility.

Mr. Taylor responded that an extenuating circumstance is something that you can't predict it could be an economic recession or a pandemic. A coastal town has a hurricane knowing that we have capacity system challenges and choosing to say we're going try to get these projects done anyway that's not an extenuating circumstance. The LGC rating agencies are going to be very aware of market conditions on the front end so I would say that extenuating circumstances are things that you could not have predicted in advance.

Chair Thomas thanked them for that clarification.

Commissioner Adamson asked if we have ever had a circumstance where we went to the voters for a bond and we're not able to fully utilize the money because we ran out of time.

Mr. Taylor responded that has not to his knowledge ever happened.

Ms. Gaskins shared the Steps after successful bond referendum.

Steps after successful bond referendum

- Issue debt in tranches sufficient to provide timely funding for projects being undertaken
 - County is frequently in bond market
 - Ideally issue bond proceeds for up to 3 years (approx) project funding
- 7-year statute to issue all authorized bonds
 - Nov 5, 2024 ballot date = bonds to be issued by Nov 4, 2031
- Unissued authorization expires after statutory deadline (7 years)
 - Statutory relief available for 7-year statute under extenuating circumstances (i.e., 2007 Library bond of \$45 million)
 - Requires application to LGC for a single 3-year extension to issue remaining bonds thus deadline becomes 10-years from ballot date

She shared How much to include in bond question and other considerations.

How much to include in bond question and other considerations

- Inherent in bond referendum is a reasonable expectation for bonds to be *issued* within 7-year statute to complete necessary projects
- If projections show all bonds not likely to be issued within 7 years:

- Delay those projects / possibly include in a later subsequent referendum
- Opportunity cost of pursuing bond referendum
 - Capacity is “used up” and cannot be used for other competing capital needs
 - Debt & Capital Model helps guide & inform County of impacts of alternative funding
- Optics
 - 7-year bond issue window extended to 10-years (LGC, Taxpayers, Rating Agencies)
 - Delay in *spending* bond proceeds (LGC, Taxpayers, Rating Agencies, IRS)
 - Voter fatigue - if County does not do what it said when it said it would do it

She shared Debt model that determines Debt and Paygo capacity for future funding.

Debt model determines Debt & Paygo capacity for future funding

- Adding more projects than previously planned:
 - Uses up future capacity that may have been planned for other purposes
 - Impacts the tax rate needed to fund CIP
 - Increases the fund balance required to be on hand (i.e., the higher the budget, the higher the fund balance)
- Debt is limited by bond agency monitored metrics, such as:
 - Annual payments as a percentage of total budget
 - Timing of when debt can be paid off
- Board direction on projects and programs are inputs to the debt and capital model
- Affordability impacts and impacts to AAA rating metrics will be shared at April 8 budget work session

She shared Design and Construction: Implementing Projects.

Design and Construction: Implementing Projects

Regional growth and development continue to make projects more expensive.

- **Construction and facility maintenance will not get cheaper**
 - Land availability is dwindling as Wake competes with developers and ourselves
 - Maintenance needs increasing as facility portfolio ages
 - County needs continue to grow

- **Experiencing lingering supply chain issues and cost impacts**
 - Increases in equipment prices and longer lead times in receiving equipment
 - Higher material prices and labor costs resulting in significant bid increases

She shared the Increased Number of Capital Projects.

Increased Number of Capital Projects

- 95 projects in FY 2017 versus estimated 120 projects for FY25
 - Construction value of all projects > \$300 Million/Year FY 25-28
 - Includes 5 projects exceeding \$20 Million planned for FY 25-31
 - Construction value of these projects alone > \$300 Million
- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Public Health Center | \$120 M (under construction) |
| Morrisville Public Works/Solid Waste Conv Ctr | \$ 40 M (FY 25) |
| Jail Annex Renovation | \$ 10 M (FY 25) |
| Animal Control Center | \$ 45 M (FY 26) |
| GSA Headquarters | \$ 70 M (FY 26) |
| <u>Decedent Storage Facility</u> | <u>\$ 20 M (FY 28)</u> |
| TOTAL | \$ 305 Million |

She shared a chart showing the Major projects planned and underway throughout CIP.

She shared the potential projects not yet in the CIP.

Potential projects not yet in the CIP

- Detention Center Expansion
- Crosby Garfield renovation/expansion
- Transitioning some County departments out of downtown complex
- Additional EMS stations
- ESEC expansion and renovations
- Full scope of library bond projects (GO bond slated for fall 2024 vote)

She shared the County projects are also increasing in complexity.

County projects are also increasing in complexity

- Addressing more complex programmatic needs (e.g.- Public Health Building and Detention Center)
- Collaborating with jurisdictions on joint project management (e.g. - Morrisville Public Works/Conv Ctr; Zebulon EMS/Fire Station, etc.)

- Navigating market and supply chain challenges
- Less sites available; those sites require much more work (steep slopes, stream crossings, utility connections, road improvements)
- More complex (and \$\$\$) municipal permitting requirements

She shared the Internal Capacity-Workload Challenges.

Internal Capacity - Workload Challenges

- All those projects supported by team of 9 Project Managers in FD&C
 - 120 Projects = 13 projects/ Project Manager
 - Most Effective Range = 6 to 9 projects/Project Manager (less when managing very large projects)
- Hiring Challenges - competing with private sector
 - Design, engineering and construction positions in high demand
 - FDC PM Recruitment Time - 6 to 8 months + Onboarding/Initiation
 - Projects have increased more quickly than staff ability to grow

She shared the External Capacity-Design and Construction.

External Capacity - Design & Construction

- Competition with WCPSS, Wake Tech, University work
- Competition with private sector development
 - Retail development
 - Health care campuses (WakeMed, UNC Health, Duke, etc)
 - High-rise residential development
 - Life sciences campuses
- Expertise of available firms
- Workloads of available firms

She shared the Most experienced construction workers nearing retirement age.

Most experienced construction workers nearing retirement age

- Roughly 1 in 4 workers are over age 55
- Older employees tend to be the most skilled
- In 2024, the construction industry will need to bring in more than 546,000 new workers on top of normal hiring pace in 2023 to meet industry demand

She shared the Timeline Challenges.

Timeline Challenges

- Designer Procurement, Design and Permit Review Timelines
 - Statutes require design team selection process - 3 months
 - Design process generally 1 year+, especially for major projects
 - County responsible for core building permit review
 - Municipalities retain authority for site permit approval process, - can take 6-12 months for site plan approval prior to building review
- Major Equipment/Materials Lead Times
 - Structural Steel Members 20+ weeks
 - Mechanical Equipment 25-65 weeks
 - Electrical Switchgear 50-80 weeks
 - Emergency Generators 65-104 weeks (Public Safety & Others)

She shared a chart showing the Typical Timeline for Moderate Sized Project.

Vice-Chair Evans made comments on the various challenges with everything that's going on in the building environment right now. She shared that we have to be careful how many projects we take on, you can price your own self out of the market if there's too much going on at one time so you have to be very deliberate about how many things you can be doing at one time in a robust market like this it just drives the cost up it's a tricky time we find ourselves in. She thanked them for the presentation she thought it had a lot of good information.

Mr. Mark Forestieri, Director, FD&C, shared that this is a delivery method. He shared starting with construction manager at risk that's a delivery method and that's akin to a contractor and they are effectively a contractor, it's just that we use them on larger projects like the school system. For example, Wake Tech we'll refine that to be effective as with a project that's 12 to \$15 million or more not every project. Project Management staff that are attracted are people with 10-15 years of experience and Wake County benefit from it. The designs are not completed in FD&C, they manage the project managers.

Commissioner Calabria shared comments on project managers. He shared that he would like additional information on project managers.

Manager Ellis shared adjustments in the budget.

Ms. Gaskins shared Long Term Costs: Opening the Facility.

Timeline Challenges

- Designer Procurement, Design and Permit Review Timelines
 - Statutes require design team selection process - 3 months
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 - Municipalities retain authority for site permit approval process, - can take 6-12 months for site plan approval prior to building review
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 - Emergency Generators 65-**104** weeks (Public Safety & Others)

She shared charts showing how each new and expanded facility ranges in downstream operating, maintenance, and FTE costs.

She shared next steps.

Next Steps

Upcoming capital dates

- April 8 - Board Work Session on Debt & Capital planning
- May 6 - Recommended Budget will include balanced capital plan
- May 13 or 23 - One of the May Board Work Sessions will focus on additional information for the recommended FY25 - 31 Debt and Capital Plan

4. 2024 Library Bond Projects

Attachments: [Libraries CIP - updated.pdf](#)

Mr. Matt Roylance, Deputy Director of Community services, shared 2024 Bond Projects.

He shared the process of how they got to where we are today and the

changes have been made to the version online.

He shared the agenda for today.

Agenda

- Bond Process
- Library System Overview
- Planning Process
- Potential Wake County Public Library (WCPL) Projects
- Project Prioritization
- Current Project List
- Discussion

He shared the Bond Process.

Bond Process

- March 2024 | Finalize list of bond projects
- April/May 2024 | Approve bond amount & wording of bond questions
- Summer 2024 | Develop & implement communication plan for bond referendum
- November 2024 | Bond referendum

He shared the Library System Overview.

Library System Overview

The Library System Today

8 Regional Libraries, 13 Community Libraries, 2 Special Libraries =

323,000 square feet

1 Bookmobile

1 Administrative Building

FY23 Circulation: 10,950,697, FY23 Visits: 2,620,775

21% of Wake County's population has an active library card

He shared a slide showing a chart showing drive times and a map of current libraries.

He shared the Planning Process.

Analysis of Internal Factors

- Prior bond review
- Facility assessments

- Services & data

Analysis of External Factors

- Peer benchmarking
- Demographics & population growth

Input Opportunities

- Library Commission
- Staff focus groups
- Community engagement
- Customer satisfaction survey

Projects & Recommendations

- Prioritization of projects
- Project budgets & timelines

He shared the Potential WCPL Projects.

Mr. Roylance shared a chart on the Staff Recommended Renovations with Library Renovations and Improvements + \$43.3M. Projects will address aging facilities, system replacements, furniture, finishes, and other upgrades.

Commissioner Adamson shared comments on the previous presentation about the Library Admin building needing renovations. With \$43.3 M is this full renovation.

Mr. Roylance shared that this is a full renovation. He shared the Staff Recommended replacement and New Library.

Vice-Chair Evans shared comments on finding land for Athens Drive, Wake County will purchase property in Rolesville and Wendell.

Mr. Roylance shared not negotiated yet. He shared each one is a community branch.

Commissioner Calabria shared comments on the inclusion of the three libraries on this slide. He asked about the Athens total in January versus now.

Mr. Roylance shared that they have shifted and in some cases adjusted the years of when things will occur. They have also updated some of the pricing based on more recent information and escalation factors. The list of renovation projects has changed slightly and that sometimes impacts when there's capacity to start on a new big construction project as well so it's not I don't think so much the case that anything is radically different it just represents a more updated view of all the moving parts and pieces.

Commissioner Waters shared the importance to libraries in the community. She shared that she wanted to ensure that vulnerable communities are privy to this information. What could be shared with members of the community as why specific libraries are not included in the priority list.

Mr. Roylance shared that all are needed projects and not enough money to fund them all. He shared that there are 2 libraries (Harrison and Southgate) that serve Southeast Raleigh.

Manager Ellis shared comments on partnerships especially with the City of Raleigh and Wendell. He shared that they are committed to finding a site.

Commissioner Adamson shared comments about the Rolesville library. Can we apply for earmarked money.

Mr. Ben Canada, Chief of Staff, shared options are being explored.

Commissioner Waters wanted to elevate equity around vulnerable communities. She shared comments about Richard B. Harrison and the security concerns, parking lot issues. They are not ideal for serving the community and the challenges that are faced.

Mr. Roylance shared that Richard B. Harrison does have a parking issue as well as a safety concerns. He shared that a renovation would not improve the parking but security needs to be fixed and they are working with the City of Raleigh.

Commissioner Waters asked what are the plans that will benefit Richard B. Harrison other than the parking and security.

Mr. Roylance shared that any renovation is focused on the interior of the facility.

Mr. Frank Cope, Community Services Director, shared that it is hard to state what will be done. An architectural design firm will be hired. They will meet with the community for input as part of the planning process.

Manager Ellis shared that Community Services submitted their budget and safety is part of the proposed plan.

Mr. Roylance shared the Staff recommendations and Project Costs.

Staff Recommended Replacements & New Library

- **Athens Drive Library (replacement) \$16.3M - The FY27**

WCPSS renovation project will require new construction for a public library.

This project will require \$1-2M in operating expenses.

- **Rolesville Library (new library) \$13.3M** - Wake County's only municipality without a library and one of the fastest-growing communities in the county. Wake County and Town of Rolesville adopted Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on September 6, 2022 for preliminary planning of new library on town campus property.

This project will require \$1-2M in operating expenses.

- **Wendell Library (replacement) \$18.2M** - WCPL's smallest community library is no longer adequate to serve the rapidly growing Wendell population. If not replaced, a renovation cost of \$1.2M will be added to the renovation project list.

This project will require \$1-2M in operating expenses.

He shared a chart on Additional Potential Projects and a map of Potential Library Project Locations.

Commissioner Calabria shared comments on the additional potential projects. Does estimate include 1% of art.

Mr. Roylance said yes.

Commissioner Calabria asked about the contingency amounts associated with this type of project.

Mr. Cope explained that we typically apply 10% contingency to a renovation and 5% to a new building.

Commissioner Calabria shared Digital Equity Center, single center or regional center model.

Chair Thomas shared ideas on incorporating digital and broadband access. She shared the example of Southgate Library where citizens need wi-fi.

There were comments on wi-fi and broadband access and not a stand alone facility.

Mr. Cope shared comments on size and cost. He shared that the Digital Equity Center does not mean that it has to be one single building.

Commissioner Stallings thanked them for the conversation and shared

when we've been looking at Health and Human services data we clearly know that there are pockets of the county who are really struggling more so than others in regard to digital equity. She commented on a regional approach with the potential to add on space for digital equity.

Commissioner Adamson commented on doing an RFP for the Digital Equity Center.

Commissioner Waters shared comments on mixed use housing, digital equity centers, earmark dollars for Southeast Raleigh. She asked about the Southeast Wake facility.

Mr. Cope shared that he met with Manager Ellis and nothing is etched in stone as they are still trying to hash some things out. He shared that the Southeast Wake project if built further away from Southgate you could build a new one but if they are close, it does not make sense to build a new library.

There were additional comments about the capacity of what to do now.

Ms. Jacobs shared comments about outreach engagement.

Vice Chair Evans asked staff about recommendations and the additional projects. What is the debt capacity beyond \$91M.

Mr. Todd Taylor, Debt Manager, shared comments on the \$135M bond and the models. he shared that they are still planning for the \$140M amount in the bond.

Vice-Chair Evans shared comments on total capacity, not looking at PGROS bond for this year.

Commissioner Calabria shared comments on the board's focus of the library bonds.

Mr. Roylance shared the Current Project List.

Commissioner Adamson shared comments on the Peace Memorial, she asked to move it to the current project list.

Chair Thomas agreed on moving the Peace and Justice Memorial to the current project list.

Vice-Chair Evans shared that she is in favor of moving the Peace and Justice Memorial. She shared comments on the Apex Friendship library. Supports the current project list.

Commissioner Mial echoed Chair Thomas and Commissioner Adamson.

Mr. Taylor shared that it can go to \$142M.

Mr. Mark Forestieri shared that the current project list, they can handle. Adding more gets him nervous.

Commissioner Calabria shared comments on the current project list and add the Peace and Justice Memorial. Staff need a proposal where it should go moving forward.

Commissioner Adamson described the memorial column in Alabama where it lists the countys that have had lynchings.

Commissioner Waters shared she is in agreement with the Peace and Justice Memorial. Still have questions on the current project list. She commented that she championed the SE Wake project and wanted to be sure she understood the process used when decisions are made.

Chair Thomas shared some clarity on the additional libraries (FQ and Friendship)

Mr. Roylance shared additional information on the decision of the list presented today. He shared that some received more traction than others and that was what they perceived from the BOC.

There was open discussion about data and how the list was prioritized, data, heat map, growth, explosive growth in area.

Commissioner Stallings asked about earmarks. She supports the Peace and Justice Memorial. Mr. Canada shared that options are being explored but not necessarily for libraries.

Commissioner Mial shared the possibility of public/private partnership for libraries. Agree with Commissioner Adamson on the Digital Equity Center.

Ms. Emily Lucas, Deputy County Manager, shared comments on more research on what digital equity center can look like. What programs will be offered base on the bond inclusion.

Commissioner Calabria asked what kind of library the \$19.4M applies to.

Mr. Roylance shared the \$19.4M is for a regional branch library.

Chair Thomas asked how we can explore public/private partnership for

digital centers.

Ms. Jacobs will follow up.

Chair Thomas asked in relation to the \$140M in 7 years, if we have no workforce or skilled labor, what happens.

Mr. Roylance shared that there is a general order.

Ms. Lucas shared that if Wake County does not pass the bond, we would have to go back to the voters for another one.

Mr. Roylance shared the Project Prioritization.

Project Prioritization

Limits on Number of Projects

Factors to consider:

- Bond referendum amount
- County's debt capacity
- Tax rate and ongoing operating budget implications
- Staff capacity
- Construction market capacity for County projects
- Statutory spending timeline

Factors to Consider

Population & Geographic Coverage

Population within a 10-minute drive time of the potential project.

Future Growth

Increasing residential capacity within the 10-minute drive time of the potential project.

Youth Populations

Youth populations within the 10-minute drive time of the potential project.

Underserved

Underserved populations (senior citizens, those with limited English, and those without reliable internet) within the 10-minute drive time of the potential project.

Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable communities (defined by the Vulnerability Index) within the 10-minute drive time of the potential project.

Site Availability

Potential projects with sites identified.

Shared slides showing: Funding Interest: Population & Geographic Coverage; Drive Time with Potential Projects; Funding Interest: Future

Growth; Funding Interest: Youth; Funding Interest: Underserved; Funding Interest: Vulnerability; Funding Interest: Site Availability; Funding Interests Summary; Current Project List; and Discussion.

He shared the Limits on Number of Projects.

5. B.W. Wells Property

Attachments: [BW Wells slides 03.11.2024.pdf](#)

Mr. Chris Snow, Parks, Recreation and Open Space Director shared B.W. Wells Park.

He shared today's discussion.

- Introduction
- Mission Statements and Goals
- Facility Development Process - Concept Plan
- Project Introduction
- Site History and Analysis
- Concept Plan Details
- Preliminary Costs
- Funding Considerations
- Next Steps

Mr. Eric Stahle, Senior Facilities Project Manager shared the Commissioner Goals, resolutions and design Guidelines.

- Board of Commissioners (BOC) Growth and Sustainability Goal GS4
 - **Preserve open space and expand access to parks, preserves, recreation resources and greenways**
- Renewable Energy Resolution
- Native Plants Resolution
- Public Art Policy
- Wake County Design Guidelines & Standards
- Energy Design and Management Guidelines

He shared the PROS system- (Parks, recreation and Open Space).

- Natural Resource Based
- 8 Existing County Parks
- 3 Existing Nature Preserves
- Construction/Planning/Design
 - One New Park under construction

- Two New Parks in planning/design
- One New Greenway/Preserve in design
- Three Existing Parks in design
- Two New Park Facilities in concept planning

He shared the Facility Development Process.

- Site Identification
- Consultant selection
- ✓ **Concept Plan**
- ✓ **Master Plan**
- ✓ **Schematic Design**
- Construction Documents and permitting
- ✓ **Bidding / Construction Contract Award**
- Construction
- Opening

Concept plan is a less detailed illustration of the core ideas to incorporate on the site, and the opportunities that might exist to facilitate these ideas.

He shared Project Team and Stakeholders.

Project Team

- Wake County
- Design Workshop (Design)
- Lynch Mykins (Structural)
- Palacio Collaborative (Estimator)

Stakeholders

- State of North Carolina
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- B.W. Wells Association

Ms. Ellen McKoy, shared About the Site.

- Owned by US Army Corp of Engineers, leased to the State of North Carolina for Falls Lake State Park
- Adjacent Campground not considered

She shared About B.W. Wells.

- Chair at NC State Botany Department for 30 years
- Identified eleven different plant communities across the state
- Developed new field of ecological botany

- Author of “The Natural Gardens of North Carolina”
- Retired at Rockcliff Farm in 1954

She shared pictures and maps of the Rockcliff Farm and Historic Structures.

She shared Project Goals.

- Honor B.W. Wells’s legacy
- Preserve the natural and cultural landscape
- Craft an executable plan
- Improve public access
- Provide learning opportunities for all ages

She shared Activity Zones.

- Historic Core
- Education Hub
- Land Stewardship and Research
- Park Trail Hub

She shared the Concept Plan.

- Historic preservation of structures and landscape
- New gathering and teaching areas
- Supporting infrastructure
- Expanded trail system and amenities
- Improved interpretive elements
- Improved water access
- Habitat restoration and demonstration gardens
- Maintenance and operations

She shared the Historic Core.

- Ray/Wells House
 - Artist in Residence
 - Office
 - Welcome
- Studio
 - Art Gallery
 - Interpretive Center
- Smokehouse
 - Interpretive

- Ray House Outbuilding
 - Require Reconstruction
 - Maintenance/Storage
- Ray/ Caretaker House
 - Office and Operations

She shared the infrastructure Improvements.

- Entry road improvements
- Parking and trailhead
- Septic drain field
- Well
- Maintenance facility
- Structural reinforcement
- Power connections

She shared pictures showing the Gathering Spaces, Nature Play, Demonstration Gardens and Maintenance areas. The Site Circulation -13 miles of trails (5 miles existing and potential for 8 miles of additional trails, Trail Amenities, and Water Access.

Mr. Chris Snow shared a Recap.

Currently

- Rockcliff Farm is protected open space as a part of the Falls Lake State Recreation Area
- Open to the public:
 - BW Wells Association events
 - Guided Group Tours upon request

Proposed

- Rockcliff Farm is protected open space managed as a part of Wake County Parks Recreation & Open Space
- Open to the public:
 - 361 days per year; 8:00AM - Sunset
- Expanded programmatic opportunities
 - Historical
 - Environmental
 - Recreational
- Unique programmatic opportunities
 - Native plant propagation

He shared the estimated Costs for B.W. Wells.

Capital Improvements = \$12.8 million

- Facility renovations and new facility development

Operating = \$1.4 million

- One-time = \$260,000
- Ongoing = \$1,140,000

He shared the Anticipated Shortfalls for Project Funding.

Kellam-Wyatt County Park

- Currently budgeted at \$5,490,000
- Design Cost Estimate \$8,800,000
- Estimated Shortfall \$3,300,000 - \$3,700,000
- Start bidding June 2024

RDUAA - 286

- Currently developing concept plan
- No funds budgeted for construction

Lake Myra County Park

- Currently budgeted at \$16,000,000

He shared a charts showing the 2018 PGROS Bond Funding.

He shared next steps.

- Determine the project boundary and level of development
- Determine source of funding

If the Board of Commissioners moves the project forward:

- Develop agreement with the State of North Carolina and the BW Wells Association
- Programming
- Design
- Bidding
- Construction

Commissioner Calabria asked what is status of negotiations with the State.

Mr. Snow shared the lease agreement with the State is \$1 per year for 40 years.

Commissioner Calabria asked what is contingency on the \$12.8M.

Mr. Snow shared that the contingency rate is 20%. He commented that it's

a little higher than what we normally do but there's just so many unknowns with this project. We've only got a concept plan, we're dealing with historic structures, also there is a lot of site work with parks and so at this level we feel 20% is right.

Commissioner Calabria suggested that we secure the land and not compete with what is already planned.

Chair Thomas commented that the money is not available.

Mr. Snow shared comments on what has not been spent down to date.

Chair Thomas requested they provide an update on the \$12.8M .

Commissioner Mial asked could the other half of the \$7.1M be used for B.W. Wells.

Mr. Cope shared that based on the way cost has been escalating and the Lake Myra cost was estimated 4 years ago, the cost really escalated. The 286 mountain bike property is part of the spending so we anticipate spending all of that \$7.1M to fund the projects that are already in place.

Ms. Emily Lucas, Deputy County Manager, shared that the next opportunity for a Parks bond is 2026.

Commissioner Adamson stated she is not comfortable with leasing until we know that we are developing it. She shared comments about the Parks Masterplan.

Vice-Chair Evans shared that she doesn't see a sense of urgency for a lease.

Commissioner Adamson asked if any one has worked with Ms. Cervania in the House to get the State to fund the project.

Chair Thomas asked how long is the State lease, and commented that the County needs to consider the liability.

Ms. Lucas shared staff will look at other areas of the CIP and what would be the tradeoff. Ensure that lease terms are longer than the bond.

Chair Thomas asked if the leasing is from original owner or the Corp and asked for information on Blue Jay park.

Commissioner Calabria asked what is the State's position.

Mr. Snow has the list and will provide information to the Commissioners.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne C. Gilyard, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board