

Item Title: Authorize the Establishment of 4 FTEs in the Information Services Department

Specific Action Requested:
That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Authorizes the establishment of 3.00 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions in the Information Services department within the General Fund for the rewrite of the Revenue billing and collections system; and**
- 2. Authorizes the establishment of 1.00 FTE in the Information Services department within the General Fund to serve as a Chief Data Officer.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners approves all authorized FTE positions.

Background: In June 2017, the Board adopted the FY2018 County Capital CIP budget, which funded the rewrite of the Revenue billing and collections system. The project budget included contracted IT Engineer positions. After consideration, Information Services and Revenue staff determined direct County time-limited FTEs would be more cost effective and appropriate for retention and funding was included in the FY2019 General Fund budget. Funding was reallocated within County Capital to fund out year projects. As the County pursues recruitment of these positions, the time-limited status of these positions has caused difficulties in attracting qualified candidates, as well. This item converts time-limited to permanent FTEs.

Information Services identified a need for a Chief Data Officer position to lead the development of a data management strategy to foster a data-driven culture and build intelligence essential for a digital enterprise. This position was determined as a high-priority need and is requested outside of the budget development process.

Board Goal: This action supports the Board's great government goal to enhance the innovation within the organization and implement data-driven decision making processes and methods.

Fiscal Impact: There is no fiscal impact to FY2019. The salary and benefits of these positions will be managed within the FY2019 Information Services salary and benefits appropriation. The three IT Engineer positions were included in the FY2019 budget.

The Chief Data Officer position will impact the department's personnel budget for FY2020. This position will be included in the

FY2020 salary and benefit forecast with a salary of \$137,611. The ongoing cost of this position will be offset by circuit charges contract savings identified in the Information Services operating budget.

Additional Information:

IT Engineers in the Wake County Information Services Department develop and maintain the technical platform utilized by the County's Revenue Department to bill and collect property taxes for the County. This system allows Wake County to consistently maintain one of the highest property tax collection rates in North Carolina. The platform includes complex and highly customized applications consisting of approximately 4.5 million lines of software code spanning multiple modules. The technology underlying the platform is nearing end of life and requires a complete rewrite. Completion time for the rewrite is approximately 3.5 years, during which time IT Engineers must also maintain functionality of the current system.

Beyond the platform rewrite, ongoing responsibilities of the IT Engineers include:

- Performing annual technology refreshes, infrastructure upgrades, and enterprise project initiatives.
- Developing new features and automating routine tasks.
- Performing system updates in response to changing federal, local, and state mandates and frequent security enhancements.
- Providing nightly batch cycle monitoring and support.

The IT Engineers will also support Revenue's revaluation system. The maintenance requirements of this system have doubled since the revaluation cycle decreased from eight to four years. No additional FTEs were allocated at the time the revaluation cycle changed.

Three 42-month FTEs were allocated in the FY2018 budget to assist with the rewrite and ongoing maintenance of the Revenue applications. These IT Engineers must possess advanced development and methodology skills, and the positions have been difficult to fill due to their time-limited status. The Human Resources Department aided in marketing the positions, recruiting via numerous career websites and professional associations. These efforts were unsuccessful, and fee-based direct placement services were ultimately utilized to fill two of the three positions. The direct service placement fee is 25% of the hiring salary, totaling \$52,500 for the two positions filled. The third position remains vacant.

Additional concerns regarding the time-limited nature of the positions include significant timeline delays and loss of institutional knowledge if the employees leave the positions in pursuit of more permanent career pathways. These setbacks could potentially jeopardize the County's ability to collect taxes. To remove recruitment and retention concerns, the Information Services recommends converting the three time-limited FTEs to permanent positions.

Chief Data Officer FTE

Wake County generates and manages massive amounts of data. Often the data is in disparate and unconnected repositories, and as more services are moving to cloud-based

models and software-as-a-service initiatives, county data is no longer neatly confined to our own data centers. Supporting an “always-on” culture means that we sometimes lose the ability to physically touch our data or know exactly where it exists from one moment to the next. Our data is also subject to federal and state regulations that mandate the privacy and protection of electronic information. While the Information Services Department has implemented several enterprise data management platforms, including document management, content management, and public records management, several disparate departmental data integration and analytics initiatives are currently underway in the organization. Considering all of this, it is imperative that the County understand what data we have, where it is stored, who has access to it, and most importantly, how it *could* be used to inform business decisions.

Organizations are increasingly facing the challenge to develop an enterprise data management strategy that focuses on maximizing the value of their data assets. A good strategy can shift the organizational culture from simply viewing data as a transactional activity to seeing data as a tool for making decisions, improving efficiency, cutting costs and mitigating risk.

To facilitate the development and implementation of a data management strategy for Wake County, Information Services recommends the addition of a Chief Data Officer (CDO). The CDO will be tasked with overseeing everything related to the County’s data: strategy, maintenance, policy and stewardship. Furthermore, the CDO will foster a data-driven culture within the County, advocating how data can contribute to business success and improved citizen services.

Outcomes the County can expect to achieve from a successful enterprise data management strategy led by a Chief Data Officer include:

- A data management strategy tied to organizational goals
- Data governance policies and standards
- Defined roles, responsibilities and skills for data users
- Standardized data collection, analysis, and interpretation processes
- Enhanced data modeling, analytics, visualization, and reporting capabilities
- Improved data quality

Based on the visionary leadership skills need for this position, Information Services will perform a national recruitment. It is expected this will be a lengthy process and staff recommends beginning the recruitment process as soon as possible.

Attachments:

1. Budget Memo – FY 2019 Information Services