

Item Title: Accept and Appropriate Federal Grant Funds for Mental Health Project and Establish 1.000 FTE

Specific Action Requested:
That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Accepts and appropriates \$450,000 from the North Carolina Department of Public Safety into the Grants and Donations Fund for Wake County Sheriff's Office (WCSO), and**
- 2. Authorizes and establishes 1.000 FTE in the Grants and Donations Fund for WCSO for the duration of this grant.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: In accordance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, the Board of Commissioners must approve all amendments that increase the budget for a fund.

Background: On September 9, 2025, WCSO was notified of a grant award from North Carolina Department of Public Safety – Governor's Crime Commission for the Bridging the Gap: Community Mental Health Project. This pilot project will target four areas with our partners to educate, advocate, support, and promote public awareness. The project will address mental health misconceptions, decrease the gap between law enforcement and the community regarding mental health, while working together to provide mental health training and resources, and crisis intervention efforts for law enforcement, individuals within the agency, detainees, family members/caregivers affected by mental health challenges or crisis.

This grant award is in the amount of \$450,000 for a two-year period from October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2027. Each year, \$225,000 in funding will be allocated to cover expenses, including salaries and benefits for one FTE Deputy Sheriff position who will serve as the Project Coordinator. The funding will also support partnership trainings with National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – North Carolina, WCSO trainings sessions, and project supplies.

This project will be in collaboration with the WCSO Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), WCSO Peer Support, WCSO Community Engagement, Alliance Health, and Wake County Behavioral Health. All participating units and organizations have committed to working together by contributing their specialized services.

Strategic Plan: This action supports Safer Community Together Goal 3: By 2029, reduce the Wake County violent crime rate per 100,000 people by 5%.

Fiscal Impact: No Wake County Matching funds are being requested. At the conclusion of the grant, the Sheriff's Office will assess the program and consider requesting local funds for continuation.

Additional Information:

Bridging the Gap: Community Mental Health Project is a pilot with two (2) primary goals, to:

1. Decrease inaccurate stigmas associated with mental health challenges or crisis between the community, law enforcement, and mental healthcare professionals. This will increase community awareness regarding mental illness through information and viable resources to support those individuals, detainees, affected family members and caregivers in Wake County to provide a self-sustaining project that turns into a signature program for Wake County.
2. Demonstrate the importance of utilizing available mental health resources and open dialogue between the community, law enforcement, and mental healthcare professionals to increase the knowledge of how to interact with individuals with mental health illness and those persons affected by mental health challenges or in a mental health crisis to especially prepare detainees that are being discharged.

Bridging the Gap: Community Mental Health Project is a pilot with four (4) primary objectives, to:

1. Increase public awareness of mental illness through information and viable resources to support those individuals within the agency, detainees, and affected families with mental health challenges throughout the community in Wake County.
2. Provide educational resources to support those individuals within the agency, detainees and families in Wake County affected by mental illness throughout the community.
3. Advocate for individuals within the agency, detainees, and those families in Wake County affected by mental illness throughout the community.
4. Provide support those individuals within the agency, detainees and those families in Wake County affected by mental illness.

Attachments:

1. Budget Memo - FY2026 Grants and Donations Fund
2. Budget Memo – FY2026 Personal Ordinance