



Wake County

301 South McDowell Street
Raleigh, NC

Meeting Minutes Board of Commissioners

Monday, November 13, 2023

1:00 PM

Wake County Justice Center

Work Session

Meeting Called to Order: Chair Shinica Thomas

Meeting called to order at 1:03 p.m.

Chair Thomas asked for a moment of silence in reflection of Mrs. Betty Lou Ward, former Wake County Commissioner.

Chair Thomas shared the history of Mrs. Betty Lou Ward's service on the Wake County Board of Commissioners:

Mrs. Betty Lou Ward served on the Wake County Board of Commissioners for 28 years, from (1988-2016). Her 28 years as a Commissioner were noted for her advocacy of public education, the arts, parks, the environment, and public transit.

During her tenure, she served in the following roles:

- 1989 - Vice Chair of the Board
- 1998 - Vice Chair of the Board
- 1999 - Chair of the Board
- 2007 - Vice Chair of the Board
- 2009 - Vice Chair of the Board
- 1998-1999, Commissioner Ward served as President of NACo
- In 1999, Commissioner Betty Lou Ward was the 1st recipient of the National Award for County Arts Leadership
- 2000-2008 Commissioner Ward served as the Chair of the NACo's Art and Culture Commission
- 2011, the State County Commissioners Association inducted Commissioner Ward into its Hall of Fame
- 2016 The Wake County Board of Commissioners created the Betty Lou Ward Public Art Ordinance, allowing the Board to spend money on public art for capital projects that exceed \$1million

Commissioners shared personal reflections.

Commissioners Present: Chair Shinica Thomas, Vice Chair Susan Evans, Commissioner Matt Calabria, Commissioner Vickie Adamson, Commissioner James West, Commissioner Cheryl Stallings and Commissioner Don Mial.

Staff Present: Emily Lucas, Deputy County Manager; Duane Holder, Deputy County Manager; Ashley Jacobs, Deputy County Manager; Denise Foreman, Assistant County Manager; Ben Canada, Chief of Staff; Yvonne Gilyard, Clerk to the Board; Toni Womack, Deputy Clerk to the Board; Dr. Jose Cabanas, Chief Medical Officer; Dara Demi, Chief Communications Officer; Michael James, Assistant County Manager; Portia Johnson, Senior Executive Assistant; Tanika Cooper, Senior Executive Assistant; Jason Horton, Strategic Initiatives Director; Scott Warren, County Attorney; Stacy Beard, External Communications Division Director; Mark Forestieri, Director of Facilities, Design & Construction; Heather Drennan, Deputy Director of Budget & Management Services; Angela Crawford, Chief Human Resources Officer; Trinija Martin, Deputy Director of Human Resources; and Michelle Venditto, Director, Budget and Management Services.

Others Present: Sheriff Willie Rowe; Jonathan Frederick President & CEO; Hardin Engelhardt, Chief Learning Officer; Michael Haley, Executive Director, Wake County Economic Development Senior Vice President, Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce; Ashley Cagle, Wake County Economic Development; Barbara Belicic, Economic Development, Town of Apex; Joanna Helms, Economic Development, Town of Apex; Cameron Lilyquist, Wake County Sheriff's Office; Jennifer Brame, Wake County Sheriff's Office; Mark Oakley, Wake County Sheriff's Office; Darius McCalister, General Services Administration (Fleet); Clifton McCabe, General Services Administration (Fleet); and Brandon Zuidema, Deputy Town Manager, Town of Morrisville.

1. Agenda

Attachments: [Work Session Agenda 11.13.2023.docx](#)

Chair Thomas provided the agenda:

1. Remarks by New Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) Superintendent
2. Marbles Spoke Study
3. Business Development Grant Policies
4. Finalizing 2024 State Legislative Priorities
5. Bonus Sick Leave

2. Remarks by New WCPSS Superintendent

Dr. Robert P. Taylor had a last minute conflict and was unable to attend today's Work Session.

3. Marbles Spoke Study

Attachments: [Feasibility Study Wake BOC Presentation-vFF.pdf](#)

Ms. Lucas introduced leadership team from the Marbles Museum and provided reminder for Commissioners that the Marbles team previously came before the Board of Commissioners to provide interest in doing a study about the feasibility and expansion opportunities to provide more educational opportunities for children, beyond the HUB that is located downtown. The Commissioners funded the study and today's presentation is to share the results of the study and next steps.

Mr. Jonathan Frederick, President & CEO, Marbles Museum shared he and Ms. Hardin Engelhardt will provide presentation and update.

Mr. Frederick shared when he previously presented to the Commissioners, he shared the 10-year agreement between Marbles Museum and Wake County was completed. He shared in September, 2023, Marbles Museum will have been opened for 16 years. He thanked the Commissioners for their support, and leadership to Wake County staff for the collaborative work with Marbles Museum.

He shared the Marbles Museum mission is to spark imagination, discovery and learning through play:

- Play is how children learn best.
- Play strengthens families.
- Play connects communities.
- Play fosters joy.

He shared Marbles Museum has had a 47% increase in attendance. He shared a photo of Marbles Museum's initiative (kick off to kindergarten) event. This event allowed families to get an example of how kindergarten would be. Families were excited to participate in this event.

He shared Study Purpose & Approach:

Purpose:

- Extend Impact Beyond Downtown
- Assess Demand, Feasibility and Sustainability

Approach:

- Engaging, Equity-driven

- Commitment to Serve All

Ms. Hardin thanked the Commissioners for the investment in Marbles Museum. She shared the feasibility study and findings of the study.

She shared Feasibility Study Activities, noting that Gensler was the organization used to complete the feasibility study:

1. Data Review
2. Team Visioning Sessions
3. Site Evaluation Visits
4. Stakeholder Surveys, Interviews and Focus Groups
5. Opportunity Evaluation
6. Ongoing Conversations with Municipalities
7. Conversations and Site Visits with other Museums
8. Pilot Programming

She shared Opportunity Evaluation Considerations:

1. Few Alternative Options
2. Anticipated Growth
3. Socio-economic Need
4. Adjacency to Target Population
5. Prevalence/Proximity to Parks and Open Space

She shared Community Priorities:

- Expand early childhood educational opportunities
- Provide relevant and engaging education
- Expand access to extending learning opportunities
- Attract visitors
- Preserve and enhance the quality of life
- Expand access to recreational resources
- Enhance the quality of life for vulnerable residents and communities
- Focus support and resources on vulnerable parts of the county

She shared Marbles 3-year Strategic Goals:

- Expand access and capacity
- Build upon existing momentum to advance diversity, equity and inclusion
- Increase donations to fund new and improved exhibits
- Strengthen learning experiences
- Attract and retain top quality staff and volunteer talent

She shared a photo of Marbles van that assists with transportation to the off site program (transportation services are free to the public and funded by the City of Raleigh). She shared an example of an event held at Dix Park, noting that attendance was strong and a great success. She shared track

out camps held in Morrisville are partnering with Marbles Museum.

She shared Findings from other Children's Museums with Satellites:

- Consistency of experience across locations
- Not a duplicated experience
- Unique location adjacent to other amenities
- Membership inclusive of all sites
- Same admission
- Higher member attendance at Spokes
- Requires similar facility situation to Marbles/Wake County arrangement
- Additional backbone capacity needed

She shared Summary of Feasibility Study Findings:

- Expand capacity to meet community demand for play-based learning
- Limited opportunities
- Socio-Economic Need
- Growing Population
- Large Number of Children Under Age Nine

She shared Expansion Possibilities:

- Brick & Mortar Spoke Location(s)
- Programmatic Partnerships prioritizing areas of need
- Community based programming
- Offsite Field trip programming
- Pop up traveling exhibits
- Offsite camps

She shared Brick & Mortar Spoke Location(s) (challenges and opportunities):

Opportunities

- expand capacity & impact/meet community need/mitigate competition

Challenges

- funding /staff capacity/unknown demand /highest risk investment

She shared Programmatic Partnerships Priorities Areas of Need:

Opportunities

- expand impact and access /replicate existing successful programs /reduce barriers/ build on successful partnerships/ easy on ramp/low risk

Challenges

- funding/ staff capacity/ unknown demand

She shared Community Based Programming:

Opportunities

- expand impact and access/ replicate existing successful programs/reduce barriers/ build on successful partnerships/ easy on ramp

Challenges

- funding and staff capacity

She shared Offsite Field Trip Programming:

Opportunities

- Respond to market demand/ Increase field trip capacity/revenue / Expand educational impact

Challenges

- staff capacity

She shared Pop-up Traveling Exhibits:

Opportunities

- expand reach/ enhance accessibility/ test demand for permanent spokes

Challenges

- funding/ staff capacity/ unknown demand

She shared Offsite Camps:

Opportunities

- Increase camp capacity/revenue / meet community need for out-of-school learning opportunities

Challenges

- Staff capacity / replicating the camp Marbles experience / Transportation to Marbles / Unknown demands

Mr. Frederick shared Emerging Opportunities to Expand Impact & Reach:

Programs:

- Access Programs and Community Based Programming

Satellite Locations:

- Brick & Mortar Satellites and Pop-up Traveling Exhibits

He shared Next Steps:

- Downtown Expansion
- Expansion Taskforce
- Partnership Development
- Business Planning

- Due Diligence
- Pilot Programming

He shared a photo of a child and the importance of the Marbles programs.

Commissioner West shared information about Wake County's Social Economic & Vitality (SEV) program and asked if there is a nexus with SEV programs and Marbles.

Mr. Frederick shared yes, there is a connection and Ms. Hardin shared they would welcome opportunities to meet with partners in areas mentioned by Commissioner West.

Commissioner West recommended the Marbles after-school program connect with Ms. Katherine Williams, Wake County Director of Cooperative Extension program.

Ms. Hardin confirmed they are currently working with Co-op program managed by Ms. Katherine Williams.

Commissioner Adamson thanked presenters for attending. She asked if the study identified specific sites.

Mr. Frederick shared yes there was data provided and he can certainly share that with the Commissioners. He shared data also factored in timing per the locations.

Ms. Hardin shared that Gensler showed sites in municipalities with the most opportunities for partnerships.

Commissioner Calabria thanked the presenters for attending today's meeting. He shared his appreciation for doing the survey for community priorities and connecting to BOC goals as it pertains to education/camps/track-out programs for children over the summer. He shared this is an important priority for Wake County. He shared regarding satellite sites, if there are higher memberships at Spokes and does this create reluctance on Marbles' part?

Mr. Frederick shared it merits more research. He shared it doesn't give pause but to make sure they aware.

Ms. Hardin shared membership at various satellite locations is sometimes higher.

Commissioner Mial shared thanks to presenters for attending today's

meeting. He shared thanks for consideration of expanding the Marbles Museum services throughout the county. He asked presenters to go into detail about the products/work that is done at Museum.

Mr. Frederick shared fabrication and prop shops customize the exhibits in Marbles. Mr. Frederick shared he would welcome the opportunity to provide a tour to Commissioners if they are interested.

Vice Chair Evans shared appreciation to Marbles staff for their vision. She shared the importance of having satellite opportunities for those who may not have ability to get to the main location. She shared securing locations for exposure is key.

Chair Thomas asked how will staff capacity be addressed.

Mr. Frederick shared currently, all of their team members love their work and want to ensure well trained staff are committed.

4. Business Development Grant Policies

Attachments: [Incentive Policy Recommendations.pdf](#)
[WakeCountyEconomicDevelopmentPolicySeptember2019Final.pdf](#)
[Proposed Incentive Policy Nov 2023.pdf](#)

Mr. Michael Haley, Executive Director, Wake County Economic Development Senior Vice President, Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce and Mr. Michael James, Wake County Assistant County Manager, shared Business Development Grant Policies.

Mr. James shared Incentive Policy Discussion.

He shared Today's agenda:
Incentive Policy Updates

Today

Recap ES Committee Recommendations & Discussion

- Living Wage Standard
- Business Practice Guidelines
- Upward Mobility Bonus Updates

Continue discussion on:

- HQ Tier
- Wage Thresholds

He shared Living Wage Standard Recommendation.

Living Wage Standard**Recommendation**

- Establishes Wake County Living Wage as the minimum required for **all** jobs in a project across all tiers of the policy
- Wage calculated and updated annually
- Utilize the same calculation for County employees
- Current Wake County Living Wage: **\$43,971**
 - \$40,851 after health insurance credit (County employee standard)

He shared Business Practice Guidelines Recommendation.

Business Practice Guidelines**Recommendation**

Add factors to policy guidelines:

NEW: Business practices, including employee benefits, wellness and health benefits, leave policies, and community involvement.

NEW: Business practices, including LEED Certification, WELL Building Standard, and other sustainability initiatives.

He shared Application of Business Guidelines Recommendations.

Application of Business Guidelines

Guidelines include factors the board considers in determining whether to offer an incentive. They do not determine eligibility, or impact incentive amounts.

Application will work as it does now, but with new factors:

- WCED collects information through updated intake forms
- Information is shared with BOC in closed session prior to offer decisions
- Potential Examples:
 - Company's planned investment includes constructing a LEED Certified building
 - Company is progressing towards a goal of being carbon neutral by 2050
 - Company donates a percentage of sales to nonprofits that mentor and serve justice involved individuals

He shared Upward Mobility Bonus Recommendations.

Upward Mobility Bonus**Meet all 3:**

- Prohibit discrimination (Align language with the County's Nondiscrimination Ordinance)

- Provide health insurance at an affordable level
- Leave policies accommodate vacation, sick, bereavement, parental, and community involvement.

Plus 2 of the following:

- Offset costs to employees associated with childcare.
- Offset costs to employees associated with transportation.
- Demonstrate second chance hiring practices, including removal of prior conviction checkoffs.
- Offset costs to employees associated with tuition or similar educational expenses.

Commissioner Stallings asked for elaboration about health insurance being on an affordable level.

Mr. James shared there is a percentage used by looking at company's premium and viewed as percentage of wages from the job.

Commissioner Calabria shared thanks to Mr. James. He asked about requirements for upward mobility bonuses, as prerequisite for businesses who provide insurance at an affordable level, and asked if this is for full-time employees.

Mr. James shared yes, this is for full-time employees.

Commissioner Calabria shared community involvement leave, he approves making it a requirement for upward mobility bonus and asked that it not be a barrier for participants.

Mr. James shared that some companies do have these types of leave buckets available and the requirement for upward mobility bonus is helpful but not mandatory.

Commissioner Mial shared a comment regarding Plus 2 and second chance for hiring practices and removal of prior convictions, he asked for elaboration on that process.

Mr. James shared documentation for all Plus 2 will require documentation from companies to confirm services/practices are being provided.

Mr. Michael Haley and Ms. Ashley Cagle shared Headquarters Tier Recommendation:

- Establish new HQ Tier = Defined as corporate, regional, or division headquarters
- Commissioners would have input on destination of requesting corporations headquarters
- WCED would evaluate HQ status

- Investment = \$2million

He shared there is a gap in incentive policy and if there is not a State incentive, and project is not located in target growth area, the gap becomes a need to invest at least \$20 million dollars.

Mr. Haley shared a chart on Wage Thresholds:

Discussion

Current requirement is 120% of the County average wage, except in:

- State Participation
- Targeted Growth Area tiers

NC Average Wage: **\$62,648**

Wake Average Wage: **\$72,743**

120% of Wake Average: **\$87,292**

Does the BOC want to consider any modifications to the wage threshold?

Wage Thresholds: Average or Median?

- **Average** is the typical standard used
 - The State of NC:
 - Calculates and publishes the average Wake County wage, which is the basis for Wake County's policy thresholds.
 - Uses the average to qualify their projects.
 - For State participation projects, the County aligns its wage performance targets and compliance evaluation with the State's.

Wage Thresholds: Competition

- **WCED hired consultant to review policies including:**
 - Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Dallas, Nashville, Orlando, Richmond, Tampa
- **Common structures**
 - 100% of average local wage
 - Area living wage
- Prevailing wage for relevant industry is also used
- **Are wage thresholds impacting location decisions?**
 - Wake has won several projects that were not eligible using the 120% standard, but were eligible under the State match or Targeted Growth Area tiers
 - Unable to track companies that don't start the process because of wage thresholds

He shared this request is coming before the Board to change 120% of

Wake Average to \$100%. He shared 4 reasons for this request:

- Commissioners continued support of economic mobility through economic development
- If policy is only supportive of high wage jobs, it becomes difficult for the tool to be used for economic mobility
- Response to rapid escalation of wages across industries and sectors (this has potential to eliminate good projects coming to NC)
- Not anticipating a negative material change in the type of projects coming to NC

He shared Next Steps:

Is the Board ready to vote on policy changes?

Next step would be to vote on December 6, 2023.

Commissioner Calabria asked question regarding percentage payout amount.

Mr. James shared it depends on which companies are meeting their performance.

Vice-Chair Evans shared her understanding of the discussion regarding percentages of incentivized employees. She shared this all depends on the assumption that companies are making an investment into Wake County.

Commissioner Calabria shared the living wage base line discussion is important. He shared in regard to headquarters provisions: the magic is that a company identifies a location, employees live there, and this would justify original incentives. He would be inclined to frame incentive it as corporate and not national. He asked is this better than other projects as funding will need to come from this bucket.

Commissioners held a discussion regarding state tier qualifier.

Commissioner West asked if there is a tool that measures upward mobility.

Mr. Haley shared his team is working with Ted Abernathy to create a diversity index that would measure economic mobility and index DEI categories, at a community level.

Commissioner Adamson shared approval for adding headquarters as this leads to smaller businesses moving to area. She shared regarding wage threshold, there still has to be an investment piece met in order to get the incentive. She shared having entry level jobs is important.

Commissioner Stallings asked how many regional/corpoate division headquarters are there?

Mr. Haley didn't have that information included in presentation but will provide it to the Commissioners at a later date. He shared the purpose of the recommendation is to grow the list.

Vice-Chair Evans shared her support of adding headquarters provision, she shared the 25% threshold is a little low for her and asked if there is room to increase investment amount.

Chair Thomas shared she would like to see the Investment/Jobs minimum number increased. She would like it to be notable as a local headquarters.

Mr. James asked if information on tier and wages on feedback is sufficient.

Commissioner Adamson asked what is \$2M for headquarters?

Chair Thomas shared that making adjustments to bring back for a vote is sufficient.

Mr. Canada asked if material could be added to January meeting.

Mr. Warren agreed that January would be fair treatment.

Commissioner Adamson inquired what is the current office space vacancy, she would like to see that information.

Commissioner Stallings would like numbers on headquarters division.

This item will be added to December 4, 2023 Board meeting for a vote by the Commissioners.

5. Finalizing 2024 State Legislative Priorities

Attachments: [State Legislative Priorities Nov 13.pdf](#)

Mr. Ben Canada, Chief of Staff, shared Finalizing 2024 State Legislative Priorities,

He shared What do we need from Board today:

What do we need from Board today?

- **Approve 2024 State priorities**
 - General guidance
 - Top 3 list

- Opportunity list
- **Next steps**
 - Staff will work to explore coalitions
 - Discuss with partners
 - Refine the legislative ask

He shared Approach Legislative Priorities in Three Ways:

Approach Legislative Priorities in Three Ways

General Guidance

- Policy guidance to CMO and contracted lobbyists to:
 1. reflect ongoing Board interests, and
 2. allow discretion to react quickly to legislative actions

Top Three Asks

- To speak with a single, clear voice, Board needs to set a short list of top priorities.

Opportunity List

- We can't predict what issues will be "hot" each session. The Board may approve a list of issues that, if an opportunity arises, CMO has discretion to pursue.

He shared 2024 Context:

2024 Context

- Short session
- Legislature and local government
- Limited political "capital"
- Prioritizing is always important, but especially in this setting

He shared Staff Recommendations:

Staff Recommendations

Champion Housing Programs

- Lead discussions about potential new State policy
- Advocate for new State policy and programs

Placement of Foster Youth with Acute Needs

- Unclear LME/CMO responsibilities contributing to placement challenges
- Need to "modernize" the legislation

Modernize CCBI Legislation

- Statutes authorizing the forensic services agency out of date
- Need to "modernize" the legislation

#1 - Champion State Housing Programs

- Expand State's low-income housing tax credit program
 - Make criteria more flexible
- Create gap-financing opportunities
 - Trust funds
 - Grants
- Address source-of-income discrimination
 - Source-of-income as a basis of rental decisions
- Create statewide clearinghouse of opportunities

#2 - Placement of Foster Youth with Acute Needs

- Lack of community providers and placement options is a Statewide challenge.
- Seek amendments to roles in placement of foster youth
- Unclear responsibilities has contributed to significant wait times, youth in office buildings

#3 - Modernize CCBI Legislation

- **State legislature created CCBI in 1937**
- **Need language to reflect current practices, be flexible for future changes**
- **Examples**
 - Agency name
 - Director term
 - Roles of County, DA, and Raleigh
 - Flexibility for evolving services

Logic for Staff Recommendations

- Reflect needed changes that would benefit County services
- Align with policy issues legislature already discussing
- Safe

Opportunity List

Advocacy work not guaranteed, but CMO staff have discretion to pursue if opportunity

- K-2nd Instructional Assistants
- Teaching Fellows Program
- Property tax relief
- Veterans services policy aligning with County
- Foster care system improvements
- Medicaid coverage for persons in jail (state / federal)
- Orphan road funding

- Social and emotional resources for public schools

Finalizing 2024 Priorities

- In October, Board asked staff to invite Commissioners to suggest changes to top 3, or additional items for Opportunity List
- None received
- Staff request Board direction to proceed with recommended top 3 list and opportunity list

General Guidance**The Board of Commissioners will pursue legislative advocacy that:**

- Preserves the Board's statutory authorities and discretion to set policy priorities for Wake County government.
- Preserves the County's financial resources and tax base.
- Maintains and enhances State funding for government services.
- Advances the Board's Strategic Plan initiatives.
- Facilitates policy improvements that benefit Wake County government and residents.

County Manager's Office staff have the Board's permission to advocate in support of this general guidance

- Applies to state and federal advocacy

Staff and lobbyist assume this covers the following:

Sustain or increase funding for public schools and community colleges.
Sustain or increase funding for State-funded services in HHS and other departments.
Oppose bills that would shrink tax base or present financial challenges.
Oppose bills that reduce the Board's options to manage growth.
Oppose unfunded mandates or bills disrupting services.

Chair Thomas shared she would like broadband digital equity added to list.

Commissioner Adamson asked when will federal priority list be completed.

Mr. Canada shared he is working on that list.

Commissioner Stallings shared comments regarding teaching fellows model for behavioral health in schools.

Ms. Foreman shared funding in State can cover teaching fellows in behavior health.

All commissioners approved recommendations.

6. Bonus Sick Leave

Attachments: [2023 Additional Sick Leave Board Presentation.pdf](#)

Ms. Crawford shared Recruitment and Retention: New Sick Leave Proposal

She shared the **Agenda:**

- Current Labor Market
- Employee, Turnover, and Vacancy Data
- Additional Sick Leave Proposal
- Recommendation
- Next Steps

She shared **Why Are We Here:**

GG 3.1: Strengthen employee recruitment, compensation, retention, and upward mobility.

The HR staff are proposing an enhanced sick leave benefit.

Presented to Board previously:

- Great Government on May 1, 2023
- Board member follow-up in June 2023

Today, staff seek:

- Board's feedback and questions on the proposal
- Item placement on November 20th agenda

She shared **Current Employment Market:**

- Employee Driven Market
- Wake County's current vacancy rate is 11% (percentage of authorized positions vacant)
- 2022 turnover rate is 15.48% (percentage of employees that left the County)
- Wake County continues to research strategies to recruit and retain employees
- Wake must be as dynamic as the market to sustain operations

She shared **Wake Employee, Turnover, and Vacancy Data:**

*Shared charts showing: More than 65% of Employees Have 0-10 Years of Service; Nearly 80% of all Turnover Occurs Between 0-10 Years of Service; In 2022, Turnover Cost the County Over \$66 Million; Six Departments Had 15% or Greater Turnover; Departments Having Recruiting Challenges; Half of the Departments Have a 10%+ Vacancy Rate; Average Age by Service Category; Age Distribution by Service Category; and the Wake Proposal.

Wake County Proposal

- Policy effective December 1, 2023, as an employee reaches each service milestone
- Accrual would start beginning on the anniversary year and month
- Would accrue per pay period for the entire anniversary year
- If the employee separates, the additional sick leave accrual stops
- Would not retroactively apply leave amounts, effective going forward
- As part of implementation, would have a catch-up accrual of 60 days for employees that have passed 20 years of service with Wake County

Commissioner West shared comment about making tough jobs more attractive to people within vulnerable communities.

Ms. Crawford shared an annual labor market study is done is every year.

Commissioner Calabria asked if position titles and number of individual slots fall within titles whether they are filled or vacant.

Ms. Crawford shared it is the total number of positions associated with individual titles.

Ms. Crawford shared chart showing half of the departments have a 10%+ Vacancy Rate

She shared **Other Additional Sick Leave Information:**

- Can be used for the same reasons as regular sick leave
- Not paid out upon separation of service and does not accrue on County financial statements like annual leave
- Upon retirement, unused sick leave:
 - Counts as service time for pension calculations under NC's local government retirement system
 - Counts as service time for Wake County retiree health insurance benefits

She shared **Why Current and Future Employees Want this Benefit:**

- In a survey conducted by Purdue Global, most generations including Baby Boomers, Millennials, and Generation X said they value paid sick leave as a benefit
- Sick leave counts toward an employees' years of service for retirement
- Applicants review an organization's benefits before deciding to join the organization

- An organization that supports sick leave and encourages employees to take it when needed can foster a culture of empathy and understanding
- Makes Wake County competitive in attracting employees who want local government careers
- Proposal may incentivize employees to stay at points in their career where they may have considered a job change

She shared Recommendations:

Recommendation

Effective December 1, 2023, benefit eligible employees will accrue additional sick leave based on total years of service in a Wake County benefit eligible position, as follows:

- Upon achieving 5 years of service, a benefit eligible employee will accrue 60 days of additional sick leave over the next 12 consecutive months
- Upon achieving 10 years of service, a benefit eligible employee will accrue 60 days of additional sick leave over the next 12 consecutive months
- Upon achieving 15 years of service, a benefit eligible employee will accrue 60 days of additional sick leave over the next 12 consecutive months
- Upon achieving 20 years of service, a benefit eligible employee will accrue 60 days of additional sick leave over for the next 12 consecutive months

Vice-Chair Evans is in favor of approving policy.

Commissioner West supports recommendations.

Ms. Crawford shared Next Steps:

Next Steps

- Answer Board questions
- Request Board approval for adoption of additional sick leave
- Request Board consider this item for placement on November 20th agenda
- Human Resources to implement December 1, 2023
- Communicate to employees

Commissioner Adamson shared thanks to Ms. Crawford, stating information was very helpful. She shared when looking at the slide titled

"More than 65% of Employees Have 0-10 Years of Service", she asked is there flexibility to provide more additional sick leave days to employees with 20 or more years of service; so they are getting more than 60 days, the amount that all employees are getting.

Ms. Crawford shared that would be up to the Board to make that decision.

Vice-Chair Evans asked Commissioner Adamson for clarification regarding the request to add additional sick leave days - would this be for employees approaching the 20+ year service mark, or for employees currently at the 20+ year service mark.

Commissioner Adamson shared she was referring to the catch up for employees currently at 20+ years of service.

Chair Thomas asked Commissioner Adamson was there a specific number she had in mind.

Commissioner Adamson shared 120 days.

Vice-Chair Evans shared she could agree with 120 days

Commissioner West asked what research do we have that would show that an increase at 20 years would give the outcome that is needed. Before doing this, he would like to see more data and then he would support.

Ms. Crawford shared City of Raleigh implemented this program in 2009. She would support giving more incentive for 20-year employees. She shared this will be the only time Wake county will be able to show value to these tenured employees.

Commissioner Stallings agrees with increase of annual contribution for employees with 20 years.

Commissioner Stallings asked is there exit interview data.

Commissioner Calabria shared this information will include all employees within Wake County.

Commissioner Mial asked what is cost effect? Are there other benefits that need to be considered.

Ms. Crawford shared additional information in Appendix is available and she provided a summary of benefits; staffing model and productivity and studies showing the value of sick leave.

Chair Thomas asked if this item can be added to the November 20th meeting agenda.

Ms. Lucas shared sick leave is not financially recorded on the books.

County Manager Ellis shared Ms. Crawford will bring this back, with a number, for the catch up (employees who have been here more than 20 years).

Adjourn

Chair Thomas adjourned meeting at 3:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Antoinette H. Womack, NCCCC
Deputy Clerk to the Board
Wake County Board of Commissioners