



Wake County

301 South McDowell Street
Raleigh, NC

Meeting Minutes Board of Commissioners

Monday, May 6, 2024

5:00 PM

Wake County Justice Center

Regular Meeting (Budget Presentation)

Meeting Called to Order: Chair Shinica Thomas

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation: Commissioner Matt Calabria

Items of Business

1. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Calabria moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Evans, to approve the Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Thomas, Vice-Chair Evans, Commissioner Adamson, Commissioner Calabria, Commissioner Mial, Commissioner Stallings, and Commissioner Waters

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Work Sessions of March 11, 2024 and March 25, 2024

Commissioner Stallings moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Evans, to approve the Minutes of the Work Sessions of March 11, 2024 and March 25, 2024. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Thomas, Vice-Chair Evans, Commissioner Adamson, Commissioner Calabria, Commissioner Mial, Commissioner Stallings, and Commissioner Waters

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Mial moved, seconded by Commissioner Waters, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Thomas, Vice-Chair Evans, Commissioner Adamson, Commissioner Calabria, Commissioner Mial, Commissioner Stallings, and Commissioner Waters

3. Accept and Appropriate Supplemental Funding from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Attachments: [BOC Additional PH Funds 5-2024 FINAL.docx](#)
[121 FY24 Wake County Health.pdf](#)
[Budget Memo - FY2024 Grants and Donations Fund.pdf](#)

4. Accept and Appropriate Funding from the North Carolina Division of Social Services (DSS) Emergency Placement Fund

Attachments: [BOC - CW Emergency Placement Fund 5-2024.docx](#)
[DCDL_CWS_08_EMERGENCY PLACEMENT FUND.pdf](#)
[Budget Memo FY24 - Human Services.pdf](#)

5. Amend the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget to Appropriate FY2023 Positive Variance to the OPEB Trust Fund

Attachments: [BOC Agenda Item-OPEB Appropriation 5.6.24 .docx](#)
[Annual Funding Policy for the Other-Post Employment Benefits Trust Fund.doc](#)
[Proposed OPEB Funding Policy Presentation Update.pdf](#)
[OPEB Deposit Calculation.docx](#)
[Budget Memo FY24 - General Government.pdf](#)

6. Resolution to Modify Fire Insurance District Boundaries

Attachments: [BOC Agenda Item Garner Fairview Fire Insurance District Realignment.docx](#)
[FIREINS_Garner_ISO_April2024.pdf](#)
[FIREINS_TenTen_ISO_April2024.pdf](#)
[NCDOI Approval of ISO District Changes.pdf](#)
[Resolution - Modification of Garner and Fairview Districts.doc](#)
[Garner-Fairview Fire Insurance District Reassignments Presentation.pdf](#)

7. Approval of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Grant Funds for the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority (RDU)

Attachments: [RDU FAA Grant Item Summary.docx](#)
[Grnt66Trsmtl_Wake County_2024-04-12.docx](#)
[FY22_Comp_Sup_GrantAgreement_3-37-0056-066-2024.pdf](#)

8. Approval of 800MHz Tower Lease Agreements

Attachments: [Wake Forest Tower Site and Apex-Cary Tower Space Lease Agreements Board Item.docx](#)

9. Approve the Acquisition of the Beaverdam Property as Part of the County's Open Space Program

Attachments: [Agenda Item Summary Beaverdam 6 TLC.docx](#)
[CIP Budget Memo - FY2024 County Capital Fund - PGROS.pdf](#)
[OS Bond and NCDOT Funding Tracker.pdf](#)

10. Approve the Acquisition of the Midway Forest Property as Part of the County's Open Space Program

Attachments: [Agenda Item Summary Midway TLC.docx](#)
[CIP Budget Memo - FY2024 County Capital Fund - PGROS.pdf](#)
[OS Bond and NCDOT Funding Tracker.pdf](#)

11. Award Construction Contract for West Regional Library Renovation for \$2,392,669 to Riggs-Harrod Builders, Inc.

Attachments: [Board Item Summary WRL Reno 4-17-24.docx](#)
[Scanned Bid Tab WRL Reno 3-28-24.pdf](#)
[Project Budget Summary 4-18-24.pdf](#)

12. Add the Jordan Lake One Water Coalition Board of Directors to the County's List of General Advisory Boards

Attachments: [Final Jordan Lake One Water Consent Agenda Item 4.5.24.pdf](#)
[Jordan Lake One Water Item Summary 4.6.24.pdf](#)
[Wake County JLOW Membership Packet.pdf](#)
[JLOW Membership Responsibilities.pdf](#)

13. Proclamations for May 2024

Attachments: [Proclamations Item Summary 05.06.2024.docx](#)
[Proclamation Jewish American Heritage Month Proclamation.docx](#)
[Proclamation Maternal Mental Health 5.6.24.docx](#)
[Proclamation Mental Health Awareness](#)
[Proclamation 4.29.2024.docx](#)
[Proclamation Military Appreciation Month - May 2024.docx](#)
[Proclamation National Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2024.docx](#)
[Proclamation National Foster Care Month.docx](#)
[Proclamation National Historic Preservation Month.docx](#)
[Proclamation Professional Municipal Clerks Week.docx](#)
[Proclamation Teacher Appreciation Week Proclamaton.docx](#)

14. Tax Committee Recommendations for Gross Receipts Penalty, Refund Requests and Various Reports

Attachments: [Tax Collections Item Summary](#)
[Tax Committee Agenda Process](#)
[Executive Summary 1.doc](#)
[May 2024 Refunds Under 500.pdf](#)
[May 2024 refunds over \\$500.00.pdf](#)
[Daily Updates For Gross Receipts.pdf](#)
[Daily Updates For Special Situations.pdf](#)
[Municipal Collection Report](#)
[Wake County Collection Report](#)
[Monthly In-Rem Foreclosure Report](#)
[Register of Deeds Excise Tax Report.pdf](#)

General Public Comments

15. General Public Comments

Steve Rao - shared accomplishments in Morrisville. He shared that he is hosting an AI Summit on 5/8/24, John Chambers is the guest speaker.

Maria Rosa Rangel - Apex, requesting support for Green Road Library expansion.

Lwiza Escobar Garcia - shared comments on support for the Green Road Library.

Tomas Franklin Castillo - North Raleigh, support for the Green Road Library.

Maria Castro - represents the Latino community. In support of the library expansion. Libraries represent diversity. Especially have books in Spanish.

Laura Tirado- does not live in Wake County (WC) but has worked in Wake County. Partnered with public libraries for 15 years especially at Green Road Library. In support of the expansion of the Green Road Library.

Humberto Trejo - works near the library and goes once a week. Shared that there are lots of children that use the library. Shared that he would like to see more bi-lingual books. In support of additional funding for the Green Road Library.

Rocio Anderson - President of the North Carolina Society of Hispanic Professionals, advocate for literacy. Asking for support of the Green Road Library.

Christina Spears -Wake North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) President. In support of the Green Road Library. Requesting support of funding the Wake County Public Schools System (WCPSS). Will the Board of Commissioners (BOC) stand with WCPSS at the General Assembly.

Carla Mena - online comment submitted.

Regular Agenda

16. Presentation of the County Manager's Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2025

Attachments: [FY25 Recommended Budget Legistar Agenda Item.docx](#)

Fiscal Year 2025 Recommended Budget Message
County Manager David Ellis
May 6, 2024

Introduction

Good evening, commissioners.

I'm pleased to present to you tonight a Fiscal Year 2025 recommended budget that aligns with the county's new vision statement.

It represents our *passion* to serve our nearly 1.2 million residents and enhance their wellbeing every day. It includes *proactive* solutions for the challenges we face now and in the future as a fast-growing county. And it

purposefully invests in key areas like public safety, affordable housing and child welfare where our needs are greatest.

My budget proposal also connects directly to your newly adopted strategic plan. It includes funding to advance each of the plan's six focus areas, so we can improve the quality and reach of our programs and services, while remaining fiscally responsible.

As you know, many of our services are mandated by the state. We are statutorily required to provide them. My recommended budget ensures we'll give our residents the opportunity to achieve their best possible outcomes.

Population Growth

I considered many factors as we developed this budget proposal. The first one is growth.

With our top-notch educational opportunities, access to high-quality health care, strong local economy, and excellent quality of life, it's no surprise that Wake County remains a highly desirable place where people want to move.

We're currently growing by 51 people per day. That makes us the third fastest-growing county of more than 1-million people in the country.

Interestingly, the data show nearly half of our new residents are 55 or older. State projections show that, by 2029, Wake County will have more residents over 60 than children under 18. As our population ages, we must consider their evolving needs and how the county will support them, particularly from an EMS and public safety perspective.

Economic Conditions

While building this recommended budget, I also looked at the economic landscape locally and globally.

The rising inflation rates we saw last year have slowed, but higher prices have become the new normal. Just like you feel it when you buy groceries or fill up your gas tank, the county feels it when we buy life-saving medical supplies for our EMS providers, postage and printing for important mailings for elections and the Register of Deeds Office, and books and supplies for our library patrons to enjoy.

Beyond materials and services, it's also more expensive now to maintain county facilities like the aging courthouses and our parks and preserves, approved through the 2018 bond.

Sales tax revenues have continued to grow, but that growth is happening at a more moderate rate than we've seen in recent years. We've officially moved beyond the pandemic when infusions of federal funds increased shopping. We're now seeing a more measured consumer spending environment.

Again, this is our new normal after the unpredictability of COVID-19 and the post-pandemic economy.

Approach to Budget Development

While taking the economic conditions and population growth into account, I also looked for opportunities across our organization to better utilize existing resources and positions.

Fiscal stewardship is a hallmark of our budget development process. We always strive to make the best use of what we have before we add any new investments.

To that end, our team assessed current staffing across departments and repurposed vacant positions to meet emerging or higher-priority needs. For example, we shifted long-term vacancies within Health and Human Services to support positions in our health clinics and regional centers. The change will improve access to services in our communities with the highest needs.

We also asked county departments to plan for the next several years of their operations. I challenged them to identify strategies to improve their services. Looking ahead, this approach will ensure department priorities align with your newly adopted strategic plan. It will also help us make purposeful, data-driven decisions to ensure the best possible outcomes for our residents.

Public Safety

Public safety is a major component of this budget proposal. I firmly believe that it is the duty and responsibility of local government to protect its residents.

We must provide an appropriate and timely emergency response to ensure our community is safe. That's why I recommend investing significant funding in FY2025 in Emergency Medical Services, Fire Services, the Wake County Sheriff's Office and the City-County Bureau of Identification.

Public Safety: EMS

As our population grows and our residents age, the demand placed upon Wake County EMS is greater.

Providers responded to medical emergency calls across the county a record 133,000 times last year. Our projections show we'll need to send EMS field staff out an additional 10,000 to 13,000 times in 2025. That's a 10% increase in just two years.

And it doesn't include the nearly 5,000 calls directed to the Nurse Navigation line - a pilot program that redirects 911 calls that are not emergent and don't require an ambulance to other healthcare options like urgent care or telemedicine providers. The Nurse Navigation line is one of several important triage tools that allow our EMS providers to focus on patients who need immediate care.

To meet the increased demand for emergency care, I recommend deploying 10 more ambulances to the roads, along with the EMTs and paramedics to staff them. The additional units will help the existing 51 ambulances and crews continue to reach residents experiencing medical emergencies in a timely manner. I also propose adding more EMS employees to manage ambulance movements 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They will ensure that we maximize ambulance deployment across our 835-square-mile county, so our crews can respond quickly to calls and keep people safe.

As I mentioned earlier, the cost of medical supplies is on the rise. We now pay about \$375,000 to stock and outfit one new ambulance to get it ready for service. That includes life-saving medicine, equipment like an automated defibrillator, and the radios to communicate with dispatch. In the year ahead, we also expect to pay more than \$1 million to replace 14 power-lifting stretchers that help protect our providers from injury while safely loading patients in and out of ambulances. The replacements will occur while the ambulances are being reconditioned to extend their lifespan on the road. We must account for these increased expenses in this budget. It's another reminder of the new normal that we're in.

I'm proud of our EMS team for becoming a national model by creating a talent pipeline for recruitment. In 2022, the vacancy rate within our EMS department was at a historic high of 22%. Today, our vacancy rate is at 0% for frontline field staff, and EMS is already gearing up to meet the coming demand.

One way we're doing that is through our in-house training program that helps EMTs become paramedics. I want to expand that program. I recommend adding another instructor, so we can create a second cohort to grow our frontline EMS staff.

As we increase our training options, we'll need more room to host classes. In FY2025, I advise renovating our Emergency Services Education Center, so we provide our EMTs, paramedics and other public safety staff with the best possible space to practice life-saving work. The renovation would also improve logistics and better position the county to respond to emergencies in the future.

Speaking of space, we'll keep building and expanding EMS stations in underserved parts of our community in the upcoming fiscal year. We'll also advance our work to replace aging stations with newer models that reflect modern standards and support current EMS operations. In addition, our EMS and Fire Services teams will continue their ongoing commitment to identify opportunities to co-locate their facilities, which both saves county taxpayers money and enhances response times, while maintaining a high quality of care for our residents.

Public Safety: Fire Services

Beyond those dual-purpose facilities, we also plan to build some new fire houses in the Fire Tax District.

They will be strategically located to shorten the average response time, better serving the residents living nearby.

Based on National Fire Protection Association standards and best practices, the Fire Tax District is transitioning to a staffing model of four firefighters per truck instead of three. The purpose is to ensure that the non-profit fire departments serving the district have the appropriate number of firefighters ready to respond in an emergency. We must be prepared to protect the people who live and work in those areas now and in the future.

Our Fire Training Academy has been extremely successful. Since we launched it as a pilot program in 2022, we've aligned the approach in the fire academy with the model used by our other public safety departments. By paying staff a livable wage during training, we reduced the barriers for people to start a career in the fire service.

These changes helped more people see fire services as a career for them - we had 990 applicants for 18 spots in the most recent academy - and improved the diversity of the trainees entering the current academy by 33%. The fire staff will now better reflect the community we serve. In the FY2025 budget, I recommend adding a Fire Training Academy manager. This role will provide the structure needed to grow and enhance the program, so we can continue developing our own highly skilled, diverse talent pool.

Public Safety: Wake County Sheriff's Office

As we turn to the Wake County Sheriff's Office, I'd like to commend Sheriff Willie Rowe for dramatically reducing the number of vacant positions in his department since taking office at the end of 2022.

When he started, there were more than 200 vacancies. With the help of a dedicated recruiter for law enforcement, that number is down by half. To further that effort, I recommend adding a recruiter for detention officers who can expand the search for top talent within our community and beyond state lines.

I also propose adding deputies to staff three newly opened courtrooms. This is an important and statutorily mandated safety component needed to support the North Carolina Court System.

Sheriff Rowe tells me that our growth in the unincorporated areas of the county has increased the need for deputies to respond to calls from residents and other law enforcement agencies for support. The Sheriff's Office receives more than 113,000 calls a year, and they've increased year-over-year for the past five years. To help meet demand, I recommend adding law enforcement officers to his patrol roster and staff to his Emergency Response Center. They will not only enhance the ability to appropriately respond to calls, but the new positions will also ensure officer safety by having staff available when more than one deputy is needed on scene.

The Sheriff and I are also looking at ways to strengthen support for people involved with our justice system. Partners and agencies are working with the Sheriff's Office to better connect incarcerated individuals with recovery networks for substance abuse, when appropriate. To complement the investments the county is making through the Opioid Settlement Fund, I propose in the upcoming budget implementing an opioid treatment program in our detention center to help jail residents start or continue treatment. Our hope is that it will help them get on a healthier, drug-free path that they can maintain once they're released from jail.

I also recommend enhancing our jail diversion investments by funding another case worker through our partnership with Pretrial Services. This organization helps connect people released from jail before their trial with resources to ensure they make their court date. When justice-involved people are connected to Pretrial Services, the rate of people failing to appear for their court date decreases from 15% to 5%.

The Legal Support Center, which you all helped fund, is another important tool in the toolbox to support residents involved with the legal system who can't afford an attorney or choose not to hire one. With more than 5,000

people visiting the center in the first year alone, I would like to increase funding, so the center can help even more people navigate the justice system.

Public Safety: City-County Bureau of Identification

Like the other departments I've mentioned, the City-County Bureau of Identification is also feeling the effects of population growth. The number of crime scenes they helped investigate in 2023 represents an 26% increase over 2022.

I propose adding crime scene specialists to CCBI in the FY2025 budget. The additional staff will bolster our support for county law enforcement and municipal police departments in our growing community. They will respond to crime scenes to collect evidence, which ultimately will help solve cases more efficiently.

Public Safety: Emergency Communication

The Sheriff's Office, Fire and EMS all rely on their 800-megahertz radios to communicate instantly with one another during emergencies and routine incidents.

They're an incredibly important resource for our first responders, which is why I recommend adding staff to the public safety communications team to support new and much-needed radio features. These features will help keep our first responders safe in more locations and on more complex scenes. They will benefit our county staff, as well as all municipal public safety agencies that are on the same radio network.

Human Services

When we talk about public safety, we must take special consideration of our most vulnerable residents including children, people who lack access to transportation, and people who require behavioral health services. Wake County is committed to promoting community health and wellbeing among all residents across the county.

Human Services: Child Welfare

In Wake County, the wellbeing of our youngest residents, especially the children who are in dangerous or unhealthy situations, is a priority. These youth in our community deserve, need and want loving homes, and it's our statutorily mandated job to help them find them.

In the upcoming fiscal year, I propose continuing to strengthen our Child Welfare program by adding more social workers who will rapidly place youth entering the county's care in safe and appropriate locations. I recommend adding staff at the point of intake when allegations of child

abuse or neglect are raised. Making timely decisions during this process is important to protect the safety and wellbeing of children. When youth can safely stay in their current homes, these county staff will also more actively engage with families at risk to help them access preventive measures, like parenting classes, counseling or community support.

This budget also adds kinship care social workers who will focus on placing children in our care with their relatives. Youth placed with relatives are nearly 20% more likely than those placed with non-relatives to find a permanent home. This is a best-practice model that is proven to generate better life-long outcomes for our community's children.

The pandemic had a significant impact on our foster care system. During COVID-19, Wake County lost nearly half of our foster families, and we still aren't back to pre-pandemic numbers. With 410 children needing placement and less than 100 foster families currently available, we just don't have enough homes to take these children in. We can and must do more. In this budget, I recommend adding positions so we can engage the community to recruit and train more people who could be amazing foster parents.

I also advise investing an additional \$2.8 million in Child Welfare to enhance temporary placement and the accompanying therapeutic support and stability for the children who aren't yet in appropriate care. They would remain in these temporary solutions until a permanent home is found.

We've taken purposeful steps over the past year to protect children from abuse and neglect, help them avoid entering the foster care system, and connect them and their families with the right resources to thrive. We used pandemic recovery funds to launch two new pilot programs in partnership with the Wake County Public School System. In FY2025, I recommend continuing these pilot programs with federal funding.

The first one - called the Student Engagement Team - addresses the social determinants of student health to improve attendance and grades, while increasing engagement in school activities. It launched last fall and currently has nearly 40 families participating.

The second pilot program is called Neighborhood Networks. Dedicated social workers provide students and families with personalized support, aimed at building resilience and promoting family wellbeing. As of February, nearly 40 families are participating in this program.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention our school nurses here, as well. They are a critical conduit for children to get the healthcare they need. We'll add school

nurse positions in FY2025 to maintain our ratio of one nurse for every two schools. This will ensure every student has the help they need to manage known conditions and during unexpected illness or emergencies.

Human Services: Regional Centers

As we look at how we care for our residents of all ages, we know the distance they travel to use our programs and services matters. People are more likely to take advantage of opportunities if they're close to where they live or work.

We don't want lack of access to transportation to be a barrier for anyone. That's why we're enhancing the spectrum of services and staffing we offer at our regional centers in FY2025. These facilities are strategically located, so when someone wants to get a flu shot, get help paying a utility bill or register to vote, it will be at the most convenient location for them. We'll blend new and existing resources in our five regional centers to better support residents where they are. Our hope is that convenience will increase access and ultimately result in better outcomes for all.

Behavioral Health

We're also focused on creating more positive outcomes through our investments within our local behavioral health network.

We all know the impacts of the pandemic triggered an increase in mental health challenges worldwide. Global research shows that the prevalence of anxiety and depression alone increased 25%, and many are still wrestling with the instability those conditions cause daily.

We contract with healthcare providers to support residents struggling with mental health issues and addiction. I recommend increasing our investment in the WakeBrook facility by \$3 million - for a total commitment of \$17 million - to support the much-needed crisis and detox services. We're confident that new partners, Recovery Innovations and WakeMed, will provide excellent care to patients and help them find the right paths to safety and stability.

Another way we help support residents experiencing behavioral health challenges is through behavioral health urgent care. Last year alone, it served nearly 900 patients - a 22% increase from 2022. In the FY2025 budget, I propose increasing funding to our partner, Monarch, to continue the recent expansion of the hours the facility is open: Monday through Thursday **until 10 p.m.** and on weekends **from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

The recommended budget also continues to fund programs specifically focused on supporting children with behavioral health needs. We've seen

success with the school-based mental health program and our efforts to provide behavioral health services to youth in foster care. We want to keep up that momentum and help more children move from struggling to thriving.

We also want to build on the 10-Year Vision for Behavioral Health that you adopted earlier this year, which includes implementing the recommendations of our behavioral health crisis study. I propose creating a position to further bolster our behavioral health efforts and oversee the crisis study implementation process. With your established vision, the right leadership, a strong plan and broad public input, we can strengthen our community's comprehensive response to our behavioral health challenges.

In addition to needing therapy and medical care, our residents experiencing behavioral health issues often need housing. All our initiatives follow the "Housing First" model - a nationally recognized best practice guided by the principle that housing is the foundation for improving life. In contrast to a treatment first model, Housing First gives people access to housing, so they have a safe place to live that is not contingent on treatment. Studies show Housing First programs increase housing stability and decrease rates of homelessness.

In FY2025, I recommend redirecting existing funds to explore ways we can provide safe housing - and access to social services and behavioral health resources - in the same location. We believe this approach will contribute to your goal of making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

Affordable Housing

We know housing isn't just a challenge for those with behavioral health needs. Finding affordable places to live is becoming tougher for many residents across our county.

In 2018, approximately nine out of every 10 rental units in Wake County could be rented for less than \$1,500 per month. Now, only six in 10 rental units are available in Wake County at that rate. This also seems to be our new normal.

In response, I recommend increasing our investment in affordable housing to \$32.5 million - up nearly 60% from the launch of the Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization Department six years ago. This includes a \$4.5 million increase in FY2025 in ongoing support, as well as an additional \$500,000 of funds you set aside from ABC fund balance, for our affordable housing development program. Those funds provide critical gap financing to make it possible for our partners to construct and preserve affordable housing units throughout the county. Our goal is to create and preserve 2,500 affordable housing units by 2029, and collectively, these

investments will help more affordable housing projects move forward to get us there.

This will happen alongside the Lease to Home pilot program, which helps quickly end episodes of homelessness by connecting households with landlords who have available, affordable rental units. We launched this pilot during the pandemic, and between January 2022 and January 2024, the program has successfully helped 258 families secure housing.

The Lease to Home team found that 22% of people exiting homelessness will experience it again within two years. But, if we can help someone stay housed for a full year, that likelihood drops to just 5%. This team prioritizes units for the people most at risk, which is a U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department best practice, and ensures the best possible matches between clients and landlords.

In the FY2025 budget, I also recommend continuing the Bridge to Home pilot program. It provides flexible funding to non-profit organizations working to end homelessness in Wake County. To date, we've invested more than \$8 million in this initiative, which has served over 1,400 households and reduced the average length of homelessness by 31 days.

Affordable Housing: Veterans Services

As you know, Veterans Services is part of our housing department, offering many opportunities for collaboration and synergy. It helps connect the more than 57,000 veterans and their families currently living in Wake County to benefits and vital services.

In the FY2024 budget, you added one veterans services officer to our team, and the impact was impressive. The new officer generated a 56% increase in client intake. During that process, veterans received assistance filing claims for benefits, ordering military service records and accessing community resources.

In the FY2025 budget, I propose increasing our number of veterans services officers from four to five, so we can proactively serve residents in more areas of the county. This will also help us increase equitable access to the benefits our veterans have earned through their years of distinguished service.

We know veterans reflect the diversity of our community and make great employees, and as part of our recruitment efforts, I'm proud to share that Wake County EMS has partnered with the U.S. Department of Defense on the SkillBridge program. It helps active-duty veterans who are being discharged and their spouses discover new careers after the military. With

their passion for service and drive for excellence, veterans make dedicated EMTs and paramedics at Wake County.

Veterans entering the Sheriff's Office as law enforcement or detention officers can receive incentive pay for military service. We hope these partnerships help encourage more veterans to apply for positions at wake.gov/careers.

Looking at job opportunities more broadly, Capital Area Workforce Development is helping our residents build the skills and knowledge to fill jobs throughout the community, ensuring that we promote inclusive prosperity for all residents. I propose we continue two successful pilot programs in FY2025. The first is Pathway to Entrepreneurship. It offers one-on-one support for people who are exploring starting their first business. The second is the NCWorks NextGen Program. I want to expand it to provide young adults with career planning, education and training to support economic mobility. Ultimately, these programs will help lower barriers to employment and increase employment opportunities.

Elections

Voting is the foundation of our democracy, and it's our duty to hold safe and secure elections for our community. Hundreds of thousands of Wake County voters will head to the polls in November to cast their ballots.

During the 2020 General Election, Wake County had more than 794,000 registered voters, and with record-breaking turnout, nearly 80% of them voted. As of April 2024, we have over 821,000 registered voters, making us the county with the highest number of registered voters in North Carolina. The Board of Elections team anticipates that number will continue to rise as we get closer to the November General Election.

To support this growth, I propose supporting the Board of Elections' plan to expand our early voting sites from 20 to 22. Early voting is the most popular method of voting in presidential election years, with more than 50% of voters using this method during the 17 days of early voting leading up to Election Day.

I also advise adding technical staff members to help our elections team process ballots quickly and address elections requests from our growing community efficiently. After the 2024 elections, Wake County will identify and split five of our largest, most crowded election-day precincts, bringing our total to 217 precincts and improving the people's access to vote.

With these recommended investments, we can keep voting safe, secure and easily accessible, so anyone who is registered can vote using the

method they find most convenient - early voting, absentee voting or voting on election day.

Environmental and Community Services

While developing this budget proposal, I considered how our growing population is impacting our environment in Wake County and the services and spaces we offer to enhance our residents' quality of life.

Environmental and Community Services: Libraries

Our public library system is a great example. It had more than 2.6 million visits in 2023 and offers free access to books, programming, computers and WiFi seven days a week.

Not everyone has transportation to visit one of our 23 branches, so we bring the library to them. I recommend replacing our aging bookmobile with a brand new one, so we can increase accessibility to learning, personal growth and positive forms of entertainment.

To that end, I also propose increasing resources for the libraries' digital book collection, so patrons can find the books they want to read any time of day or night. Circulation for digital materials like eBooks and audiobooks has increased 140% over the past 5 years and topped 2.2 million per year. From New York Times bestsellers to books by up-and-coming authors, patrons will have shorter wait times for our digital titles from a computer, tablet or phone at no cost, making reading even more available to our diverse community.

Continuing that theme, our library system is implementing assistive technology to better serve people with disabilities. They're also offering more books and more translation services to better serve residents who speak English as a second language. The Census shows that 18% of our residents speak a language other than English at home, and these services will enable us to better meet them where they are.

All these accessibility services will build on the work our libraries have already done to create inclusive and welcoming environments, including becoming the first library system in the state to earn a Sensory Inclusive certification from KultureCity, the nation's leading nonprofit on sensory accessibility and acceptance.

Environmental and Community Services: Parks and Preserves

Our parks and nature preserves are other great examples of spaces that we provide our community to enhance their quality of life.

I'm excited that in FY2025 we'll open our first park in 14 years. We plan to

cut the ribbon on Beech Bluff County Park in southeastern Wake County later this year. My recommended budget accounts for the staff and resources we need to open the gates and officially welcome the public inside to explore the 300 acres of green space, take classes in the agricultural building or play on the playground.

In the summer of 2025, we'll open Kellam-Wyatt County Park. The 59-acre property is located near the border between Raleigh and Knightdale. It will feature 2.5 miles of trails, a community garden, a pond with a boat launch and much more. In this budget proposal, I've included the investments needed to fully support transitioning this third-generation family farm into a community park open to all.

Opening more parks in more parts of the county increases accessibility to nature, as well as educational and fitness opportunities for our residents. To further that goal, I recommend taking steps in FY2025 to expand the operating hours of our three nature preserves. Right now, the peak summer season is the only time they're open seven days a week. We're working towards opening them every day in the spring, fall and winter, as well.

Environmental and Community Services: Growth & Development

Securing land for parks and nature preserves not only benefits our residents, but it's also good for the environment to protect green space amid significant growth, construction and development.

Following that theme, Wake County is planning for a 50-year water supply. We want to ensure the community has access to clean, abundant drinking water for decades to come.

To support this effort, I recommend increasing the number of staff who manage erosion control inspections. These additional positions will allow us to conduct more frequent inspections to protect and enhance water quality across the county. I also propose creating an administrative position to assist people seeking watershed management permits. It will help reduce the wait times and increase the accuracy of permit submissions. And we're continuing a pilot program that helps residents in our community repair their wells and septic systems to protect their drinking water and the water quality overall in the county.

As more global companies like FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies announce expansions in Wake County, we can continue to expect that more homes, businesses, schools and other amenities will be built. I advise adding more inspectors to our Planning, Development and Inspections Division to keep pace with the speed of development in our community.

Environmental and Community Services: Animal Center

Rapid growth is a cause of overcrowding at the Wake County Animal Center.

Last year, more than 8,600 dogs, cats and other animals came into our care, and the line between adopting these animals and needing to euthanize for space reasons continues to be razor thin. We've managed to avoid euthanasia for space for more than eight years, and we want to maintain that important record.

To do that, I recomm

Chair Thomas moved, seconded by Commissioner Calabria, that the Board of Commissioners receives the Recommended Fiscal Year 2025 Budget for consideration and approves the following:

- 1. Instructs the County Manager to organize a process for receiving virtual public comments on the recommended budget; and**
- 2. Holds public hearings on the budget on:**
 - **Monday, May 20 at 2:00 p.m. in the Wake County Justice Center, and**
 - **Tuesday, May 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wake Commons Building; and**
- 3. Holds budget work sessions on Monday, May 13 at 2:00 p.m. and Thursday, May 23 at 9:00 a.m. in the Wake County Justice Center Room 2800; and**
- 4. Considers the budget for adoption on Monday, June 3 during the Board of Commissioners' regular meeting, which begins at 5:00 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:**

Aye: 7 - Chair Thomas, Vice-Chair Evans, Commissioner Adamson, Commissioner Calabria, Commissioner Mial, Commissioner Stallings, and Commissioner Waters

- 17. Approval of 7th Amendment to the Tri-Party Agreement Regarding PNC Arena**

Attachments: [7th Amendment Item Summary.docx](#)
[Final 7th Amendment Presentation.pdf](#)
[7th Amendment For Approval.docx](#)

Ms. Denise Foreman, shared the 7th Amendment to the tri-Party

Agreement Regarding PNC Arena.

She shared the PNC Funding.

PNC Arena Funding

- In 1997, Wake County, the City of Raleigh and the Centennial Authority established a Tri-Party agreement establishing terms for the construction of a new arena in Wake County.
 - The arena opened in 1999 and serves as the home of the Carolina Hurricanes and NC State Men's Basketball.
 - PNC Arena serves as a major attraction for Wake County drawing over 1.5 million attendees annually and hosts more than 150 events each year.
 - Construction, maintenance and operation of the arena benefit from hospitality taxes collected from Room Occupancy and Prepared Food and Beverage taxes in Wake County.
- In 2023, Wake County and the City of Raleigh conducted a joint review of the use of hospitality taxes, inclusive of stakeholders, to establish funding commitments for key projects eligible for hospitality taxes.

She shared the Agreements.

Agreements

- In November 2023, Wake County and the City of Raleigh approved the 23rd Amendment which included a funding commitment for improvements to PNC Arena.
 - 23rd Amendment commits \$300 million to arena enhancements to ensure facility continues to support major events in our community.
- Arena enhancements will coincide with a twenty-year lease extension for the Carolina Hurricanes and will anchor a future, privately funded, redevelopment of land surrounding the arena.
- Terms of the funding commitment are established in 7th Amendment to Tri-Party agreement between Wake County, City of Raleigh and Centennial Authority.

She shared the 7th Amendment Highlights.

7th Amendment Highlights

- Establishes use, term and timing of funding allocation that will

support two construction draws and 25-year debt financing for approximately \$300 million of facility improvements from FY 2025 through FY 2053.

- Acknowledges the arena enhancement project construction funding anchors the redevelopment and revitalization of land surround the Arena (PNC Arena District Redevelopment).
- Requires submission of proposed funding plan for the arena enhancement project and amended arena lease agreement prior to first funding distribution.
- Establishes any funds not used for construction or debt financing will be deposited in the Authority Building Enhancement fund for any additional building needs.
- Establishes expectation that PNC Arena District Redevelopment would include 10% affordable housing at 80% of area median income.
- Establishes an expectation of a voluntary payment in lieu of taxes by the developer on any components of the PNC Arena District Redevelopment that are exempt from ad valorem property tax pursuant to North Carolina law.
 - Allows for developer to withhold payment in lieu of taxes until credits for public improvement costs are recovered by the developer.
- Acknowledges that a developer affiliated with the separate PNC Arena District Redevelopment may separately apply or seek reimbursement for public improvements constructed within the PNC Arena District Redevelopment.
- Anticipates future negotiations would occur related to the PILOT program and any future incentives sought by the developer.

She shared Next Steps.

Next Steps

- Tonight - County Commission scheduled to vote
- May 7 - City Council scheduled to vote
- Finalize execution of 7th Amendment
- Centennial Authority and Gale Force execute lease extension
- Centennial Authority pursue financing approval by Local Government Commission
- Construction improvements begin Summer 2025

Commissioner Mial moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Evans, that the Board of Commissioners approves the 7th Amendment to the Tri-Party

Agreement with the Centennial Authority and the City of Raleigh regarding funding for PNC Arena enhancements, subject to terms and conditions acceptable to the County Attorney. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Thomas, Vice-Chair Evans, Commissioner Adamson, Commissioner Calabria, Commissioner Mial, Commissioner Stallings, and Commissioner Waters

Appointments

18. Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee

Attachments: [ACHCAC Item Summary 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[ACHCAC Member List 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[ACHCAC Kay Castillo CAC Orientation Training Status Pilot III RJ 3 2024.pdf](#)

- **Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee = 1 Reappointment + 1 Recommendation**
(Reminder: all interested candidates must be vetted by Adult Care Home CAC for State qualifications)
 - 1 Reappointment:
 - Phyllis Fulton
 - 1 Recommendation by ACHCAC:
 - Kay Castillo

19. Board of Adjustment (Wake County)

Attachments: [BOA Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[BOA Member List 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[BOA Applicant Roster 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[BOA Applicant Packet 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[BOA Board Choices 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[BOA and Plng Board Attendance Report April 2024.pdf](#)

- **Board of Adjustment (Wake County) = 1 Vacancy**
 - 1 Vacancy:
 - _____, Alternate voting member

20. Energy Advisory Commission

Attachments: [EAC Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [EAC Member List 4.17.24.pdf](#)
 [EAC Applicant Roster 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [EAC Applicant Packet 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [EAC Board Choices 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [EAC Attendance Report through March 2024.pdf](#)

- **Energy Advisory Commission = 2 Reappointments**
 - 2 Reappointments:
 - Larry Nunnery
 - Jeffrey Lippard

21. Human Services Board

Attachments: [HHS Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [HHS Member List 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [HHS Board Ltr of Recommendation - Dr. James Peterson - Physician.pdf](#)
 [HHS Applicant Roster 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [HHS Applicant Packet 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [HHS Board Choices 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [HHS 2024 Board Attendance Record.pdf](#)

- **Human Services Board = 2 Vacancies + 1 Recommendation**
 - 2 Vacancies:
 - _____, Optometrist
 - _____, Physician
 - 1 Recommendation by Human Services Board:
 - Dr. James Peterson, to fill Physician vacancy

22. Jordan Lake One Water

Attachments: [Jordan Lake One Water Item Summary 4.6.24.pdf](#)
 [JLOW Membership Responsibilities.pdf](#)
 [Wake County JLOW Membership Packet.pdf](#)

- **Jordan Lake One Water = 2 Board of Director appointments**
 - 1 Wake County Commissioner:
 - Commissioner Don Mial, Wake County representative on JLOW Board of Directors
 - 1 Wake County staff appointee:

- Nancy Daly, Wake County Primary Alternate Director on the JLOW Board of Directors

*Please note, Jordan Lake One Water (JLOW) is an external board with a mission to help Jordan Lake Watershed stakeholders meet the shared goal of finding cost-effective, mutually beneficial solutions that protect our water resources and communities. All who live or work in the Jordan Lake Watershed are affected by the management of Jordan Lake's water quantity and quality and our water future depends on our collaboration. JLOW submitted a request for one County Commissioner to serve on the JLOW Board of Directors and one Wake County staffer to serve as the Wake County Primary Alternate on the JLOW Board of Directors.

23. Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

Attachments: [JCPC Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[JCPC Member List 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[JCPC County Manager Designee.pdf](#)
[JCPC Attendance Roster.xlsx](#)

- **Juvenile Crime Prevention Council = 2 internal staff changes**
 - 2 internal staff changes:
 - Remove Darryl Blevins as County staff designee and replace with Duane Holder, Deputy County Manager, as new County Manager Designee
 - Darryl Blevins appointed as County Designee, Member-At-Large

24. Knightdale Land Use Review Board

Attachments: [Knightdale LURB Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Knightdale LURB Member List 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[Knightdale LURB Recommendation Dickens.pdf](#)
[Knightdale LURB App. Roster 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Knightdale LURB App. Packet 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Knightdale LURB Board Choices 4.18.24.pdf](#)

- **Knightdale Land Use Review Board = 1 Term Completion (ETJ) + 1 Recommendation**
 - 1 Term Completion:
 - Steven Hopper, ETJ rep
 - 1 Recommendation by the Town of Knightdale:
 - Lori Dickens, to fill ETJ vacancy; term ending date: Feb. 28, 2026

25. Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee

Attachments: [Nursing Home CAC Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [NHCAC Member List 4.17.24.pdf](#)
 [NHCAC 4.8.2024 Attendance.pdf](#)

- **Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee = 2 Term Completions + 7 Reappointments**
 (Reminder: all interested candidates must be vetted by Nursing Home CAC for State qualifications)
 - 2 Term Completions:
 - Steven Wilson
 - Clifton Lavenhouse
 - 7 Reappointments:
 - Carol Derrenbacher
 - Ann Schick
 - Bennett Cotton
 - Sara Lynn Raha
 - Sharon Singer
 - Marilyn House
 - Sandra Deutsch

26. WakeMed Hospital Board of Directors

Attachments: [WakeMed BOD Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [WakeMed BOD Member List 5.1.24.pdf](#)
 [WakeMed BOD Ltr of Reappointment 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [WakeMed BOD App. Roster 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [WakeMed BOD App. Packet 4.18.24.pdf](#)
 [WakeMed BOD Board Choices 4.18.24.pdf](#)

- **Wake Med Hospital Board of Directors = 1 Reappointment**
 - 1 Reappointment:
 Blount Williams

27. Water Partnership

Attachments: [Water Partnership Item Summary 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Water Partnership Member List 4.17.24.pdf](#)
[Water Partnership C. Glass Resignation 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Water Partnership App. Roster 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Water Partnership App. Packet 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Water Partnership Board Choices 4.18.24.pdf](#)
[Water Partnership 2024 Attendance.pdf](#)

- **Wake County Water Partnership = 2 Vacancies + 1 Resignation**
 - 2 Vacancies:
 - _____, Environmental Advocacy Group
 - _____, Town of Rolesville representative
 - 1 Resignation:
 - Chris Glass, Town of Wake Forest representative

28. Upcoming Vacancies for June

Attachments: [Upcoming Vacancies June 2024.pdf](#)

Manager's Report

29. Local Government Career Expo

Attachments: [Item Summary-LOGO Expo 4-15-24.docx](#)
[Local Government Career Expo.pdf](#)

Manager Ellis shared that the Local Government Career Expo will be held on June 8, 2024 at the NC State McKimmon Center from 1:00 p.m- 4:00 p.m. logocareerexpo.com

Other Business

30. Reports from Advisory and Regional Boards

Commissioner Mial hosted the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners District 9 meeting at the Commons Building on Thursday, May 2, 2024. This meeting is a series of district meetings where county commissioners and other county officials meet to share challenges, successes, and issues impacting counties in the region.

31. Other Reports from Commissioners

Closed Session

Attorney Warren shared that there was not a need for a closed session.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne C. Gilyard, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board