



# Wake County

301 South McDowell Street  
Raleigh, NC

## Meeting Minutes Board of Commissioners

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Monday, July 6, 2020

10:00 AM

Wake County Justice Center

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### Work Session - Meeting Held Remotely

#### Work Session Meeting Materials

#### Meeting Called to Order: Chair Greg Ford

**Present:** 7 - Chairman Greg Ford, Vice-Chair Vickie Adamson, Commissioner Matt Calabria, Commissioner Susan Evans, Commissioner Jessica Holmes, Commissioner Sig Hutchinson, and Commissioner James West

Others Present: David Ellis, County Manager; Scott Warren, County Attorney; Yvonne Gilyard, Deputy Clerk to the Board; Johnna Rogers, Chief Operating Officer; Chris Dillon, Assistant County Manager; Denise Foreman, Assistant County Manager; Ben Canada, Assistant to the County Manager

#### Agenda

**Attachments:** [07-06-20 Work Session Agenda.pdf](#)

Chair Ford called the meeting to order. He thanked the citizens for their patience due to technical difficulties. He said that there is only one item on the agenda and it's a conversation with the Sheriff. He shared that there are three judicial branches. He shared that there are statutory requirements. He thanked commissioners for bringing this item to the board for discussion. He thanked Sheriff Baker for being here today.

Sheriff Baker shared that it is an honor and privilege to serve in a county in which he has served for 30 years. He said that with God's grace he feels privileged to be in this position as the Sheriff. He talked about honesty and being transparent. He said that he holds everyone in the sheriff's office

accountable and he is aware that there are issues in the sheriff's office that require immediate attention. He shared that there are standards and that staff will be held accountable. He shared that there is still work to do in the Sheriff's department. He shared that feedback from citizens and colleagues shared with him states that the department is moving in the right direction.

#### Conversation with the Sheriff

Chair Ford shared a quote from Commissioner West. He said that there is no outline for the agenda today, but open dialogue.

Commissioner West shared guiding principles. He said we must join together to disband systemic racism. He shared information from a book called the "Why". He said that he has participated in the Civil Rights Movement and the world is changing and we need to change with world. He shared inserts from the book "Why". He said that everyone starts with the "why" and then work on the "what" and the "how". He said that everyone should work together for Wake County.

Sheriff Baker acknowledged his respect for Commissioner West. He said that the issue that we are facing today is race and band aids can not fix it. He referred to the Rodney King case. He said that the issues of race have to be addressed today. He said that he has begun to deal with issues in the Sheriff's office. He shared that if deputies have issues with race and cause them to make mistakes, the Sheriff's office is not the place for them to work. He shared that the issues in Minnesota and the Rodney King case have nothing to do with race. He said that training should have prevented the death of Rodney King and others.

Chair Ford thanked the sheriff for being candid. He said that the incidents in Minnesota and other states are symptoms of greater issues at play right now. He said that training is paramount. He said that implications are much broader than what we are dealing with today.

Commissioner Calabria thanked the sheriff for being open and candid in his dialogue about various matters. He thanked the sheriff for the amount of work that has already been done as it relates to today's issues. He thanked the sheriff for focusing on systemic racism. He thanked the sheriff for his work on body cameras and national policies, as well as other issues. He shared available programs behavioral health, juvenile crime, peer support, potential training programs such as CIT, de-escalation programs. He said the he appreciates the ban on choke holds and making it a policy. He shared comments about the community safety task force. He said that this is a multi-disciplinary issue. He said that there are holes to be filled. Commissioner Calabria thanked Commissioner West for his support and serving on the safety task force.

Chair Ford said that this is not the beginning of conversations with the Sheriff, but there have been many conversations. He said that he appreciates the on-going relationship with the Sheriff.

Sheriff Baker shared that there have been many discussions and addressing systemic racism has been one of his goals as sheriff. He said that one of the trainings upon his hire was diversity training. He said it is important for every day service. He said that the sheriff's department was ready for what was to happen. He mentioned the youth that are coming behind us and that the county needs to be prepared. He said that it is important to prepare people from various backgrounds to serve the diverse community. He said that the choke hold policy will be implemented. He said the he is looking forward to going out into the community and working with the youth.

Commissioner Holmes said that the reason for the conversation today is because of the George Floyd incident and the protest in downtown Raleigh. She thanked Sheriff Baker for being in the community participating in the protest. She shared comments about a community work group. She said that people in the community feel safer knowing he is the sheriff. She asked the sheriff for his thoughts on community work groups.

Sheriff Baker said that the work has already started. He invited anyone that would like to be a part of the group to let him know. He said that he is currently meeting with pastors in the community and he mentioned the topics included the youth. He said that race, social justice and how to protest are a part of the agenda. He said that as an African American he feels that he was put here to serve the community. He said that the sheriff's department is out in the community and serving youth. He said that the first meeting will be held on July 16th. He said that the message is that his department wants the community to feel safe.

Commissioner Holmes said that her intention of the meeting today is to get a better understanding and she wants to be conscious of where Wake county is. She said that she is aware of the work from several county departments. She asked how the board could assist in providing a plan and resources. She shared that the board is in support. She shared that due to a lack of training, lives should not be taken. She shared that the board does not want to be a barrier as it relates to resources. She asked if there was a need for additional support such as de-escalation training.

Sheriff Baker shared that de-escalation is a part of law enforcement training. He said they are taught how and when to use force. He described the terms of putting on the uniform on a daily basis. He said that the department welcomes additional training.

Commissioner Holmes shared that basic training and de-escalation is not sufficient. She asked for a specific plan within the sheriff's department. She shared her thoughts on conscious and unconscious bias. She said that she would like the board to participate in equity training and invited the Sheriff to participate. She thanked the sheriff for his comments.

Commissioner Hutchinson thanked Sheriff Baker for his time today and his service to Wake County. He said that he has participated on many committees involving safe communities. He shared that his interest is in diversion. He said that there are more things that can be done to keep citizens out of the justice system. He spoke about best practices. He shared that he is interested in bail reform. He spoke about education for citizens in the detention center. He said that re-entry is an interest that he has. He asked what can be done for repeat offenders. He shared that he is interested in working with the sheriff on the three ideas presented. He asked about the 30 day transit passes so that citizens leaving the detention center would have transportation. He said that he would like to see case management, housing, peer counseling for preventing recidivism.

Sheriff Baker shared that these are some of the areas that the Sheriff's office will continue to work on. He agreed with programming for youth and inmates on recidivism.

Vice-Chair Adamson shared that she is on the Drug Overdose Task Force. She shared that the Sheriff's office is an asset to the task force. She thanked the sheriff for the first AA meeting in the detention center. She said that last year there was a decrease in overdoses in Wake County. She said that peer counselors have been embedded within Emergency Medical Services. She shared that citizens shared emails on incidents during the protest weekend and deputies being injured.

Sheriff Baker shared that the sheriff's department had received information that there were plans from citizens to burn down the jail, courthouse and the justice center. He said that safety was provided while there was still criminal activity. He described the damage to the Wake County offices and said that officers were present. He said that persons chose to damage buildings and officers. He said that there were non-compliant citizens and officers used teargas deployment to disband them and it was successful. He said that citizens that were not a part of the group, but in the vicinity, were tear-gassed as well. He said that the goal was to keep Wake County safe. He said that shifts were adjusted and had the deputies not been on staff, the county could have been in ruins.

Vice Chair Adamson shared that Wake County has two detention facilities. She thanked Commissioner Holmes for her thoughts on the racial equity

training.

Chair Ford shared that Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) had racial equity training and there is always something new to learn.

Commissioner Evans shared her thoughts on acknowledging the changes that have taken place. She shared her background growing up in the south. She said that she has worked to support inclusion and eliminate biases. She said that this is important work and she agrees to the equity and racial training. She shared that it will help the board with policies that need to be made. She shared that the community work groups are a good idea. She spoke about the diversion on the front end, minimizing arrests when we can perhaps instead give a citation. She thanked Sheriff Baker for his efforts in the Sheriff's department as it relates to the issues mentioned by the board. She said that she looks forward to working with the Public Safety Committee and Sheriff's department .

Commissioner Holmes thanked Commissioner Evans for sharing her background growing up during Jim Crow. She shared her thoughts about the citizens that were tear gassed. She shared that when it comes to de-escalation and stopping citizens from protesting and vandalism, that law enforcement need to be careful with the use of tear gas. She shared that not all protesters should have had this experience. She said that she does not support rioting and she supports business owners and described her efforts in assisting business owners with the cleanup. She asked the sheriff to use as minimal amount of force, if applicable.

Sheriff Baker shared that he was responsible for lives and the attacks that took place. He said that it was a last minute decision but necessary. He described the decisions that the aggressive protesters chose to take. He thanked Commissioner Holmes for her comments and concerns. He shared that if tear gas had not been used, it could have been a decision to strike. He shared that he apologized to those that it applied to.

Commissioner Holmes shared that the citizens could not decipher if the tear gas was from the City of Raleigh Police Department or the Sheriff's Department. She thanked him for explaining it to the board.

Chair Ford said that several of the calls to action was #defundthepolice. He said that the board is not reactionary, but several departments had to take a cut. He said that the role of the board is to allocate the resources of the sheriff's department to fit. He said that he appreciates the candid discussion that the board has offered. He said the only way change can occur is to bring out things that may be uncomfortable to discuss. He shared his thoughts on the SRO's in the schools. He asked the sheriff to offer thoughts on the School Resource Officers (SRO) in the schools.

Sheriff Baker said that as long as the schools need resource officers, they will be available. He shared that this year offers challenges, but officers will be required to be in schools daily. He shared that there may be a possible decrease in the charges and incidents in schools. He said that the sheriff's office is working on plan B that the school may have to institute. He said that the goal is to ensure that the schools, teachers and students are safe. He shared his thoughts on defunding the police and that if the county defunds the police, services will be lacking.

Chair Ford made comments about the SRO's in the schools. He said the job of the board is to facilitate the questions and stay in their lane. He said that use of the funds allocated to the office of the sheriff is the decision of the sheriff's department. He shared that Wake County will continue to be an example on working together.

Commissioner West said that we can focus on procedures and policies, but until there is a change of heart, nothing will occur. He said that staff need to learn how to speak with others. He said that talk and training are cheap, and we need to ensure that these things are of the heart. He spoke of Civic Saturdays.

Commissioner Hutchinson said that the meeting was productive and constructive. He shared that he would like to put the ideas talked about today on the Public Safety agenda.

Commissioner West offered comments about Frederick Douglas' speech narrated by James Earl Jones.

Chair Ford commented also about the Frederick Douglas speech narrated by James Earl Jones. He said it was one of the most important speeches ever made and it is not taught in schools which is another indicator about improvements that need to be made.

Sheriff Baker thanked the board and County Manager Ellis for the support and the conversation today. He said that it is not about Gerald Baker, but the Wake County Sheriff's Department.

Meeting adjourned at 12:08 pm

Meeting went into Recess

Meeting Reconvened

Community Organization Funding

Attachments:    [CommunityOrganizationWorkSession v2.pdf](#)  
                          [Starting Point Summary.pdf](#)

Chair Ford started the meeting at 2:00 pm. He shared that this is a two part meeting and that the meeting with the Sheriff was held earlier. He shared that this is the community organization funding meeting and that the budget had to be cut. He said that the purpose is to review the process and options for funding for the organizations. If consensus is met today, staff will proceed and if no consensus today, an additional meeting will be held.

Ben Canada, Assistant to the County Manager, shared the "Pre COVID" BOC Direction.

- Commissioners directed staff to develop a more inclusive process for evaluating the funding of community organizations
- At the November 12 Work Session, staff presented a proposed process for review and approval
- BOC directed staff that all previously-funded organizations must go through the competitive process, with the exception of Smart Start
- Staff developed an open online submission process to facilitate collection of materials for Board review, analysis, discussion and approval
- Staff facilitated the collection of submissions and documented exceptions to submittals

He shared that the February submissions by providing a chart with 30 requests totaling \$4.8 million.

- FY21 Adopted Budget includes \$1,750,000 for BOC to allocate
- Tentative awards for food security groups and Interact
  - Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC    \$12,000
  - Interfaith Food Shuttle                        \$35,000
  - Universal School Breakfast                \$258,000
  - InterAct    \$100,000
- Left \$1,345,000 to allocate to 26 organizations
- June 15 - Board directed staff to collect additional information, prepare for BOC consideration in early July
  - Describe how your organization's financial status and outlook has changed since the COVID-19 crisis began. When describing revenue declines, please share specific data and forecasts.
  - Since applying for these funds in early February, has your organization changed the intended use of the county funds? Would your organization use the funds to address a different

need?

- Since applying for these funds in early February, has your organization changed the desired goals or outcomes of the proposed program?
- What additional information would you like to share with the commissioners as they consider funding allocations?

He shared Prioritizing Organizations.

- June 29 - Board reached consensus to exclude Triangle Family Services from exercise
  - Assumes that Board will approve \$125,000 in ABC fund balance for TFS
- Left \$1,345,000 to allocate to remaining 25 organizations

He shared FY2021 Allocation Process

- June 26 - Board received:
  - Original packet of information on each organization
  - Responses from 22 of 25 organizations on COVID-19 and financial impacts
  - Updated allocation worksheet
- Board returned worksheets by June 30, staying within \$1,345,000
  - Thank you for submitting on time!

He shared the Starting Point for Discussion.

It is...

- One of many ways to use the allocation worksheets
- A potential consensus
- Ready for the Board to adjust and change as desired

It is NOT...

- A recommendation

He shared the starting point chart

He shared Step 1-Consensus from Seven Commissioners

- Support from 7 commissioners is a **strong** consensus
- If organization received amounts from all 7 commissioners, then allocate the average of the 7 worksheet amounts
- 5 organizations received amounts from all commissioners

He shared a chart which showed using \$990,000 of the \$1,345,000



He shared Step 2 - Consensus from 5 or 6 Commissioners

- If organization received amounts from 5 or 6 commissioners, then allocate the average allocated amount
- 7 organizations fall into this step

He shared a chart reflecting that

- This step uses nearly all remaining funds
- Remaining few thousand distributed among these 7 groups

He shared considerations for the starting point

- Board discussion: Prioritize those organizations with increase in service demand due to COVID
  - Done through Board-directed carve out
- Board discussion: Award funding to previously awarded organizations versus awarding new requesters?

He shared board discussion

Board Discussion: Awarding funding to previously awarded organizations versus awarding new requesters?

Organizations Receiving Funding in Prior Years

- Every organization receiving funding in FY20 receives an amount in FY21
- Based on commissioner worksheets, Marbles would receive a significant reduction

New Organizations

- 7 new organizations would receive funding
- Triangle Family Services would be 8th new organization (although funded through a different source)

He shared a chart with the organizations from the worksheet and suggested funding as a starting point today

- Start with this allocation and adjust as the board desires
- If BOC is ready to finalize, confirm the results during the regular meeting
- If board does not reach a consensus this afternoon, board may continue the discussion during the regular meeting

He shared the worksheet for starting point

Chair Ford said the purpose today is to make allocations and get funds to

the organizations as quickly as possible. He reminded the board that they agreed to remove Triangle Family Services to the 5:00 BOC meeting today.

Commissioner Hutchinson thanked staff and commissioners for the work on the funding chart. He shared that he has minor allocations. He said that the two organizations cut were Marbles and the United Arts Council. He shared that the ABC funds should be prioritized for addiction issues. He shared that some of the organizations provide services to vulnerable communities around addiction and behavioral health. He mentioned Dorcas Ministries, Step Up Ministry, and the Green Chair project. He asked Ms. Emily Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, if Dorcas and Step Up Ministry allocations were close enough to use ABC funds for.

Ms. Lucas, shared thoughts on the use of the organizations that would benefit from the use of ABC funds.

Vice-Chair Adamson said that the worksheet does not show the whole story. The county provides the building and other resources to Marbles. A chart from March 2020 was shared noticing the funding for Marbles.

Commissioner West shared that he has made adjustments based on his value. He shared that part of the process is to "Rob Peter to pay Paul". He said that there should be an emphasis on need. He said that it is important to send a message based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. He shared that the board should show the concerns for the least of these.

Commissioner Evans asked Commissioner Hutchinson about the three organizations he recommends. She shared that she can support the organizations from the ABC funds.

Commissioner Holmes said that she agrees Commissioner Evans with funding from the ABC funds to support Dorcas Ministries, Step Up Ministry and the Green Chair Project. She shared that the ABC funds should be used for other organizations seeking funding. She shared that she fully supports funding minus 7% cut across the board. She said in terms of reallocation, the board should go back to the drawing board and fund other organizations in need of funds that may fit into the ABC category.

Chair Ford asked if there is a general agreement that ABC funds be used to support other programs.

Commissioner West said that a Pandora's box is being opened. He said that the rules have been set and the bar has been moved. He asked if there was any criteria or are they making decisions based on citizen input.

Chair Ford said that the message is clear. There is \$1.3 million available to organizations. He said that due to the pandemic, Wake County has received \$11 million from the ABC board and funds are used for addiction. He said that if ABC funds could be used to support the organizations, he would support.

Commissioner Calabria shared thoughts on using ABC funds to supplement funding for various community organizations. He shared that he is in support of using ABC funds. He said that previous organization numbers from Ben resulted in a decrease of \$421,000 for previously funded organizations and an increase of \$355,000 increase to new organizations. He said that he agrees with the proposal that Commissioner Hutchinson mentioned in his comments.

Chair Ford said that one of the reasons for the new process is for assumptive funding. When organizations build budgets, it's on an assumed budget. He said the needs of the community have changed and they are more pronounced.

Commissioner Holmes shared that on June 24th, she requested that Triangle Family Services work be included in the ABC funding. She said that today, other requests have been suggested for the use of ABC funds. She proposed that the board return to the drawing board and that all of the organizations that fit ABC funding criteria should be evaluated fairly to receive funding and the remaining funds be allocated accordingly.

Commissioner Hutchinson shared his thoughts on the creation of Marbles. He appealed to the board that these are not normal times and all of the organizations and citizens are hurting. He said now is not the time to be cutting the funding.

Mr. Canada shared his thoughts on moving forward. He asked the board to make the decision based on the \$1.3 million today and in August make decisions about new funding using ABC funds.

Commissioner West shared his thoughts on piecemealing the process. He said that looking at content in isolation is not effective. He said that the board must think of the households, workers, and taxpayers who are looking for them to act and make the best decisions that will have positive impact. He said he is in opposition to moving the decision for ABC funds to August. He said that the process is fragmented.

Chair Ford said that they are objectifying a subjective process. He shared his thoughts on data being collected. He shared observations on the process. He shared that he would like to make the decisions today.

Commissioner Holmes shared the board discussed the sustainability of organizations. She shared that legacy funding organizations were notified that funding may or may not be available. She said the Boys and Girls Club as well as Wake Smiles were told not to come back. She said that ABC funding is a one time funding. She asked what will organizations do next year when ABC funds are not available. She said the process has been inequitable and unfair. She shared that she would like to vote today and is open to another work session if needed.

Commissioner Evans shared that if a consensus could be reached today, she supports funding the organizations today. With ABC funding, organizations could be identified for funding. She said that the directions they received today about the charts were starting points not something set that required a vote. She said that there were five organizations that received funding from all 7 commissioners. She shared that she is in favor of removing organizations that could be funded with ABC funds. She shared her concern of discrepancies of organizations that have received funding and the other organizations that have not received funds. She shared that she would like to propose leveling the 30 percent reduction and apply to the top five organizations that are seeking funding.

Chair Ford shared thoughts on the decisions for allocations that were made and everyone has different expectations. Given the decrease in available funds we cannot make everyone totally happy.

Commissioner Hutchinson shared that he would like to make the decision today to fund the organizations. He commented on the letters that were mailed to the organizations that stated that they may or may not be funded. He said that the distinctions are Marbles and the United Arts are county buildings.

Mr. Canada reiterated the process of taking all seven commissioners allocations and working to find an average of them that works across all the items.

Commissioner West made comments about JCPC. He shared that he has concerns about the hodge podge of organizations and that the impact does not meet the board's goals. He said that board needs a plan and to achieve it if they are to meet the needs of the citizens and organizations. He said that there needs to be a collective impact and a shared agenda. He said that vulnerable communities feel that they don't have a voice. He referred to the book "Start with the why". He said that equity should be considered.

Commissioner Holmes shared her thoughts on why organizations submitted their applications. She said that Justice Served NC should be

included on the ABC list for funding. She shared that for the purpose of moving forward, she is committed to voting on the original document. She shared that she is requesting a motion on where the board stands on the document presented.

Chair Ford said that vote would be on

1. does the board majority want to move forward
2. no majority and re-work the allocations

Commissioner Holmes clarified the two proposals for the motion as to taking out some organizations and redoing the worksheet.

Commissioner Calabria shared his thoughts on framing the discussion. He asked Commissioner Holmes to clarify the two proposals. She shared comments on the two proposals.

Commissioner West made general comments about the how, the why and the what.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked for clarity on the motion suggested by Commissioner Holmes. He offered an alternative suggestion to the ratio of organizations not funded.

Chair Ford said that Commissioner Holmes has asked for a vote on whether the board is willing to vote now. He asked the board how many were in favor of voting today to move forward with making recommendations for funding at the 5:00 pm meeting.

Commissioner Holmes said that if there are four or more commissioners who are good with the plan, they can move forward. She said if they can rework the ABC funds within the next hour that would be fine with her.

Vice-Chair Adamson shared that she is satisfied with the scenario to vote on the community funding this evening. She shared that she is out of office from July 14th - August 10th so it is her desire to get this item passed today. She shared that next year is unknown, so funds may or may not be available.

Commissioner Evans shared that she would like to resolve the issue of community funding today.

Commissioner Calabria shared that he is not prepared to vote on the strawman process. He shared comments about making decisions moments before meetings, historically this happens as people work

through options. He said that it is not an attempt to exclude anyone or blindsides them it is a common practice. He said that he is open to looking at future ABC funding for organizations.

Commissioner West made comments about the decision to move forward with a vote today about funding community organizations.

Commissioner Holmes shared her thoughts on using the \$11 million from the ABC board. She said that no one has changed their thoughts on the use of ABC funds.

Chair Ford said that he was in support of the strawman proposal at the inception of the meeting.

Commissioner Hutchinson shared that he would like to revisit organizations that were cut and use ABC funds to fund them.

Chair Ford shared that proposals have been made and asked how to proceed.

Commissioner West said he is in support of the strawman proposal.

Commissioner Evans shared that she had a proposal for the top five organizations using the ABC funds. She would like to consider a pro rata distribution to the top tier of three that were agreed upon and use the rest of the money across the remaining organizations that were agreed upon equally. She also proposed a cut across the top five organizations.

Commissioner Holmes shared that there are 4-5 proposals. She shared that she is in support of distributing funds evenly across the board. She shared that all of the organizations that fit the ABC funding be removed and not to cherry pick.

Manager Ellis shared that his concern is that pulling together information in a 30 minute time frame gives him warrant. He suggested having another meeting so that the board is given enough time to prepare.

Chair Ford adjourned the meeting at 4:19 pm.

## **Adjourn**

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne Gilyard  
Deputy Clerk to the Board  
Wake County Board of Commissioners