

Item Title: Use Agreement with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to Manage and Operate Public Access at the Firearms Education and Training Center (FETC)

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Manager to execute a Use Agreement with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission for the use of the Wake County Firearms Education and Training Center, solely for the purpose of operating an indoor firearm range for public access, upon terms and conditions acceptable to the County Attorney.

Item Summary:

Purpose: This Use Agreement with North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) outlines roles and responsibilities for a new partnership to manage, operate and schedule the public access at the Firearms Education and Training Center.

Background: Wake County is the owner of the Wake County Firearms Education & Training Center, an indoor firearm shooting range, located at 3921 Old Holly Springs Apex Road, Apex, North Carolina 27539. The Wake County Sheriff's Office previously contracted with a private entity, Range Safety Management, LLC, to operate public use of the Center during weekend and weeknight hours. On January 15, 2020, the contract with Range Safety Management, LLC was terminated, and public use of the facility was suspended. During the Board of Commissioner's work session held on January 13, 2020, the Board affirmed the facility to be utilized for law enforcement training and the public while the County evaluates long term options for management and operation of the facility. The Board received a subsequent update on the status of the operations of the facility during their work session on February 10, 2020.

The Wildlife Resource Commission operates several public shooting ranges throughout North Carolina. The operation of the facility is consistent with its mission to provide access to education and shooting opportunities in a safe shooting environment throughout the State of North Carolina. The Commission has a goal of providing shooting sport opportunities within a fifty (50) mile radius of each North Carolina resident and is currently not associated with a range in the Raleigh metropolitan area. The Commission has the expertise and personnel to independently manage and operate public utilization of the facility. The dual use of the facility by law enforcement officers and the public is compatible with the historic purpose for which the facility was constructed.

Board Goal: This action supports routine county operations.

Fiscal Impact: Wake County will offer the facility in-kind to the WRC. The WRC shall be responsible for staffing; furnishing and supplying all equipment, apparatus, and supplies associated with its use and operation of the facility. WRC plans to provide recreational public use of the range at no cost to the public; however, at its sole discretion, the WRC may charge reasonable fees to the public to offset staffing and operational costs in the future.

WRC is responsible for applying for grant funds through the United States Fish & Wildlife Services' Wildlife and Sports Restoration Fund in an effort to cover 75% of the cost of staffing of WRC's use of the facility. The County will provide cost accounting information for maintenance, environmental contracts, and utility bills to the WRC for purposes of grant funding.

Additionally, a budget memo is included to reduce the remaining uncollected revenue and unused expenditure budgets associated with the Range Safety Management, LLC public firing range operations contract that was adopted in the FY 2020 Wake County Sheriff's Office operating budget.

Additional Information:

None.

Attachments:

1. Use Agreement with Exhibits
2. January 13, 2020 & February 10, 2020 Work Session Presentations
3. Budget Memo – FY 2020 Wake County Sheriff's Office