

Item Title: Authorization of Three Additional FTEs to Staff and Support the City-County Bureau of Identification (CCBI) DNA Laboratory

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Authorizes the establishment of three (3) full-time positions to staff and support the CCBI DNA laboratory; and**
- 2. Appropriates \$278,900 of lab fee revenue received in the Grants and Donations Fund.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: In accordance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, the Board of Commissioners must approve all amendments that increase the budget for a fund. In accordance with the Wake County Personnel Ordinance, the Board of Commissioners must approve any changes to the full-time equivalent position amounts.

Background: In May 2021, CCBI staff briefed the Board's Public Safety Committee about the upcoming construction of a DNA Laboratory. Construction will begin in Fall 2021 and finish in Spring 2022. The project is funded with revenues from court-ordered fees.

State statute requires all laboratories conducting forensic examinations to be accredited for laboratory results to be admitted in the courts of North Carolina. Achieving this accreditation, and operating the lab, requires three additional positions. The positions will include a lab manager and two analysts. Among other duties, these positions will develop procedures, validate laboratory instrumentation, and expand CCBI's scope of accreditation to include DNA examinations. In addition, a software module for DNA services must be added with input from these analysts to CCBI's Laboratory Information Management System before DNA services can be provided.

While construction of the lab will not be completed until Spring 2022, CCBI requests authorization for the three positions at this time. Hiring processes for these highly technical positions can require three months. The new employees will then prepare for the lab accreditation process.

Board Goal: This action supports Public Safety Goal 1: Address equity in the criminal justice system, and Public Safety Goal 3: Provide high quality and sustainable public safety services to meet the community's current and future needs.

Fiscal Impact: The projected partial-year cost in FY 2022 for three positions is approximately \$135,000. This includes salary, benefits and associated operating costs and will be funded within the existing General Fund budget. During the FY 2023 annual budget process, staff will include an increase to the FY 2023 General Fund of \$300,000 to cover the full-year cost of these positions.

The Grants and Donations Fund will be increased by an appropriation of \$278,900 of lab fee revenue received but not yet budgeted, which in addition to existing budget capacity will fund the construction contract for the DNA Laboratory.

Additional Information:

This item requests the funding of one (1) Laboratory Quality Manager (LQM) FTE beginning in December 2021 for the remainder of FY 2022 and two (2) DNA Analyst FTEs beginning in March 2022 for the remainder of FY 2022. Selection and recruitment for these positions is a three-month process that includes a background investigation, polygraph, drug testing, and psychological evaluation.

The contract for construction of the DNA Laboratory has been awarded to Salisbury Moore Construction. Work is tentatively scheduled to begin October 4, 2021. The cost is approximately \$376,000 and has been funded by CCBI through the court ordered laboratory fees. Laboratory construction is planned to be a two-phase project with office space completed first to accommodate the increase in personnel, and laboratory space finished second, while the new DNA staff develops procedures and acquires equipment and supplies.

The Ferguson Group, retained by Wake County, has worked with CCBI to obtain earmark funds from the federal government for DNA testing equipment. Ferguson informed Wake County in April 2021 that US Congresswoman Deborah Ross submitted this request to the House Appropriations Committee as part of her FY2022 Community Project Funding requests. These funds should be available once the FY2022 federal budget is passed.

Attachments:

1. DNA Presentation to BOC Public Safety Committee (May 2021)
2. Ferguson Group Appropriations Email
3. Budget Memo – CCBI General Fund
4. Budget Memo – Grants and Donations Fund