



### **Agenda Action Form Overview**

The Board is requested to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No.21NCC000050, increasing the Youth Home expenditure budget by \$30,000, for unplanned expenses for the Durham County Youth Home due to increases in county juveniles being detained at out-of-county facilities.

Funding for this need will come from funds that were set aside at the outset of FY 2020-21 to address potential revenue shortfalls and/or address expenditure overages due to the pandemic. A budget amendment is required because the County's expenditures are adopted by the Budget Ordinance at the functional area level. This funding approval requires a transfer from General Government to Public Safety functional areas.

### **Background/Justification**

Due to unanticipated circumstances caused by COVID the Youth Home has had to send several Durham County juveniles to out-of-county facilities. The Youth Home received a fund balance appropriation of \$100,000 in November 2020 and has expended over fifty percent of those funds for six months of the billing cycle. Because there is little room in the rest of the Youth Home budget to realign, the Youth Home will need an additional \$30,000 to cover out-of-county monthly costs until the end of the of fiscal year 20/21.

In 2008, the Department of Public Safety developed a new strategy and assessment tool to use the least restrictive environment, thus reducing the number of youths placed in detention facilities and providing services and programs in the community. After implementation of the assessment tool, the Youth Home's budget was reduced due to a decline in Durham's juveniles being detained in other facilities.

On December 1, 2019, "Raise the Age" legislation became effective, allowing 16- and 17-year olds' to be placed in juvenile detention rather than local jails. With this new legislation passing, staff continued to work on the capital improvement plan to build a larger 36- bed facility to meet Durham's juvenile detention needs. On August 1, 2020, new legislation HB 593, was also implemented, removing all minors from jails. Subsequently, these laws affect the Youth Home's capacity to keep all its juveniles at the current 14-bed facility.

Additionally, most detained juveniles have serious class A-G felony charges and are held for more extended periods. The Youth Home has served ten juveniles transferred to Superior court, and currently, there are seven still in detention. In the same period in FY 20/21, the average length of stay was eleven days. This fiscal year, the average length of stay is twenty-three days, a 109% increase in admissions length of stays for the same period last year.

### **Policy Impact**

Approving the Budget Ordinance Amendment appropriation allows Durham County Youth Home to pay for Durham's juveniles placed in out of county facilities as required by state statute.

### **Procurement Background**

In accordance with North Carolina General Statutes 143-B-820 State Subsidy. Any county placing a juvenile in a detention facility in another county shall pay fifty percent (50%) of the total cost of caring for the juvenile to the Division. The other 50% is paid for by NCDPS.

**Fiscal Impact**

Approving the Budget Ordinance Appropriation will provide additional funding to the Durham Youth Home to support operational costs to pay for juveniles placed in other detention facilities when beds are not available at the Youth Home.

**Recommendation**

The Board is requested to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No.21NCC000050, increasing the Youth Home expenditure budget by \$30,000, for unplanned expenses for the Durham County Youth Home due to increases in county juveniles being detained at out-of-county facilities.